OPUS ANGLICANUM WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO COPES AS LITURGICAL SHOW-PIECES, ECCLESIASTICAL EXEMPLARS AND EUCHARISTIC EXEGETES

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CHRISTINE LINNELL
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ABSTRACT

This thesis arose from a need for a re-evaluation of *opus Anglicanum*, a somewhat discounted artform which was nevertheless central to the cultural output of medieval England. It is concerned with looking closely at a couple of important aspects. First, the available evidence is considered, with a view to exploring whether long-held assumptions about the subject can actually be substantiated; second, a detailed study of iconography is made, in an attempt to find an explanation for particular choices. Among the extant English medieval ecclesiastical embroideries the great copes, covering the period from c1270 to c1330, offer the most fruitful opportunities for study. Thus, the focus is on these for general concerns and for more particular issues four "narrative" copes have been examined in detail. Early assessment of the gamut of imagery disclosed certain striking features—the individuality and doctrinal exactitude of the various iconographic programmes, the singular absence of some central theological themes and the ubiquitous nature of the angelic presence among the representations—which indicated lines of enquiry and determined the parameters of study.

In the course of laying out the evidence such primary sources as there are, are reviewed and assumptions regarding possible workshop practices and issues of patronage are examined. On the technical side, the manufacture of these precious embroideries is explored and the vexed question of who was responsible for the designs is considered. The findings reveal that, contrary to widely held opinion, the luxury copes were liturgical vestments, with a crucial role to play both within the service and the meaning of the High Mass itself. The cherished belief that the twenty processional vestments which are known today represent a mere fraction of the original output is challenged and a diametrically opposed view is put forward— that what there is, is the greatest part of what there was.
PREFACE
From the outset the research on this topic has been hampered by serious obstacles - inadequate and poor quality photographic reproductions of the vestments, and an almost complete dearth of supporting documentary evidence. This meant that from the start the work to be done on the information gleaned had, of necessity, to be of an interpretative nature rather than being able to focus on pure research. After time spent in Italy, sufficient photographic material was obtained to counter the difficulty of having to rely on reproductions of the robes. Study of what documentary evidence there is, in the form of inventories, revealed little more than confirmation of the suspicion that these writings were principally unrevealing lists of vestments of slight interest, to my line of enquiry, in themselves.

Requests for both assistance and access to archive material addressed to the guardians of the Anagni (Don Aurelio Prosperi) and Lateran (Monsignor Sciubba) cope, met with defiantly authoritative stonewalls of misunderstanding which deflected the conversation onto totally irrelevant matters. This lack of cooperation was disheartening although not completely unexpected, given the advanced age of the priests in question. The work of previous scholars has uncovered only the odd cathedral or papal inventory, most notably those of 1294 and 1328 for Christchurch, Canterbury, and that of Santa Sede in Rome of 1295. But while these demonstrate that the contents of treasuries, vestries and wardrobes could be recorded, they also show with how little concern the documents were kept, and that chance probably accounts for the tiny sampling which remains to us. There is nothing to show that it was considered normal practice to keep inventories, nor that it was a procedure which was followed regularly. Even the seemingly systematic practice of royal records, revealed in the Liberate and the Close Rolls, has significant omissions. With crucial papal history focussing on Anagni in the 1290s, and the Lateran having been the first church of Rome as the gift of Constantine, it might seem that there is good reason to suppose that important records--inventories, accounts, diplomatic reports, or even journals such as the writings of Pius II--could once have existed in either or both of these locations. However, never having been referred to, hinted at or reproduced, in spite of scholarly
trawls at earlier stages (notably in the work of Montault, Molinier, Legg and Hope), the expectation of finding evidence from documentary sources seemed poor. My own searches have yielded nothing but have instead further clouded the picture by failing to recover some previously quoted manuscripts or references.

A different situation prevailed in Pienza where a bond of friendship was forged which would have opened any doors, assuming there had been any to open which, predictably, there were not. The limited relevant material for the Bologna cope housed in the city archives has been viewed, but it did nothing to help the hypotheses which are to be put forward. A similar situation exists with the Velletri Roll from which information could possibly have been found to add to the current scant picture. Although this study concentrates on four vestments in Italy, with the single exception of the Ascoli Piceno cope, nothing which can be said about the other fifteen/sixteen examples is any more reliable or informative. Neither does anything historical exist beyond the oft quoted Matthew Paris reference and the few entries in the various Rolls which offer limited interest and information; indeed, they raise more questions than they answer.

Translations have relied mainly on paraphrasing the medieval notarial Latin. When my endeavours were later checked with an authority, Dr. Gratwick of St. Andrews University to whom I am greatly indebted, nothing of importance had been missed. Such information as has been gathered from these sources has done nothing to disrupt the thread of my argument, but neither has it contributed in anything but the loosest sense. This left the necessity of drawing almost exclusively on the primary material of the embroidered robes themselves. As an inevitable consequence of this, it has not been possible to do more than speculate on certain crucial areas such as patronage, production and workshop issues, or how and by whom the programmes were compiled.

Scholars such as W.R. Lethaby and M.R. James, Peter Brieger, Margaret Rickert and Joan Evans onwards, writing about *opus Anglicanum* have traditionally made connections between the medium of embroidery and that of manuscript
illumination. While inevitably there are close links, as would be expected when the two arts share the religious context and the iconographical conventions, I have found this area to be one of the least fruitful for my particular purposes. The connections, when looked at collectively, could not sustain a sufficiently consistent and close link to reveal more than superficial borrowings. This is not to deny the claim made for these two wondrous art forms, which clearly are related, and rightly credited as being the areas in which medieval England excelled: the period around the turn of the thirteenth century being unrivalled on the Continent.

Mrs. Christie may have had to contend with practical difficulties in visiting each and every piece of English medieval ecclesiastical embroidery, but she had a unique and enviable advantage which it is unlikely will ever be available again - she was able to handle the textiles and examine them under ideal circumstances. Each of the four copes on which this thesis is based is currently displayed behind glass which establishes a barrier automatically, and interferes with any photographs I was permitted to take. It is understood that an earlier student, when engaged on research into the embroideries some years ago, was privileged to photograph them outside their cases, but it has proved impossible to elicit a response of any kind from efforts to contact them. Similarly, enquiries directed to the recognised authority in medieval musical instruments, for assistance with dating from the angelic orchestras on the Bologna and Lateran copes, have met with no success.

These disappointments have been countered to some extent by the few instances of genuine co-operation. The most notable of these was the time spent in Pienza with Don Aldo Franci, Giovanna and Carolina who could not have done more to make my visits there stimulating and memorable. While working in their museum I became a temporary exhibit; and my regrets about the paucity of material were matched only by their own. The Principle of the Royal School of Needlework, Mrs. Elizabeth Elvin, was most generous with both her time and her expertise, which she gave freely on the strength of an introductory letter. Work in the Vatican Library was the most obvious and also the most rewarding. Here, in spite of unreasonable demands on his time the
Prefect, the medieval scholar Father Leonard Boyle, took the trouble to scan recorded references in obscure inventories and manuscripts on my behalf, and added a human touch to an otherwise impersonal exercise.

In the early stages requests for information and photographic material were generously responded to by Carin Lundberg Gustafsson, Secretary of Uppsala Cathedral; Paolo Seghetti, Director of Ascoli Piceno Pinacoteca Civica, who most kindly arranged for the gift of the book produced after the restoration of the Ascoli Piceno cope to be sent; Monique Jay, Librarian at the Musée Historique des Tissus, Lyons; Dr. Angela Franco, Conservadora-Jefe de la Sección Medieval Cristiana, Museo Arqueológico Nacional, Madrid; M.S. Gros, Conservador, Vich; Dr. J. Lawson, Faculty of Law, Dundee University; Monsignor Charles Burns, Archivist, Vatican City.

Père Joseph Destré, Curate at Saint-Bertrand de Comminges (Toulouse), kindly sent his personal collection of slides of the Passion cope and allowed me to take copies. He has remained in contact and retained an interest in my progress in spite of my having to suspend work on the two vestments which were in his care. This decision was taken reluctantly since the Passion cope is a splendid example and also had papal connections. However, having determined on the Italian "set", which provided ample material for study, it would have been impractical to include a cope in the south of France. Dr. Massimo Medica, Museo Civico Medievale, Bologna, kindly facilitated my visit to his Museum and permitted me to see the photographs taken when the Bologa cope was under restoration (there was no archive material). Signor Fausto Ercolani, Direttore del Museo Diocesano, Velletri, working under trying circumstances while a new museum is being constructed, nevertheless retrieved, and gave me free access to the Velletri Roll on a couple of occasions - the splendid photographs are a result of his kindness. A copy of Susan Kyser's M.A. thesis was gifted by the Department of the History of Art, Syracuse University, New York, and helpful material was supplied by Michelle Brown of The Manuscript Collection of the British Library.

A special word of thanks is due to Dr. Francis Ames-Lewis of Birkbeck College, University of London, who first planted the seed of the idea of further
research in this field but, at the same time, warned that nothing worthwhile might emerge! He has been kind enough to give of both his time and support as I worked, and alerted me to the thesis of Penny Wallis as well as providing access to it. While enjoying his hospitality, the difficulties of studying *opus Anglicanum* were openly discussed with Donald King, President, Centre International d' Étude des Textiles Anciens. Professor Martin Kemp, acting as Departmental Supervisor for me during a sabbatical, offered an authoritative and fresh perspective on any material he kindly agreed to read. I have always received patient and helpful responses to any and all enquiries from the staff of the library at the University of St. Andrews: and have benefited from the expertise and assistance of librarians in the Bodleian, most particularly from Marion Pemberton; the Manuscript Room at Cambridge University Library; St. John's College, Cambridge; the Mitchell Library, Glasgow; the British Library Reading Room and Manuscript Collection and the Archivio di Stato in Bologna.

Most of my time in the School of Art History at St. Andrews was spent under the Chairmanship of Dr. John Frew, to whom I owe thanks for a number of opportunities which I might not otherwise have enjoyed. I have been proud to be a part of the Department and to be included in the wide variety of activities on offer, generally through the efficient energies of Dawn Waddell. Financial assistance was most gratefully received from the Department, the Holt Scholarship and the Gapper Bequest, and was used to help with the costs of travel and photography. While at St. Andrews University it has been my privilege and pleasure to get to know some of the young scholars making their way in Art History, most particularly Lindsay Shen and Suzanne Lyle. As a troublesome mature student I have severely tried their patience on many occasions but their tolerant indulgence has helped me through the worst stages; I will always be grateful for the companionship and support received from them all. The responsibility of keeping me earthed in the "real" world has been shouldered most particularly by a couple of staunch friends, whose support has not wavered and who are deserving of sincere thanks - Eleanor Watson and Elaine Gerber. Finally, my
gratitude must go in fullest measure to my supervisor, Rosemary Muir-Wright, and my husband, David Linnell. Any achievement I may be considered to have made is due in large part to these two people, the one for making it possible and the other for making it happen.

The thesis reflects twin preoccupations - those of needlework and the study of medieval art. As a rule it is enough to mention an interest in just one of these to lose the sympathy of the company, but worse still is the combination of both embroidery and medievalism which generally proves to be too much altogether! It is an ardent personal hope that, if not the script at least the photographs, may go some way to kindling a renewed awareness of the integrity and beauty of both.

School of Art History
University of St. Andrews
January, 1995
INTRODUCTION
As the moving centre of the pre-Mass session and as resplendent as the processional cross itself, the golden cope of the high ecclesiastic acted like a call to worship as it passed through the confines of the sacred space of the church at the rear of the ceremonial procession. It was not a liturgical object but a garment of which the real significance was only made apparent in the most luxurious versions. This thesis, therefore, will concentrate on the way in which the iconography of these unique copes rendered explicit their inherent function. It was only with embroidery that any opportunity existed for this singular role to be revealed visually in artistic terms: it functioned, in all its parts, to serve a single idea reflective of the garment's purpose. In the liturgy of the medieval Mass the luxury robes acted as beacons of light drawing the faithful into the celebration, investing the wearer with the signs of God's promise to mankind, and thereby affirming throughout the sacred space of the church the certainty of the ultimate reunion with the hosts of heaven, whose eternal worship was reflected on earth in the drama of the Mass.

Scholarship has emphasised the supposed non-liturgical nature of the copes without addressing the question of what application they could have had, apart from the processional role. Recognition that some attempt was obviously made to devise a characteristic repertoire for ecclesiastical embroidery has not led to any critical enquiry as to why this particular repertoire should exist. If it is remembered that iconography works only when the object is seen as a whole in its intended context, and with some idea of the expectancy of the intended audience, is clear that meaningful programmes were prescribed. In this case the object was a richly decorated textile robe, worn by a high ecclesiastic who moved through public and sacred spaces, and was visible to an assembled congregation of lay persons and clerics. Recent detailed scrutiny of the imagery, so perfectly rendered in the gold thread, has ignored the influence the context would have imposed on the choices made, and the particular demands which would have had to be met as a result. The insistent angelic presences, which critics have consistently ignored, hold both the clue to the direction to look in,
and much of the evidence for the eventual resolution, which is attested to by their very ubiquity.

Once vested in the cope, which played an important part in the setting for the Eucharist and in the initial sequences of the actual drama, the bishop could be seen to bring the Church herself to the altar. From the premise that the source of the design lay in the iconography and experience of English church worship, the possible context for the vestment was its part in the Sarum liturgy, which became a standard form in much of England in the thirteenth century. This liturgical practice provided the setting for both the visual and the aural sequences of the festivals of the English Church. Following this practice, the bearer of the cope would literally announce the drama of the celebration in the preliminary rituals of the Blessing and the Aspersion, for by his distinctive embroidered robe, his presence served as a marker in the stages of the preparation. Acting as the representative of Christ's Church on earth through historical time, a responsibility signalled by the unique quality of the garment, the celebrant would unite in his person the worship of the earthly church with the heavenly company through the liturgy. From the introductory prayer chanted at the Aspersion by the officiant:

Exaudi nos domine sancte pater omnipotens eternae dei: et mittere
dignare sanctum angelum tuum de caelis: qui custodiat, foveat, protegat,
visitet et defendat omnes habitantes in hoc habitaculo...

(Hear us, O Lord, holy Father, almighty everlasting God, and vouchsafe to send thy holy angel from heaven to keep, cherish, protect, visit, and defend all who dwell in this habitation ...), the prologue to the drama was set, as it were. It invoked the company of angels present within the sacred space, as guardians of the church precincts through which the procession was to move, and confirmed their participation in the earthly worship. The attendance of this unseen congregation was signalled by the embroidered imagery, which also illuminated the rememorative proceedings and doctrinal passages of the words of the pre-Mass liturgy. The audible affirmation of this joint celebration was contained in the great Sanctus which marked the start of the Canon of the Mass.
By their golden sheen the festal copes drew all those who saw them into their orbit, and reflected the fulfilment of the promise of the Eucharist on all those on whom the light of the jewelled splendour fell. Accompanied by sound and sparkle, the great copes must have confirmed the truth of the promise of Revelation.

Existing commentaries on *opus Anglicanum* have tended to accept what examples of the English medieval ecclesiastical embroidery remain without feeling any necessity to account for their excellence, beyond indicating that from earliest times England had a well-established tradition of embroidering vestments, and that from Old Testament days it had been customary to decorate articles reserved for the service of God in some way:

> When the priests enter therin, then shall they not go out of the holy place into the utter court, but there they shall lay their garments wherein they minister, for they are holy, and shall put on other garments, and shall approach to those things which are for the people. Ezekiel 42:14; see also Ezekiel 44:17, 19.

While there is no arguing with either of these points, even a superficial acquaintance with the pieces under review brings to mind a host of questions about the nature of the ornamentation, the way in which it was used and how it would have been seen; as well as stirring a curiosity about the manner in which they were actually produced. Brel-Bordaz, Kyser and Wallis have put forward suggestions about some of these issues, but no thorough examination of what can be known, as well as what may be surmised from the characteristic imagery, has yet been attempted. Certain claims have been made—about workshop practices, among other things—and repeated by successive writers over the years, without proper enquiry to see if they can stand up in the light of available evidence.

It was with these aspects in mind that this particular study was undertaken. In spite of the perishable nature of decorated cloth, and the number of intervening centuries, the range of extant embroideries is such that it became obvious early on it would be necessary to be selective. In this way the decision was made to draw on what was felt to be a distinctive but relatively representative section of vestments - the
copes. Nineteen from the so-called "great period" (accepted to have been from c1270-c1330) remain in existence scattered around Europe, with England and Italy having the greatest numbers; one other is known from a Victorian watercolour which is of such a detailed nature as to allow it to be incorporated in any inquiry into these articles. The dominant theme of the representations is that of the Company of Heaven to which all the depicted were bound, and to which every beholder of the work was invited through the mediation of the Church, personified by the cope's wearer. However, one of the most striking features of the collection is the immensely varied decorative programmes which are found within the characteristic thematic range, a point which contributes to the interest the copes generate and which helped to determine the concentration on them.

While it would have been feasible to focus on almost any single one of them, preliminary examination led to four being used for close investigation. Among the examples which have come down to us some sort of "hierarchy" is apparent: the nature and quality of the decorative programmes and iconography found on a number of them set them in a class of their own. Of these copes, the Anagni c1280, Bologna c1290-1300, Lateran c1300-1320 and Pienza c1325, could conveniently be grouped by reason of their form and condition, comprehensive programmes, papal connections and location in Italy. It is the imagery which makes these astonishing vestments significant; the richness of the materials which makes them exotic, and the contemporary technical virtuosity which made their production possible. These aspects gave rise to the pressing questions of what this particularised treatment meant and why it should have been given to a vestment with no eucharistic standing. Any answer to this derives in part from the function of the robe and the role it played in church ritual, but conversely the doctrinal emphasis which informed the imagery must also have been responsible in some way for making the cope appropriate to its function. Emerging from the more wide-ranging concerns, which are met at different stages of the study, the principal preoccupation is to explain and account for this. Hence, there are two areas of exploration in the thesis: one which deals with the
practice of opus Anglicanum generally, and the other which looks at certain of the
copes specifically - conclusions are reached which accord in some instances, and
disagree in others, with prevailing opinions. Most significantly, however, it will be
seen that the iconography fitted the great copes to celebrate, in a manner unique to their
own nature, the interaction between the Church on earth and its spiritual counterpart in
Heaven. The stitchery of these vestments acted like the written words of a text
describing the role of the Church as the inheritor of God's promise to mankind, and
made available through the celebration of the Eucharist.
The prime examples are distinguished by their extensive narrative cycles, and a decorated design field covered completely with gold underside couching. Among those classified as opus Anglicanum, as well as the four selected the St. Maximin, Passion, Daroca and Lost copes would also have served. With the exception of the Daroca and St. Maximin, the little known about these vestments indicates papal connections. It was this feature, together with the convenience of the Italian locations which finally determined the selection. The Ascoli Piceno cope is also covered with "narrative" representations and gold stitchery, and belonged to a pope. However, the unusual iconographic programme does not expand the themes of the central scenes of the Virgin and Child with Angels (vested), the Crucifixion and the devotional "Veronika" Head of Christ in the same way as the chosen examples.
CHAPTER ONE

THE COPE

as

LITURGICAL SHOW-PIECE
The historical development of priestly attire reaches back to the early Church and has its roots in Roman society, and to some extent also in Jewish Levitical practices. Relying, to begin with, on a small number of secular articles of clothing, such as the paenula and tunica, the early ministers' dress remained unaltered as fashions changed and gradually came to assume an archaic look which set it apart by default. It is from these almost ad hoc beginnings that the range of hierarchical complexities and symbolic subtleties built around ecclesiastical costume evolved, although like the Mass itself, taking several centuries to become standardised and fixed. However, from the outset the precedent was clearly stated in the Old Testament, both for the distinctive garments and for their ornamentation:

And these are the garments which they shall make; a breastplate, and an ephod, and a robe, and a broidered coat, a mitre, and a girdle: and they shall make holy garments for Aaron thy brother, and his sons, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office. Exodus 28:4.

By the time of St. Jerome in the fourth century, a form of liturgical dress, already infused with symbolic meanings through Biblical references, had come to be recognised; clothes reserved for a specifically religious purpose and seen to be desirable, but not all at this stage regarded as an obligatory part of the act of worship. The secular connection was sustained through the act of passing to churches royal or imperial robes which, as a result of their opulence, could be reshaped and made fitting for ecclesiastical purposes. The most famous instance of this, and an early example of the potential for religious "ceremonial", concerns a mantle "made of threads of gold" sent to Macarius, Bishop of Jerusalem (died 457), by the Emperor Constantine to be worn "when performing the office of holy baptism". In the letter written by St. Jerome to Fabiola from Bethlehem in 396 or 7, it is seen that the Christian tradition of endowing religious garments with mystical properties drew on long established Hebrew practices. St. Jerome talks of "'earthen vessels' what majesty shall there be in the treasure that lies concealed within!"; and associates interpretation of these hidden mystical meanings as a form of unveiling which occurs through turning to face God,
following the example of David in Psalm 129:18, "Take thou the veil from mine eyes, and I will consider the wondrous things of thy law."

As the Church developed and moved towards uniformity commentaries on the application, meaning and relevance of vestments came from many great theologians, but among the most notable of the early writers significant contributions to the process of regularisation were made by Amalarius of Metz, sometime Bishop of Trier, in his *De Ecclesiasticis Officinis* written in 820; the texts of Pope Innocent III, especially his *De Sacro Alteris Mysteriis* of 1198, and Durandus, Bishop of Mende in his *Rationale Divinorum Officiorum* of 1287. Innocent is regarded as having been the first to attempt a systematic interpretation of ecclesiastical ritual symbolism, in the context of the contemporary church. He applied this to the six vestments seen as pertaining to the celebrant of the Mass, as already decreed by the time of Alcuin, who was writing a century earlier. These were the amice, alb, girdle, stole, maniple and chasuble (Pl. 1); with the chasuble, then as now, seen as being the most sacred and consequently the most vital.

However, while the sanctity and importance of vestments generally is underlined, these represented only a portion of the articles which were commonly in ecclesiastical use by this time, and no explanation of the cope is given. The medieval scholar, William Durandus (c1230-96), as an authority on canon law and the Sacraments, explains the need for special clothing in this way:

> We may not enter ... into the Holy of Holies with garments tainted by the use of common life; but with a pure conscience and with clean and holy raiment must we handle the holy things of God. Wherefore Stephen, Pope, did order that the Sacred Vestments should not be used, save in the rites of the Church, and in service meet for God ... By the Vestments, moreover, as worn only in sacred services, we do understand that not all holy things are to be unfolded unto the people.

He is the first to give an interpretative account of a Church cope in the third book of his *Rationale Divinorum Officiorum* which is entirely devoted to "The Sacred
Vestments”. Here, drawing on works of the Church Fathers and his theological predecessors such as Hugh of St. Victor and Innocent III, he gives, among other things, a comprehensive description of who could wear which article, what the significance was and often the origins. According to these writings all vestments were held to "signify virtues and express the ministry of the Incarnation". Although this is only one historical account of the evolution of church vestments, in spite of varied opinions it is a clear indication that by the thirteenth century procedures had become formalised, and little change was to occur through the rest of the Middle Ages. A possible explanation for the later adoption of the cope as a liturgical vestment suggests that it was a result of the changes which took place in the chasuble. The explanation of the cutting down of this eucharistic vestment lies in the need for the arms of the priest to be free for the elevation of the Host. Since the "slimming-down" of the eucharistic robe meant that it no longer offered adequate protection for the wearer during his progress to the altar (Fig. 1), something more was required.

While the historical antecedent of the chasuble is quite clearly the full round paenula, in spite of the changes which led to the "fiddle" shape most commonly associated with the medieval period, there is a number of different variations of the outdoor cloak to which the cope is ultimately related. All known in Roman times, they were originally secular in application, whether the lacerna, chlamys, or the byrrus as worn by the nobility, military or the lower classes; or the cappa or pluviale which appears to have been ubiquitous in use. All were outerwear robes, frequently with a hood and generally meant to serve as protection from the weather. The materials involved could range from a heavy felt-like wool to silk according to the requirements and the means of the owner, who might have been anyone from a peasant to a member of the aristocracy. The robe would have been either open in front joined at the neck by some form of clasp, or draped and similarly held on the shoulder. Less credibly there are other suggestions that the cope was simply an early full chasuble "cut open in front", or alternatively that it derived from the cucullus. This was a detached hood which went over the head, was in time extended to cover the shoulders and came
eventually to be full-length. The word is also used to refer to a hood attached to a cloak or cape.

The cycloid form, which has been implied since the Middle Ages when a cope is referred to in a liturgical context, appears to be semi-circular but has in reality an extended diameter along the straight edge. This was the result of it being a little less than the exact half of a circle, and ensured a level hem when the vestment was being worn. It was indeed open in the front and was held across the chest by either a stiff hooked fabric bar, or an ornamental morse (Pl. 2). The need to single out the type of cope arises since its earlier ubiquity was retained when it came into the service of clerics, both before and after its adoption into the liturgical "wardrobe". In the same way, a wide range of types and forms remained. From early monastic days a plain heavy cape was worn by any and all members of an Order to provide a degree of protection outside, and warmth inside during the long hours of prayer in draughty stone buildings, this seems to have been referred to simply as a *cappa*. St. Isidore, (c560-636), Bishop of Seville, in his *Origines* gives a *cappa* two meanings, referring both to the ecclesiastical and practical applications and, thus, demonstrating a continuity of function for the cloak. He indicates that, while no ecclesiastical regulations controlled its use at this stage, its potential for splendour had already been exploited:

we find ... that the *Cappa* was used by laymen, by monks, by the clergy of all orders .... But even the richest Copes were for the most part considered as vestments of stately dignity to be worn in processions, and on ceremonial occasions, not as having any especial relation to the *ministerium Altaris*.

More specifically, a cantor and the entire choir were similarly arrayed, although in a refined version of the monastic cape (Fig. 2). This would have been understood to be a black robe of undecorated silk (*cappa nigra*), and inventories attest to the vast numbers of choir or choral copes (*cappa choralis*) held in some places. Directions for their use were contained in instructions for the Black Canons at Jerusalem's church of the Holy Sepulchre in "The earliest liturgical colour-sequence that has come down to us ...", written between 1100 and 1187. Even as early as
c1210 in England, as is made clear in the Sarum Consuetudinary for that time, the wearing of these copes was already subject to strict controls—again mainly with regard to colour, as dictated by the annual church fixtures—which could require a holding of white and red copes as well as the more usual black. However, it is with its adoption for liturgical use that the cope comes to appropriate ecclesiastical significance, and take its place among the other vestments which carried symbolic associations.

In common with the other forms, the particular type of cope on which this study centres—a festal version—derived from protective outdoor clothing, and it retained in part this fundamental association in the application it eventually came to assume within church ritual. Made distinctive in ways to be explored, these "celebration" copes had already come to be set apart by the time of St. Isidore, and had found their role as both processional and ceremonial vestments. Their wear was confined to church dignitaries, and their use to the great feasts, the most Holy days, and events which called for the fullest display of extravagance such as Coronations or Investitures. That this was so is confirmed by the early imperial Coronation mantle of the Holy Roman Emperor, 1133-34. Thought to have been worked for King Roger II, this is a robe of such obvious magnificence in both materials—silk ground, gold and silk threads, pearls and jewelled ornaments—and design that it is easy to understand how the semi-circular form contributed to the possibility of lavish adornment on a grand scale, which surely must in part account for the cope's adoption for ceremonial use. There is also evidence that copes of this order of luxury existed in Anglo-Saxon times, some lost to the conquering William who understood their potency and is documented as having sent one to St. Hugh, Abbot of Cluny.

In spite of retaining their "outdoor" association "celebration" copes did not keep the protective hood. Its dimensions shrank until it became merely a reminder of its original state (Fig. 100). It may have been for aesthetic reasons since, in its practical amplitude it would have interfered with the decorative schemes; further, its position became of the greatest iconographic importance within the programmes. In its reduced form it was able to be decorated and sit flat at the apex of the composition.
without causing any disruption. 20 There are only a few of the original hoods remaining and, while they are embroidered, they do not provide any evidence of the significance claimed for them by Rock who suggests that a single cope might have had a number of different hoods for the various liturgical seasons or feasts. 21 By the time of the copes under examination, the tiny pointed hood was clearly of sufficient importance to be treated with the same care and skill as the rest of the vestment but had little to contribute to the representational programmes.

It is a different matter when considering orphreys (Fig. 3), frequently the only embroidered part of a garment which has been labelled as a piece of opus Anglicanum. 22 The name of these decorative bands stems from inventory descriptions where the gold thread which characterised them from early times was indicated by the words aurifrigium or aurifrasium. 23 Arising from the need to hide central back and front seam-joins—most medieval materials were only 27" to 30" across—the width of pillar and cruciform orphreys gradually increased as they assumed greater importance and advantage was taken of the opportunity they provided to illustrate Biblical themes or depict sacred figures. 24

Among the vestments which belong to the "great period" of opus Anglicanum the orphrey was an integral part of the whole, thirteen of the extant copes still have the original one in place. However, generally comprising alternating figures and angels in compartments (Fig. 65), they appear not to be directly connected to the iconographic programme which articulates the rest of the robe. That depicted on the watercolour of the Lost cope is clearly of a later date (Fig. 4).

A cope orphrey ran down the front sides, stood up stiffly behind the neck, and was clearly visible when the robes were in use. The garment was thus imbued with the same connotations of prestige, power and importance implied in the more ambitious schemes which ornamented the entire field of design. 25 Needless to say, they would have been considerably less expensive; could have been produced at relatively short notice since they would have required much less time and labour for their execution; and, by using standard imagery, could have been held as stock "on the shelf" ready for
immediate purchase. By drawing on the conventional repertoire of imagery, biblical or hagiographic, many variations could have been made up in anticipation of a patron. To judge from the comment made by Matthew Paris, it does indeed seem that there was a healthy market for traders in just this form of embroidery. This does not, of course, preclude the possibility of individual requirements being met through personal commissions.

In response to the oft repeated claim that the cope is not a liturgical vestment, it is necessary only to look into the writing of Durandus to give the lie to this notion. Adopting the term *pluviale*, a word which derives from *pluvia* meaning "rain", he includes it after the vestments reserved specifically for a bishop, and interprets its entire form outlining its position as follows:

There is moreover another Vestment, which is called the Pluvial or Cope. This is believed to have been borrowed from the Tunic of the Law; wherefore, as that was ornamented with little bells, so is this embroidered with fringes, which are labours and cares of this world. An hood also it hath, which is heavenly delight; and it is long, reaching unto the feet, which signifies perseverance to the end. In the forepart it is open, to denote that unto holy livers eternal life is open, and that their own life ought to be an open ensample unto others. And further, by the Cope we understand the glorious immortality of our bodies: wherefore we wear it not, save on the greater Feasts; having respect unto the Resurrection to come, when the elect, laying aside the flesh, shall receive two garments, rest of soul and body's glory. This Vestment also, as well beseemeth, is ample within, nor is joined but by one necessary fastening; because the body, rendered spiritual, shall in that day by no narrowness cloke up the soul. And it is provided with a fringe, because nought shall then be lacking unto our own perfection....

The importance of the position the cope occupies in ecclesiastical practices is made explicit; however, as there is no reference to any part it might have played in the Mass.
itself, no eucharistic standing can be understood. The use of words is crucial since, as it is known that the cope was worn during the preparatory stages of the Mass, while it did not carry sacramental significance, in this context, what it was doing was clearly to fulfil a liturgical function. When worn on the occasions of baptism or marriage, as two of the seven sacraments, the cope on the bishop or officiant would then be serving as a sacramental robe in the same way as the chasuble did during the eucharistic section of the Mass. The "ceremonial" versions of these liturgical copes, as reserved for the "greater Feasts", were thus doubly precious by virtue of their hierarchical significance and their costly treatment in whatever form.

As with a great number of the vestments which were in use in the Middle Ages, many churches would not have been in a position to accord with regulations governing their use or the liturgical colours, while others would have had many whole suits from which to choose the most appropriate for regular use and the various special feast days. The commonly accepted practice called for three "suits", these would have been applicable for festal, dominical and ferial (workday) services but would rarely have included a special cope. Rock states that:

When the number of clergy was great and the church wealthy in splendid vestments, a custom existed in some places of England of spreading a wide linen cloth in the middle of the choir floor, and heaping it with a pile of copes to be worn at the divine service. By this method these garments could be easily got at just before the clergy had to walk forth in procession, and as easily put on afterwards.

It was always understood, however, that certain relatively modest minimum requirements would be met, either through the good offices of a wealthy cleric or the local landowner, or as a result of the generosity of the parishioners themselves. In this way a degree of uniformity was established and dignity imparted to the various offices of the day. While a chasuble and possibly dalmatic came to be seen as essential (Fig. 5); there might have been only a single unadorned cope--the festal one--in the holding...
of a church, or perhaps only one of silk, alternatively it could have been the most valuable article in a treasury.

Having seen how and why religious dress came into being, it is important to look beyond the level of appearances and to explore the reasons or issues which caused an article to assume particular sanctity; and further, to ask what this meant in terms of worship, how it worked and what it did for both the priest and those in attendance. Knowing that a cope was used for ecclesiastical purposes calls to mind a number of associations automatically; these involve notions of sanctity, ceremony and solemnity. They tie the garment to a particular type of location and remove it from the context of domestic life; they link its use to situations of collective ritualised worship and seriousness of purpose; they convey an aspect of timelessness to its form which is suggestive of continuity and stability, and they indicate that a certain authority has been imparted to the wearer who will then be expected to behave in an appropriate manner. For the person vested, they would have been recognised as a member of the ecclesiastical community; they would have been assumed to have followed a specialised training, taken specific vows, adopted a particular life-style and hold an established set of beliefs. In its wearing a mute declaration was being made of the bearer's priestly nature and membership of a monastic institution or body of secular canons, it demonstrated their place within the recognised hierarchy of achievement—which may or may not have been intelligible to outsiders—and in addition, it would have been suggestive of order, discipline, regulation and conformity.

The wearing of vestments would have worked in the Middle Ages in much the same way as a uniform does today, by confirming the specific persona of the wearer and conveying all the above information to spectators. This visual and accessible statement about the individual's identity, through a generalised public recognition, involved a degree of transformation from what they were before adopting the collective identity as one of a group, in this case by having taken Holy Orders. With issues of transformation being involved it would be possible to call the "ceremonial" cope a costume, since it served temporarily to individualise the wearer through making
possible an extension of their generalised priestly nature into something more particularised for the duration. Additionally, it played a part in a "dramatic" ritual, and aided the transference of symbolic properties, associated with the spiritual dimension of the Church, to the wearer. These were inherent in the form of the vestment, but manifest through the imagery, which also made explicit the sacramental authority of the priest to the faithful. As well as being associated with theatre, costume is also a fundamental requirement of ceremonial, be it religious or secular and civic, where it might have appeared as a form of "party-dress". The processional nature of the cope would seem to remove it from an everyday context and may, at the same time, have restricted its application both in terms of wear and usage, particularly for those in the "celebration" category. If this proves to be so then it would be possible to make particular claims relating exclusively to the cope beyond those just outlined, and, by extension, to the individual who is in the special position of having the right to assimilate any symbolic properties conferred by the wearing of it.

A procession imparts greater significance, importance and dignity to an event through the ceremonial and display, presumably of a public nature, and the involvement of large numbers of people; the focal point most likely being an individual who could well be associated with an item of symbolic relevance such as a crown or saintly relic. It is intended to impress, calls for lavish costume and formalised ritual, and will be attended by either an invited audience, the members of an institution, a congregation of the faithful or the public at large. For the wearing of a cope the event would be of a religious nature, either a service enacted at regular intervals but of greater significance than the daily offices; one tied to specific annual festivals; or something more particularised, such as a State funeral, a coronation, investiture or ordination. There would also have been civic occasions which called for the presence of a vested ecclesiastical dignitary. The procession would be expected at the very least to pass through the church, after first possibly having gone around its precincts and perhaps also along the streets (Pls. 3 and 4), and those in attendance are likely to have been representative of a broad spectrum of both secular and ecclesiastical communities.
Wonder, awe and reverence will all have been part of the response instilled in those witnessing the events, through the majestic nature of the proceedings which had their roots in classical and imperial traditions. Honorius of Autun in his *Gemma Animae* (written before 1125) "describes the processions of pontif, clergy and people, as like to the going out of the emperor and his army to war ..." and saw the clergy when vested as "protected for the fight by breast plate beneath and shield in front." 35

If it is accepted that there are singular associations tied to the processional aspect of a cope, and assuming a single one only of this exclusive type is involved, it is likely that it would have the intended effect of marking the bearer out as being of greater importance than those who accompany him. This emphasis, while elevating the stature of the minister, would in turn serve to focus the attention of both the lay and ecclesiastical bodies who were participating in the event on the main protagonist. Clearly if several people were adorned with copes, there would need to be some other way of distinguishing the principal figure; this would be a simple matter of using ever more luxurious materials, and/or colours, to make one garment stand out from the others. Alternatively the head-gear or other hierarchical attribute such as a crozier could serve the same purpose. The wearer would, however, have undergone some type of transformation which, as a result of the preparatory training to bring him to readiness, had already changed him from what he was before assuming the collective identity and becoming a priest; but in being vested his differentiation "as a minister of the Church with invisible and inalienable likeness to Christ ..." would be underlined. 36

The Pope in secular clothing would have been seen as a man; in ecclesiastical dress he assumed his priestly identity as an ordained minister of the Church, but in full papal regalia he transcended both of these roles and made visible and manifest his unique individuality as the Church's elect and leader of God's people on earth. All three aspects went to make up the man but without papal insignia it would have been deemed improper for him to have performed duties in accordance with the elevated rank of the Head of the Church - the vestments made manifest the transformation of the wearer and
conferred both the required identity and authority to act in accordance with the position.

Ideally fulfilling the conditions required for maximum visual impact and public display, even in the simplest terms through the use of colour alone, these festal copes achieved their distinction in a variety of different ways. Knowing that it was an article to be worn indicates that it would have been made from some form of textile. The kind of material used could be chosen from different weights of cloth, different types and colours as well as different qualities. A fabric could be plain, patterned, or ornamented with some form of applied decoration which may have covered a part, various parts or the whole of the surface; its make-up might have been textured or plain, rough or smooth. In the later Middle Ages, from the second half of the fourteenth century, a wide range of luxury woven fabrics--velvet, damasks and brocades, as well as many other different types of light or heavy weight silks--became available from the Continent (Lucca in particular). These rich fabrics were eminently suited to ecclesiastical purposes, splendid enough in themselves and calling for no further ornamentation other than perhaps a simple braid round the outside edges. It was during the years before the adoption of less demanding means of decoration that embroidery came into its own. Through the incorporation of gold threads, jewels and pearls with skilled stitchery as applied to ecclesiastical costume, it came to be seen as the ultimate manifestation of prestige and position.

The sixty or so years prior to the proliferation of these imported fabrics marked the time of the "great period" of opus Anglicanum, a term which in itself requires explanation. Among the modern cognoscenti when the words "opus Anglicanum" are used, in an art historical context, English medieval ecclesiastical embroidery will come to mind in the first instance. However, taken literally the more exact meaning is simply "English work", and indeed it would seem that originally in contemporary records this is how the words would have been understood and used to describe an object--an ivory, embroidery or article from the hand of a goldsmith--with an English provenance. In more recent years, no article or book written on the history of
embroidery in general, or opus Anglicanum in particular, fails to make reference to a couple of standard and accessible pieces of information, the relevant one here being the Inventory of the Treasury at Santa Sede of 1295 which is said to contain one hundred and thirteen items of opus Anglicanum. This somewhat misleading count, which has been picked up and perpetuated by commentators almost without exception, gives a greater or lesser distortion to what can be understood about the reality of the production of English medieval embroidery, depending on the individual interpretation of the words "opus Anglicanum". It has also played a part in the confusion over what is meant by these words. At a selective level they can be seen to signal the output confined to between roughly 1270 and 1330, which has, however, come more generally to be referred to as the "great period" of opus Anglicanum. While at another level they have become synonymous with the entire body of medieval needlework, done for religious purposes and covering a number of centuries, which is all that has come down to us from that time, the secular output having long since perished.

Understood in this all-embracing way articles of both clothing--mitres, buskins, chasubles, etc.--and furnishing--altar frontals, dossals or cloths--are included under the same heading with nothing to distinguish period, form, function, technique or, more significantly, centre of production. It may have been as a result of the numerous entries for pieces of English embroidery in the 1295 Inventory and others like it, where phrases such as de opere anglicano, de Anglia ornatam, and de opere Anglie are found, that the words came to be adopted indiscriminately since they offered a useful, quick and easy way to tie the embroideries together and relate them to the wider context of the medieval period. In these contemporary documents articles were often identified by their place of origin and consequently references to opere Venetico, Cyprensi, Romano, Alamanie, Lemovincensi and mosayco appear regularly in inventory entries. De opere plano, de opere fili or sine aliquo opere (plain work, filigree work or without any work), can be understood as indications about the appearance of an article, descriptive phrases serving to aid recognition. Other phrases
were much more specific and were incorporated to indicate the technique with which
the article was decorated; in this way *opus consutum* referred to appliqué, *opus
teutonicum* to whitework, and *opus plumarium* described a particular manner of
working stitches to recall a bird’s plumage. There seems to have been a problem with
vestments covered in gold underside couching which in instances has been taken not for
embroidery but for weaving (Figs. 10 and 16), where it is described as
*contexta/contextum per totum de auro/de opere Anglie* (woven all over in gold/in
English work). A more secure way round the difficulty is demonstrated with the
wording *laboratum per totum/campo toto de auro filato* (worked all over/field sewn
completely with gold) where the decision about the technique is left open.

Early scholars, such as Hartshorne and Cole, have tried to apply this form of
meaning to *opus Anglicanum*: one seeing the term to be synonymous with “ouvrage de
perles”, and another feeling it to encompass certain types of stitches. The most
expansive attempt to link the term with technique was made in the last century by Rock,
although today his account is seen as being unreliable and perhaps even in part a little
fanciful. He suggested that the singular and characteristic manner of delineating
figures, which were then worked on in certain places by "a little thin iron rod ending
with a small bulb or smooth knob slightly heated ..." to create "a play of light and
shadow ... [and] the appearance of low relief ... constitute[d] the elements of the ‘opus
Anglicanum’ or embroidery after the English manner”. These efforts to give a more
satisfactory definition have served only to complicate and confuse the issue, extending
the meaning to encompass technique and characteristics as well as provenance. In
spite of the various attempts to give a tighter definition to the term, all of which can be
seen to be more or less correct as far as they go, it would appear that today the
consensus rests with the widest possible interpretation: covering the entire output of
English medieval needlework, and retaining, possibly by default, the ecclesiastical
connection, but pertaining exclusively to embroidery. In this all-encompassing sense
certain characteristics—of content, design, style, technique or interpretation—have
indeed come to be assumed, while still allowing for artistic developments within the
decorative programmes during the period. Although arguably too wide-ranging, since the field is so narrow the term in this meaning appears to work well enough, and it would seem that any attempt to classify a range of articles to be incorporated in the definition, or specify an era, would have to be arbitrary and for use only in a particular study.

Since the apogee of this English embroidery falls somewhere between the middle of the 13th and the middle of the 14th centuries the output of these years requires to be extricated from the general context. A number of writers (Lee, Christie, Kendrick, King et. al.) have labelled it the "great period" of opus Anglicanum, and this again would seem to be adequate for the purpose. When defining the articles which received this embroidery, some of the different garments within the classification of vestment have already been encountered; the copes come as a sub-division under this heading and have required labels of their own to differentiate the various types in common use. For the purpose of this study it has been necessary to introduce further categories, adopted arbitrarily, to signal the copes around which it is built. The collective nineteen/twenty examples may be labelled as "festive", "celebrational", "great", "ceremonial", "display", "presentation", or "luxury" copes; and for the select four of these which provide the material for close research, the term "pontifical" would seem to be both appropriate and satisfactory, since each is known to have belonged in papal hands.

As explained, one of the common denominators incorporated within the term opus Anglicanum is that some form of embroidery was involved, whether confined to an orphrey for a vestment, extending to cover the entire surface of an article be it a mitre or chasuble, or motifs which could be applied wherever desired. In the case of the festive copes, they relied for their background material on a plain generally rose-coloured silk, velvet, or humbler, but stronger and more durable, linen, depending on which form of decoration was involved. When fully extended the ample dimensions of the field of design provided a large uninterrupted expanse which could be broken up into smaller segments or could carry an all-over decorative programme of narrative,
iconic, or devotional representation. The inventiveness and skill of the English embroiderers was such that for the best part of a hundred years their artistry was second to none and the envy of all. In their adornment of the semi-circular robe they exploited the form in a variety of different and increasingly complex ways, which have frequently caused them to be compared to the work of medieval miniaturists.

The semi-circular form is not peculiar to the vestment; it is found in architecture where the tympana of early Gothic portals have an identical shape (Fig. 6), albeit inverted, and where the geometrically constructed circular rose windows can be seen as the joining together of two matching halves (Fig. 7).\(^{46}\) However, although having certain features in common, most obviously in all providing large surfaces for decoration, parallels cannot readily be found between the various media. The treatment of the different planes of representation will have depended on the iconographic purpose which was tied up with the function. The construction of rose windows relied for its effect on the beauty of the colour sparkling in the small decorative geometrical units which broke up the circular form; this resulted in a fragmented composition which in many instances must have been impossible to read from the ground. Although frequently representational--York: c1220-40, the West rose at Chartres: c1250?, Notre-Dame: begun 1258, and Strasbourg: begun c1277, carry figures of apostles among other design elements--these windows did not lend themselves to doctrinal programmes in the same way as the copes or tympana, the stone structure being too obtrusive in the earlier examples.

An entirely different approach was used for tympana where the hemispherical field of design seems generally to have been thought of as a single unit, although possibly being framed with a border, and/or orphrey-like frieze along the lintel, as at Vezeley. These sculpted portals through which the faithful passed burdened with their sin, but in anticipation of spiritual communion and hopeful of forgiveness, adopted themes--such as Christ in Glory or the Last Judgement--which demonstrated this possibility, while also carrying a warning for the unrepentant. The copes by contrast far from being stationary and fixed, could be processed, at the very least through the
confines of the church and congregation, before arriving at the altar where they could then be appreciated by the attendant clerics. Being most closely connected, as will be demonstrated, with the sacrament of the Eucharist, the representational programmes with which the robes were ornamented required to be appropriate in this context. This provided a setting of intimacy which touched each individual worshipper in a personal manner, as they were gathered together and made ready for the Mass, while witnessing the events which established the Church as the earthly dispenser of Grace.

Thus the iconographic programmes found on the vestments encompass crucial doctrinal issues and focus on the Incarnation, the Passion and Marian cycles, most frequently in the form of Christmas or Easter narratives. There are notable thematic omissions: nothing is found relating to the Last Judgement, the Apocalypse, the Old Testament or the Baptist, neither is any use made of typology. The "narratives" are tightly knit together by the organising structures, which as compositional devices clearly define all the parts while giving overall formal unity. The scenes are arranged in a way which is arguably closer to the rose windows in format, since the surface is articulated with compartments for the representations in roundels, repeated geometric units or splayed arcading. Here, however, the structure is subsidiary to the imagery, being designed to break up the surface into easily manageable units in order to allow the greatest legibility for the complex iconographic programmes.

Diagram 1: Structural Plans for Copes.
There is only a single example remaining of an English vestment where the design field is adopted for a unified composition, although a case has been made for the John of Thanet panel to have originally been a cope (Fig. 8).\textsuperscript{48} There is no obvious technical reason for this since clearly such a large surface could accommodate a monumental arrangement of a specific sacred event like the Adoration of the Magi or the Nativity, or equally a devotional image such as that of Christ in Glory accompanied by angels. However, from a practical standpoint this would hardly be satisfactory since, when worn, the fall of the drapery would interfere with the cohesion and coherence of the composition. The only time when it could have been fully appreciated by anyone, near or far, would have been when the cope was completely extended. This would not allow for the visual impact created by the bejewelled ceremonial robes, nor would it have had the doctrinal breadth encompassed by the festive copes.

Although it would be difficult to take in more than possibly two or three scenes, for a similar reason to that just mentioned, smaller scale individualised representations could at least be recognised as the cope processed around. Further, the central back panel along with the two outside edges which meet at the front, as the only sections able to lie flat against the wearer, would have allowed for unimpeded observation while the vestment was in view. Not surprisingly, the most important themes were, almost without exception,\textsuperscript{49} placed in ascending order right through the prestigious middle section, with the culminating image found at the back of the neck of the wearer. Thus, the imagery which covered these celebration copes was clearly intended to be seen and understood. In other words - it was not merely ornamental but served to impart meaning to the cope, and fitted the vestment for its function within the ceremonial context of the High Mass. For those who either could not understand or discern the nature of the images, or those who simply could not see the embroidery, the cope would still have had the powerful effect of putting the wearer in the spotlight. As a relatively commonplace garment, in daily use within the familiar routine of church ritual, any slight enrichment, such as an embroidered orphrey or unusually bright
coloured fabric, would act as a signal of the relative importance of the bearer to the congregation, and alert them to the distinctive character of the occasion.

Three aspects can now be listed in support of the importance of these celebration copes. Firstly, in choosing to confer singular honour through deliberate ornamentation on a ubiquitous and seemingly unimportant vestment, its nature was transformed in the most distinctive manner, and through this remarkable elevation it became separate from the hierarchy of copes. Secondly, the public nature and duration of the processional display accorded the cope an exposure not given to any other single vestment; and finally, the selection of crucial theological themes with which to decorate the background, linked the vestment to the central mysteries of the Christian faith and, thereby, imparted to the wearer both glory and authority.

It is not difficult to understand why it should have been the cope which was selected to receive this particular honour all those centuries ago; nor indeed why it was decided today to investigate the type of decorative treatment they received and how it functioned. As has been seen, its hemispherical shape provided the largest area for ornamental purposes; as an outdoor robe it was eminently suited to processional occasions and, as such, afforded the maximum possible promotional opportunities for the Church. It must also now be obvious why embroidery was the chosen form of decoration: nothing else could have sufficed to set the luxury copes apart and realise the effects achieved by the devotional and narrative representations, within the decorative schemes, on a textile background. Further, the possibility of enriching the needlework with gold or silver threads, seed pearls and even jewels, along with the richly coloured silk yarns, made it entirely appropriate for an ecclesiastical setting. Here, it would also have had a part to play in the orchestration of an other-worldly atmosphere of spirituality, along with the carved and sculpted surfaces, the brightly coloured stained-glass windows, the altar furnishings and the precious vessels of the Mass.

English embroidery already had a distinguished pedigree by the Middle Ages reaching back to Norman and Anglo Saxon times, with commissions for ecclesiastical
vestments known to have come from figures such Queen Aelfleda, c909-916, designs from the hand of St. Dunstan, 924-88, and execution stemming mainly, in the earlier stages, from monastic communities. Arguably the most splendid examples of what has been viewed as a large heritage, are the stole and maniple of St. Cuthbert at Durham (Fig. 9), identified as "those recorded as being presented to the shrine of St. Cuthbert by King Athelstan, step-son of Queen Aelfflaed, when he visited Chester-le-Street in 934". While photographs give some idea of the highly skilled draughtsmanship with which the various saints are depicted they do not prepare the eye for the wonder of the infinitesimal stitchery in pure gold, which shines today as it must have done all those centuries ago. They offer clear proof of the excellence already available by the tenth century to those who sought to give substance to their faith, and to honour God through the selection of only the most precious materials and skilled workmanship for the vesting of his ministers.

English embroiderers were thus already in a strong position to demonstrate the power of the needle to depict subjects more generally rendered in paint, either in manuscripts or on panels and walls. It was only a small step from ornamenting long strips to covering an entire semi-circular field of cloth, by an expansion of the repertoire of imagery to give vestments of unparalleled fascination and magnificence. Recognised during its great period as holding primacy over the work of other Continental countries, English embroidery was distinguished both by technical supremacy—most notably through the complex method of underside-couching for some of the precious gold threads—and design prowess (Figs. 10, 11 and 16, Diagram 2). In spite of its renown, however, the paucity of documentation means that many questions relating to matters of production cannot readily be answered. No evidence exists regarding the execution of a commission, nothing to show if the suspected system of professional workshops and/or court production was in fact operational, or how an iconographic programme was assembled and transferred to the fabric in preparation for the sewing.
When asking who would have owned one of these prestigious luxury copes the simple answer would seem to be a high ecclesiastic, probably a pope or patriarch.\textsuperscript{54} However, this would not necessarily mean that they themselves had actually given the order for it; instead they could have received it as a gift, which leads to the question of who might have given such a costly and distinctive present, and why? Although the function has only been looked at superficially, the issue of cost will have made it evident that the gift of an item of this splendour and extravagance would have been restricted to the very rich, probably a monarch--Edward I is known to have given a cope to pope Nicholas IV in 1291\textsuperscript{55}--or a cleric such as John, Bishop of Ely, who sent a "sumptuously embroidered cope" to pope John XXII in 1333.\textsuperscript{56} Where a pope was concerned, there could be at least a couple of obvious reasons for making such a lavish gesture: either as gratitude for favours received, or alternatively in anticipation of the support of the pontiff in some cause close to the heart of the donor.\textsuperscript{57} They could also have served simply as a form of surety to perpetuate the backing of the Vicar of Christ; this had been of great importance to Henry III, for instance, in his ongoing struggle against the nobles and Simon de Montfort. It is unlikely that they could have served as inaugural presents given the time required for their manufacture, since the elections of a pontif were entirely unpredictable and the throne of St. Peter could even be left unoccupied for several years at a time, as it was after the death of Nicholas IV in 1292.

Additionally, there would be no good reason why an archbishop or bishop, abbot or royal chaplain might not also have had a presentation cope in their possession; it is equally possible that a cathedral or religious institution could have kept such an item in their treasury. However, based on the information gleaned from a number of treasury and vestry inventories of church furnishings and vestments,\textsuperscript{58} it is clear that the exclusive celebration copes were a rarity which could be enjoyed by only a few select individuals or churches, with the possible exception of the Vatican. While a number of copes may be listed in a document, it will be seen that these could be of very different degrees of richness and ornamentation; some were made of silk, linen or wool and were unadorned--possibly the choir copes mentioned above--others simply carried
an embroidered orphrey, while still others could have been like the Clare Chasuble with inbuilt "orphreys" (Fig. 1), and foliate scrolling covering the rest of the surface. But in only three known sources are there examples, a total of only six entries out of the many hundreds, of the distinctive opus Anglicanum pontifical and festive copes.

Some reason must exist to account for this exclusivity, apart from the prohibitive cost. It has been seen that colour or fabric in themselves could be enough to signal a festive cope and provide the appropriate distinction for an individual, for High Mass or for special feasts. However, looking at the fundamental aspects, which are readily accessible to our understanding, has gone some way to explaining the importance of the celebration copes, without having recourse to any particular function other than its ceremonial role. The specific decorative programmes which adorn these singular garments have been seen to be responsible, through their distinctive treatment, for a transformation brought about to an ordinary robe used by many individuals as a simple practical daily protection. What made this possible was the type of representations which were selected, and what signals the likelihood of this being related to function, is the insistence found on the incorporation of certain crucial themes indicated by the chosen iconography. Within the various different decorative schemes a uniformity is found to exist with a shared focus which links each of the twenty known examples, and ties them all unmistakeably to the context of the Mass itself. The effects realised at the level of both a uniform and costume have been established, but, in contrast to both of these, an additional layer meaning is conferred in this instance through the liturgical context within which the cope is operational. This extends to the transformation a mystical dimension which binds the vestment to the location and the setting, as well as the spoken word and the actions of the wearer or the officiant. Since it is the specific imagery which enables this to occur, the symbolism can be almost equally effective with merely a cruciform orphrey as with an entire decorative scheme, although clearly the latter is weighted and carries an emphasis which could not be possible with the former. It is this aspect which ultimately sets the pontifical and celebration copes apart, with the embroidery and resplendent golden
threads acting as visual translations of the "rainment of needlework" of Psalm 45. As liturgical show-pieces the robes served to give tangible form to the allegorical marriage of Christ with his Church, while at the same time crowning the festal procession with the light of Revelation.

An example of this was the giving of his Coronation robe for an altar decoration to the Abbey of Glastonbury by King Edgar (956-978), and a purple and gold mantle to Ely cathedral for a vestment. *Illustrated Catalogue of English Embroidery*, Burlington Fine Arts Club exhibition catalogue, 1905, Introduction.

The rest of this paragraph draws on Marriott, 1868, 10-19, 42-43.

Legg & Hope, 1902, xii.

*De sacro Altaris Mysteria*, Bk.I, Chapter 10.


Passmore, 1899, 4.

It was generally accepted that only the larger and better endowed churches would be in a position to conform with all the requirements, both in the nature of the vestments and the liturgical colourings. In the case of an archbishop or bishop, they might well have had their own *capella* or "chapel" - this would have included all the necessary articles for the performance of pontifical offices. Legg & Hope, 1902, 1.

Alternatively, Martimort, 1968, 103, indicates that its importance came through liturgical modifications stemming from Franco-germanic influences; and that "in many ceremonies [the cope] supplanted the chasuble".

The difficulty of correctly understanding terminology has long complicated aspects of study. Edmund Bishop warns: "how wary it is necessary to be in dealing with testimonies, apparently plain, of these early times, since at one and the same date the same word may easily designate two really different garments, and different words a single and the same one." Bishop, 1918, 261.

Ibid., 260.

This article was often the work of a goldsmith, made of gold, silver, ivory or copper and sometimes inset with gems. The few which have come down to us are of embroidered fabric, the originals probably having long since been pilfered for the precious jewels. For inventory descriptions: Chapter 3 below.

Included among the other forms was the *cappa magna* which was a complete circle with a train, reserved for solemn functions and worn over his *rochet* by a bishop. The *cape professio* were given, at the time of a sufragans bishop's profession of canonical obedience, to Canterbury. See Chapter 3 below, 102. In addition, there is the black hooded "Canon's" cope which went over the head, was only open from the chest downwards and was worn with a furred alnuce. Rock, 1905, 41.

Marriott, 1868, 225.

16 Ibid., 108.


18 Among other such examples are the mantles of Emperor Henry II (c1010-1020); St. Kunigund (c1020); and St. Stephen (1031), all of German provenance. Ibid., 298, pls.14-26.

19 Rock, 1905, 23, n.55a.

20 The Lateran and Pienza copes show how neatly this could be done with the double arcading enfolding the hood within its confines.

21 Rock, 1905, 27.

22 E. Molinier, "Inventaire du Trésor du S. Siège sous Boniface VII", Bibl. de l'école de Chartres, XLIII, 1883, 276ff, 626ff; XLIV, 1884, 31ff; XLV, 1885, 16ff; XLVI, 1886, 646ff. The original inventory is no longer in existence. Of the 84 among the 113 entries in the Santa Sede Inventory of 1295 which relate to the actual work, 16 refer to opere anglicano/Anglicano; frouxion anglicanum (6); frouxio anglicano (49); frouxio Anglicano (1); aurifrouxio anglicano (7); aurifrouxia Anglicana (1); frouxios Anglicanis (1); frouxia anglicana (1), pluviale anglicanum (1) and de Anglia ornatum (1).

23 These words are linked to opus Phrygium which was sometimes used to mean embroidery. According to Pliny it was the Phrygians who invented embroidery; from this the Latin term phrygio for an embroiderer, phrygium and phrygian for needlework itself. When gold (solid gold wire or golden thread) was incorporated the work was called auriphrygium from which stems the English "orphrey". Daniel D. Rock, Textile Fabrics, London, 1876, 78.

24 Some were simply made of plain woven, or patterned damask material which added a contrast or touch of luxury to the main fabric.

25 Orphreys were also of considerable importance for chasubles and dalmatics, often having a cruciform structure for the back and a pillar shape in front.

- 46 -
non-matching set of this type can be seen on the chasuble at the Victoria & Albert Museum, London. Christie, 1938, 118.

See Chapter 3, pp. 94-95 below.

Passmore, 1899, 17ff; Mayo, 1984, 38. One early writer affirms the status of the cope: Miss Lambert, Church Needlework, London, 1844, 26, tells that "Its use as a sacerdotal vestment originated in the out-door processions during the penitential seasons of the year, but it has long since been employed at the altar ...". Daniel D. Rock, Hierurgia or The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, London, 1892, 251, expands on this account in the following manner: "Its appropriation as a sacerdotal garment may be referred to that epoch when the popes were accustomed to assemble the people, during the penitential seasons of the year, at some particular church, which had been previously indicated for that purpose, and thence proceed with them, in solemn procession and on foot, to some one or other of the more celebrated basilicas of Rome, to hold what was called a station. To protect the person of the pontiff from the rain that might overtake the procession on its way, the pluviale, or cope, was on such occasions assumed by him at the commencement of the ceremony. It has been employed at the altar ever since ...". Brel-Bordaz, 1982, 13, is alone in contemporary sources in defining opus Anglicanum vestments collectively as "ornements liturgiques".

Passmore, 1899, 17-18.

Sandon, 1984, 1.

The word "suit" was used to mean a number of vestments, generally including an alb, amice, stole, girdle and chasuble, possibly also a fanon and perhaps a cope. There might have been duplicates of some, and also matching dalmatics and tunics for the deacon and sub-deacon. Ibid., Appendix II, 189.

Rock, 1905, 40.

These points apply for any liturgical vestment although their properties will vary; it is not that the cope works differently, rather it is that the bearer is differentiated, within the appropriate context, by the wearing of it.

As a servant of God, the priest is enclosed within the fabric of the cope which could be seen to be acting as a vessel in much the same way as the chalice.

The route followed by these processions for the Use of Sarum is recounted in some detail in Sandon, 1984, 4-5.

Bishop, 1918, 264.

Martimort, 1969, 104.

For information regarding fabrics: Rock, 1876.

Louis de Farcy, La Broderie du Xle Siècle Jusqu'à Nos Jours, Angers, 1890, 3. It has, however, been suggested that the term might not have even been a reliable indication of English origin, but rather descriptive of a type of
stitchery. Alan S. Cole, *Descriptive Catalogue at South Kensington*, 1888, 125.


41 See Chapter 3 below.

42 Molinier, 1883, item 820, n.2

43 Cole, 1888, 125.

44 The act of sewing tiny stitches in a circle is likely to have caused a pulling up of the background fabric, even when stretched, which would have resulted in an indentation. It is doubtful that any further steps, which could have damaged the fine silk, would have been taken to exaggerate this, the difference in effect would have been minimal and not worth taking the risk.

45 Rock, 1876, 83. The use of this hot rod was supported by such writers as W.I. Clifford, "A Descriptive Catalogue of some Remarkable Copes", Clifton Antiquarian Club, Part 3, 1884-5, 238; Marion Alford, *Needlework As Art*, 1886, 327; Christie, "Some Early English Embroideries", *Burlington Magazine*, Vol.22, 1913, 291-295. The notion is now discounted. Writing in 1938 Christie, (p.26), says that the worker "may have pulled the stitches more tightly than was necessary, and pressed them down, to increase the indentation ..." and makes no reference to the use of any heated rods. By this time it is understood that she had personally seen and handled the different vestments which may have caused her to re-think the method.

46 Farcy, 1980, 175, feels the arcaded copes may have derived from rose windows. However, the copes have the widest part of the arcades at the base while the reverse is true of the windows; never-the-less there may have been a decorative connection for the division of the field of design which is reflected in the similarities of the structural aspects.

47 This is not strictly accurate, the Daroca cope in Madrid, and the Lost cope, both carry Old Testament scenes. On the Madrid example, following the accepted pattern, the central Crucifixion and Annunciation are capped by the Adoration of the Angels; the other twelve narratives are set among a chorus of musical angels and seraphims. The Lost cope has Old Testament events as a secondary theme in the spandrels of the lowest register only, and uses a similar cycle to the Daroca cope. Other subjects which are not in the repertoire include the work of Christ; the miracles of the Virgin; the Seven Joys and Sorrows; the Virtues and Vices and the Stations of the Cross.
The exception is the Melk chasuble which has monumental depictions of the Crucifixion on each side, showing the scene before (back) and after (front) the death of Christ. Christie, 1938, 130. The John of Thanet panel, so called from its inscription, is of similar scale and possibly related to the chasuble, is now of indeterminate function. Christie, 1938, 134. It was the hood-shaped blank space above the head of Christ which led to the speculation that it was originally a cope. King, 1963, 23.

The Bologna cope does not accord entirely with this conception having only two registers of imagery and no obvious central emphasis.

Christie, 1938, 45.

Ibid., 1.


This technique was unknown to later needleworkers; it was identified, explained and named "point couché rentré et retiré" (literally translated to mean "laid stitch pushed in and pulled back through" in the same hole, ie. thread invisibly held by another thread) by Louis de Farcy. Farcy, 1888, 7.

There is an interesting account of the early twelfth century written by the monk Eadmer which illustrates the regard in which these vestments were already held. He relates how the then Bishop of Benevento came to acquire an English cope "adorned all round with a gold fringe ... more brilliant than any of the others ... " from the Archbishop of Canterbury, Aethelnoth. Kendrick, 1905, 18.

Lee, 1932, 33 and n.133.


In an article in 1845 on opus Anglicanum, Hartshorne calculated the equivalent cost for embroideries as being fifteen times more expensive. Thus the £24.1.6 paid for a red silk cope equalled £361.2.6; a mitre of £82 equalled £1,230, and a purchase made by Edward III, for his own chaplain, of a "vest" embroidered with divers work for £140 equalled £2,100. C.H. Hartshorne, "English Medieval Embroidery", Archaeological Journal, Vol. 1, 1845, 318ff.

Kyser, 1990, has built her thesis on the conception that the Ascoli cope was a papal gift to demonstrate English allegiance to the Church of Rome, and the Pope in particular, after the Baronial Rebellions which had challenged this authority.

See Chapter 3 below.
CHAPTER TWO

OPUS ANGLICANUM.

PRODUCTION METHODS AND
WORKSHOP PRACTICES
A knowledge of the practical execution of goldwork embroidery and the making-up of a vestment, allows one to feel the process of producing a cope of the type recognised as *opus Anglicanum* would be straightforward, and in all likelihood would have followed conventional methods similar to those still in use today. However, no information regarding the practice of embroidery, either by an individual or a workshop, has been found to confirm or deny this, or to indicate how the accepted manner used in the Middle Ages may have differed. As Christie pointed out in 1938 "Practically nothing is known about the designers of medieval embroideries, or about where they were made"; and further she wrote "With the solitary exception of St. Dunstan ... no name of an English medieval embroidery designer has yet been found".\(^1\) Unfortunately, the position has remained the same to this date.\(^2\) Histories of needlework have been written,\(^3\) exhibitions of medieval embroidery have been catalogued,\(^4\) individual copes have been examined,\(^5\) *opus Anglicanum* pieces and their iconography have been explored, and accounts of the development and use of vestments continue to be updated,\(^6\) but apart from generalised descriptions of the stitchery involved no attempt has been made to re-create the actual technical process of manufacture.\(^7\) At the very least this would surely indicate both the kind of conditions which would have had to be met and the different aspects pertaining to manpower and materials.

However, when faced with this task of re-creating the production of a medieval cope, unexpected difficulties inevitably present themselves as a result of the dearth of contemporary records, and this gives rise to a series of alternative possibilities which complicate the issue. These have been addressed as they were encountered, but the central concerns focus on such things as the mechanics of framing-up the fabric to embroider on; the influence this framing would have had on how the work could progress; the way in which the practicalities of goldwork could be handled in a project of this scale; the point at which transferring the design to the background fabric might have occurred; the manner in which it may have been done, and the sort of time-span which could be involved in the completion of such a vestment. A recurring pre-
occupation throughout concerned the question of workshops. Over the years scholars—Lethaby, Morris, Christie, King, Kent Lancaster, Montefusco et. al.—have relied on the assumption, based mainly on the date, quality and sheer numbers of the embroideries, that opus Anglicanum was indeed the product of a workshop system, having moved from the precincts of monasteries and convents into professional lay hands from about the middle of the thirteenth century. Other factors which contributed to this conclusion included the scant documentary references, the information known about other medieval trades, and the Matthew Paris quotation regarding the business of the London merchants. However, as Christie pointed out what the quote contains is an implication rather than a statement: "That this [workshop system] was so is implied, if not expressly stated, by Matthew Paris, who, when relating how in 1246 Pope Innocent IV ordered English Vestments, adds 'this command of my Lord Pope did not displease the London merchants who traded in embroideries'."

According to Fitch "the conception of an organised, professional group dates only from 1963 ..." after a statement by King in the introduction to the 1963 Exhibition catalogue, which Brel-Bordaz says is "evidence, for the first time, of the existence of organised professional groups mainly situated in London". However, it should be noted that nothing new has come to light in recent years; research by Kent Lancaster, Fitch and Randall was all written after 1963 but offers no new definitive evidence. King would appear to be relying on oft cited sources for his statement, which reads "the bulk of the work was produced in professional workshops, most of them in the City of London". Thus, his comments should be treated with some caution; the other critics seem merely to be echoing his words without questioning them. In spite of Fitch’s research into occupational names and related land transactions, which arguably offers substantially more sound evidence of the existence of workshops and their London location, the available information gives only the slightest glimpse of any mode of operation. However, having found no reason to discredit the notion of embroidery being produced in London workshops, it is proposed to lay out the details
of the technical processes on the assumption that they would have been carried out in just such circumstances.

Inventory entries have made it quite clear that copes with embroidered orphreys were plentiful, that some churches held large numbers of them and that they were in widespread use especially for festive occasions. The distinction drawn between this form of vestment and the luxury item, which carried embroidery over the entire field of design, automatically establishes a similar separation with regard to the technical production. In terms of practical expertise, if the conditions required to produce an embroidered orphrey existed, there would be no good reason why a celebration cope could not also be made - with the single caveat that there would need to be sufficient floor space. There is little to stand in the way of assuming the making of embroidered orphreys—with expensive materials and of a very high quality—to have been a commercial activity. The sheer numbers recorded, together with the recurrent documentary evidence which exists relating to the acquisition of choir copes, demonstrates this to have been so.

It would appear that, in the case of a royal purchase at least, a clerk might act as a go-between for the King or Queen with a retailer or agent from whom the embroidery was to be bought. What is not clear, however, is whether this same merchant ran a workshop of his own with a team of embroiderers; employed itinerant sewers as the need arose, or "sub-contracted" the embroidery work to local outlets. Any or all of these options would have been equally possible and indeed it may be that all were practised. Referring to Adam de Basing, the London draper who was Henry III’s chief supplier between 1238 and somewhere around 1260, Kent Lancaster writes: "By 1240, Basing apparently had his own atelier of embroiderers and tailors or at least had workers under some sort of direct control who produced complete vestments and decorated and repaired others at command." While Fitch feels that the implication carried in the surname of a property owner (and presumably therefore the workshop owner), with regard to the person’s livelihood, is proof of their being actively occupied in the execution of the trade or craft: "It can ... be held that 'le Seur"
implies a 'sewer', working with needle and thread, which identifies well with [Clement] 'le Setter' as an embroiderer, especially of ecclesiastical vestments requiring the fixing of stones or gems ... it most certainly existed as an occupational name.".20 Since it is presumed that there will have been a number of different workshops, these would seem to be examples of two different options. According to the calculations made by Fitch, "the total of persons employed on making opus Anglicanum in the City might be estimated as between 70 and 80." in perhaps three large outlets and "possibly several smaller undertakings".21 What is also not made evident is whether those who provided orphried copes were at the same time capable of supplying one of luxury quality or whether a specialist workshop, or workshops, existed devoted exclusively to the making of these resplendent manifestations of prestige.22 Since there are no records of a commission for a cope which can be identified with any of the existing celebration vestments, or any accounts of how a workshop functioned, a conclusion can only be hypothetical.

There is nothing to limit the speculation about the way in which this workshop system might have operated except for the practice of embroidery itself, for which it is necessary to depend on contemporary procedures and comparative material. This is generally from a much later date since, unlike the French,23 English embroiderers were not incorporated by charter until 1561 although the craft was organised and regulated, as the "brouderers' mistery", by 1402.24 However, arguably the single most important consideration with regard to the manufacture of a cappa pretiosa must have been the time element: it would have required anything from one to three years to produce a vestment of this type. Bearing this in mind and remembering the huge sums of money invested in the materials as well as the labour, they could not have been items held "on the shelf", nor would they have been made at random in the hope of a purchaser. It might be possible to make a case for a silken cope carrying various saints with perhaps three doctrinal representations in the centre back panel--as found on the Vatican or Virgin copes--to have been undertaken with no prior commission. Certain saints would have been widely acceptable--for instance Peter and Paul, Lawrence and
Stephan, Margaret and Catherine—and hence work could have been well underway before a patron were found; it would have been a simple matter to leave a number of spaces to accommodate any personal choices that might have been desired. In the event of a workshop having orphreys as the mainstay of its production, acting as "pot-boilers", this arrangement might have been possible. However, it would still represent a considerable commercial investment over a prolonged period of time with no guarantee of a buyer on completion, and it is questionable whether a single workshop could have supported such a speculative project.\textsuperscript{25} If there were no specialist outlet, it might have been necessary for a general workshop to take on extra manpower to deal with a fully embroidered cope. The other possibility, that of drawing teams together as commissions came "on stream", does not seem likely because of the number of years required for production and the need for premises - unless, of course, the best embroiderers were free-lance, and/or itinerant\textsuperscript{26} and were to have been accommodated in the royal "workshops".\textsuperscript{27}

Randall has pointed out that recognition of a particular location as the leading centre for specific articles was dependent, then as now, on certain fundamentals: access to labour and materials; quality of workmanship, competitive pricing and awareness of the latest in fashionable developments.\textsuperscript{28} He further suggests that given an apprenticeship system the resulting stability of the main body of workers would be complimented by artists coming and going, bringing new ideas and adopting others; that the better workshops would set the trends and the lesser ones follow suit. As a commercial activity, which is the assumption being made about embroidery from at least the middle of the thirteenth century, these same principles would surely apply and the obvious centre in this instance would have been London. There is nothing to suggest that other places would not also have been able to produce highly decorative vestments, suitable for use in the other great secular cathedrals—Fenlands, Yorkshire and Wiltshire—but perhaps not of the quality required for diplomatic purposes or royal patronage. Claims have been made for the Syon cope to have been produced "by some religious house in or near Coventry",\textsuperscript{29} and for the Ascoli Piceno cope to have
"possibly (though not certainly) [come] from a London workshop or monastic school it may be at or about Canterbury".\textsuperscript{30} However, given the roles of gold, silver, gems and pearls in the ornamentation; the stylistic affinities found with manuscripts, sculpture and Westminster Abbey paintings, and with the greatest part of the materials having had to be imported, the suggestion that this artistic endeavour was located around or within the environs of the Court seems to be the most likely.

Made distinctive by their diversity, there is nevertheless a striking uniformity about the festive copes which, as a group, are characterised by the consistent incorporation of notable technical and design features: the same underside-couching of the gold background threads (Figs. 10, 11 and Diagram 2), often in imitation of damask or illuminated manuscript backgrounds (Fig. 94); the limited range of surface stitches; the split stitch spirally worked cheeks (possibly the only aspect exclusive to English work, Figs. 16 and 12); the dark outlining of figures and details; exaggerated gesturing hands and large protruding eyes; artificially striped hair and beards, and the striated manner of depicting draperies either in gold or silks.\textsuperscript{31} Recognised as hall-marks of English medieval ecclesiastical embroidery and components of \textit{opus Anglicanum}, these aspects may be classed as conventions. Used together they made possible the unrivalled quality of the desired and acclaimed \textit{acupictura/auripictae} and demonstrated a deliberate adherence to the prevailing methodology.\textsuperscript{32} There are other ways to achieve representational embroidery, some perhaps arguably more clumsy and less flexible, but nevertheless providing different options to produce work of similar appearance, and certainly methods of "drawing" and "modelling" could have differed from one artist or worker to the next.\textsuperscript{33}

Diagram 2: Underside Couching

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The conformity, which was labour-intensive, found in each of the nineteen known celebration copes would seem to point to some kind of links, even if they should come down merely to those of location. Could this have arisen as a result of there being this hypothetical specialist workshop? If it were simply a question of this being the only type of embroidery being done in England during the Middle Ages and, therefore, all that the workers could have known, there would still remain the question of why faces, hair and beards, and draperies were consistently interpreted in the same fashion within widely varying decorative programmes - were these merely artistic conventions followed unquestioningly? In the absence of Guild records there is no way of knowing how the trade would have been organised; could there have been all those centuries ago some type of formally approved training being given around the country, much in the way the City and Guilds functions today, thereby establishing recognised methods and procedures and ensuring certain standards to give conformity and continuity? Alternatively, were the methods simply adopted as being the most expedient and effective and handed down over the generations through the apprenticeship system?

In attempting to account for this singular uniformity comparisons with other media come to mind, particularly miniature paintings. Different hands working on manuscripts have been identified--the Peterborough Psalter (Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale MS 9961-62, c1300 - before 1318) is reputed to have had three Masters— and connections have been made between illuminations to suggest certain workshops in particular areas. Since these conclusions have tended to be drawn on stylistic grounds a similar exercise could also be done for the copes. However, it would have little or nothing to do with the practical interpretation and expertise. What the copes show is a bias for one particular technical method or procedure above all others, a preference for a set of conventions selected and combined to depict a specific form of imagery, and having no regard for any costs involved relative either to labour or materials. The suggestion will be put forward that the remaining examples of luxury copes, far from being only a fraction of the total output, represent the greater part of what must have been an exclusive and specialised aspect of the embroidery trade.
Given this hypothesis, it would seem that a single production centre could have sufficed, whether working exclusively on celebration copes or making other articles as well. The artists, craftsmen, materials, most up-to-date models, patrons and money could all have been found in London, where merchants are known to have been dealing with royal, and other commissions for vestments. It is the very nature of these presentation copes which sets them apart, and would seem to restrict their manufacture to the most important centre of wealth and power in medieval England. According to the prevailing notion of this trade being in the hands of lay professionals probably in London, is not to say that high quality workmanship could not be being done elsewhere. It also seems unlikely that religious institutions would have abandoned all production of embroidered items as commercial traders made the market their own, indeed they may possibly even have acted as suppliers.

Wherever opus Anglicanum was carried out the procedures would have been largely the same. The first things which would have to be taken into account concern what the piece was to be and which of the many embroidery techniques was to be employed; for each of these certain pre-requisites exist which determine the way projects are approached. These few constants, together with the knowledge that sewing can only be done comfortably within a certain range--Beryl Dean puts this at around 12-13 inches--and that the average dimensions of medieval copes are 66" down the centre back and 138" along the straight edge, are the only facts on which an attempt to build any hypothetical theory can rest. It has already been seen that opus Anglicanum relies on a small repertoire of surface stitches used in specific ways to achieve particular effects, and goldwork predominantly characterised by the distinctive underside-couching. For these two conditions would have been essential: first, it would have been necessary to have a backing fabric; and, second, the embroidery would have had to be carried out with the materials stretched in a frame.

Christie demonstrated that the first condition was met since the copes were indeed made with backings; these were to act as a support for the weight of the gold and jewels, to prevent puckering, and to hold the stitchery. But the second
condition—being an unknown quantity—raises a debatable point: how would this framing be done? The full size of the vestment, with its backing fabric attached, would have required to be framed from the outset, there is no visual evidence that they were pieced together after the embroidery had been done in panels. So, would the fabric have been laid out as a complete rectangle with the entire semicircular design visible to the workers at all times, or would it have been sewn in sections with the unworked piece rolled up out of the way and the completed part lying over the side of the frame? On the answer to this crucial question would have depended the manner of working, which in turn controlled the number of people able to be sewing at any one time. This in its turn would have become one of the determining factors of the length of time it would have taken to produce a vestment, as well as the amount of floor space which would have been required.

At a cursory glance, either of these methods would seem in essence to be possible; but a closer look will show difficulties arising with them both. In the first case, when it is remembered that sewers have a limited reach, the dimensions of the vestment would mean that the central sections would be quite out of their range. There is also the impossibility of providing adequate support in the middle of the fabric to give the required tension, consequently this option must be ruled out. Thus it seems that the second method would have been the one adopted, and it is now necessary to think about how it could have operated given the size of the cloth to be framed-up; and in addition, would it have allowed workers to be positioned at both sides of the frame or only one. Achieving sufficient tension for the goldwork to be done would again have been the problem; any means of securing the unseen sections—both worked and unworked—would have been likely to perforate or damage the background fabric in some way. For embroidering single motifs it is sometimes possible to use a frame within a frame: a small wooden circular (tambour) frame, carefully padded, being attached to a section of the design before sewing. However, it cannot be said with any conviction that these frames were in existence in the Middle Ages, and their application would have given only a partial solution for a small number of instances.
No such highly specialised cope has been produced since the decline of opus Anglicanum and those for contemporary use depend on different techniques for their effect. These include appliqué directly onto the background fabric, pre-embroidered panels joined together and the use of machine embroidery, which is very effective and very fast. Nevertheless, as a starting point it would be instructive to look at modern methods since the principles have remained unchanged over the centuries. As a general rule most forms of embroidery are done in a frame for preference, if not necessity. There are various reasons for this but the most obvious are that it eliminates puckering of the background fabric and distortions of the design, and with both hands being free they can be positioned one on top and the other below allowing a steady working rhythm and regular tension to be set up for the embroidering, all of which is essential for a professional finish. For goldwork framing is necessary since the threads cannot be sewn with a needle, could not be made to lie flat and, as they are traditionally worked in pairs, would not give clean lines otherwise. Underside couching would seem to have been done both in pairs and singly, as far as can be seen. Framing is also necessary for surface couching and laid work (Fig. 13), both medieval techniques; the gold threads when laid were, and still are, worked in pairs.

The specific frames required for the kind of embroidery being considered are usually known as slate frames (Pl. 5). Made of wood, they have two stretcher bars with webbing attached along almost the full length which can be as much as eleven or twelve feet, and two side arms (since these can also be of different lengths the size of those used in the Middle Ages must be a further matter for speculation). These fit into the flat ends of the bars and are fixed by pegs or screws at the desired position, there is usually a range of alternative fixing points to allow the frame to be used for different widths of fabric. The so-called "square" frames generally used for "tapestry" (this is a misnomer used for canvas work) do not always have adjustable side arms (Fig. 21). Any excess length of fabric can be rolled up on one of the bars being unwound as the work progresses, the completed section being similarly accommodated on the other bar - this is usual with canvas work but generally avoided if at all possible.
with other forms of embroidery.\textsuperscript{46} The alternative is to have the worked section moved on but left free, either being padded and loosely rolled within itself or left hanging. With both of these options there would need to be adequate protection for the completed part and, in all likelihood, sewers would then be restricted to one side of the frame. If this section were covered, rolled up and left suspended just over the stretcher bar, it is possible work could continue from both sides, but given the precious nature of \textit{opus Anglicanum}, the holding stitches which would still be required could not be added without damaging the surface of the embroidery. The last possibility may well have been the one adopted: as each section was completed and the next part exposed, the side arms may have been replaced with longer ones until the full size of the cope was indeed visible; work proceeding obviously from one side only.\textsuperscript{47} All of these methods would have called for the background fabric to be fully attached to a lining, which would have been taking the strain of the lacing and holding stitches, in advance of any sewing.\textsuperscript{48}

The fabric chosen has to be suitable for the function of the finished article, but a closely woven material is required and, keeping the grain straight, it is attached through a folded edge to the webbing along the top and bottom bars of the frame, with firm thread and small evenly spaced holding stitches.\textsuperscript{49} When in place these bars are extended as fully as possible thereby exerting considerable pressure on the fabric. Finally, the background is laced down its full length around the side arms, with thin string which is further tightened once all the lacing is completed. It is possible to reinforce this edge by passing string through a channel made by tacking a fold down its length. Needless-to-say, if sections have to be rolled on this lacing has to be taken out and replaced on the new part. If the technique being used demands it, or if a fine or loosely woven fabric has been chosen, a lining will probably be necessary,\textsuperscript{50} often of larger dimensions, to which the background will be pinned and tacked, matching the grains and again keeping them straight, working from the centre out in parallel or star-shaped lines. This also serves to take the stress of the stretching process and any resulting holes will be cut away in the final making-up of the article. Once lying flat,
small holding stitches can be worked along the outside edges of the top fabric if desired, in which case the tacking is usually unpicked. All this is generally done when the lining has already been loosely framed-up, the final stretching being left until all the fabric is in place.\textsuperscript{51}

This should result in an evenly spread drum-like surface which may yet require further adjustment, since the tension of the fabric frequently slackens during the working process. Clearly the smaller the piece of cloth the easier it is to achieve a tightly sprung surface which is the most satisfactory to work on. Once the frame is fully dressed it will be supported in some manner, with trestles in the case of large pieces, at an appropriate height allowing the embroiderer to sit, close in to the work, in a comfortable upright position. Medieval procedures can have differed little and would have resulted in the same taut surface even if the stretching followed slightly different steps. The only modern concession to this age-old procedure is the possible use of artists' stretchers as a substitute for smaller hand-held slate frames, drawing-pins or staples then being used to attach the fabric to the wood.\textsuperscript{52}

In the field of religious embroidery the most notable contemporary counterpart is the cope produced for the Queen's Silver Jubilee in 1977 by Beryl Dean (Fig. 14), and students of Ecclesiastical Embroidery classes at the LLEA Stanhope Adult Education Institute.\textsuperscript{53} The execution of this cope was carried out over two years. In spite of the modern interpretation used for the churches which make-up the design—they were made in pieces and later assembled on the backing fabric (Fig. 15), allowing for the use of faster techniques such as appliqué—it took approximately 6,015 hours to embroider them. Miss Dean spent 7,500 hours in preparation and many hundreds more to do the applied work necessary for the assembly and the making-up. From this it may be seen that the production relied on a combination of the methods described above. The individual pieces will have been worked on manageable round hand frames, slate frames or stretchers, but the final assembly had to be carried out on a large slate frame resting on trestles. The cope background required to be joined and this was done first, along the length to avoid a central back seam. A nine foot long frame with side arms of
varying length was used, and it would appear that the lining was attached to the stretcher bars with the excess being rolled up in the manner already described. The appliqué was done in sections and then moved on, but with each re-framing the tension altered and problems with resulting puckering had to be resolved. Since the finished parts of the cope were lying over the side of the frame, working space would have been restricted at all times; from the photograph (Fig. 15) it would seem that sewing was done at one side only.

Although vital to the successful completion of any embroidery of this nature, the necessity for such a taut working surface would have been of much greater importance for the far more exacting techniques required to produce the pieces of opus Anglicanum. Furthermore, since the embroidery frequently covered the entire surface of the fabric, correct framing-up would have been crucial. Unless some now forgotten method existed to stretch large amounts of cloth, it would seem that workers in the Middle Ages will have indeed been dependent on the process outlined above. If it is accepted that this was the case, a further question arises: would the copes be framed-up horizontally or vertically? Both could involve a problem of perforation of the material, and the difficulties already encountered of accommodating the excess background fabric awaiting embroidery, as well as any completed part that has been moved on. But either would seem to be possible. Since stretcher bars could be up to eleven or twelve feet long there is no good reason why the side arms could not also be correspondingly long, and cope dimensions were approximately eleven and a half feet along the straight edge. Originally these copes were fitted with orphreys of approximately five inches wide, presumably added in the making-up process. Since many have now be lost they have not featured in this chapter.

Horizontal framing would give the greatest lucidity for the sewers and less of a problem with tension since there would be fewer occasions to move the cloth on. On the negative side, the fabric could be more difficult to keep tightly stretched since it would be likely to sag in the middle from a much earlier stage. Work could be satisfactorily done at both sides only for the first section. Further, as extra fabric
would be left for the making-up (the assumption is that it would still be a rectangular shape with the cope pattern merely outlined on it), a larger frame is really called for. Vertical framing, while allowing less working surface and giving greater bulk—and the consequent problem of tucks—with the unframed parts, would provide a more satisfactory tension for the sewing to begin with, but the more frequent movement of the fabric might well have caused other difficulties. If the cope were to have been entirely covered with stitchery it is possible that any holes made by the lacing up might not have mattered. While allowing sewing to be done at both sides, the angle of the representations would not have been so satisfactory, and with each move the side arms would have had to be extended and the lacing re-done; however, there would be no need to roll-up finished areas. Arguably then, the most efficient situation would have had two teams of workers operating from the centre back panel outwards, on a vertically framed fabric with stretchers to match the width of the article. But, again, as the needlework progressed the expected problem of tension would have arisen and, further, the dimensions of the side arms would have had to keep increasing until they reached the full length of the straight edge.

This detailed look at the business of framing has revealed that there seem to be two likely ways of proceeding. In each case the sewing would have had to be carried out in sections with moving on and unrolling done as they were completed, and it is presumed that the edges of the background fabric would have been kept taut by small firm holding stitches attaching it to a framed-up lining. The conclusion this leads to regarding the number of embroiderers able to work together—possibly three at each side of a frame—is probably not to be relied on, it might have been less and even perhaps more. Today it is conventional for sewers only to be positioned along the stretcher bars but there is nothing, apart from the type and position of the trestles, really standing in the way of perhaps one person (or possibly even two as the arms were extended), also working at the sides. It would have been less comfortable, the design could rarely have been upright and the area they could cover would have been
restricted, but for a commercial project possibly carrying a deadline—and perhaps even "penalty clauses"—it might have been a necessity.

Having dealt with the basic requirements of the techniques involved, consideration has now to be given to their individual characteristics: what follows is not an exhaustive survey but a look at the principal ones found in *opus Anglicanum*. Goldwork is a very specialised technique; today even the most experienced embroiderers find the use made of it in the medieval period awe-inspiring. Although underside-couching, on which so much of the fame of *opus Anglicanum* was built, has not been practised for centuries, the method of working is fully understood (Figs. 10, 11, and 12). The manipulation of the gold called for careful control to build up the large areas of background covered with the meticulous chevron patterns and decorative motifs; the scale of working is so minute, and the technique so exacting, that it would have necessitated the highest levels of skill. Because of the impossibility of sewing with the precious metal threads, and the wish for the fullest exposure of the gold, which calls for them to be laid on the surface of the fabric with the least possible interruption, great precision is required for the couching stitches with hold them in place. Farcy suggests that the regularity of the geometric patterns made by the couching was achieved by counting the threads of the background fabric—a daunting task in itself since the material was so closely woven. For decorative features this couching was done on metal threads lying both vertically, which was usual (at right angles to the top edge of the vestments), and horizontally to distinguish ground from pattern, or create pattern (Fig. 16).

The lustrous threads themselves are difficult to handle owing to the fact that the gold is wound round a coloured silk core (yellow or orange generally) which shows through if care is not taken to keep the thread from becoming untwisted. Taking them through to the back of the fabric damages the metal threads (and is not good for the background fabric either since rather too large a hole may be made in the material), as well as rendering the article lumpy. Hence in areas to be covered by gold the threads are bent back on themselves when a design edge is met, this is a tricky operation
requiring an experienced hand to achieve neat and firm U-turns. *Opus Anglicanum* shows the work of embroiderers who had a complete understanding of how to exploit the possibilities of gold threads to make the most of the play of light and shade, and had fully mastered all the technical aspects which allowed them to be put to such splendid use.

All gold embroidery requires a closely woven background which in *opus Anglicanum* pieces was either linen or silk, and latterly velvet. Starting and finishing any couched thread (apart from those made entirely of metal—purls—which are treated like beads) obviously involves a need to safeguard the raw ends, usually by attaching them to the back of the work. How could this be done as often as would be necessary when covering a surface in gold stitchery, framed up as has been described? In contemporary practice the ends are left on the surface while the work is being carried out, to be taken through to the back on completion. (Although a seemingly simple matter, it is not considered professional to be continually turning a frame over while sewing, and it is quite out of the question if the frame is on trestles.) This is fine when limited use is being made of the metal threads, but given their exhaustive use in *opus Anglicanum*, it would result in a very cluttered surface and make it difficult to control the sewing: it would also be likely to leave unclean edges.

From the purely practical angle, there does not seem to be a straightforward way to reach the back of such a size of frame; the picture which comes to mind of workers crawling underneath to take care of the ends does not merit serious consideration when envisaging a professional operation. A possibility is that the threads could be dealt with in batches, trimming them to short lengths, and then pulling them through to the back where they could be left loose in the hope that, as the sewing proceeded, they would be caught up firmly enough to allow completion of the work. Then, once the entire vestment was finished and taken off the frame, it could be turned over and tidied up where necessary. Bumpy areas could be cleaned up by spreading the ends out and holding them in place with one or two stitches with the couching thread. This is not a very satisfactory solution since there is the risk of getting
tangled, or even being brought back to the surface by mistake. The notion that the mark of excellence in embroidery is to have the back of a work as ordered as the front, may have originated in the Victorian era; if the medieval workers adopted the suggested method, then clearly they could not have attached any importance to what the back looked like (Figs. 17, 18 and 19). If the metal threads came in great lengths this might not have been much of a problem, leaving only the couching thread to be attended to. Execution of the other aspects of goldwork, while still demanding an experienced worker, depends more on correct procedure in the handling of the materials. The strong couching thread—invariably linen—would be used in shortish lengths to prevent it being weakened through wear, as it was tightened over the metal threads and pulled back and forward through the background fabric. It would also be necessary to watch the lengths used when several people were working to avoid getting in each others' way. There are two methods by which these could have been attached. To start, the thread could simply be sewn to the background fabric with a number of tiny stitches in a place where it would be covered by embroidery later; alternatively, it could be brought to the surface from the back, a single knot preventing it from slipping through before being attached on top, again to be covered as work progressed. To finish off, the thread is likely to have been anchored on the surface as just described; alternatively, the loose end might either be left to be hidden as the sewing progressed, or taken through to the back where it could be cut off "by feel".

The golds would be in as long lengths as practicable to avoid frequent joins and wastage, depending on the type of use being made of them at the time. Purls, made of a variety of fine coiled wires in spaghetti-like strings, would have to be cut to appropriate lengths on a surface of felt or velvet; this is required to prevent the pieces from bouncing about as they fall. They would be attached with a thread passing through the channel formed by the coil; care has to be taken that the ends are not caught by this thread since the wire is easily pulled out of shape. In contemporary times, the couching thread used for all these multifarious purposes has been a fine silk (Maltese) which is strengthened by being first run over a block of beeswax, however, no
indication has yet been found to suggest that this practice was common to workers in the Middle Ages. It may be that the linen thread used then did not require such treatment.

There is no need to dwell any further on the techniques employed for the vestments of opus Anglicanum. The necessity of using a frame, and the problems which arise from its application, have already been demonstrated without going into the intricacies of split stitch and laid work; however, mention should be made in the passing about the incorporation of pearls or jewels. The craft of the goldsmith has frequently been said to be closely tied to embroidery; Fitch made the connection explicit when he demonstrated 'le seur' to refer to an embroiderer and 'le setter' to concern an embroiderer "especially of ecclesiastical vestments requiring the fixing of stones or gems." Today, ornaments such as beads or sequins have perforations through which special needles can pass to allow them to be attached to the fabric. They are received by the embroiderer in this form ready for application, but perhaps other methods were adopted in the Middle Ages. Sadly, since the precious stones have long since been lost it cannot be known definitely how they were fixed, nor is there any way to demonstrate how the two métiers may have interacted. From the interpretation of the occupational names it would seem that some embroiderers were empowered to deal with the jewels themselves, but whether this just meant the "fixing" or extended to cutting and polishing it is impossible to say. All of these various aspects were dependent, as must now be understood, on the fabric being stretched.

The next stage to be considered is the design - to see how it may have been outlined and the manner in which it might have been transferred to the backgrounds. This is an area where assumptions have been made without the benefit of proof. It is not known who produced the designs--painter or embroiderer--but the consensus rests with the painter. Tristram has this to say: "It is evident that painters were employed to make designs for embroidery, since there are records to show that Robert Asshcombe, 'King's broderer', and Peter Swan, who held the same office, impressed from the city of London, not only 'broderers' and tailors but painters." Staniland, who has done
much research on the royal Wardrobe accounts, says of the design process that artist/designers were "probably contracted in on a daily or weekly basis according to the work available. They came from the London community of painters, some from the known family dynasties of London painters ...". For the purposes of this chapter it is proposed to refer merely to the "artist", whether illuminator, painter or even, less credibly, embroiderer. Unlike the projected manufacture of an illuminated manuscript which could involve changes in the designs either because of different hands or the use of a variety of source models, the presentation copes are each marked by an individual stylistic cohesion suggestive of a single designer working on a programme until it reached completion. There were, as a general rule, two parts to any design for the presentation copes: the organizing structure (scrolling, geometric or arcaded, Diagram 1, p.38), and the figures or religious narrative scenes to be contained within the spaces of the framework. In order to keep all the shapes and sizes uniform there would have been a need for great accuracy; this would be increasingly difficult to achieve given the growing complexity of the schemes over the period in question. However, those of the Bologna, Lateran, Pienza and Lost copes are of such intricacy that it is clear the art of drawing out a plan even of this type and scale, as well as transferring it to the background fabric, posed no problems to the artists. So how would it be done? Reference may be made to the work of mural painters and stained glass makers, about which much more is known, since some of the procedures envisaged would be common to all artists of these media, but it is entirely possible that this will not throw any light on the special problems involved with the use of fabric as a working surface.

Again, alternative possibilities exist but before getting to the point of considering the full-scale design, it would be sensible to ask if a small mock-up or sketch would be done first, to be submitted to the patron for approval. If this were the case would it be done to scale, fully drawn out, and of a size which could be enlarged by the traditional "squaring-up" method to make it ready for use on the vestment, or would it just give the idea of the finished article? Although it is clearly impossible to
say which, if either, of these were normally done in the Middle Ages, it is certainly accepted procedure today to present a drawing to scale, together with swatches of fabric and samples of threads. Considering that the commissioning of vestments of the nature of celebration copes would have been the prerogative of only the very wealthy, it does seem likely that a patron would have had some curiosity about the proposed look of their robe. Quite apart from this, from a purely commercial point of view, it seems reasonable to suppose also that the customer would have wished some idea of the total costs involved. Therefore, an essential part of a preliminary exercise such as is being proposed would surely entail making estimates of the type and quantity of materials to be required, and the probable number of man-hours to be devoted to this execution. It would call for quite concise information about what the cope should be made of, how much embroidery was to be done, what techniques were to be used, how many people would be required to do the needlework, and whether jewels were to be incorporated or not. In view of all of this, some form of detailed representation would seem to be a likelihood but one it is impossible to corroborate.

Turning now to the working copy of the design— the full-size cartoon (if there was one), presumably also made by the artist— but looking first at the structural plan since everything else would have been dependent on it. The approach to this stage is again influenced by the need to stretch the background fabric. It is generally necessary for the framing to be completed before any design is applied because clearly otherwise it would be distorted during the stretching. Since it has been established that the cope would be embroidered a bit at a time on the frame, it would seem that it might consequently be necessary to apply the design in similar sections. In the interests of accuracy and uniformity this would not have been desirable, it seems more credible to have had the entire structural plan plotted out after the preliminary stretching and before any rolling-up. Hence it does seem to follow that a working cartoon would be completed in a piece, possibly made up of panels overlapped or joined in some way. However, since the plans rely on regularity and repeating shapes, it would be possible to plot out just one half first and take a mirror image from that; templates could then be
made of the required sections from this cartoon for transference to the fabric. It is also possible that this plan would not have had any of the design filled in if the sewers were to have worked from individual models.

Theophilus, the German monk writing in the twelfth century, in his treatise *De Diversis Artibus* outlines the method used by medieval stained glass makers. It seems they marked out their designs on transportable whitewashed boards (no mention is made of the use of any sketches as just considered). The glass was then laid over these and, since the forms could be seen through the glass, had the outlines traced onto it in wet chalk ready for cutting.66 Sadly, this relatively straightforward procedure cannot be emulated in the kind of embroidery being considered, although preparation for sewing on canvas and transparent fabrics today involves tracing from an outline placed behind the material.67 Reflecting on whether this process has any relevance at any stage to the situation which prevails with embroidery does not, however, seem to be an altogether fruitless activity. There appears to be no reason why a number of such boards—three perhaps to eliminate interference in the important central strip—carrying the outline of a cope over them, and placed closely together, could not be used in a similar manner to make possible a tracing on the surface of the material. Assuming that professional embroidery workshops existed, it is also possible that in this way a "master" copy of the finished design could be set up and made available for continual reference throughout the working process. Smaller more manageable tracings of individual figures or scenes could be taken as required, alterations in the plan could be tested for effect and the boards could be reused for the next commission when the design was no longer needed. Elvin has suggested that designs, or individual scenes, could have been on the walls which would have been more satisfactory in terms of the use of space.68

Cennino Cennini, in *Il Libro dell'Arte*,69 has a small section for embroiderers but it is not concerned with their needlework as such and deals instead, principally, with painting directly on fabric. Some of his instructions do, however, necessitate consideration because of the possibility of their being applicable for use in opus
Anglicanum - bearing in mind that Cennini is writing at a later date, in 1437. It is possible that background fabrics—he singles out both linen and silk—could have been stretched and nailed in place over a frame in the manner he describes (akin to contemporary methods as indicated above) or, more satisfactorily, to some flat surface, to be drawn on. It would not have been tempered in the preparatory fashion outlined to receive paint, but it would have been entirely possible to draw with charcoal, or the tailor's chalk to which Cennini refers, directly onto the surface in its existing state, or to work from a tracing. In this fashion, the design foundation could be laid out over the entire surface of the background fabric before it was attached to the lining or stretched on the working slate frame. This is a most attractive option which seems to provide a satisfactory solution to the difficulties likely to be met in transferring the framework accurately and coherently by sections. However, the usual doubt recurs regarding tension: would it be possible to match that arrived at on a slate frame by nailing the fabric out in its entirety? If not, the distortion previously mentioned would result when the fabric was mounted, and the whole scheme would be thrown out of shape. The only sure way to counteract this crucial problem would have been to wait until the backing fabric was fully stretched and laced-up before any design lines were applied.

There is also the other, and more important, artistic component to consider—the sacred subjects for which the organizational structures were required. While these could be drawn or painted on the cartoon, in the same way they could also be done directly on the background, but from what has been said thus far, it seems there may have been another alternative: in certain instances the drawings of these figurative parts could be made independently of the working cartoon, if so desired. In other words, once the framework had been laid out either as a cartoon or directly on the fabric, there would be no reason why tracings could not be made of enclosing circles, quatrefoils or arcades, and then filled in with the figure or scene they were to contain, quite separately from any master plan. This would give great flexibility to the creating of the design, and speed up the whole process since the needlework could commence before the whole programme had been worked out. With more than a single
draughtsman at work—perhaps a master with an assistant or several hands contributing different parts of the overall scheme—a slick professional operation could result.

There has never been any suggestion that more than one artist was responsible for designing a cope—their striking individual stylistic cohesion reinforces such an idea—however, this would not preclude "him" having help in the way that fresco painters had. With the apprenticeship system in operation in artists' workshops, it might be that certain aspects of design could be allocated according to the level of skill reached by the painters. 

For instance, the recurring angel figures could perhaps be done by one or more apprentice copying from a master's original; someone could be in charge of any lettering; still others possibly copying animals from a model book or bestiary, leaving the master free to supervise and carry out the important figures or scenes. Alternatively, if, as has been suggested, care and time were to have been spent in producing a fully detailed scale drawing, it would then be possible at this point for a team to do the squaring-up with each one perhaps having responsibility for a certain area of the overall plan. One way or another, a full-sized design outline or cartoon, comprising the organizing structure, figures or narrative scenes and any decorative elements, might have eventually been arrived at.

These speculations have already made reference to one of the possible ways in which this design could have been marked out on the fabric—by painting it directly onto the surface. In spite of the reservations mentioned regarding distortion, from a look at those copes where the stitchery has been worn away leaving the background exposed and some design lines visible (Fig. 20), it would seem that this may well have been the preferred method, while also perhaps being the most expedient. Christie talks of examples of "a fine, sensitive grey line" in the designing and "flat red washes" for some details but, although commenting on the care and skill taken with their execution, makes no suggestions about how these were realised. It is possible to make reference to Cennini again since he gives instructions of "How to draw for embroiderers", on untreated fabric, which involve painting over preliminary charcoal lines followed by shading:
Again, you sometimes have to supply embroiderers with designs of various sorts. And, for this, get these masters to put cloth or fine silk on stretchers for you, good and taut. And if it is white cloth, take your regular charcoals, and draw whatever you please. Then take your pen and your pure ink, and reinforce it, just as you do on panel with a brush. Then sweep off your charcoal. Then take a sponge, well washed and squeezed out in water. Then rub the cloth with it, on the reverse, where it has not been drawn on; and go on working the sponge until the cloth is damp as far as the figure extends. Then take a small, rather blunt, minever brush; dip it in the ink; and after squeezing it out well you begin to shade with it in the darkest places, coming back and softening gradually. You will find that there will not be any cloth so coarse but that, by this method, you will get your shadows so soft that it will seem to you miraculous. And if the cloth gets dry before you have finished shading, go back with the sponge and wet it again as usual. And let this suffice you for work on cloth.  

There is nothing to indicate whether this same procedure was followed in the earlier Middle Ages, but Cermini's remarks do show that it was a method which would be suitable for the fabrics being used at that time. Faced with this daunting area, and considering the complex and exacting nature of the operation to be carried out next, it would seem likely that an artist would require some sort of basic guide lines to be marked on this surface in the interests of accuracy. It could be broken up as Elvin suggested, possibly with the assistance of a plumb line, into smaller divisions of geometrically measured proportions which could then perhaps be scored out with tailor's chalk. With points of reference thus in place, presumably the complete organizing structure would be drawn before anything else. While several people could be involved in this, the extent and type of co-operation possible with the actual compositional elements (to maintain uniformity) would be dependent on preparatory sketches or the detailed scale plan already talked about.
The other option for transferring the design to the background fabric involves a process known as "pricking and pouncing"; this was a method used by contemporary fresco painters and one still practised today (Fig. 21). The procedure calls for a full-scale cartoon (or tracing), with or without the representational components, which would have pin-sized holes punched closely together all along the design outlines. It would then be held in position on top of the working surface and a dusting of powdered charcoal or cuttlefish brushed over the pierced lines. The tiny dark mounds deposited on the fabric would be joined together by a painted line and then removed, possibly with feathers as described by Cennini with reference to panel painting. This left a design outline in place ready for working similar to the one achieved by direct painting. Once the organizational scheme was in place the other compositional details could simply have been added at random if this were to have been desirable. So long as the areas being worked on were fully described it would not have hampered progress, and would also have allowed for changes in the programme or the lay-out if the need arose. However, it would obviously have been much more satisfactory to have had the whole programme mapped out from the start, allowing the artist to maintain stylistic uniformity and complete his initial responsibilities without interruptions. In sum, while it is clear that the complete organisational structure would have had to be in place from the outset, it seems that there could have been greater flexibility with the ornamentation which could have either been fully described or put in as work progressed. Whichever option was followed, there might have been either a "master" drawing which could be referred to during the manufacture, or alternatively a series of individual models for the sewers to work from, or possibly even both.

Just how detailed any of these models would have been is impossible to say; nothing but the important outlines appear on the fabric which gives rise to the feeling that the embroiderers were left pretty much on their own for completion of the details and shading or modelling. It would appear that this could also have been so when working the background since it is clear the chosen design has not been adhered to on the Bologna cope (Fig. 22). In addition to the deviation signalled above (p.64, n.57),
in the area around the "Veronika" Head of Christ tiny squares have been worked in the background (Fig. 23). Finding the same treatment has been given to the birds on Christ's right, rules out any idea that it had been done to differentiate between St. Paul and Christ. It is surely an oddity and is suggestive of a lack of supervision (or checking) of what the workers were doing. Alternatively it could be a repair carried out at a later time when experience of underside couching had gone. Without being able to see the back it is difficult to be sure but this could have been done with a slightly different technique, it is certainly easier to do squares than chevrons. However, the pictorial interpretations show such complexity, consistency, and sophistication that it is hard to imagine there not being a fully realised and coloured model for the sewers to follow. With regard to the sources of such models and the widely held view that there was a continual exchange of designs between different media in the Middle Ages, those of *opus Anglicanum*—having no obvious parallels elsewhere—seem to belong and originate with each individual presentation cope. The lack of signs of "borrowings", together with the unquestionable mastery of the representations, would seem to indicate the highest standards of artistry and point to the commissioning of an individual to be responsible for each programme in its entirety. Needless to say there is no evidence to either substantiate or undermine any of the different ways suggested.

This lengthy account of likely stages in the preparation of fabric destined for the specialised embroidery characteristic of *opus Anglicanum*, is an indication of the expertise required even before any sewing had begun. The greatest care and thoroughness is essential in the framing-up, there are no short-cuts and, although it is a very time-consuming exercise, it does not pay to overlook inaccuracies at any point. The difficulties encountered as a result of the sheer size of the fabric would require special consideration and necessitate experienced handling. The skill of the artists, which is self-evident from the actual vestments, is visual proof of the level of excellence brought to planning and designing the various compositions, no two of which are the same. The variety of tasks involved thus far, the relatively large working
space required, the number of man-hours already expended, and the consequent cost of all this, along with the expensive nature of the actual materials, are surely indications of an activity which would depend on a business-like professionalism calling for organization and management. Does this mean, then, that there would be one person, not necessarily an embroiderer, in charge of production and supervising all aspects of a commission? Although easy to imagine again it is impossible to say, but the documentary entries relating to Adam de Basing do seem to suggest such a system of operation.

The striking uniformity and coherence of the different copes contribute to the concept of a controlling hand, which, as has been demonstrated, suggests that the overall design was the responsibility of a single master. Whether this same person would have been in charge of the sewers is again open to speculation but what is certain is, that in order to sustain the uniformity of each particular programme, there would be no room for individual interpretation in the execution of the embroidery. While this would suggest the need for supervision of the sewers also, it does not, however, necessarily indicate a uniform level of ability, although there would be little that could be entrusted to beginners. Given this proviso, it seems likely that a similar situation could prevail among the embroiderers as was suggested for the draughtsmen above, with different people having responsibility for certain design or technical aspects. Perhaps some worked only on the structural plan, some on the gold work, or maybe all the silk stitchery; others possibly applied any tiny seed pearls and jewels, or did the dark outlining, facial features, decorative elements or even lettering. It may have been a function of the apprentices to thread needles, cut lengths of gold and generally administer to the embroiderers by looking after pins, scissors, stilettoes or other implements. A division of labour certainly seems likely since it would require considerable experience to reach the level of skill necessary to work at speed with certain of the difficult threads and stitches. A contemporary estimate, from Elvin, of the sort of time the characteristic stitchery might take, suggests it might be as much as seventy or eighty hours or more for the completion of a silk split stitch figure, and
upwards of six hours to embroider one square inch of the gold underside couched background.

These astonishing figures are proof positive of the expertise involved. They also prompt questions about the actual working conditions: for how many hours could an individual sew; what would the length of a working day be; would the embroiderers be "paid-off" if they developed problems with their eyesight; how would sufficient light be generated if sewing continued after dark and during the short winter days; was there a system of shift workers or could such a workshop be an example of a medieval counterpart to today's "sweat shops"? 78 Sadly, there is much which can only be imagined or guessed at; nevertheless, nothing which has yet been said undermines the idea of this distinctive art form having been the product of a workshop system, if anything it has been further reinforced. What does, however, now appear almost to be indisputable is that such vestments would have been the result of teamwork, produced in a spirit of co-operation by efficient and highly skilled artisans, and probably under the supervision of a master craftsman or "workshop manager".

Apart from the need for the highest levels of artistic and technical skills, the manufacturing of these vestments was a serious undertaking. If it is remembered that commissions could come only from royalty, the highest clerics or most noble of the laity; the vestments were to be dedicated to the service of God; the compositions were of an entirely sacred nature; the materials among the most precious available to provide the greatest splendour or visual display and demonstration of wealth, power and status, to be worn by only the most important church officers, it is clear that production could only be entrusted to experienced, organized and reliable hands. It is known that some form of regulation was operational since it is recorded in the Close Rolls that pieces of the work of Mabel of Bury St. Edmunds were submitted for inspection. From the French statutes it is learned that, along with the rules governing the apprentice system, specific instructions were set out for the overseeing of the craft, with malpractice to be reported to the Provost of Paris. 79 Viewing a co-ordinated activity of this nature as a commercial concern does not, of course, rule out the
possibility of its having also been done, as an entirely appropriate pursuit, in religious institutions. 80

There are a couple of ways in which these commercial transactions (or alternatively any institutional production) might have been handled. Matthew Paris does nothing more than mention that merchants were involved in the selling and it is, therefore, possible that they were not party to the manufacturing process but acted as agents. The most informative evidence has come from the references relating to the King's clerk and Adam de Basing, but the royal goldsmith to Henry III, William of Gloucester, is another documented figure whose function covered not only artistic output, but also duties as agent and supervisor of embroiderers. 81 Thus, it seems that there were no clear operating parameters, rather considerable overlap would appear to have been the order of the day in this, and other so-called "industries". 82 It also seems that little direct contact with workshops existed, instead orders probably came through the clerks to agents who would appear to have combined artistic and commercial interests. Finished work did have to be submitted for appraisal, which was apparently done by some independent "knowledgeable experts" who also, it seems put a value on the article. 83 Given the sixteenth century foundation of the Guild, such regulation at this earlier time seems not to have been imposed by the embroiderers themselves, in spite of them already having come together in some way long before there was any registration. 84

With regard to the materials questions also need to be asked. How available were the threads in view of the need to import most of them; could they be obtained "over the counter" in a merchant's warehouse or would an order have to be placed in advance; was the sewing carried out in the same premises as the threads were being sold, and would "dye lots" be a consideration in the Middle Ages. All it seems possible to say is that, from the available evidence, there does appear to be a connection between the execution of embroidery and availability of materials, through the common denominator of a merchant/agent.
The slight documentary evidence for workshops gives no indication of how many there might have been. If the premise of centralisation for particular industries is accepted, and if, as so many authorities suggest,\textsuperscript{85} the greatest part of the production of \textit{opus Anglicanum} has been lost, it would seem that the trade could have supported many workshops. However, if the celebrational copes are considered separately it is possible to imagine a completely different situation pertaining to them. Their range of approximately sixty years makes it entirely possible that they could have been the product of a single specialised workshop. As the ultimate in luxury, limited in number because of their cost and the years they took to make, their manufacture might have been in the hands of a particular family covering several generations.\textsuperscript{86} This then makes it possible to say that the examples which remain represent if not all, at least a very high proportion of their total output. Undoubtedly there will have been a number of smaller ateliers making less extravagant copes, as well as the orphreys with which others were decorated; at the same time filling the more modest requirements of ecclesiastical dress. The host of articles thus produced, which could still be described in inventories in similar terms to the prize specimens of \textit{opus Anglicanum}, would serve to account for the numbers now lost.

To conclude one last step of the production process needs to be mentioned: the assembly. This should be the least complicated part of the entire operation, even without the help of sewing machines, and could probably be undertaken by the embroiderers themselves, although it may be seen more correctly as a function of a dressmaker or tailor.\textsuperscript{87} Again the concept of team work comes to mind; in projects undertaken in the royal workshops the costs are set out together with the different operations itemised and a grand total given.\textsuperscript{88} However, again there is nothing to confirm that the same system was operational in lay practice; it may be that the embroidery was done in one location and sent to another to be assembled. For a cope, when the labour was completed—which is likely to have been after a number of years—it would have been taken off the frame, the shape cut out of the rectangle and then made-up into its finished form. The robes were originally given a narrow border
around the outer perimeter, an orphrey along the straight edge, and an ornamental hood at the neck. As these were all separate pieces they would be attached at this stage with some form of firm hand-stitched oversewing; the lining would be fitted after the back of the embroidery had been tidied-up where necessary; and, as a last touch, the morse would have been put in place.

Although it is known that cope chests were used for storage (Fig. 24), there is no information about how the vestments were transported. Given the special nature of the articles and the emphasis put on their value, not to mention the vast sums of money needed for their purchase, it does suggest that careful arrangements would have been made for delivery, particularly if it were to be to a Continental destination. Again the usual questions: would it have travelled flat or draped in some way, or alternatively would it have been folded or rolled up; is it possible that an embroiderer might accompany it to give any finishing touches on arrival; would it have had a container--if cope chests were used most of these same questions would still apply--and its own caravan or would it have been included in a more generalised shipment or accompanied the travels of a diplomat or cleric? It is interesting to speculate on these aspects but, at the moment, little more can be advocated. If a cope were a gift from a king, queen or archbishop to a pope, it would surely have travelled with them in the event of their making the journey themselves for some occasion perhaps; but, this said, the idea still offers no indication of how it would have been handled. Staniland writes:

Preparation for the embroideries to leave the workshop was careful, leaving little to chance. Past disasters had obviously shown that all eventualities should be expected and guarded against. The finished items were carefully enveloped in linen and canvas, and sometimes waxed linen covers were used to repel moisture. They were then placed in leather bags or even travelling chests if they were large. Their cross-country journey, which might extend across the sea and continent, was usually in an open cart with a large leather cover. Thus the embroiderers ensured that their patient labours and patron's investment were well and truly protected ....
However, as in previous instances, this account probably relates to a later date and refers to secular items from the royal Wardrobe and so cannot necessarily be seen as representative, although it offers an option for *opus Anglicanum*.

Mention of cope chests ties up with an interesting observation made apparent on viewing each of the copes in their respective homes. They appear to have been stored folded in half, and consequently show signs of wear and tear on the most sacred part of the programmes - down the middle of the central back panel. It is disappointing to find that an article of such value, in monetary, spiritual and ceremonial terms should have suffered in this way, but it is indisputable and is supported by the shape of existing medieval cope chests which can be seen in a number of England’s cathedrals. York - late 12th century and c1280 (Fig. 24); Gloucester - c1368, and Salisbury - 1225-58, all have fine examples. This does not necessarily mean that each and every embroidered cope was indeed stored in this way, but it surely indicates that it was an accepted practice for even the most precious of vestments. There is also the possibility that this evidence of a fold does not derive from the medieval life of the vestments, but dates instead from some later era when they may have lain abandoned, hidden or forgotten in less than ideal circumstances. However, the finding of the same feature on them all mitigates against this idea.

It would be interesting to learn how this custom came about, since clearly the shape of the storage chests would have been decided after a method of caring for the copes had been established. It would hardly have been in the interests of economy: if a patron (or institution) could afford such a luxury product, the cost of a wooden chest is unlikely to have been a consideration. The most obvious explanation would appear to derive from concern for the amount of space required to keep such a vestment, if it were to assume its full dimensions on being laid out flat. Remembering that churches could own a vast collection of copes, it is clear that a number would be stored in the one container. However, it would seem unlikely that an entire collection could be kept in such chests since, in the case of Christchurch at Canterbury for example, which had
ninety six copes at one time, this could mean having several chests and a corresponding amount of available space to house them.

Hence it seems much more likely that such containers, which were articles of considerable beauty and obviously valued in themselves, were reserved for vestments of special concern. Quite apart from the security point of view, the weight of these bejewelled gold embroideries might have mitigated against them being stored as hangings or draped over some kind of support.\(^92\) This conclusion substantiates the original suggestion that the folding of the embroideries did not give cause for concern, and that possibly a splendid container, where available,\(^93\) may have been seen as an appropriate storage vessel for the most highly prized copies held by a church.

Returning finally to the workshop, but more particularly to the actual work space, Fitch has given a number of suggestions about the possible sizes of premises.\(^94\) Based on his calculations he has proposed a likely number of employees but has given no indication about how they would be disposed, other than to say that the "craftsmen sitting cross-legged at work [would require] some 12 sq. ft. of space each ...". He seems not to have taken account of the articles being framed-up, nor of any project where a number of people would co-operate in the execution, but focuses instead on single items—presumably small—being worked by one individual. This somewhat limited view also eliminates provision for a continuous orphrey of the type with which it is understood so many copes were adorned; this would again have necessitated a frame of considerable length with a number of sewers being occupied at any one time. Since there can be no idea of either the number of projects being worked simultaneously, nor what type they would have been, the most that can be said with safety is that a full-sized cope, with its entire field of design visible, would have required a minimum of approximately fourteen feet by nine to twelve feet, depending on whether work was done on both sides or only one. If the suggestion of having sewers all round the frame were valid an additional three feet would probably be needed at each side, which would have resulted in overall dimensions somewhere in the region of twenty by twelve feet. Applying these measurements to the
approximations given for floor space in premises by Fitch, namely twenty five by twenty two feet, it will be seen that it might just be possible for two copeys of the type being considered to be set up at any one time. Alternatively, with a single large-scale project underway, the remaining area could have been taken up by a full-length orphrey or a number of individual workers occupied with less complicated tasks, display of designs, the storage of materials and the movement of apprentices.

From the few entries of payments to embroiderers in the Close Rolls, it is known that long periods covering many months, and frequently lasting a number of years, were usual for the production of pieces of embroidery. There is nothing surprising in this, indeed if it is remembered that even today two years were required for the making of the modern Jubilee cope, it only serves to deepen the sense of wonder felt when looking at these magnificent examples of man's handiwork. However, the suggestion made above, that the remaining vestments are actually representative of the greatest part of the output of opus Anglicanum presentation copeys, is given credibility with the knowledge that such years were involved in their manufacture. When this time factor is considered in relation to the period covered by the remaining luxury copeys—approximately sixty years—a single specialised workshop would have been entirely possible, perhaps relying on less important commissions to fill the "slacker" periods.

Alternatively, following the example of the production of the contemporaneous Bible Moralisée, where a team of illuminators was drawn together to execute this particular individual commission, the same pattern could have been followed for the making of a festive cope. Requiring the best available workmanship both for the design and for the embroidery, it would have been a simple matter to enlist the services of the most renowned individual artists of the day for such a prestigious commission. They may have then brought with them other workers with different expertise or experience, or alternatively calls might have gone out to the workshops to send extra assistants to build a supporting team for the Master. Such a system would have allowed for the greatest flexibility, premises could have been found within ecclesiastical institutions or around the Court. The patron would have borne the cost
of the materials thus eliminating the need for any investment from a third party, and close supervision of the project could have been maintained throughout. It could also have been possible, within the confines of a private venture, to contravene any statutes which might have existed governing working hours, and thereby shorten the time required for completion. This manner of operating would also go some way to explaining the great diversity of the programmes, which in spite of all efforts to make them do so, do not fall happily into stylistic groups.

It is interesting to speculate about the influence the protracted waiting period would have had on the ordering of a celebration cope. Were commissions placed in the expectation of high office; would the knowledge that a gift of this nature was in the offing be a sufficient palliative if a fall from grace had occurred; could an enthronement be envisaged so far ahead or was the plan to have an appropriate tribute at the ready, or was it a matter of security of tenure which allowed for the time lapse to accord with either a donor or patron's requirements? An altogether more plausible opportunity to honour the Bishops of Rome would have been on the anniversaries of their Coronation, an occasion when they were accustomed to receive gifts. This would have allowed the donor the temporal freedom to have a prestigious pontifical cope commissioned, and finished, to coincide with an annual commemoration.

Kyser, 1990, 62, has suggested that the artist who drew the figures on the Ascoli Piceno cope had trained in miniature painting, in the tradition of the Sarum Master, and worked in London in the 1260s. If this were to have been the case then it would seem that the embroiderers would be unlikely to have also been the draughtsmen. However, this is a single example and does not constitute evidence that it was the only possibility.


Kendrick, 1905; King, 1963.


Wallis, 1988, for iconography; Mayo, 1984, for vestments.

Fitch, 1976, Appendix, 294-5, attempts to reconstruct dimensions of an embroiderer's workshop and makes an estimate of the possible number of people based in London and involved in the craft.

Brel-Bordaz, 1982, 22, having published the most recent account of _opus Anglicanum_, gives a résumé of the main contributors to this line of thought.

The fullest exposition of these is found by R. Kent Lancaster, "Artists, Suppliers and Clerks", _Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institute_, 35, 1975, 81ff.


Christie, 1938, 18. Also Lee, 1932, 2.

Fitch, 1976, 294.


King, 1963, 5. King cites no references for any of his introductory remarks but presumably he has relied on such sources as Matthew Paris, Farcy, Christie, Hartshorne and Lethaby. In _Age of Chivalry_, Royal Academy of Arts, eds. Alexander & Binski, London, 1987, King, 159, refers to "professional embroidery workshops that we know of...", clearly feeling that the available evidence amounts to proof. He reiterates this same "fact" in his essay in _Il Piviale_, ed. Fanelli, 1990, 28, where he says, again without reference to sources, "There is no doubt that all these English copes were made-up in London workshops, since embroidery of this excellent quality made of precious metals and other costly materials, was a luxury item which could not have been realised anywhere except in the capital, in the environment of the court and under the patronage of the king". Having thus demonstrated the existence of...
London workshops, in the most recent publication, *The Victoria & Albert Museum Textile Collection: Embroidery in Britain From 1200 to 1750*, Donald King and Santina Levey, 1993, King is now taking the existence of a London workshop tradition for granted: "At the end of the 13th century and in the early part of the 14th, the London embroidery workshops reached the zenith of their achievement...", (p.12). However, he is careful to exercise the proper caution when discussing the business of design: "No doubt the embroidery designs were supplied by the same artists [painters and miniaturists].". (My italics.)


See Chapter 3 below.

Kent Lancaster, 1975, 104.

Of this same de Basing Staniland, 1991, 10, says "it has been suggested, though not proved, that he ran embroidery workshops. Most likely he was simply a merchant entrepreneur, a middleman commissioning and buying embroideries, always with stocks of the vestments that rich customers like the King would offer to churches or to favoured visitors or send as presents with ambassadors. To help the production flow of stock it is possible that de Basing financed London embroiderers by some means.". As usual, with no documentary evidence to support any particular interpretation, at best only informed guesswork can be offered.

Kent Lancaster, 1975, 87.

Fitch, 1976, 289.


It should be noted that running through many commentaries and articles on *opus Anglicanum* attempts have been made to link various vestments stylistically; these connections have then been used to tie the articles to a suggested particular workshop. Needless to say the single source for the "evidence" is the vestments themselves. The only "set" which appears to have any credibility is the Vich and Butler-Bowden copes with the Chichester Constable chasuble, all three of which are red velvet and stylistically and iconographically related.

The "Brodeurs Chasubliers" were documented from 1292. Much is known about how the craft was organised in France from these records, which show that it was very tightly controlled and called for an apprenticeship of at least eight years. Brel-Bordaz, 1982, 24-5. Also Staniland, 1990, Chapter 2. Perhaps this is where King gleaned his information?


King, 1963. 5, says "there are indications that the provision of capital for the execution of major pieces was considered a sound investment by the great capitalists of the City.". Again he fails to give a reference for this and I have not found a source to substantiate his words.

Staniland, 1990, 31, suggests that since no entries have been found pertaining to needles, pins or other implements, that the workers provided their own. If this were the case the idea of being "self-employed" or "free-lance" would make
good sense. However, again it should be remembered that Staniland is dealing with the records for the Court and not for professional workshops for which, as has repeatedly been stressed, none have been found.

27 Paul Binski, "The Painted Chamber at Westminster", Society of Antiquaries, London, 1986, 108, says of court patronage for painting that "styles were probably the product of specific favoured individuals, rather than formal or permanent court workshops ...", and that the same arrangements probably held true for sculptors and manuscript illuminators.


31 There is a notion that the characteristically enlarged and bulging eyes, large heads and hands of the opus Anglicanum figure types are the result of a need for the vestments to be "read" from a distance. However, on the celebration copes, where little sense can be made of the iconography from far away, this would serve no purpose and seems rather to under-mine the explanation. It seems more likely to have been a stylistic feature.

32 The word acupictura means "painting with the needle", auripictae is "painting in gold"; the terms are taken from contemporary inventories. W. Sparrow Simpson, "Two Inventories of the cathedral church of St. Paul, London", Archaeologia, Vol. 50, 1887, 454 and 501.

33 It is only necessary to look at the embroidery from China where the same method, fine silk worked almost exclusively in long and short satin stitch, has been in operation for many centuries and used to produce exact replicas of figures, animals and flowers which may even be completely reversable. Contemporary vestments reflect the wide range of techniques long having been at the disposal of needleworkers; appliqué features most prominently since it is quick and can be used to very striking effect.


35 Norwich is suggested as an East Anglian production centre for example. L.F. Sandler, Gothic Manuscripts 1285-1385, Oxford, 1986, 30.

36 As Fossen points out "the identification of an embroiderer based on composition and style is totally invalid" since they are merely following the artists design: David van Fossen, "A 14th Century Embroidered Florentine Antependium", Art Bulletin, 50, 1968, 151.

37 This feature is in marked contrast to the hypothesis proposed by Fossen, 1968, 151, which suggests that individual embroiderers had their own distinctive methods and that "It is not unreasonable to assume that design conventions grew up around the major embroidery shops: that each shop, that is, had its speciality, a product which could readily be associated with a given master.".

38 Christie, 1938, Appendix I.

Christie, 1938, 19-20. Both the Lateran and Vatican copes are displayed in glass cases which allow the backs to be seen.

This was not entirely successful, probably due to the large design field which it would be difficult to keep as tightly stretched as would have been desirable. Puckering is evident on both the Vatican and Pienza copes but evenly distributed and, consequently, not really obtrusive. This is usually associated with embroidery worked on material held loosely in the hand; however, the extremely meticulous and miniscule sewing found on these copes may have given rise to this distortion of the linen ground because of the sheer density of the embroidery. Originally the surface may have been smooth, the rippling possibly having evolved over the centuries with the vestments being kept in uncongenial circumstances. It does seem unlikely though, since puckering is to be found to a greater or lesser degree on each of the copes under examination, each of which has an independent history and hails from a totally different environment.

If a large piece is worked in strips today, threads are left unfinished until the joining is done in order to disguise the seams; however, on a vestment covered with a gold underside-couched background this would have been inconceivable as a practical option.

It is notable that at no point does Christie, who was in the enviable position of being able to examine each of the copes at first hand, mention any joins in either the background or lining fabrics; however it is not safe to assume that the embroidery was carried out on single pieces of fabric. A join is visible across the entire length of the Anagni, Lateran and Pienza copes, about two-thirds of the way down from the straight edge, and from what is known about the width of medieval cloth (27" to 30" wide) joins would have been inevitable.

Today it is likely that a cope would be made in sections framed and worked individually. This would allow greater stress to be applied to the outside edges which could then be seamed inside any marks left by the lines of holding stitches.


It may not have been possible to have rolled both bars in earlier times, we cannot know this today; the illustrations which are available come from the 16th century and only show small framed pieces, Fig. 21.

Being able to examine the actual substance of the needlework, from a distance of perhaps six to eight inches, reveals just how tiny and close the stitchery is, both with the paired strands of gold and the silk threads. The result of this dense working is such a close bonding of embroidery with the ground fabric that an entirely new "fabric" is formed, one which could probably be rolled up carefully without the work coming to any harm (jewels would have to be added at the finish though). If this assumption is correct it means that it would allow sewers to be positioned on each side of the frame throughout the whole process, instead of just while the first section was being done. This would considerably shorten the time required to make a fully embroidered cope.

A slight variation at this point occurred with the Jubilee cope: the background fabric was attached as the work progressed. With opus Anglicanum requiring
the organising design structure to be in place before work commenced, this
alternative is not being considered here.

49 There is another system which relies on pins to act as anchors; it is also
possible to lace-up all four sides as illustrated in Fig. 21. Staniland, 1991, 32,
says there are entries of linen thread being supplied for this lacing.

50 It also serves to take the stress of the stretching process and any resulting holes
will be cut away in the final making-up of the article.

51 This has necessarily only been an outline of a time-consuming, exacting and
very important part of the preparation for embroidery. Fuller accounts can be
found in many embroidery books such as: Beryl Dean, Embroidery in Religion
and Ceremonial, London 1981; Barbara Dawson, Metal Thread Embroidery,

52 Any four pieces of wood securely joined will suffice; old picture frames or
suchlike are not unknown! In Cennini's Il Libro dell'Arte, ed. D.V. Thompson,
Jnr., New York, 1960, 105, he refers to these same stretchers when advising
painters to have fabric stretched before applying any design.


54 When talking of folding or rolling sections of the completed embroidery it
should be borne in mind that, although entirely possible (n.47 above), both
would have been undesirable, and perhaps even damaging for opus
Anglicanum. Even assuming no jewels and pearls were in place, soft padding
would need to cover the surface and no pressure whatever could be applied to
the fabric thus disposed of. There would also be a need for protection on the
exposed section considering the time involved in the manufacture; this
protection would have been imperative if work was carrying on over the
rolled-up strip.

55 For a full account of this method: Christie, 1938, 22.

56 There is a great variety of different types of background motifs--geometric,
heraldic or naturalistic forms--sometimes found mixed together on the same
vestment, for example the Pienza cope.

57 Farcy, 1890, 127. Although this is certainly an acknowledged method, I feel it
would have been used only to begin with (it would be very time-consuming),
the experienced worker soon knowing by sight the correct size of stitch to
make. See Chapter 4, n.12 below.

On the Bologna cope exposure of the background underdrawing, through wear,
has given an interesting instance of the sewers apparently disregarding a
previously marked out pattern. The original repeating diamond-shaped diaper,
filled with four-lobed leaf forms, can be seen in the spandrels above the
Crucifixion (Fig. 23). A simple chevron has been substituted which Christie
says is "an easier task ..." (Christie, 1938, 159). This is probably one of the
factors which leads to the somewhat negative reaction the workmanship of this
cope produces in Christie who labels it "a rather poor example of trade work
of its time ..." and says "both tracing and needlework are rather roughly
executed," and "faces lack expression ...". She suggests that by adopting a
mechanical and less taxing chevron repeat the sewers are guilty of a casual
approach to their task. This may have been the case but there is another
possible, and arguably more valid, explanation: since this is a much quicker
method, might it not have been a necessary option imposed on the workers in order to meet a deadline? It is clear from a look at the rest of the needlework that whoever was responsible for the assured execution and obvious level of skill which created the sophisticated anatomical modelling, the fall of voluminous folds of richly textured drapery and graceful elegance of the figures, could have mastered a repeating diaper shape in the background if called on to do so.

This works well in the centre of the garment but once the edges are reached the direction of the background stitchery is strangely at odds with the representational elements - as in the Nativity or the Annunciation on the Bologna cope. The problem is circumvented on the Pienza cope where each scene has its own background pattern.

From the photographs it will be seen that the Lateran Adoration of the Magi is quite distinct on the reverse side although the sewing is not particularly meticulous (Figs 18 and 19). This would result from using short lengths of thread and not carrying them across spaces.

Christie, 1938, 23.

Staniland, 1991, 28 talks of wax being used "on linen to make water-resistant covers for transporting royal clothing ...", and tells that "candle-wax has been found on the raw edges of some medieval pieces [of cloth].", *ibid.*, 33. Hence, it may have had other applications, such as thread strengthening.

Fitch, 1976, 289.


Staniland, 1991, 23. She goes on to ask "Did some of these artists find themselves drawing up designs for the ecclesiastical embroiderers in London? Regrettably there seems no way of ever discovering this, but their proven involvement with embroidery makes them strong contenders for the honour.". Staniland is able to give detailed examples of the breakdown of a number of particular secular projects, as well as indicate how the court workshops seem to have operated (Staniland, 1986, 236-246). There is nothing, however, to substantiate any claim for the workshops producing opus Anglicanum having operated in the same way, although her information gives reason for consideration.

Taking all the evidence on balance it would seem safe to say that painters did in fact do designs for embroideries, but this does not mean to say that it was always the case nor that there were no embroiderers who could not also have done so. Since there was so much overlap within the different métiers it is entirely possible for either option to have been the rule.

It is interesting to note that the scholar Farcy, who would appear to have been the source of much of Christie's information, is alone among critics in holding the undoubted opinion that the embroiderer was often a "très bon dessinateur et miniaturiste; il n'avait besoin de personne pour l'aider ..." (very good designer and miniaturist; he had no need of anyone to help him ...), adding that a painter would have had no idea of what could be done in stitchery (Farcy, 1890, 66). Mrs. Elizabeth Elvin, Principal, Royal School of Needlework, London, believes the artists will have drawn from nature and she has no conception of pictorial models.
That this became an accepted method, if not already practiced in the 13th-14th centuries, is confirmed in a book of 1527: *Libro primo ... de recami* by Alessandro Paganino. Here, a candle under the framed embroidery throws light up through the fabric and allows tracing to be done (Fig. 21). (Staniland, 1991, 32, 64 and Pl. 29)

Elvin, who has both worked in and run a workroom, is quite confident that technique and procedure are the same today, with the method being adapted to each individual case. She feels work could have started either in the middle with two teams working outwards, or could have started at the straight edge. She says the work will not have been rolled up on completion, and has no worry about any problem with tension which she says would have been adjusted daily. She also indicated that the workers—men and women—would have been trained to sit for lengthy periods, and would probably have worked in shifts (today it is a seven hour day but it was eight when Elvin was learning). She suggests the full use of daylight: eight to ten to twelve hours, with five to nine for the winter.

Thompson, 1960.

Fossen, 1968, 143, also quotes Cennini as a source since he feels that it is reflective of "artistic practice of the late Trecento ...". He goes on to say that "it is clear that at least some embroidery designs were rendered not by the embroiderer, but by a professional painter for whom this work was merely a sideline."

A.S. Cavallo, "A newly discovered Trecento Orphrey from Florence", The Burlington Magazine, 693, Vol. 102, 1960, 505-510, speaking of procedures in 14th century Florence says "It is clear, then, that trecento embroiderers were not using traced or pounced designs, but that they depended for the preparation of their models directly on the services of contemporaries who were proficient craftsmen and painters.". While this does seem to be the case it should be remembered that he has largely relied on Cennini for this information who, as has been noted, wrote at a later date. Further, documented procedures from elsewhere on the Continent do not necessarily confirm them as having been those followed in contemporary England, where there is no evidence one way or the other.


King, 1987, 161, states that "the underlying designs ... were drawn on the supporting material by a draughtsman for the guidance of the embroiderers. As these designs are generally outlining drawings in ink, it seems that responsibility for the colours and shading may have been left to the embroiderers themselves". A little further on he says that "It is also possible that, in addition to the designs drawn on the supporting material, the embroiderers could refer to fully coloured cartoons ...".

Christie, 1938, 27. King, 1987, 161, says that "Occasionally the designs included some colour, in the Pienza cope, the embroiderers have only partially worked many of the faces, leaving exposed the flesh tints in the underlying painting.". Farcy, 1980, 65, makes a similar claim for the faces and hands of the Lateran cope, suggesting this was done in the interests of speed and
economy. There is absolutely no evidence to suggest economics played any part in the production of these copes which, quite to the contrary, are testimony to the extravagant lengths medieval patrons were prepared to go to. With regard to the painting, I do not find this convincing either. If this was an accepted practice I have been unable to find any visible evidence of it today.

75 Thompson, 1960, 105-106.
76 Ibid, 75.
77 Fossen, 1968, 144, when writing on this aspect says "Using Cennini as a starting point, Adolph Cavallo has demonstrated that painters probably kept a set of designs, perhaps a pattern book, from which embroiderers could make their selections as the case demanded.". He goes on to suggest that in the case of the altar frontal in question the painter could have been the "sub-contractor" and had received his instructions from the embroiderer. There is nothing to indicate that any such circumstances prevailed in the manufacture of the presentation copes.

78 Staniland, 1991, 13-4. The French Statutes of 1292 spell some of these things out, for instance regulations banning the use of candlelight to extend the hours of work, statutory holidays and rules about the quality of the materials. Staniland says that "The working day usually began shortly after sunrise and ended within daylight." (p.15). It is, of course, open to speculation as to whether these same regulations were operational in England at the same time; during the 15th century parallels can be found, (ibid., 18).

82 Randall, 1966.
83 Kent Lancaster, 1975.
84 Lethaby, 1928, 178, gives an example of one of the earliest recorded mentions for 1376: "In a register of misteries of the City [of London] contained in a 'Letter Book H' the names of Nicholas Hally and Robert Ascombe appear as representing the 'Brodereres' on the City Council in 50 Edward III (1376).".
85 Christie, 1938, 1; Brieger, 1957, 209; King, 1963, 5.
86 This suggestion is implied in the land transactions within families of embroiderers outlined by Fitch, 1976,
87 Staniland, 1991, 53, says "The embroiderers did not make up the vestments nor, indeed, even apply their work to them. Instead this appears to have been done by a tailor". I think Staniland is again referring to the royal workshops here.
88 Staniland, 1986; Dale, 1928, 110.
89 C. Hewett, "English Medieval Cope Chests", Journal of the British Archaeological Association, Vol. cxli, 1988, 105. Staniland, 1991, 32, gives an account of the preparations for transporting embroideries but there is no reference, nor is it clear if this procedure would have been the same for opus Anglicanum pieces.
Staniland, 1991, 32.

Hewitt, 1988, 105. Although generally thought of as a quarter circle, the case at Salisbury is semi-circular and that at Wells is a sixth of a circle.

Chapter 3, pp.107-108 below.

As far as can be ascertained, none of these chests are known in Italy, nor any documentation relating to them, which suggests they may have been exclusive to England.

Fitch, 1976, 295.

Lethaby, 1907, 398, tells us that "Such embroideries as I have described took long to execute and were very costly. The altar frontal of Westminster Abbey occupied four women for nearly four years, and cost £280, equal to three or four thousand pounds of our money."

CHAPTER THREE

PRIMARY SOURCES
The claim for a single outlet for the production of luxury copes is sustained by an analysis of the existing evidence of the inventories, none of which securely refers to any extant item. Such correspondences as can be found tend to confirm the rarity of these robes. The information gleaned shows little to suggest that such embroidered vestments were extensively listed and, therefore, that the present examples were part of a now lost corpus of work. It points rather to a quite contrary situation: that what there is, is instead a fair representation of all there was. To say this is to challenge the accepted way of viewing these vestments, but as a proposal it is easily accommodated when it is remembered that scholars generally have not been in the habit of making any significant distinction when considering the losses, which undoubtedly have occurred.

Before reviewing the inventories the most famous and most quoted primary source has to be looked at. In his *Chronica Majora* for the year 1246, Matthew Paris writes as follows:

*How the pope ordered some gold fringe, such as some of the English wore, to be sent to him.*

About this time, the pope, happening to see some handsome gold fringe amongst the ecclesiastic ornaments worn by some English persons in their choral copes and head dresses, asked where they were made. On his being answered, "In England," he exclaimed, "Of a truth is England our garden of delights; truly is it an inexhaustible well, in which many things abound: from many things many may be extorted." And thereupon he at once sent his sacred letters under his bull to all the abbats [sic.] of the Cistercian order resident in England, to whose prayers he had lately commended himself at the Cistercian chapter, ordering them, without delay, as though they could get them for nothing, to send him some choice gold fringe, to ornament his chasubles and choral copes; an order which did not displease the mercenary Londoners, because they had them on sale, and sold them at their own prices; but it struck many with detestation of the evident avarice of the Roman church.¹
Another translation talks of "English priests [having] choral copes and mitres ... embroidered in gold thread after a most desirable fashion ..." and Pope Innocent IV, "allured by the desire of the eye, [sending] letters, blessed and sealed to well nigh all the Abbots of the Cistercian order ...". He asks them to "send to him without delay, these embroideries of gold which he preferred above all others ...". And of Paris' comment the translation reads: "This command of my Lord Pope did not displease the London merchants who traded in these embroideries and sold them at their own price.". The use made of this renowned quote has been over-played through the years, and it would be well to look at it afresh to see just what it actually does tell us.

From the two accounts it is easy to see how misunderstandings have come about. The first one tells merely of gold fringing, while the second is more specific and, through the mention of "embroideries", would appear to be referring to the ornate and highly sophisticated orphreys produced by English hands. Whichever meaning is accepted, and either could be correct, what clearly is not being talked about are the pontifical copes, completely embroidered with the gold thread. Nor even the celebrational types on a silk ground and also richly embroidered. Either way what the pope is asking for is some type of ornament to be applied to existing robes (or mitres), of whatever nature. The ambiguities which arise in translation of the medieval Latin do not, however, interfere with the statement about the London merchants, selling such embroideries or fringes. The reference is to a commercial activity which, it must be assumed, was well established and whose fame was well known at home, and was spreading abroad.

Needless to say, there is no indication given of how the trade was carried out, who might have supplied the merchants or what kind of costs would have been involved. Neither is there any explanation of why the Pope should have singled out the Cistercians, a question which has never been addressed. Could it be that there has been some inaccuracy in Paris' recording of the matter, or did Innocent think the Cistercians were the most likely source for the particular type of embroideries he desired? Despite this lead suggested by Paris, no clear relationship between
Cistercian Houses in England and the "commercial" production of luxury copes, or embroidered orphreys, has emerged. The "Tables of Cistercian Legislation" reproduced by Norton and Park,\(^3\) give no information about whether their members were contracted to secular outlets for embroidered vestments; whether they sold their work through such means, or whether they worked with secular embroiderers as helpers. Although embroidery was considered to be in the hands of laymen by this time, there is nothing to say that such articles were not still being produced by ecclesiastics. But the implication from the statement is, that the Cistercians would have to go to the merchants to purchase the Pope's requirements. While Paris' statement has been viewed as "evidence" it would seem to raise more questions than it answers; at best it substantiates the notion that "embroideries", of a quality to appeal to His Holiness himself, were readily available in London, commercially. It does not confirm the existence of workshops, but neither does it deny it.

The only other documentary evidence for opus Anglicanum is to be found in inventories. Due to the small number of pertinent medieval inventories extant, the same ones have again been repeatedly referred to over the years - by Christie, King, Montefusco, Brieger, Rickert, Brel-Bordaz and Wallis.\(^4\) This does not mean to say that everything which can be learned from them has been recorded, and time spent surveying the minutiae is rewarded with occasional insights into contemporary thinking, and the odd rare fact which at the very least contributes to our understanding of medieval practices. In this instance the references to the documents depend on a thematic selection and therefore they will not be handled in a chronological sequence. As is usual with documents it is not safe to assume that the scribes actively writing up the inventories had the actual articles in front of them as they wrote. This might account for a fairly widespread paucity of detailed information regarding any representational decoration found on vestments. It might also have resulted from what seems to have been the scribes' preoccupation with practicalities. If the circumstances surrounding the acquisition were unusual, perhaps in the form of a gift, this was likely to have been noted. Where it was necessary perhaps to distinguish between similar
articles such things as colour or jewels might come into play; or where there were parts which might get lost—such as the *tasselli*—these things were also noted.

It is clear from the wide variety of terms used to say the same thing, as has already been pointed out, that no hard and fast rules existed with regard to any terminology for either the garments or their ornamentation. Hence a chasuble may be referred to as a *casula* or *planeta*; pearls may be written as *pernils, perlis, perulis*, or *perillis*; "embroidered" can be described as *racamato, brodatum, gramitum, filato* or *laboratum*, and the word used in one case to mean gold braids or fringes, in another instance may well refer to embroidery or an embroidered orphrey, as witnessed above. Needless to say this can make it difficult to discern just what is being described at times; further, within any single document variations are to be found indicating the same thing: for instance *laboratum/cum gramitis de opere anglicano, cum frixio/aureifrixio anglicano* (worked with/with embroidery of English work, with English fringe or orphrey/gold fringe or orphrey).

To judge from the few explanations we have of why an inventory was made at any particular time, it would appear that they could be prompted by a watershed of some sort or another. The investiture of a new pope or archbishop would seem to have offered an appropriate reason, indeed, that of *Santa Sede* in 1295 is said to have been compiled on the accession of Boniface VIII, and that of St. Peter’s of 1304 on the death of Benedict XI. One from Avignon in 1361 was made "in anticipation of the return to Rome of the papal court, the return of stability and almost on the eve of the election of Urban V...", the first of the Avignon popes who thought seriously about the move (Pls. 6 and 7). In the case of the 1315 inventory of ornaments and jewels kept in the vestry at Christchurch Canterbury, considered to have been ordered by Prior Henry of Eastry, it went with the articles when responsibility for their care was handed over by the sacrist and subsacrist to their successors six years later in 1321. Alternatively, there may have been no obvious or very good reason for undertaking such an operation; the list of one hundred and one articles belonging to the cathedral of Anagni is of the gifts
made by Boniface VIII, at different times during his pontificate—*Diversis Temporibus*—but is not dated. 8

In spite of following a general format there is nothing standardised about the presentation of an inventory. Instead they are each individualised by some feature, such as an emphasis on jewels or colourings, which may have reflected the interests of the institution or merely the methods of the scribe. That of 1309 for Clement V is distinguished by being the only document to incorporate information about its compilation, which indicates that the recording of these documents could be prolonged. After roughly every two pages of script it is dated, thereby marking the individual blocks of work. Beginning on a Friday, March 26th, it takes until Saturday April 17th just to deal with the textiles, a period involving thirteen days on which labour was carried out, perhaps for a few hours on each. 9 This being an isolated incident it is impossible to say if such laboured progress was the pattern elsewhere. Where two documents remain for the same location, as with those for St. Paul's for 1245 and 1402, it is rarely possible to follow through and identify the same vestment as an entry in each of the lists. In the same way the medieval vestments still held in the Treasury at Anagni, several supposedly gifted by the generous Boniface VIII, are not to be identified among those on the list of his donations—presumably they were given after this was compiled. 10

The documents to which access is freely available mainly belong to important and wealthy churches such as St. Peter's in Rome, St. Paul's in London or Christchurch in Canterbury. Their treasury holdings were rich in furnishings, vestments and ceremonial artefacts of precious metals, frequently encrusted with gems, and listed according to type. For vestments within a sub-heading there does not appear to be any rationale in the order of listing; being of liturgical significance colour would be the obvious determinant but, while often mentioned, it rarely plays any part in bunching vestments together. Neither does the inherent value seem to have ensured pride of place, although the 1388 inventory for Westminster Abbey takes great care to distinguish between the various categories of copes, starting with *De capis*
principalibus aureis brudatis sine casulis et tunicis (Of the principal copes embroidered with gold without chasubles and tunics) and finishing sixteen categories later with De Capis Casulis et Tunicis simplicioribus diversorum colorum de Serico et Samyt sine aliquo opere aureo (Of plain variously coloured Silk and Samite Copes, Chasubles and Tunics without any gold work).

That the Italian robes have been cherished over the centuries is evident both from their very survival, and the remarkably good condition of most of them today. The primary evidence attached to the Ascoli Piceno cope makes clear the importance of such a gift from the supreme pontiff to a town. Conditions were attached to the donation, which were drawn up in similar terminology as would have been attached to a grant of land. These facts beg the question of why it is impossible to match a single inventory entry, with absolute certainty, to any one of the papal copes. It could be accounted for through the exclusivity of the robes, since what is usually listed are articles of general usage. The luxury copes could have been the personal possessions of the ecclesiastics and therefore not mentioned in inventories; alternatively their very exclusivity could well have made the need to record them redundant. From the listings little is learned about the origins of articles; nothing about the manufacture, commissioning or receipt; nothing about why any particular donation should have happened nor when articles were received into the treasury. As historical evidence the scant documentary sources are disappointingly void of pertinent information, recording nothing unusual or revealing. In the case of Pienza the first evidence of ownership of such a robe—reliably recorded as having been gifted to the cathedral by Pius II in 1462—is from the twentieth century. The Bologna description is "said" to be that of the cope of San Domenico, while some of the various vestments belonging to Anagni cathedral are "presumed" to have been the property of Boniface but later gifted to the church. In each case the connection could be undermined, having been determined on somewhat tenuous links and the actuality of a cathedral possessing a piece of *opus Anglicanum*, with features which resemble various entries.
Claims have been made, by Enzo Carli and King, for an unusually carefully described cope in an Avignon papal inventory of 1369 to be that of Pius II. The entry, is number three on folio 196 and there is no doubt that the outline of the narratives matches those found on the Pienza cope, which are rare enough in their combination and comprehensive nature. No other descriptive item has been encountered mentioning scenes from the life of the Virgin, coupled with those of the lives of the two particular female saints, Margaret and Catherine, and the details of the materials also accord with what can still be made out from viewing the robe. Given the suggested date of the vestment (c1315-35) it could very easily have been in the possession of the pope at the time of the inventory. However, if this hypothesis is pitched against the documentary evidence for the same robe, which indicates that it came into the hands of Pius II as a diplomatic gift from the Despot of Morea in 1460, its supposed provenance becomes increasingly confused. It is not beyond the bounds of possibility that it had first been sent to a Western pontiff, fell then into the hands of the Eastern emperor or patriarch as a gift or booty, and finally somehow became the property of Thomas Paleologus who completed the circle by disposing of it, as he found expedient, back into the papal treasury.

There is perhaps a caveat to these speculations which arises from the knowledge that pontifical treasures were kept separate from those of the basilica: in Rome it seems that collections could belong to the Pope, the basilica of St. Peter's and also the Vatican. As a consequence of this the basilican treasury stayed in Rome while that of the Pope went to Avignon when the papal court moved to France in 1309. Thus any papal inventory between the years of 1309 and 1377 should relate to possessions of the incumbent rather than a church or cathedral. No mention is to be found of the Pienza cope in the Avignon 1342 inventory of Clement VI or the 1353 record of Innocent VI; similarly, it makes no appearance in that of 1361 mentioned above, and seemingly having been instigated by the expectant "Urban V". Does this mean then that the cope would have been brought to Avignon, or received by Urban after he came into office in 1362, or that it had already been passed on by an earlier
pope before 1342, for some political end? The historian Sigismundo Tizio, who
documented the history of Siena in 1528, is generally accepted as a reliable witness
and his account of the donation of Pius to his native home—of the cope, the arm of John
the Baptist and head of St. Andrew—is viewed with credibility. Hence, if the 1369
account is the Pienza cope, nothing is known about it from the time of its manufacture
up to this mention—least of all who it was made for—and nothing from 1369 until 1462.

It is clear that the nomenclature applied to the renowned "English work" was not
common currency in England itself: the terms opus Anglicanum and de opere
anglicano make no appearance in the extant inventories. This would suggest that
English churches or clerics were amply supplied by domestic production of the
necessary garments and, therefore, there was a need only to distinguish vestments,
embroidery or fabrics of foreign origin. This is a notable difference from the Italian
manner of recording, where work or material from such local centres as Rome, Venice
or Lucca was singled out and correspondingly labelled. Most English accounts are a
great deal more interested in recording to whom articles once belonged, or from whom
any particular article had been donated, than in where it originated. While this can
give an insight into the generosity of clerics, nobles or royalty, it does nothing to
contribute to the tantalising issues, already encountered, of patronage, production or a
workshop system. The tradition of reusing regal robes in an ecclesiastical context was
of long standing, and it is learned from the 1388 Westminster Abbey inventory that
three copes were made from cloth taken from the body of Edward the Confessor, when
he was enshrined in 1163. They are recorded in the first of the seventeen sections as
item tres cape Sancti Edwardi in quibus fuerat sepultus ... (Likewise, three copes in
which Saint Edward was buried ...).18 The tenth century St. Dunstan, well-known for
his creative powers, was also celebrated in this same inventory. Among the various
treasured items are different articles from his own wardrobe—albs, chasubles and
capes among other things—already several hundred years old and valued more as
relics, having been worn by the sacred figure himself. Whether they were made by his
own hands or not, which would be of great interest today, has not been thought worth recording.

For the year 1245 St. Paul's divided its collection of eighty-one copes into two sections of the most precious and the not-so-precious; each one is succinctly described and personally attributed to the donor, with the earliest recorded gift of a red samite embroidered robe pertaining to Richard Ruffus, archdeacon of Essex 1142-62, "Capa magistri Ricardi Ruffi est de rubeo samito, breudata ...". Great care is taken to particularise these robes by name in this early inventory but in the later one of 1402 for the same cathedral, although there are now one hundred and seventy-nine copes, only a small number are connected to their donor. We can only wonder at the fate of those from the 1245 listings, this time the earliest among the gifted copes belongs somewhere between 1316-29 from Roger de Waltham, prebendary of Caddington Minor: "et j Capa de dono domini Rogeri Waltham quondam Canonici ...". The recording of names is, however, a feature also found in the 1315-16 inventory for Christchurch Canterbury, for a singular reason, in two of the three sections devoted to copes. These relate to the so-called "profession-copes" each of which is attributed to the individual concerned:

It was one of the privileges of the church of Canterbury to receive from every suffragan bishop of the southern province on his consecration, whether it took place at Canterbury or elsewhere, a decent cope and a profession of canonical obedience. Hence the copes so given were called 'profession-copes'...

Of the sixty-seven vestments involved in this holding twenty-three were known to be red, four blue, two black, seven green and two Murray. These relative proportions of colourings are to be found repeatedly in extant documents and are reflective of the high percentage of days in the annual liturgical calendar when red was worn - for the apostles, martyrs and Pentecost.

A couple of interesting points emerge from English inventories--those from Christchurch and St. Paul's--and appear to be peculiar to them. These concern the morse, which joins the two sides of the cope at the neck of the wearer, and something else which also pertains to copes but, since none appear to have survived, about which
little seems to be known with certainty - tasselli. From the various items described as carrying these features they were to be found on tunicles, chasubles, copes and gloves, and they have been explained as both tassels and flat decorated bands used to join vestments. The account offered by Rock described tasselli as a "sheet of thin but solid gold ..." and made no connection with embroidery for its production. Legg and Hope indicate that "They were ... of no special shape." and, after consideration of the various entries, state that:

It seems ... that, when the word is used in connexion with copes, the 'tassels'
may have been ornamental plates or buttons sewn on to the orphrey, to which
were attached the bands or morses that held the cope together in front. It may
be, too, that sometimes the term was applied to the bands themselves.22

Later they suggest, having ruled out the possibility that they could be either hoods or morses, that:

in the Canterbury inventory the tassella were the transverse bands of
embroidery on the breast and back joining the vertical orphreys. They were
certainly not the pendent tassels found on later vestments, which hung at the
ends of the laces that drew together the elongated slit for the head.23

That they could be of some size is clear from a description of one belonging to a
chasuble "breudato Agno Dei cum duobus esmallis magnis ..." (embroidered with the
Lamb of God with two large emeralds ...), and another "tassellum habet breudatum
ymaginis Petri et Pauli et Archangeli Michaelis ..." (tassel with embroidered figures
of Peter and Paul and the Archangel Michael).24 Further, they were obviously
significant features since precious metals and jewels were involved in the manufacture
of some, while others were enriched with gold embroidery as described above. Thus
they could be tassellis aureis, tassellis gemmis ornatis (golden tassels, tassels
ornamented with gems), or tassellis rubeo brudatis; magnis tassellis aureis, tassellis
aureis minoribus (tassels with red embroidery, large golden tassels, small golden
tassels) or simply tassellis de viridi (green tassels), all of which makes clear the wide
variations of forms which existed.25
It is difficult to explain why an apparently important, and often valuable item such as this should have vanished without trace, and still harder to account for its not even being mentioned in any of the remaining Italian inventories. It cannot be said to have been an English variation or addition to standard vestments since the term makes no appearance in the Westminster Abbey record of 1388; neither was it associated with dalmatics or tunics in the 1245 St. Paul's inventory. This would suggest that it may have been an "optional extra". Whatever the actual function of these curious *tasselli* was there can be no doubt that, from the outset, the wearing of a cope demanded some form of fastening at the neck. Contemporary illustrations from a number of manuscripts confirm the use of a morse to join the two sides of a cope, but in no case of the pontifical copes is an original embroidered clasp still *in situ*.

In the 1315-16 Christchurch inventory an entire section is devoted to morses of various types. Forty-six are itemised and from the manner of listing—under the heading of *Morsus Caparum*—it seems clear that these were used freely like brooches and did not belong to any particular cope. Where the morse was part of the robe it is included with the account of the vestment: *Item Capa ... distincto cum tassellis aureis et morsu de Ebore* (Likewise distinctive cope ... with golden tassels and a morse of Ivory). 26 The precious nature of these ornamental necessities is well known; often the work of a goldsmith they were made of a wide range of materials including *auro cum Gemmis et saphiro in medio, argento cum Gemmis, Morsi de Cupro* (gold with Gems and a sapphire in the middle, silver with Gems, Morse of Copper), and *amalati cum ymaginibus argentels et deauratis* (enamel with figures goldplated over silver). Those which were embroidered had a metal plate as a backing and were then covered with the finished piece of stitchery, which may have been further ornamented with jewels and pearls.

In the Italian documents for 1309, 1342, and 1369 there is no reference to any type of fastening for the robes, either to be found on them or kept as separate treasures. However, indication of what may be interpreted as an Italian preference comes from the inventories for 1295 and Anagni cathedral, where there is evidence for the adoption
of a basic practical solution - buttons. Needless-to-say these were not ordinary buttons as they are known today but made from gold, silver or mother of pearl. For the two copes (out of a total of sixteen) from the Anagni listing the entries are: *quator boctonibus de auro et pernis* (four gold and mother of pearl buttons) and *quator bottinibus de pernis* (four buttons of mother of pearl); but in this same inventory there is mention of a single *pectoral* which can be understood to represent the morse, listed with other articles from the goldsmith's hand it was made of silver gilt and set with precious stones.

Of all the primary sources which remain that of 1295 is by far the most comprehensive, and arguably the most well known and most quoted as a result. Known now only from a seventeenth century copy, it is entitled the "Inventory of the Treasure of Santa Sede under Boniface VIII", it comprises some sixteen hundred articles itemised in more than eighty categories and is an invaluably informative source. With regard to the copes (items 880 - 905, 1552) the entries are made up in much the same manner as those for 1309, 1342, 1361 and 1369, with the usual emphasis on the origin of the various fabrics, robes and orphreys. It is from these pages that is learned the extent to which English embroideries, predominantly orphreys, had infiltrated the Vatican collection, even before the turn of the century. The oft-quoted one hundred and thirteen mentions of *opus Anglicanum* are attached to items such as chasubles, dalmatics, tunics, stoles, maniples and copes, but not a single one of the twenty-five mitres, and in only a very small number of instances is the article itself "of English work", *de opere Anglicano*.

There is no section for morses, pectorales or buttons and out of the thirty two copes listed only ten carry any reference to the manner of fastening. As well as the small number of examples which talk of *buttonibus* another term is found--*firmali*--that would appear to refer to some form of clasp, which must have been the same thing as a morse although the descriptions can be confusing coupling the *firmali* with buttons. Of the eight mentions of the *firmali* four simply say that there was none: *sine firmali*, and the conclusion would seem to be that although it was occasionally referred to, the
firmali belonging to this treasury were not considered to be of any relative importance. The inconsistencies relating to the morse or its equivalent are perplexing, especially in this case where jewels were itemised and the weight of precious metals recorded. It would be necessary to have seen the wardrobe in order to understand why the eight entries mentioned the clasp at all. The three firmali which appear in section nineteen, related specifically to copes, may have gone some way to taking care of holding the remaining twenty-two copes in place.\(^{30}\)

While seemingly not very interested in the fastenings, the Italian collators were careful to mention the hood which rarely makes an appearance in English listings. In the case of opus Anglicanum copes, many show evidence of hoods either with the original being still in place (Lateran and Pienza) or an unworked or faded area (Anagni and Bologna) to indicate that there had once been one. In spite of having shrunk to impractically diminished proportions they were still elaborately ornamented with gold embroidery, and embellished further with pearls and perhaps jewels; indeed, with keen eyesight a tiny number of the minute pearls can still be detected on the Lateran cope.

Attached to the edge of the robe but below the orphrey there is no evidence to indicate that these hoods were anything but permanent. From the Italian inventories it is learned that the embroidery which might be found on these tiny triangles was very impressive and certainly distinctive enough to be described along with the other principal details of the vestments. The Lateran and Pienza hoods carry angels and birds which seem to be representative of the usual form of decoration: "And it has a hood on which there is embroidered a large roundel and four small; And it has a hood on which there is similar embroidery of three half-length figures ... , And it has a hood where there are two angels with censors ... \(^{31}\) There is nothing to say that this same feature was not to be found on vestments in England; however, although there are suitably shaped spaces on the Syon and Butler Bowden copes, no hoods now remain, which mirrors the absence of descriptions in the contemporary inventories.

Given the high number of times a lining is mentioned in various of the different Italian inventories, it is clear that the medieval cope was lined: \textit{Et est foderatum de}
samito violazo ... (And it is lined with violet samite ...); foderatum de purpura rubea ad aues croceas (lined with red dyed purple with yellow birds); et est foderatum de zendato taldo ... (and it is lined with yellow cendal ...). 32 Christie makes no reference to linings other than to indicate when two layers of fabric were required to take the weight of the gold and stitchery, and none of the four pontifical copes under examination are lined today. Since silk was the most generally used fabric for this lining, and it would necessarily have had to be of a fine weave, it would probably have needed to have been replaced a number of times during the working life of the more durable outer material. It must be that, on confining the remaining precious examples in museum show-cases, the lining—perhaps badly worn—was no longer considered necessary.

The later inventory from St. Paul's of 1402 is notable for the singular manner in which it documents the copes, kept in this instance in the treasury. Whether the one hundred and seventy-nine robes listed represent the entire holding of the cathedral it is impossible to say, but among those mentioned twenty-six were described as being in daily use. The rest are most interestingly presented according to the manner in which they were stored. It is learned that there were four wardrobes—armariolum—equipped with "perticae, pegs, or rods, or frames ...", 33 from which the different vestments were hung. The number of pegs in each of these wardrobes—three in the treasury and a fourth outside its door—varied but apparently each could hold from three to six copes which were arranged by colour. A total of two hundred and ninety-six vestments could be found in 1402 inside these wardrobes (along with a couple of Easter processional banners—duo vexilla processionalia pro tempore Paschae) since the chasubles and tunicles were also kept in the treasury; as well as the albs, amices, stoles, fanons, and two embroidered frontals for the high altar. 34

This form of storage, which was obviously an established system which must have worked well, would have been appropriate for copes of linen, wool, silk or velvet when carrying only a narrow decorated orphrey. The cope chests must surely have been reserved for the fully embroidered golden examples where their weight and
value would have called for more particular care and security. There are a couple of interesting mentions in the 1309 inventory which state that a beautiful red silk cope had a piece of canvas to keep it in, "habet pannum de bucarono pro custodia ipsius ...", and that one of opus Anglicanum also had a piece of canvas in which to conserve it, "habet pannum de bucarono pro conservatione ipsius ...". It is unclear why these two robes should have been singled out in this fashion, but it is indicative of another way of treating those not in daily or general use which has not been considered before. What is also unclear is whether the robe was wrapped in the cloth and stored somewhere, or whether the cloth was simply thrown round the vestment to stop it becoming soiled and rubbing against others, as it was hanging in a wardrobe. The procedure may have matched a mention in the 1402 account which tells of some articles, not kept in a wardrobe, being "folded in covers of canvas".35

In direct opposition to the 1295 Santa Sede inventory, where something in the region of eight different places feature as de opere ... from Lemovincensi to Alamanie, that of Anagni fails to indicate any origin of the articles it describes. Does this mean then that there was no opus Anglicanum among the gifts; that it was not valued here in the way it was in the Vatican; that no interest was attached to sources which were no longer known as a result, or simply that the scribe did not feel that it was of significance? The contrast is very marked since the compiler of the 1295 lists was scrupulous in giving all details, which may have involved two and occasionally three different sources in a single entry.36 Amongst the Italian inventories which remain, with this single exception, the origins were recorded probably as a mark of identification since each country's embroidery could be distinguished by either technique or design characteristics.

When considering the vestments given to Christchurch by Lanfranc, as listed in 1245, a possible link with the special clothing authorised for the priesthood in the Old Testament is found in the fifty-one bells with which two of the four copes were adorned:
And beneath upon the hem of it thou shalt make pomegranates of blue, and of purple, and of scarlet, round about the hem thereof; and bells of gold between them round about.

A golden bell and a pomegranate ... upon the hem of the robe round about.

And it shall be upon Aaron to minister: and his sound shall be heard when he goeth in unto the holy place before the Lord .... Exodus 28: 33-35.

An earlier example of this feature can be found in the robe given by Prior Conrad (1107 - 1126) and listed "In the Obituarium or Kalendar of Obits ..." c1520 talking of a precious cope which had a border "per circuitum centum et quadraginta nolas argenteas set deauratas ..." (bounded with one hundred and forty little silver gilt bells). These bells are taken to represent those used round Aaron's robe of the ephod which, although unlike a cope, was the uppermost of the Jewish garments. In spite of the earlier context their incorporation on copes had gone out of fashion by the time opus Anglicanum was at its apogee—there is no evidence of any of the nineteen copes having been ornamented in this way—and only a single mention of them is still to be found, in the Santa Sede listings. It is with reference to the gifts of Lanfranc that one of the accounts comes of the wilful destruction of a "golden" robe, when it had fulfilled its usefulness and was worn out. However, since none of the four copes he gifted took the form of a "pontifical" robe, which was already seen by its owners as a treasured item to hand down or use as a diplomatic gift, it seems unlikely that such a fate should have overtaken one of these few prestigious versions.

Scholars have pointed out that, apart from the documented work of Mabilia of Bury St. Edmunds, only a single case of a named piece of embroidery is extant. This is part of an altar frontal (dated late 13th-early 14th century) worked by a nun and marked: Beverly me fecit. There is another known example mentioned in the Anagni list of gifts: Item vna planeta de panno tartarico ad aurum, cum aurifrisio deauro cum multis scutis, et in pede a tergo cum litteris: Penne fit me (Likewise a chasuble of golden cloth from Tartary, with a golden orphrey with many shields, and at the bottom on the back with letters: Penne made me). As an isolated entry it tells us
nothing except that someone somewhere felt that it was acceptable to put their name to their handiwork. However, according to Montault it was quite common for artists to lay claim to pieces in Italy, but he gives no other examples to demonstrate his contention and, since it is such a rare occurrence in English embroidery, it cannot be taken to have been a custom there.\textsuperscript{42} This must also be the case with the other claim he makes, for the incorporation of heraldic shields of donors as being an integral part of any gifts Italians might have made.\textsuperscript{43} The few instances where heraldry is to be found in \textit{opus Anglicanum} provide singularly slight information and are surely not indicative of this being a common practice in England. The heraldic orphrey of the Syon cope has been extensively studied but has yielded no clue about the provenance of the robe;\textsuperscript{44} neither do the shields found on the velvet band with scenes from the life of the Virgin (Christie, no.94). The single other instance is on a well known, small, late thirteenth century panel, where the piece can be dated with some exactitude as a result of the heraldic motifs (Christie, no.52). There is no mention in any documented account of vestments which refers to any coats of arms on the underside to denote either its owner or donor. It is true, however, that scattered throughout the various documents instances of royal arms appear, as a designation of the gift of a king, on such items as chasubles, dalmatics, copes and tunics.\textsuperscript{45}

A final point before turning to the crucial detailed \textit{opus Anglicanum} entries comes again from the 1295 Santa Sede inventory, when a most interesting record refers to the eastern emperor. It is one of the longest accounts, if not the longest, detailing a fully embroidered altar dossal of precious threads with images of the Trinity, the Virgin with sacred figures around her—\textit{et imago domini Gregorii tenentis per manum Paleologum et presentat eum beato Petro reconciliatum, cum litteris grecis et latins} (and an image of Pope Gregory holding by the hand Paleologus and presenting him in reconciliation to the blessed Peter, with lettering in greek and latin)—scenes from the lives of the apostles, with lettering all round and the entire surface further enriched with copious numbers of pearls. Molinier indicates that this "can be considered as a gift from Michael Paleologus to Pope Gregory X (1271-1276) at the
time of the initial stages of the reconciliation between the Latin church with the Greek church at the Council of Lyons ...”\(^4^6\). In attempting to account for the passage of the Pienza cope from England to papal hands in Avignon, to Morea and back again to papal hands in Rome, a similar scenario has been envisaged with the vestment suggested as travelling and acting in just such a capacity - as a diplomatic gift. This documented record demonstrates that, far from being a fanciful idea, it could be an entirely plausible one.

It has already been stated than none of the twenty known *opus Anglicanum* copes has been identified, with any certainty, in any of the documentary sources. This does not mean that there are no entries which correspond with the form of vestment which is of interest. Among all the various copes encountered, which run into the hundreds, there is a tiny group which can perhaps be seen as representative of the pontifical examples. There are numerous instances of copes with an *opus Anglicanum* orphrey, too many to itemise; there are several of silk or velvet grounds with *opus Anglicanum* figures, but five only which appear to match the underside couched, gold and silk thread, fully embroidered figurative vestments which emanated from England somewhere between 1270 - 1330. One is in the 1295 *Santa Sede* accounts, two belong to the 1309 Clement V list and the last two are in the 1369 Papal inventory from Avignon. The fullest entries are to be found in the *Regestum Clementis Papae V* which read as follows:

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\text{unum pulcrum pluviale de opere anglicano laboratum per totum ad magnos compassus de serico. Et in maiori\(b\)us compassibus sunt figure integre apostolorum cum licteris sui nominis, tenentes ad pedes quilibet unam bestiam. Et in aliis minoribus compassibus sunt in quolibet duae aves diverse; et circa dictas ymagines et dictas aves est totum laboratum de auro filato. Et habet aurifrigium anglicanum magnum et largum, laboratum ad vites et folia de perlis per longum, et in dicta sunt aliqui flores violaezi et rosecte rubee. Et in parte sinistra versus pedes fuit dictum frigium cum parte dicti pluvialis in qua est avis vocata caldarellus, incisum et postea}
\]
adiunctum; in parte vero dextra ubi est ymago beati Thome apostoli fuit incisum versus pedes usque ad frigium et postea reparatum. Et habet caputium ubi sunt duo angeli cum turribus suis et versus pedes per girum habet frigium anglicanum, in quo est vitis de perlis cum floribus et rosectis. Et est foderatum de zendo rubeo.47

(a beautiful cope of English work embroidered all over with large roundels of silk. And in the large roundels are figures of the apostles with their names in lettering, each having at their feet an animal. And in the small roundels are in each two different birds; and around these said figures and said birds it is all worked in gold thread. And it has a long and wide English orphrey, worked with vines and leaves of pearls along the length, and it also has violet flowers and red roses. And on the left part towards the feet of this said orphrey together with the part of the aforesaid cope on which there is a bird called the Caldarellus, it has been cut in and subsequently joined on; but on the right hand side of the cope where there is a picture of St. Thomas the Apostle there was a split towards the feet of this orphrey and subsequently repaired. And it has a hood where are two angels with their own censers and towards the feet around the outside edge it has an English border, on which is a vine of pearls with flowers and roses. And it is lined with red cendal).

altid pluviale, pulcerimum de opere anglicano laboratum ad magnos compassus de serico diversorum colorum in quibus sunt diverse ymagines representantes diversas ystorias slavatoris et aliorum sanctorum que sunt de serico diversorum colorum, et omnes sunt circumdate auro. Et in dicto pluviali circa frigium per longum sunt sex angeli de serico diversorum colorum, quorum quilibet habet suum instrumentum ad modum giocularoris; et habet caputium cum duobus angelis incensantibus. Et in dicto pluviali est aurifrigium de auro largum, anglicanum cum compassibus de serico laboratis cum perlis; et habet dictum frigium per longum in lateribus unam listam constimilem cum compassibus: et habet versus pedes per girum aurifrigium anglicanum laboratum ad dracones de perlis et rosectas de
(another most beautiful cope of English work embroidered with large different coloured silk roundels in which various figures representing the history of salvation and other sacred stories of different coloured silks, and each is surrounded with gold. And in this said cope near the length of the orphrey are six angels of different coloured silks, each one of which has their instrument in the manner of playing; and it has a hood with two censing angels. And on this said cope there is a wide gold English orphrey with roundels of silk worked with pearls; and this said orphrey has throughout its length on the sides a pattern with similar roundels: and it has towards the feet around the outside edge an English border worked with dragons/serpents of pearls and red silk roses; and it is all lined with red cendal; and at the neck of the orphrey is a raised cross with pearls and red and black glass, and it has cloth of canvas to conserve it).

In the first case the representations described are all common to the ecclesiastical artistic vocabulary but no extant vestment carries this particular combination. While figures of the apostles are to be found--Syon, Vatican, Toledo--in no case are they contained in roundels nor do they have animals underfoot. The remaining examples which are decorated with naturalistic details of plants and/or birds do not use roundels as design components; seraphim and censing angels are certainly used on hoods but none with a naturalistic border. With the second example a similar situation prevails: while angels are common, musical ones are to be found only on the Bologna and Lateran, but are in spandrels spread over the field of design. Neither of the borders match existing ones--the closest would be that on the Pienza cope--and there is no instance of a raised cross at the neck on any vestment. It is disappointing, considering the extraordinarily full descriptions, not to be able to marry either of them to any of the known examples.

In the 1295 inventory the descriptions are very brief and contain only a single significant entry: Item, unum pluviale anglicanum cum campo toto de auro filato cum
multis imaginibus sanctorum et figuris avium et bestiarum cum frixis ad perlas, cum iiiij. bottonibus parvis. (Item 881). (Likewise an English cope with the entire field of design in gold embroidered with many sacred figures and images of birds and animals with an orphrey of pearls, with four small buttons). There is, however, a significant description in a special section of the inventory which relates to Tempore Domini Bonifacii Pape VIII and is found under a heading Item recepimus per manum supradicti domini pape in consistorio coram cardinalibus omnia infrascripta que misit rex Anglie (Likewise we received by the hand of the aforesaid Lord Pope in his consistory in the presence of his cardinals all the things written below which the English king sent); and reads: Item, unum pluviale de opere Anglicano cum frixio ad perlas. (Likewise, a cope of English work with an orphrey with pearls - item 1552.) From this it can be seen that the actual robe was of little interest and, while the slight information given makes it impossible to form any connections, it does offer proof of a papal gift from an English monarch (Edward I).

In the Avignon list from the Capella Sancti Michaelis can be found the only possible instance of fitting a description to an actual robe. The entries read as follows:

Item aliud pluviale non munitum et non portatum cum diversis ymaginibus auro contextum per totum de opere Anglie, in cuius summitate a recta linea retro est coronacio, post crucifixus, deinde nativitas, in fine iii ymagines, media pape, alie episcoporum.

Item aliud pluviale cum diversis ymaginibus et laqueis de perlas per totum auro contextum de opere Anglie, cuius aurifrizium est cum laqueis perlarum, cum diversis avium ymaginibus in capicio operato perlis et lapidibus, subtus est coronacio, deinde nativitas, in circumferencia vero ultima est passio beatarum Katherine et Margarete virginum et ..., ultimas est operatus de perlis, foderatus de sindone rubea.49

(Likewise another cope not packed and not sent with various figures woven all over in gold of English work, at the top of which in a straight line down the back there is the
coronation, next the crucifixion, then the nativity, at the end three figures, the pope in
the middle, and the others of bishops.
Likewise another cope with various figures and loops of pearls woven throughout with
gold of English work, the orphrey of which is with loops of pearls, with various
pictures of birds the hood worked with pearls and stones, above is the coronation, then
nativity, the last all around the edge is the passion of the blessed virgins Katherine and
Margaret and ... the last is worked with pearls, it is lined with red cendal.) The details
of the first record again comprise familiar motifs but do not point to any specific
clothing, unlike those of the second which read just like a description of Pope Pius II's
cope. It is tantalising, given what would seem to be a perfect match, not to be able to
say more than that this *pluviale* could indeed have been the Pienza cope. When the
remarkable individuality of the remaining vestments is remembered it makes anathema
of the idea that two identical robes might have been commissioned or made, but it is
not impossible. What is undeniable is that among the many hundreds of precious copes
which were in use or circulation, those coming under the heading of "celebration" ones
represented just a tiny fraction of the total number. It is this which makes it possible to
suggest that those which remain represent the greatest part of the total output.

The picture which emerges from the somewhat idiosyncratic nature of the
various documents has some areas of confusion, especially with regard to the
additional extras which could be attached to medieval copes. During the careful
examination of all the available documentation for examples of *opus Anglicanum*
celebrational copes, evidence which substantiates a number of widely held beliefs
emerged: many articles from other countries were further embellished by *opus
Anglicanum*, generally with an orphrey; the number of these English embroideries must
indeed have been staggering, suggesting a flourishing trade in a wide range of ready-
made formulaic pieces; the volume of *opus Anglicanum*, during its "hey-day", far
exceeded the output from any other location. However, even in instances of very large
holdings of ecclesiastical vestments an institution, although perhaps having a festive
cope, was unlikely to have been fortunate enough to have owned one of the exclusive
and prestigious fully embroidered, "narrative", pontifical examples. On the basis of the findings it is evident that these golden luxury items, far from existing in great numbers were, in actuality, very rare. 50

Although perhaps not thought of as a document there is another piece of primary source material which merits consideration - the Velletri Roll, c1270-80 (Pl. 8). Among all the examples of manuscripts suggested as having links with opus Anglicanum, such as the Holkham Bible Picture Book (London, British Library MS Add. 47682, c1320-c1330), the Pepysian Sketch Book (Cambridge, Magdalene College, Pepysian Library No 1916, late 14th Century), the De Lisle Psalter (London, British Library MS Arundel 83 II, c1308 and c1339) and the "East-Anglian" group generally (Peterborough, Barlow [Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Barlow 22], Gough [Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Gough Liturg 8, c1300-c1310] and Ramsey [New York, Pierpont Morgan Library MS M. 302, c1300-c1310] Psalters), the Velletri Roll would seem to be the most closely related. It has been suggested that it may have served as a model for embroiderers, 51 a possibility no-one has yet come to terms with. A couple of things about the Roll give rise to this suggestion, quite apart from the actual images themselves. Its form and size mean that it is portable and could easily be carried about with an artist as he moved between commissions; this may also account for its being found now in Italy. The sequential nature of the narrative representations follows the manner of presentation to be found on copes, and the format within which the images are displayed mirrors the architectonic schemes which feature so prominently on the later vestments.

Its true purpose being unknown, links have also been made with the work of mural painters, manuscript illuminators and tapestry weavers; another theory put forward by Nigel Morgan is that the Roll could "have decorated either a small altar or circular reliquary". Alternatively he suggests that it may once have served as an altarpiece mounted in a wooden frame or "Possibly ... have been used on some object in connection with the dramatic enactments of the Passion by the Guild [of the Disciplinati] ...". 52 In an attempt to arrive at a more closely defined purpose, albeit
still hypothetical, it is proposed here to consider the Roll as having been connected with embroidery rather than anything else, and related to a possible commission for either a vestment or a piece of church furnishing. Looking at the Roll from this specific viewpoint there would appear to be two main ways in which it could be useful in such a context: first, as a model from which a draughtsman or sewers could work; or second, as a "mock-up" to be sent to the patron for approval prior to execution. Examples of all the various elements on the Roll exist in extant English medieval embroideries, which demonstrates that it would have been entirely possible to reproduce it as it stands, in stitchery, with as little or as much embellishment as would have been desired.

On the issue of treating the Roll as a model, it is necessary to ask what this would mean to an embroiderer, and possibly more importantly, to an artist required to produce designs for different media. A Continental artist, while on his travels, seeing the Passion cycle in question in its original form, whatever that may have been, might have thought it worth recording and copied it for his own personal use as an addition to his design "portfolio". The amount of detailing in both the drawing and the colouring would make it a straightforward exercise to copy at a future date; while the somewhat rough finish would have been a natural result of a speedy execution and irrelevant to the artist's purposes. Should he have been an Italian finding himself in England, where there was a different iconographical tradition, this would perhaps go some way to explaining both the English style of the representations and the Roll's Italian provenance in Velletri. The presence of a "much damaged and frequently illegible inscription ... " in French Gothic script running along the top border, and likely to reflect some aspect of the original circumstances of production, is an interesting feature. After detailed inspection of the lettering little sense could be made of the inscription with the exception of the section above the scene of Christ with Mary Magdalene (Pl. 9). Here it is possible to make out the word "NOLI" followed by some indecipherable letters all run together, but finishing with an "ERE". Thus the passage will surely have read "NOLI ME TANGERE", which suggests that what the writing
represents is a running commentary on the depictions below. If this assumption is correct it infers that the inscription can throw no light on any original commission or an interpretation of a function for the Roll.

Any exploration into this possible function is hampered from the outset since there is nothing to indicate what the original finished length of the Roll was. If it is accepted that the Entry into Jerusalem is the first scene (Fig. 25), three main choices seem to present themselves: that the Roll was complete with the truncated last scene in place (Fig. 26); that there was at least one other section of vellum of similar length to the others, or that what remains today is only one part of a much larger whole. For the second and third options the placing of the Crucifixion, and possibly also the Deposition, complicates the issue since it would be most likely to have been the focal point of the cycle, and hold a central position (Fig. 27). With twelve scenes this would not have been possible. Considering the Roll as having been the model for a specific article, different types of items would fit according to which of the three options is being contemplated. If it is to be thought of as being complete in the state in which it has come down to us, the material consists of a Passion cycle of twelve chronological episodes or, more precisely, eleven and a half, since the last compartment, as indicated, is incomplete. The spandrels are filled with a series of tiny seated apostles and prophets carrying scrolls (Pl. 9), some of whom also have their attributes; others are quite animated and seem almost to be communicating with each other.

The parchment measures 203 x 28cms. and, in its present state, is composed of three strips which have been joined together. The scenes measure approximately 23cms. in height and between 15-17cms. in width, and were painted with a view to being connected. That this was so is confirmed by the joins running through actual scenes which makes it obvious that the pieces were intended to have been consecutive (Fig. 28). When thinking of vestments a convenient parallel with a continuous narrative strip of this type would be an orphrey; either a continuous band attached along the straight edge of a cope, or a cruciform or shorter straight strip applied to the back and/or front of a chasuble or dalmatic.
The Skál orphrey (Fig. 3), as the only narrative example, provides the closest parallel, but it belongs to a much later period - the second quarter of the fourteenth century. Displayed in ascending order up the right side and descending on the left, it has two sets of arcades meeting at what would have been the middle. It carried eleven chronological scenes of the Passion (only nine of which remain), beginning with the Last Supper and finishing with what has been taken to be the Supper at Emmaus. It is assumed that the missing Crucifixion would have been in the centre, at the back of the neck, and that it may have been at right angles to the rest of the narratives (as found on the Lateran cope). The selection of episodes corresponds well, with possibly eight matching those on the Roll, but there is nothing instructive about this given the accepted range of Passion scenes. The length of the Roll precludes its use as an apparel.

Contrary to the earlier and more conventional way of working an orphrey in a single piece, in this instance each scene has been treated separately and joined to form the long strip. It might be argued, based on this information, that these embroideries could indeed have depended on a horizontal model such as the Velletri Roll, and from the workers' point of view this is certainly possible. However, as an example of what the finished product would look like, the Roll makes absolutely no sense whatever: Apart from the shape, there is nothing about the form of the Roll which relates it to the orphrey of a cope. Although the Roll has a symmetry in the narrative selection which gives a satisfactory division into two parts, allowing a Crucifixion scene on either side at what would have been the back of the neck, it seems more likely that since the decorative band would have taken the same form as the parchment, the scenes would simply have been drawn in like fashion. Alternatively, two strips, which could have been placed side by side to demonstrate how they would be seen when worn, would have given an even more accurate model.

If the Roll were to have been a working model for embroiderers, the scenes would require to be turned ninety degrees and placed in ascending order into the middle which, at the moment, is taken to fall between the Crucifixion and the Deposition. This would give dimensions of approximately 15-17 x 276cms. The
length of the straight edge of medieval copes is somewhere between 315-345cms. which far exceeds that of the Roll, although the width of some of the extant orphreys accords well. But if it were suggested that a fourth piece of vellum originally existed, perhaps finishing a Road to Emmaus, and having the Doubting of Thomas, the Ascension and Pentecost to complete the Roll, the final length would be somewhere in the region of 270cms., which would become roughly 345cms. when repositioned for an orphrey. This would bring the designs on the Roll into line with the required lengths to enable its possible use as the model for a cope orphrey. But it would, of course, also throw the centrality of the Crucifixion off balance, and leave the difficulty of explaining the presence of the lettering which would not fit with this suggested application.

These same points also largely relate to orphreys for a chasuble or dalmatic: the lengths involved for these vestments could be more variable, but the Roll is clearly too long for a single one as it stands. If it were to be divided in half, two strips of approximately 23 x 102cms. would result. Thus, with established lengths ranging somewhere between 103-144cms., it is possible to view the Roll as having the potential to form a pair of orphreys. However, no evidence exists to suggest that a set of orphreys of this type would carry such a comprehensive Passion cycle, only a small number of scenes would be required to make it complete; inevitably, the more scenes there are the less the visual impact will be. Here again, as a patron's exemplar it would bear no resemblance to the final product; and it is still necessary to account for the lettering, which would appear to confound all attempts to fit the Roll to applied decoration for ecclesiastical vestments. The question of date has very little to contribute to the argument; with the Roll being put around 1270-80 by Morgan, it simply rules out any possible connection with the Skå orphrey - and also with other opus Anglicanum copies.

While there would seem to be no obvious match for applied ornamentation with the decorated parchment strip, church furnishings present an alternative possibility, with altar dossals relating most closely to the scale and format of the Roll. The closest parallel with English ecclesiastical embroidery is with a set of three pieces carrying
ten episodes from the life of the Virgin, in the Victoria and Albert Museum, although it too belongs to a slightly later date - the first half of the fourteenth century. However, since the function of these pieces is also unknown one is faced with the same sort of difficulties in trying to recreate a picture of its original form.

The longest piece, with five episodes, measures 26 x 82cms, and all three together give a finished length of 162cms. The comparable format of continuous architectural arcading here carries additional embellishment with a type of three-dimensional Gothic columns, multi-lobed arches, crockets and finials. Heraldic crests are found in the spandrels, and there is no lettering. Christie states that since "All three pieces are complete at top and base, one is cut short on the left side, another on the right, and the third is evidently perfect as its original line of feather-stitching runs round the four edges. The band was probably designed for an altar dossal, the panels perhaps being divided so as to fit into some kind of decorative framework." 59 This theory seems acceptable as far as it goes. However, the reconstruction she suggests gives two tiers of five scenes each, with a division in the top register between the third and fourth scenes. Were these pieces to have been fitted into some framework to be placed on an altar, it seems inconceivable that a craftsman, or a patron, would consider an irregular arrangement such as this. Does this mean then, that here again, something is missing, or have the cuts been made at a later date when the embroidery was altered for some other use? 60 Interestingly enough, if the three pieces are regarded as a single strip the correspondence with the Velletri Roll becomes more marked. The dimensions would be 26 x 162cms. with the scenes approximately 16cms wide, which relates quite well to the 23 x 203 (x 15-17cms.) of the painted strip.

Christie also says "It is probable there was yet another section in the series, for had there been but one scene drawn from the life of the Magi, the Adoration rather than the Journey would probably have been chosen." 61 This again presents difficulties since there would have had to have been a further five scenes for a strip to fit into her reconstruction, and this would then have given three tiers. Since the first five scenes pertain to the Virgin and the second to the Nativity cycle, it might be feasible to suggest
that an additional five could have been drawn from Christ's Passion; however, this
does not meet Christie's requirements as just outlined, and further scenes from the life
of Christ are more likely. No obvious solution presents itself if, as an alternative, the
two-tier format is envisaged: in this case a further ten episodes from the life, and
possibly Passion, of Christ would have had to be incorporated, thereby completely
altering the format. However, the narratives, as they stand, have stopped short of the
conventional cycle in an iconographically unacceptable way, which would appear to
bring us back to where the enquiry first started apropos the Velletri Roll!

In the cathedral at Anagni there is an interesting piece of embroidery which
may cast some light on the difficulties. Dated as c1300 and considered to have been
worked in Rome, 62 this altar frontal, with the exception of the top border which is a
later addition, is understood to be complete. It shares the familiar architectonic
structural components and has two tiers of imagery, one of a devotional type and the
other narrative, presented in a composition which bears a marked resemblance to the
Velletri Roll. The dimensions however, 95 x 195cns., cannot be matched by either the
English band, or the Velletri Roll, in any of the suggested permutations. While the
sizes of altar frontals are clearly variable to accord with different altars, none of the
possible measurements seem to give a satisfactory textile with which to cover an area
large enough for this function. 63 Hence Christie's proposal of an altar dossal for the
embroideries, where size is only relative, would seem to be the most likely. As such,
speculation on the construction and final placing of the pieces has nothing futher to
contribute to the enquiry.

While it would be feasible to consider a similar function for the Roll, such an
eventuality seems highly unlikely since, although another tier, or even two if necessary,
could be worked out, the complexity of the programme and the scale would not allow
anything to be legible except to those at the altar. 64 The necessity of according a
prime position to the Crucifixion has confounded the attempt to make satisfactory
additions to the extant representations, which suggests that perhaps the most
constructive way to view the Roll is as if it were complete, with the unfinished scene
being taken as the last one. If this proviso is accepted there remains a further possible application for an embroidery where the Roll would require to be thought of as possibly only one part of a larger whole - as pertaining to one register of the design for a celebration cope which was to have been covered with imagery.

If the assumption is accepted that *opus Anglicanum* artists worked in the same way as illuminators, relying on an existing stock of models from a variety of sources, then it would seem entirely possible that the Velletri Roll could indeed have served such a purpose. What undermines this conception slightly is the actual roll format itself since there seems to be no good reason for such material to be kept in this manner. Further, it could not be entirely representative of the finished article since adaptations would be necessary to fit it on the hemispherical field of design. The high degree of detailing, and the finished nature of both the colouring and the final presentation (in spite of the roughness), seem rather too professional and polished for the purpose being explored, but the sewers may have needed such exactitude for their interpretations. However, having no other comparative material it is not safe to draw any conclusions from these points. As elsewhere, the lettering continues to present a brake on speculations. Although having no extant example of this as an integral part of an embroidered design, there is again no good reason to rule it out as having been a possible feature. As has been stressed, each of the remaining copes is completely individual, and the creed is found written out in full, on scrolls held by the apostles, on the Pienza cope.65

As an illustration of this form of organizational planning, when related to the full field of design, the Bologna cope (Frontispiece), c1290-1300, provides the closest parallel. It also usefully demonstrates the possibility of interpreting the Velletri Roll in stitchery. It carries an uninterrupted chronological narrative cycle of the Nativity in eleven episodes in the lowest register, and a corresponding Passion cycle above with seven scenes. The representations are contained within bands of continuous Gothic arcading with an angelic host filling the spandrels. It would not be hard to imagine the narrow intervening bands of saints' heads being taken up by lettering, although the
presentation on the Roll is minute, stark and lacking in decorative features. Deriving from different sources, in spite of a number of correspondences between them, the two pieces serve to demonstrate how the Roll might have been used in this context: as a model for either artist or sewer, and also as an exemplar for a patron. However, it would comprise only one of two or three parts and would give no indication as to how several tiers of representations could fit together within the semicircular format - a complexity which requires careful managing to be achieved successfully, and surely something a patron would wish to see. It is difficult to assess how important this discrepancy would be for practical purposes, but if the first step were to have been the drawing out of the organizing structure on the fabric by someone with an overall plan, then a sewer could work from such a Roll, although it would be much more convenient if there were to have been single drawings as models. Whatever form these models took, none of them would necessarily have to be to scale but it would be desirable for them to be close by the sewers, and the underdrawing would need to be already in place on the background fabric. Given the length of the Velletri Roll it would have been possible to have had embroiderers working at different places on the stretched fabric at the same time; however, the Roll's form does not permit a sustained logical distribution of a number of workers.

Here again the dimensions involved may hold a resolution. The length is hardly significant since shaping the cycle to fit the cope would inevitably extend its span, but it is surely long enough to fill some part of the semicircular field, as a middle or top register depending on the overall layout. Iconographically, the narratives as they stand, while not being an exact match, correspond with the Bologna cope. A cycle of the Passion might well be seen to be complete with a Road to Emmaus, given the individuality found throughout the celebration copes. However, structural dimensions are more illuminating: those of the Roll--each arcade being in the region of 15-17cms. wide x 23cms. high--bear little relation to what is found on the copes. The Bologna cope has arcaded compartments measuring approximately 37 x 44cms.; those on the Lateran are approximately 44 x 44cms., and on the Pienza approximately 44 x
52cms. Hence, it is clear from this that the Roll would not be suitable for use directly onto a cope; the designs would have had to be considerably scaled up before they would be found to correspond to those required for these vestments. While it is entirely possible for this to be done accurately, the need to carry out such a laborious procedure to arrive at working models for the embroiderers, makes the Roll redundant for this purpose. It might still be thought of as a model for an artist since he could possibly make the necessary adjustments as he worked on the backing fabric, but it begs the question of why the designs would not just have been made to the correct measurements in the first place. It is obvious from the assured execution of the representations that the artist could just as easily have made them larger; as he could similarly have done them vertically if working for an orphrey, which has been demonstrated to be a closer match with regard to size. If the size of the Roll were to have depended on the size of vellum available to the painter, it might still be possible to accept its use in this context. But this seems to be stretching credibility to fit a treasured theory rather than accepting its limitations.

Of the three suggested possible options it remains only to look at the Velletri Roll as an exemplar for a cope. It might seem that one is on firmer ground when considering the Roll as a sample being sent to a prospective patron, however, there are as many problems attached to this idea as to those outlined above. The most obvious difficulty is that the form of the Roll again bears no resemblance to the field of design an artist is faced with when considering a cope. While there is no particular reason to suppose that a mock-up would necessarily take the same format as the finished article in medieval times, there is equally no particular reason why it could not have done so. Thus giving a much closer approximation of the artist’s intentions to either patron, or embroiderer. The startlingly clear watercolour painting (measuring 75 x 50cms.) of the Lost cope (Fig. 4), incorporating miniscule detailing, could have been accommodated on parchment, even if it had meant joins like those on the Velletri Roll right through the middle of scenes. Could such a detailed plan not have been worked out by a medieval artist - from the evidence of illuminated manuscripts there seems to be no reason to
doubt it. As indicated the level of skill demonstrated on the Roll shows that neither painting vertically nor encompassing a larger field of design would have been beyond the powers of this artist. The need to submit a plan for the approval of a patron—with regard to matters of lay-out, iconography, jewels and costs—has been explored in Chapter two above. An overview of the finished article would allow these things to be decided to the best advantage.

The extent to which any or all of these considerations would have had to be satisfied would depend on exactly how these important commissions were actually carried out. The little that is known would suggest that, in the case of royal patrons at least, there was an agent who acted as an intermediary with the "workshop" throughout the production time, but this procedure would seem to relate more to materials required, and payments being made in instalments, rather than to design concerns. With such a system it is possible that it might never have been necessary to have a completed design. Once the framework had been decided, this could have been laid down on the fabric and the scenes filled in as and when the choice of representations was decided and approved. The situation might have been more complicated if a foreign patron, without the services of an agent, were involved; in such a case it seems plausible to expect that a "mock-up" of an entire design plan would be required. However, a drawing of a single framing section, along with a description of the representational imagery—narratives, martyrdoms or saints—and an outline of the materials in which the various components were to have been worked, perhaps with notes on colour, might well have satisfied a patron. It is unlikely that any commission of a prestige article destined for ecclesiastical or regal service would have been ordered without a patron having a very good idea of what was being asked for. They would presumably have already had or seen an example which they wished to approximate. Clearly, given the paucity of information on all matters relating to the production of opus Anglicanum embroideries, there is nothing to either contradict or confirm the idea of the Velletri Roll having served as a patron's exemplar. If this were to have been its function with relation to a cope, then it must represent only a part of the
whole. Possibly a plan of the finished format would have accompanied the set of
designs, the balance of which no longer exist.

A brief comparison of the iconography of the Velletri Roll and English
medieval ecclesiastical embroideries is instructive. The Crucifixion offers a striking
eexample of the difference between the two. There is no extant example of opus
Anglicanum where the robbers are included in this scene as on the Roll, nor any
instance where the Virgin and St. John are not to be found on the left and right of the
cross respectively. The interesting conflation of the Resurrection and the Three Maries
at the Tomb is paralleled by an identical interpretation on the Anagni cope (Figs. 30 and
39), which shares a very similar Passion cycle.70 The biblical account of Peter cutting
off Malchus' ear—as recounted in all four Gospels—which forms part of depictions of
the Betrayal on the embroideries (for instance the Bologna and Lateran copes), is
missing on the Roll. To signal tormentors the Roll tends to rely on the use of coloured
figures rather than on aspects of dress—headgear or striped hose—or grotesque and
distorted faces (Fig. 31), by which they are most commonly identified in embroidery.
However, the inclusion of prophets and apostles either as an infill or as an integral part
of a decorative scheme, can be found on both, as can a number of design characteristics
which may or may not be coincidental. They share the same stark background, worked
in gold underside couching on the textiles.71 Both rely on minimal use of descriptive
accessories, the setting of a scene being conveyed with stark clarity by such things as a
tree for a garden or a lamp for happenings at night. The Flagellation and the Descent
into Limbo on both the Roll and the Bologna cope are completely devoid of incidental
detailing. The resurrected Christ shows no visible wounds and carries a slender cross
without a pennant in the paintings, while much is made of the wounds by the sewers,
who tend to depict the resurrection cross with a pennant. It is, of course, possible that
this kind of detailing may have been lost over time, in the same way that most of the
background gold is no longer visible. However, the interest in costume, which is
generally found to a greater or lesser degree on the copes,72 is also demonstrated on
the Roll - the breeches for the negroid tormentor in the *Flagellation* and the intricacies of Pilate's robe in the *Trial* being the best examples of this (Fig. 31).

A close look at the Velletri Roll reveals an extraordinarily assured hand at work (Figs. 32 and 33). The outlines are bold and unfaltering, delineating a countenance in a single continuous line yet giving carefully detailed attention to hair, which falls freely shaping the head with individual locks or masses of waves and curls, or escapes from underneath caps or veils framing faces. This is a treatment shared with the embroideries where the eye is frequently drawn to the hair by the use of blue with white, or green with yellow. Such contrasts, one of the characteristics of *opus Anglicanum*, show to good effect the flowing locks or curly masses on which great care was lavished. The insistent striation which is so much a part of the stitched interpretations, however, is not paralleled anywhere on the Roll. One of the other distinguishing features of the sewed work is the eyes; they are generally disproportionately large, sharply outlined and the stark white part contrasting strongly with large dark pupils - this can be seen on the greatest number of the extant copes. While the features of faces on the Roll are clearly and delicately defined, and are notable for the echoing white chalk line which gently models or accentuates some parts, the eyes are not given undue emphasis by being enlarged. Similarly, this form of modelling cannot be found on the embroideries, which generally adopt a technique of sewing along the contours of a face in a linear split stitch, with spirals for the cheeks, in a uniform skin-coloured silk.

The limited range of colour on the Roll is very similar to the treatment found on the embroideries which rely on a small number of shades, animated by striking contrasts or by the inclusion of white. How much this was determined by the available range of dyes is hard to decide at this time, but the muted overall impression received today from the embroideries is much the same as from the Roll, possibly a result of natural fading over the centuries. Vair, which features largely in *opus Anglicanum* - the Bologna cope makes extensive use of it throughout - is nowhere evident on the Velletri Roll. But there are parallels to be found with this on the embroideries, the earlier ones
in particular. It is used only once on the Anagni cope, almost as if by accident, as the lining of the Virgin's cope in Christ with the Doctors (Fig. 38). The heavy black outlining with which the drawing is done on the Roll is also a feature of medieval embroideries. Almost without exception figures and features are contained within a black line of stitchery which, in many instances, also delineates folds of costumes. Parallels for the irregular earth mounds forming the ground for many of the Roll's scenes are also to be seen on the embroideries: in individual roundels on the Anagni cope or running along the base line of parts of the Bologna cope. The anomalies of scale, visible particularly in the Entry into Jerusalem and the Maries at the Tomb (Figs. 25 and 30), are as much a feature of the embroideries as the Roll, although the proportions are arguably more satisfactory in the embroideries. In some instances these discrepancies of size are easily accounted for by the need to give an accent or emphasis to something, or someone, generally Christ. The Betrayal on the Bologna cope is a good example of this in operation (Fig. 59). However, since no exact matches can be made it is impossible to assess how many of these features were the result of contemporary practices, a common vocabulary of forms or shared models, and how much, if anything, can be attributed to the Roll having had any part to play in an embroidery workshop.

After detailed examination of the possibilities of restricting the Velletri Roll to a function in the context of embroidery, it is necessary to reject the proposal for a number of reasons. It is clear that, while sharing the plain backgrounds, heavy outlining and lack of incidental detailing of the embroideries, the Roll is not characterised by any of the other features by which opus Anglicanum is distinguished. While a case can clearly be made for a connection between the painted representations and embroidered ones, the form of the Roll does not seem to be sufficiently sympathetic to the production requirements for a celebration cope—or for an orphrey. Neither is it suitable for an artist transferring a design to a backing fabric, nor for a "workshop" team of sewers executing someone else's designs - too many alterations would be required. This prompted the question of why, in the light of the undisputed excellence of English
illuminators, they would not simply have painted in the manner of the articles being commissioned. If a scaled down reproduction of a proposed embroidery were required there is no apparent reason why it would not simply have been done. The joining together of the painted strips demonstrates that the size of available parchment or vellum did not preclude any shape or size being obtained. Further there is no evidence on the Roll itself of it having been "used" in the technical process. This would have resulted in such things as the lines of the San-Quentin Rotulus, tiny holes signalling design transfer through pricking and pouncing, or indentations where tracings had been taken. Apart from general wear and tear the parchment shows no signs of constant handling.

Having attempted to determine if the Roll could have any application with regard to opus Anglicanum vestments or church furnishings, as either an artist or embroiderer's model or an exemplar for a patron, nothing has emerged to indicate its suitability for any of these purposes. Of the possibilities explored use as a plan for a patron would seem to be the one which could most satisfactorily fit. In the commissioning of a vestment, a mock-up in the form of the painted strip (as one of several) might have been what allowed a project to go ahead, be it for a cope, a cope orphrey or even an article of church furnishing. However, as well as the obvious impracticalities outlined, both the lettering and the unsuitable size and form of the Velletri Roll finally mediate against this application.

The Latin text reads as follows: "De aurifris domini Papae quae concupivit ex his quae forte vidit. Eisdemque diebus, dominus Papa videns in aliquorum Anglicorum ornamentis ecclesiasticis, utpote in capis choralibus et infulis, aurifrisia concupiscibilia, interrogavit ubinam (acta fuisse et responsum est; 'In Anglia.' At ipsa; 'Vere hortus noster delictarum est Anglia. Vere puteus inexhaustus est; et ubi multa abundat, de multis multa possunt extorqueri.' Unde Ibid dominus Papa, concupiscentia illectus oculorum, literas suas bullatas sacras mutt ad omnes fere Cisterciensi ordinis abbates in Anglia commorantes, quorum orationibus se nuper in capitulo Cisterciensi commendaverat, ut ipsa aurifrista, ac si pro nihil ipse possent adquirere, mittere non different praeelecta, ad planetas et capas suas chorales adornandas. Quod mercenarils Londoniae qui ea venalina habeant non disputat, ut placcitum vendentibus; unde multi manifestam avaritiam Romanae ecclesiae detestabantur." Matthaei Parisiensis Chronica Majora, ed. H.R. Luard, London, 1877, Vol. IV, 546-7.

2 Matthew Paris, Historia major, ed. William Wats, Paris, 1644, 473. The Vatican source--Calendar of Papal Registers, 1893, Vol.1, 1198-1304, English State Papers, 33 (1)--has been checked but there is no record of this papal letter.


4 For the purposes of this thesis the documents have been trawled for specific information. The relevant entries have not been fully translated but have been paraphrased, and the meanings later checked for accuracy.


6 BAV Archivio Cap. S. Pietro, Inventario I, folio 35-r.

7 Legg & Hope, 1902, 10.


9 Regestum Clementis Papae V, Appendice I, 408-442.

10 An account of a dalmatic carrying the story of St. Nicholas is in the inventory but today the vestment--if it is indeed the same one--has the form of a chasuble: "Item vna dalmatica contexta de auro, argento, et serico cum octuaginta duobus plactis de auro, et pernis; ad ystoriam beati Nicolai", (Likewise a dalmatic woven in gold, silver and silk with eighty two medallions/discs of gold, and pearls; with the story of the blessed Nicholas). Montault, 1858, 24.


12 For more on the contents of this letter: Fanelli, 1990, 15.
Inventario Beni Immobili e Mobili Opera Cattedrale di Pienza, 1940, 116. The only other document extant in Pienza is: Opera di Pienza Inventario ordinato da Sua Altezza Reale con Rescritto de ... 1784, the cope is not listed.


See p.114 below.

Muntz and Frotheringham, 1883, 4.

Hoberg, 1944, 62ff; 117ff.

Legg, 1890, 257.

Simpson, 1887, 476.

Ibid., 504.

Legg & Hope, 1902, 14.

Ibid., 14.

Ibid., 18.

Simpson, 1887, 482-3.

Legg & Hope, 1902, 53-4.

Ibid., 53.

Molinier, 1888. The library collection is listed elsewhere but is reputed to contain some five hundred manuscripts.

Ibid., items 820, 863, 867, 881, 916, 952, 967, 1048, 1049.

Ibid., item 885.

Ibid., items 373, 375, 377.

Regestum Clemente, 1309: 417, 419, 421.

Ibid., 413; Montault, 1858, 27; Molinier, 1888, item 889.

Simpson, 1887, 453. The word perticae has been explained to me as meaning a shape more like a bird perch than a peg; the suggestion is that they may have been shaped something like modern coat hangers. This would allow the copes to be better supported, draped rather than hung.

Ibid., 500-501.

Ibid., 454.

Molinier, 1888, item 908.

Lambeth Ms. 20., £165 in Legg & Hope, 1902, 43-4. This cope makes no appearance in either of the earlier Christchurch inventories.

Bells reappear in this inventory in section 35 in relation to mitres: items 668-671, 673, 675; in section 36 for a frixium pro altari having 200 bells. In Farcy, Pl.72 is a photograph of a section of a thirteenth century cope, "Chape de Léon III du trésor d'Aix-la-Chapelle..." which shows a border of small bells quite close together and held in place by a yellow and black cord. This is the only illustration I am aware of. When in use they would have served as an additional pointer of the importance of the wearer, alerting the faithful to his arrival. Miri Rubin, Corpus Christi, Cambridge University Press, 1991, 59.
lists the effects of bells during the liturgy (specifically at the moment of the elevation of the Host) as exciting the senses, cheering the believers and increasing or arousing devotion. These same effects would presumably have also resulted from the incorporation of bells on vestments.

39 Molinier, 1888, item 378.
40 Legg & Hope, 1902, 13.
41 Montault, 1882, 23-4.
42 Ibid., 19.
43 Ibid., 22.
44 Lethaby, 1907, 389-391; Christie, 1938, 146-7. The orphrey does not belong to the same date as the cope.
45 Molinier, 1888, items 63-65, 955; Montault, 1882, 25; Legg & Hope, 1902, 54; Simpson, 1887, 504.

There is an interesting entry in a record of Lichfield Cathedral, albeit of a later time, 1445, which tells in considerable detail of a "precious gold cope, having images woven in on the gold, of the Nativity of Christ, and holy Epiphany, and the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the Holy Innocents, and also with images of various prophets, the orphrey having an image of the resurrection and St Michael the Archangel, and one side with the arms of France, and a seraphim with the arms of England on the other side". R.N. Swanson, "Medieval Liturgy as Theatre: the Props", The Church and the Arts, ed. Diana Wood, Blackwell Publishers, 1992, 245; quoting from Shrewsbury Public Library, fol. 93r. Unfortunately no more is known about the circumstances surrounding this cope than has come to be expected and the account finishes with the sentence "Whether the cope should be considered a lost masterpiece of opus Anglicanum is not clear ...". It is presumed to be the same vestment mentioned in a 1345 inventory simply as "one most precious cope, decorated with figures, the gift of Walter de Langedon" who appears to have been a most generous benefactor. However there is no explanation for the incorporation of the royal arms.

46 Molinier, 1888, item 811 and 19, n.1.
47 Regestum Clemente, 1309, 421, £483b.
48 Ibid., 426, £487a.
49 Hoberg, 1944, 423, £196'.
50 This conclusion has been reached once before, on the same evidence, by a notable writer: Lee, 1932, 2, n.9.
52 Morgan, 1988, 147.
53 In his article, Paul Binski, "The Cosmati at Westminster and the English Court Style", Art Bulletin, 72, 1990, 6ff, Binski, examining the work of Italians in Westminster Abbey in the late thirteenth century, discusses the "issue of design communication ..." (p.25). He suggests that drawings may have been sent from Arnolfo di Cambio's Italian workshop to Westminster "to be executed by a workshop assistant.", and says that "if designs could find their way north, so too
could they south.". Such designs could have taken a similar form to the Velletri Roll.

The San Quentin Rotulus (mid fourteenth century?) is arguably closer to the form of an artist's "sampler", being sketchy in execution.

There is nothing to indicate how long the Roll has been in Velletri; it is first mentioned in an inventory of the Cathedral only in 1708, Morgan, 1988, 147. It is known that Urban IV had in his employ an English embroiderer, Gregory of London; might a craftsman in this situation have brought a selection of appropriate designs with him for use in unknown future undertakings?

The Roll is presently mounted on a single strip of board; it is not possible to see the back which might throw some light on this issue. The San Quentin Rotulus is made up of 13 skins glued together with the drawings and text worked after it had been assembled. Its dimensions are 0.164 x 8.08m. Branner, 1968, 257.

The late 13th century Tree of Jesse Lyons orphrey is 35 x 144cms.; the Seligman Tree of Jesse and Virgin orphreys from late 13th century are 15 x 124cms. and 18 x 103cms. respectively, and the two Tree of Jesse Lerida orphreys from the end of the 13th century are 18 x 126cms. and 18 x 103cms.

Many vestments were altered either as fashion changed or as other requirements arose, for example the Steeple Aston cope was made into an altar frontal and three of the four Anagni vestments have been severely cut and pieced.

Might a dossal have had the Crucifixion diagonally across from the Deposition which would be the arrangement if the Roll were split into two tiers? Given the chronological continuity, three tiers do not seem to be a logical alternative, unless Marian imagery were to be incorporated, for example, scenes from her death and assumption. See Appendix II, for selection of possibilities.

There are examples also of the Virgin's response to the angel Annunciate being written on scrolls in embroideries, eg. Lateran cope, as well as occasional other appropriate scripts.

There is, however, an interesting correspondence in the shape of the barbed quatrefoils on the two pieces. More closely related shapes are found, turned 45 degrees, as structural elements on the Madrid and Syon copes.

Suitable for square or rectangular designs, it is possible to divide the drawing into squares and transfer the outlines to another squared paper, if one of the finished dimensions is known beforehand. Branner, 1968, 257, tells of "vertical rulings placed every 0.29m. throughout the first half of the [San-
Quentin Rotulus]. "presumably as a guide for "proportional enlargement, such as squaring off".

69 Christie, 1938, Appendix I, various entries demonstrate the pattern, also the entry in Appendix II for the lost frontal for Westminster Abbey, 41.

70 See Appendix IV.

71 This aspect is one of the most important features of these embroideries since, worked in geometrical, heraldic or natural devices, it demonstrates the high level of skill required to surround the representations with tiny gold stitches in emulation of the tooled gold backgrounds found in illuminated manuscripts. It was responsible primarily also for the richness of the finished cope, catching and reflecting light when it was worn.

72 A good example of this is the Lateran cope, in the Betrayal, Trial, Supper at Emmaus and Pentecost in particular, as well as the variety of dress used for the tormentors.
CHAPTER FOUR

THE COPE

as

ECCLESIASTICAL EXEMPLAR
The vestments to be studied in close detail have been selected because of the nature of their ornamentation, as discussed earlier. These ecclesiastical exemplars differ from other examples, like the Syon or the Vatican copes (Figs. 34 and 35), where the required doctrinal information is encapsulated in a minimum of images confined to the centre back panel. Their iconographic programmes spell out divine mysteries in the most comprehensive manner, as well as the scriptural basis of the establishment and responsibility of the earthly Church. Although the following two chapters are devoted to exploring the way in which this material was handled, secondary side-issues emerged which have been treated as they were encountered. One of the most pressing of these relates to patronage, which influences both the production and the chosen programme. Attention has been directed to whatever aspects it has been thought could offer some insight as to how this might have worked.

It is ironic that much of the mystery which appears to surround the presentation copes could be unveiled were scholars to pay more attention to their embroidered iconographic programmes. Given the paucity of primary written sources, the design and pictorial structure remain central to any discussion of the purpose and production of such display objects. The careful examination and analysis of this evidence, in the case of four copes, has revealed a correspondence of exegetic meaning and visual structure which persists in other examples, despite the enormous variety of the individual components. The differences between the copes which have been made clear from the start, present one of the most distinctive aspects of opus Anglicanum. This feature was in part responsible for the suggestion, made earlier, that the remaining vestments are the greater part of what was actually produced, instead of the tiny residue they are generally accepted to represent.

As the ultimate elaboration in church vesture the pontifical copes have been operational in both public and sacred spaces. The public requirements would have been straightforward: the need for a distinctive vestment to mark the most holy feasts; a desire to confer honour and highlight the central figure in a procession, and the fundamental need to impress. Any bejewelled embroidered or damask robe would
have fulfilled these conditions. However, the thematic unity found among the representations on the vestments spells out their particular application for the Office of the Mass within the church precincts, although the wider scriptural content would still have allowed them to be worn for any general ecclesiastical purpose. From the outset a deliberate choice has been made by patron or owner to have an expensively embroidered figurative cope; this will have led to further choices for both the subject of the cycles and the events to be included in them. The expertise of a religious adviser would probably have been relied on to ensure the doctrinal and ecclesiastical accuracy necessary to make the programme appropriate. The organising structures will also have been part of the decision-making process, and may even have influenced the pictorial content. Since nothing was left to chance the importance of the projects is clear.

While the points outlined above can be said with a degree of certainty, they still fall short of explaining how there came to be such diversity among the chosen decorative programmes, given the uniformity of use for the vestments. It has been demonstrated that fully embroidered celebration copes will not have been made at random but rather to order, perhaps even for a specific event, maybe with a political purpose, and possibly with some connection or allusion to the owner or patron incorporated in the chosen iconographic scheme. This, coupled with the degree of choice in determining "emphasis" within any particular programme, would seem to account for the individuality. In addition, since the images could be understood in different ways: historically as chronological narratives; sacramentally as ecclesiastical mysteries pertaining to a liturgical ceremony; or theologically relating to abstract doctrinal concepts, a fair amount of flexibility was fundamental to, and inherent in the programmes. Votive, didactic or exemplar-type interpretations could possibly also have been attributed, but the clear thematic emphasis, and the historical and contextual aspects which link the images, indicate that it is unlikely that these would have been the intended meanings. Their inclusion would have detracted from the impact of the sophisticated orchestration of programmes where unity of the parts, and continuity of
thought, combined to give visual form to abstract concepts and to indicate the dogmatic import of biblical events.

Despite the arguments of definition, the role of the vestment in the ritual of the liturgical ceremony of solemn Mass can be demonstrated, quite apart from the writings of Durandus. In the Sarum Rite, understood to have been the work of Richard Poore during his term of Office as Dean of Salisbury probably around 1210, the rubric for processions for double feasts spells out the wearing of the cope:

   Officiant, in alb, amice and silken cope

   Any solo singers 'in the middle of the procession', vested like the choir

   Choir, in ascending order, in surplices and silken copes, in stalls

   Bishop, in mitre and silken cope, carrying his staff, enthroned.

When the celebrant, the bishop would have retained his robe for the performance of the pre-Mass service and removed it only at the point of the Sanctus, which led to the Canon of the Mass and signalled the shift in mood as the moment of consecration and transubstantiation approached. However, when the bishop was not the celebrant the cope would have remained on show on his person throughout the full celebration, during the Eucharistic mystery which took place at the altar as well. In this instance he would have been enthroned to the left of the altar and might still have had some part in the ceremonial, perhaps saying prayers such as the Confiteor, Misereatur and Absolutionem. Either way, the cope, adorned or not, belonged and was central to the dramatic enactment of solemn High Mass, more particularly the pre-Mass section.

This context within which the cope operated is a vital consideration, as is the setting, in any attempt to account for either function or meaning since the robes carried imagery which was relevant to, and active in their public and sacred application. The medieval allegorical interpretation of the sacramental Mass transformed the service into a symbolic and dramatic rite involving the re-creation of the life, death and resurrection of Christ. This was the rememorative aspect of the ceremony which served to renew the entire plan of salvation. The celebrant was identified with Christ and the assembled faithful were united, through their participation in the service, in the
mystical body of Christ, of which He was the head. In this central act of devotion, the earthly congregation was given privileged access to the eternal worship of the Company of Heaven, joining their voices to those of the angelic guardians. The medieval church—inside which was the nearest anyone could hope to be to heaven in this life—was understood to stand as the evocation of the Celestial City on earth. All artistic media contributed to the creation of as close an emulation as was possible of the temple built by Solomon and described in 1 Kings, Chapter 6. Sculpture, wood carving, ivories, gold and silver furnishings, stained glass, murals and illuminated manuscripts all played a part in the provision of a sacred, other-worldly atmosphere within the earthly sphere. Of no less importance in this attempt to engage the senses and move the soul by setting the scene for worship, would be the splendid spectacle of the clerical robes.

The golden bejewelled robe in continual motion would have been an outstanding element in this ceremonial, glittering as it caught the light and the eye. As one of the most potent of theological images, light was directly linked to the liturgy through the Preface for Feasts of the Virgin “Who by the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost did both conceive thy only-begotten One, and ... did shed upon this world the eternal light, Jesus Christ our Lord.”. Reflections of the sparkling richness of the cope’s coloured surface would have endowed the atmosphere with spirituality. Thus, by its very inclusion in the proceedings the nature of the sacred occasion would have been elevated: “the priest in a sense leaves this earth and enters another world, the shimmer of which is mirrored in his vesture.” The copes of opus Anglicanum with their profuse use of gold, silver, pearls and jewels recalled the words of Psalm 45 which tell of the Bride being in “clothing ... of wrought gold”, and “brought unto the king in raiment of needlework”. These texts were allegorically explained as referring to the marriage of Christ with his Church. Coupled with the characteristic imagery belonging to the celebration copes, this association indicated the symbolic arrival of the assembled Church at the foot of the altar, to receive mercy and forgiveness by the gift of grace through participation in the Eucharist.
There are then grounds for suggesting that the cope, far from being merely a "celebration" garment, had in fact important and serious liturgical functions. Amongst these can already be counted a contribution to the recreation of Heavenly Jerusalem which connected the earthly to the celestial. Also the power to invest the wearer with a specific symbolic identity far beyond that of his clerical rank, through the rare and precious charge of carrying the embodiment of the living Church on his shoulders. More significantly it functioned as a link between the foundation of the Church on earth--as prefigured in the Old Testament and with its promise of salvation--the assembled congregation, and the perpetual sacrifice of the Eucharist about to be enacted. During the processional part of the service, it would have been on display, clearly visible, and able to deliver that part of its message aimed at the assembled faithful as the bishop, or pontiff, made his way through the congregation towards the choir. Although possibly recognized as narrative episodes glimpsed in the passing by the worshippers, the theological aspects of the representations would have come into their own on arrival at the altar, where they would have been more clearly understood by the clerics. By identifying these ecclesiastical concepts, embodied within the imagery and articulating the iconographic programmes, the full liturgical significance of the cope may be understood.

Of the four pontifical copes the earliest is that held in the museum of Anagni cathedral outside Rome (Pl. 11). Anagni had long been a favourite refuge of popes, not just as an escape from the searing heat of Rome in the summer but as a temporary base for the pontifical court itself. During some of the time of his confrontation with Emperor Frederick II, Gregory IX was in Anagni. Indeed it was from there in 1227 that the order of excommunication was passed, and there also three years later that the meeting of the two figures took place for reconciliation. Gregory's successor was elected by the cardinals at Anagni in 1243, with Rome still being besieged by the troublesome emperor. The fondness for this small hill town made it a natural haven for Boniface VIII, one of Anagni's sons and one who took care to endow his birthplace richly on rising to the Chair of St. Peter.10
Among the collection of *opus Anglicanum* vestments belonging to the treasury, the cope under review is in the best state of conservation, in spite of supposed alterations. Although the embroidery is very badly worn, allowing for the underdrawing to be clearly visible, notably on Christ's body in the Entombment (Fig. 36), there is no evidence of faces, hands or feet having been painted. The orphrey, morse, hood and perimeter border are all missing, but the outside edge has not been cut or reshaped. The veracity of this statement is demonstrated by looking at the outer design circles--some of which have necessarily been curtailed to conform to the semi-circular shape of the vestment--where it will be seen that the narrative representation has been compressed to fit the allotted space. In the Flight into Egypt the feet of Joseph and his donkey are clearly displayed, and the figures are all full height even though they are contained in an area only half the size of most of the other scenes (Fig. 37).

Unlike the Pienza and Vatican copes, which show an even spread of puckering across the surface, the Anagni garment displays little sign of this; but a fold running vertically through the middle of the vestment, encountered elsewhere, is visible. In this case it is oversewn rather crudely, presumably a measure taken for conservation reasons in more recent times. A join runs full span horizontally along the vestment, starting by the top of the head of the Virgin in Christ with the Doctors, and cutting across each of the adjacent circles at the same level (Fig. 38). This is in keeping with other of the celebration copes which are joined at roughly the same point, and was made necessary as a result of the narrow width of woven textiles in the medieval period. Since embroidery can be seen to cross the join--which is again roughly worked although often hard to discern--it is evident that the fabric will have been pieced before the embroidery, or the framing up, was begun. The linen background material is entirely covered with gold, silver and silk stitchery, with much of the revered underside-couching for the metal threads in evidence. The outlining, which is so characteristic of *opus Anglicanum*, in this instance is done in pale brown instead of the customary black; much less intrusive, it also gives a softer look to the features. The overall design plan which articulates the surface, consists of simple roundels made
with three thin bands of different coloured silks; they are ranged in four horizontal tiers and nine vertical rows giving a total of thirty compartments for the representations.

The scant information which is thought to be known about this cope throws little light on who it might have been ordered by, or destined for. Christie states that it is first documented in an early 14th century inventory of church goods belonging to Pope Boniface VIII, who, as Benedetto Gaetani, was born in Anagni and elected to the papacy in 1294. She further states that the entry which describes it as a chasuble was probably accurate at that time since it would not be a difficult task to turn a cope into a chasuble and vice versa:

 Una planeta contexta ad aurum, et de serico, de ystoria Saluatoris Ab annuntiatione beate uirginis et natuitate XPI usque ad resurrectionem.

 Et de assumptione beate uirginis. Et foderata sennato rubeo cum aurifrisio ex parte ante cum pernis.

(A chasuble "woven"/covered with gold, and of silk, of stories of the Saviour. From the Annunciation to the blessed Virgin and the birth of Christ up to the resurrection. And of the assumption of the blessed Virgin. And it is lined with red cendal with an orphrey on the front with pearls.) In accounting for the use of the expression "contexta ad aurum" in the entry, Christie--herself an experienced needlewoman--suggests that the underside-couched background in its chevron pattern would seem like weaving to the uninitiated; and with these explanations the definition given in the inventory is made to fit the cope in question. Christie goes on to refer to a letter she received from a Rev. J. Braun, S.J., who "suggests that the vestment's transformation took place either in or just prior to Boniface VIII's pontificate."

It seems unlikely--in view of the suggested alteration--that the cope could have been made or commissioned for this particular investiture, but rather that it must have been in use for some time previously, whether held in the Vatican or the cathedral of Anagni. Hence, it is entirely possible that an earlier date could be accorded to the cope than the late thirteenth century dating indicated by Christie. The simple geometric plan which forms the overall framework of the design would seem to
substantiate an earlier period, the unconnected circles being far removed from the excesses of the complex architecturally-arcaded plans found on the later copes, such as the Lateran (c1300) or the Pienza (c1315-35). The clarity visible here allows the narrative episodes to stand out sharply, a characteristic which tends to disappear as the field of design becomes unrelentingly covered with meticulous detailing as time goes on. While the draughtsmanship is of a very high standard, there is nevertheless a naivety, and stiffness about the figures which accords well with works which would be contemporaneous if the earlier dating were to be accepted.

The simplicity of the overall design structure is matched by an apparently straightforward iconographic program which is not complimented by secondary themes in spaces or structural divisions. Instead, an angelic host peoples these interstices, shadowing the figurative representations with the same ubiquity as can be found in the other copes under discussion. The thirty roundels available to carry the pictorial narratives fall neatly into two distinctive sections: the thirteen on the left hand side of the cope deal with the Birth and Childhood of Christ, a Christmas cycle, while on the right the corresponding circles cover His Passion and Resurrection, an Easter cycle. Conforming to what would appear to be convention, the centre back row is dedicated to crucial doctrinal matters, in this example focussing on the Mother of Christ, the Blessed Virgin Mary. These are all standard themes for representation. They contain some readily identifiable subjects which would have been recognisable to lay and cleric alike, such as the Nativity and the Crucifixion. At the simplest level, they comprise a coherent account of the scriptural narrative as ecclesiastical exemplars, utilising conventional imagery in giving form to the events of sacred history. The complexities and subtleties of the programme will only be revealed with closer examination of particulars.

The manner in which the cope hung dictated the pictorial emphasis of the garment, particularly its processional nature which determined the main visual accents on the back. Just as the iconographic themes depicted indicted the hierarchies of sacred space in mural decoration, so the copes' spinal "stem" affirmed the most
significant aspect of its function, reserved as it was for issues tied closely to aspects of salvation. Amongst the depictions which are found most often in this distinctive section are the Crucifixion, Annunciation, Adoration of the Magi, and the Coronation of the Virgin, iconic images indicating abstract doctrinal issues such as the Incarnation, and complete in themselves. These need not necessarily have been chronologically or historically related to the sequences presented on either side. Even on a "narrative" cope such as the Anagni, the imagery in these spinal discs absorbs the meanings of the individual roundels into a theological statement, reflective of the garment's purpose. These two aspects cannot be separated; the meanings of the imagery, although understood at different levels and possibly serving different ends, are nevertheless inextricably linked and complimentary, enlarging and expounding each others' themes. For this reason it is proposed to deal with the interpretation of the central roundels of the Anagni cope when the rest of the imagery has been assessed.

Second in importance to the centre back is the centre front, which, although it is the straight outside edge running the full length of the vestment at its widest point, in reality is considered as two different sides, but there is also the understanding that they will meet when being worn. If this is taken into consideration in the overall planning, it is possible to link subjects together in some way (for example: the Last Supper being coupled with the Supper at Emmaus), or make their themes correspond and thereby invest the matching pairs of images with extra meanings, or emphasis, if desired. One might have assumed that the overall design plan on the Anagni cope would have linked those subjects paired across the front, as in the Lateran cope where the Betrayal is coupled with the Doubting of Thomas. However, it is found that no obvious or direct advantage has been taken of this opportunity. The pairings, in an ascending sequence, are as follows:

- The Annunciation
- The Annunciation to the Shepherds
- Journey of the Magi
- Adoration of the Magi

- The Betrayal
- The Flagellation
- The Carrying of the Cross
- The Crucifixion
on close examination, it would appear that any connections which could be made are somewhat tenuous, even accidental.

With regard to the other ways of directing the viewer, there is nothing which is immediately striking on being confronted with the full span of the embroidered surface. The design structure is entirely balanced with no deviations in the diameter of the enclosing circles. No single scene is made to predominate through distinctive colouring, although those with solid forms—the tomb in the Three Maries and the Entombment, the bed or bier in the Death of the Virgin—do tend to stand out by virtue of the unbroken block of coloured silk embroidery (Figs. 39, 36 and 40). The figure scale is consistent except where adjustments are made to fit the truncated scenes on the edges; this is quite distinct from the conventional medieval use of a smaller scale for less important personages. As far as can be seen, the cope is entirely devoid of any visual emphasis to attract, highlight or illuminate. Thus, it is can be said that, in spite of ensuring strict doctrinal accuracy, didactic considerations have not been what guided the layout of the iconographic programme. Content, for the purposes of instruction, must clearly have been a secondary factor. In the absence of obvious visual signals pointing to where to look for meaning, the explanation for the primary purpose of the chosen iconography must be uncovered in some other fashion.

With the Anagni cope carrying both the Infancy and Passion cycles, it was clearly intended for use at both the Christmas and Easter festivals, as the most significant events in the annual round of commemorative days of the Church. The relevance for specific festivals was extended, by the general ecclesiastical themes of the pictorial representations, to suit the robe for a eucharistic celebration on any great feast day, Temporale or Sanctorale. In much the same way that an altarpiece would have been related to the rememorative sacrifice acted out on the altar, above which it would have been positioned, the images found on the celebration copes linked them directly to these same procedures— an explicit liturgical connection. The representations on the Anagni vestment offered, in part, a visual interpretation running concurrently with the enactment of the pre-Mass service in particular: the sequence of
the liturgy as it was being spoken and sung in the body of the church, in the choir and at
the steps of the altar. Further, it will be seen to have alluded directly in a number of
instances to the eucharistic sacrifice, both the historical one and the perpetual re-
enactment of the Mass then being presented on behalf of the assembled congregation.

The eucharistic connection, explicit in the Crucifixion roundel, is underscored
by the choice, in the Nativity cycle, of the episode of the Miracle of the Cornfield (Fig.
41).21 This was a popular theme illustrated in contemporary manuscripts such as
Queen Mary's Psalter (London, British Library MS Royal 2. B. VII) and the Holkham
Bible Picture Book, both c1320, and possibly encouraged by medieval dramatic
performances. The scene shows a triumphant reaper confronting the soldiers, whose
sinister mission has been thwarted by the divine intervention of the Son of God
Himself. The corn can be seen erect and fully grown, about to be harvested; grain to be
used in the making of bread. Christ, known as "the bread of the angels" and,22 in His
own words "the living bread which came down from heaven ...", is here directly
equated with the bread about to be consecrated on the altar, "the bread that I will give
for the life of the world is my flesh ...", (John 6: 51-2), and which the faithful would
receive after their confession and absolution. It would have been possible to present
this same concept in a more readily accessible form through inclusion of a
representation of the Last Supper. This would have fitted in with the programme at the
start of the Passion cycle, and there would have been no shortage of models. Having
chosen not to use this more obvious alternative is a clear indication of personal
preference which is unlikely to have been that of the artist. Inclusion of the Miracle of
the Cornfield could be explained by a need to balance the number of scenes on each
side. While other events could have been incorporated in the Passion cycle, for
example: the Entry into Jerusalem, apart from the Miracle of the Palm Tree or possibly
the Circumcision, none of the more conventional Childhood episodes have been left
out. It would perhaps have been necessary to draw on the life of the Virgin to find an
additional subject, but the meaning would then have been altered and an opportunity to
remind the viewer of the divinity of the child, through the representation of an actual miracle at work, would have been lost.

The eucharistic association is reinforced by pictorial details in the Nativity where the infant Christ is depicted lying in a raised manger/altar table in swaddling clothes (Fig. 42), an interpretation which highlights the sacramental aspect of His life to come since the manger is seen as a prefiguration of the tomb.23 That this is indeed the case is underlined by the rectangular stone crib both reflecting the shape of the sarcophagus of the later scenes—the position of the body also echoes the form adopted in the later burial—and having been worked in the same distinctive green and white spot used for the Resurrection tomb (Fig. 39). The Child is removed from His mother who averts her eyes in a gesture of deep sorrow, cheek resting on her hand in the conventional attitude of grief. Raised up and set apart, but looking directly at the ox and ass, the child has apparently recognized what His part is to be in the establishment of the Church on earth, and is aware of His impending death. The tiny body bearing the full symbolic weight of the final sacrifice is offered—eucharistically—to the animals, who represent the faithful. The active involvement of the beasts signals this interpretation which overlooks the pagan symbolism sometimes accorded to the ass, where its stupidity leaves it blind—like the Jews—to the identity of Christ and looking away from the crib. Far from a celebration of the birth of the Son of God, this representation focuses instead on what is to be the outcome of the Incarnation—the suffering of the Virgin and the ultimate sacrifice to be paid to fulfil God's plan.

This same eucharistic emphasis is found also in the Presentation in the Temple (Fig. 43). Here the fearless child is depicted standing erect on the altar, in the place of the Host as a sacrificial offering, facing a barefooted Simeon. Shore has demonstrated in her analysis of this scene that the visual moment is one of recognition, and the instantaneous revelation to the aged Simeon of the promised Messiah of the Jewish people.24 The Virgin pushes her son towards the aged priest, whose hands are respectfully covered, in a clear gesture of resignation and acceptance on her part. The scene has been reduced to its essentials which give Joseph no part to play, instead a
handmaiden carries the sacrificial birds. The iconographical interpretation makes no reference to the Purification of the Virgin. There is nothing to indicate whether the action takes place inside the temple or at the entrance; the simple square Greek altar is draped with a plain cloth. This was the usual form of altar found in opus Anglicanum which reflects the biblical description: "And thou shalt make an altar of shittim wood, five cubits long, and five cubits broad; the altar shall be foursquare ...", Exodus 27:1. Christ is again visually embracing His fate and reminding the viewer of the connection between the imagery and the actions taking place at the altar in his own space.25

As indicated, this part of the programme encompasses the full gamut of imagery associated with Christ's Incarnation; but, unusually for opus Anglicanum, the role of the Magi is spread over four roundels instead of being depicted with the single scene of the Adoration. Their story is fully recounted with the following episodes: the Journey of the Magi, the Magi Before Herod, the Adoration of the Magi, and the Dream of the Magi (Figs. 44 - 47).26 While not the only embroidered example—the Bologna cope carries an identical sequence—it is, nevertheless more commonly found in illuminated manuscripts and, in this instance, probably represents another indication of personal preference. The embroidered displays of wide ranges of Christian imagery contain many examples of what appears to be reflections of the particular interests of the donor. These personal signals were able to be incorporated without contravention of the theological content of the programmes. Kyser has demonstrated the propaganda implicit in the Ascoli Piceno cope where the overall theme manifests the subordination of the Papacy to the great councils of the Church.27 King sees a similar political end in their creation, suggesting that the Italian copes were in fact diplomatic gifts from the English crown to mark the accession of new pontiffs.28 Thus, as well as constituting the symbolic presence in the ceremonial, the cope was also able to celebrate the authority of the wearer.

The Epiphany, where the regal and divine nature of the Christ child is acknowledged by the three kings, demonstrates the subjugation of earthly rulers to the heavenly one, as they kneel and point to the star in homage and recognition.29 The
presence of the star ties the event to the Old Testament prophesy at its time of fulfillment. The close connection between the epiphany and the eucharist, established in Early Christian times and manifest through the medieval plays of the Magi, gave the Adoration an explicit sacrificial dimension. Various levels of meaning were accrued to the gifts carried by the Magi, as exegesis gradually invented analogues between the Biblical Epiphany and the physical reenactment of the Offering, in the ritual of the Mass. Thus, the symbolic gifts, Gold for Christ’s kingliness, Frankincense for His divinity and Myrrh as the emblem of death, were laid on the altar in the dramatic spectacle, visibly signalling the link between the altar and the manger. This sacrificial reminder is inherent in the pictorial representation. The enthroned Virgin, as the sedes sapientiae, supports her son in her lap as he blesses the worshipping king, the first Gentile to witness Christ’s Coming. The meaning can be extended to signify the spread of Christianity among the Gentiles throughout the world, as indicated by the supposed differing nationalities of the three wise men.

On this cope, unlike later examples, no obvious sequential order is apparent in the representations; further, the chronological direction followed on one half is not matched by the other, which contributes to a somewhat confused reading and makes the possibility of anything propelling the narrative forward unlikely. The four Magi scenes are laid out in a square, unlike the Bologna cope where they move forward in a line starting with Herod, followed by the Journey, the Adoration and finishing with the Dream. The confusion over when the Magi’s visit actually took place does nothing to help the understanding of the layout on the Anagni vestment. No significant explanation was indicated above when looking at the centre front, nor can anything be taken from the overall context of the childhood chronology. The story in itself is another instance, similar to the episode with the corn, of the thwarting of secular power through divine intervention which would have an obvious appeal to a high ecclesiastic, especially during a period when the authority of the Church was being challenged. In contradiction to this point, by according so much space to the theme the royal aspect of the figures is emphasized but there is a single instance only of the use of vair. It
appears as the lining of the Virgin's cloak in Christ with the Doctors (Fig. 38), possibly to indicate their descent from David, but this does little to add support to the notion of royal patronage.

More straightforwardly, by including the meeting of the kings with Herod, and the warning from the angel, the sense of foreboding already present in the Nativity and the Presentation is underlined more emphatically, and helps to direct the mood of the Infancy to correspond to the other side of the vestment where these worst fears are realized. The incorporation of the Massacre of the Innocents adds weight to the undercurrent of threatened violence, and compounds the sacrificial content of much of the imagery looked at so far (Fig. 48). Inclusion of this subject also introduces the theme of martyrdom to the cope; the infants, seen as the first martyrs of the Christian Church provide a link with the saints, in the Company of Heaven, who are present at the Eucharist. Everything so far looked at demonstrates that the main thrust of the iconography is focussed on Christ's ultimate personal sacrifice. If this aspect is combined with the concern also demonstrated above about the work of the earthly Church, the links between the vestment and the celebration of solemn Mass for the greatest of the annual feasts, as suggested at the outset, are clear.

The establishing of the Church on earth and its role in the crucial matter of salvation are not the only aspects of this institution to be singled out. Inclusion of Christ with the Doctors recalls His teaching mission and the apostolic charge, which was handed on later, to continue this work through the Church in the world at large. This, too, is a somewhat unusual appearance, it is one of only two on the celebration copes but would accord well with the interests of a great churchman, and would fit an emphasis on the role of the Church such as is emerging quite decidedly on the Anagni vestment. One last detail from this side of the cope will further reinforce this idea. In the Flight into Egypt an idol is depicted falling from a pedestal (Fig. 37), a reference to the legend which told of the effect which the arrival of the Holy Family in the pagan country had. The salutary warning against idolatry, while well enough established in traditional iconography, is not always included in representations. Among the
examples on the copes this is the only appearance and, as such, is a further indication of emphasis having been directed, most likely by a patron with an interest in asserting the authority of his Church, and ensuring its members' adherence to strictly defined codes of worship. 33

The devotion of half of the field of decoration to the life of Christ--coupled with the Passion on the other side--places a clear emphasis on the humanity of the Son of God, stressing this aspect of His dual nature over the divine, which is nevertheless highlighted in the miracles and the Resurrection scenes. It is Christ's involvement with mankind, His role in the provision of salvation by His sacrificial death, and the establishing of the earthly Church which would appear to be the paramount concerns of this cope. In addition to the features already singled out, the entire Infancy cycle is distinguished by a series of novel touches apparent in each of the roundels; they indicate an imaginative and fresh approach to conventional models and serve to heighten interest in the manner of representation. In the Annunciation the lilies are red in colour as opposed to the symbolic white (Fig. 49), and have more flower heads than the usual three. Behind the Virgin is a throne instead of the expected lectern stand, perhaps a reference to her royal descent. The Holy Spirit is conspiratorily hovering by the Virgin's head rather than in the more detached middle space between the two figures. It looks almost as if the message were coming not from the angel but from the dove, which appears to be pulling Mary's veil back. This probably refers to the medieval belief that the supernatural conception by the Holy Spirit came through the Virgin's ear. More attention is given to a setting for the Visitation than is normally the case (Fig. 50), with Elizabeth apparently emerging from the front of her home and being greeted by the Virgin, who seems rather to be attached to an interior and to have risen from a seat, again resembling a throne in its rich ornamentation. This is a somewhat idiosyncratic interpretation of the account as told in Luke 1:36-56, where the Virgin is described as travelling "into the hill country". Since, however, great care is taken on this cope to ensure immediate recognition of the Virgin--she is consistently clothed with the same two colours, blue and peach, with the exception of the
Assumption and the Nativity—there can be no mistaking the context. The Annunciation to the Shepherds conforms more visibly to other interpretations (Fig. 51), but great care has been taken to make the "bagpipes" clasped by one of the shepherds clearly recognizable. The artist seems to have delighted in creating the outdoor scene with its exotic rocky hillock and delicate cloud range, which matches the characteristic depiction of the sky found in manuscripts such as the Ormsby Psalter (Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Douce 366, end 13th Century, c1310 and c1325), or the Canonici and Dublin Apocalypses (Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Canonici Biblical 62; Dublin, Trinity College MS 64 K.4.31, c1310-c1320). In much the same way he has lavished attention on the horses in the Journey of the Magi, giving them distinctive piebald markings, and an air of intense concentration which almost propels them through the barrier of the frame. These dappled horses are also found on the Bologna, Pienza and Steeple Aston copes.

In Christ with the Doctors the Virgin is seen to keep a strong restraining hand on the Christ child—a show of reluctance to accept the inevitable and a direct contradiction of her behaviour in the Presentation. Christ's arms are crossed in an awkward pose as he makes his point to the Elders, characterized by their pointed Jewish caps. It is worth noting that very little use is made of costume on this cope; the figures are dressed with a considerable degree of uniformity with only simple colour reversals providing variety. Striped hose are, however, used as the mark of a tormentor in some scenes, but no tied bonnets or grotesque facial characteristics, as is usual on later vestments, are found. Rather than lying on the ground, the Magi are seated on a bench in the Dream, two asleep and one awake to listen to the angel's warning. Henderson indicates that this variation belongs to a tradition which links it to the Aedwine and Munich Psalters (Cambridge, Trinity College R.17.1; Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek Clm.835, c1200-10?), an interpretation which seems already to have been giving way to the alternative depiction of the Magi lying under a coverlet. The pose of the right hand king, who rests a cheek on his hand which is in turn resting on the knee of a leg lifted onto the seat, is complex and unusual. The
Massacre of the Innocents is presented with an economy which allows for only a single soldier, mother and infant. The action is carried out in front of a seated Herod who, although clasping a sword—twice the size of that held in the Magi Before Herod—in the attitude of a ruler, is not in the crossed legged pose often associated with tyrannical monarchs. This would seem to be a particularly English detail which is found on each of the other three copes to be looked at. The somewhat unusual selection of the iconography, along with the imaginative details noted above, makes this cycle distinctive and interesting bearing in part, as it seems clearly to do, influences of the personal involvement of the patron or recipient of the cope.

There is much less unexpected content in the Passion and Resurrection cycle on the opposite side, although inclusion of the Payment of Judas is another unique representation in opus Anglicanum (Fig. 52). This is presumably one more instance of personal choice since there is a number of other subjects which could have been used to complete the programme, for instance: the Entry into Jerusalem, Doubting of Thomas or the Supper at Emmaus. It is also comparatively rare to find both the Mocking and the Flagellation in the same sequence, but it reinforces the mood of malevolence, persecution and torture which has already been uncovered in the Childhood imagery. The idea that the emphasis on the suffering of Christ, and the nature of his sacrifice, would seem to be a conscious decision is also apparent here since, of the thirteen available roundels, only three are devoted to the triumphal events of the resurrection which followed the final defeat of the crucifixion. Indeed the Ascension is banished to the outside edge of the narrative, and compressed into one of the curtailed peripheral spaces.

Christ is seen betrayed for money by His disciple, humiliated before Pilate, degraded and suffering at the hands of His tormentors, labouring with the weight of the cross, in the ultimate agony as He accepts His sacrificial death by crucifixion, and finally as a limp and leaden corpse. The actual resurrection is indicated in this instance by the earlier convention of the Three Maries at the Tomb (Fig. 39), lifting the empty shroud which the angel points to; it is not until a later date that Christ is seen
climbing out of the sarcophagus. The form given to the tomb is interesting in that it has an open arch: in the Entombment this detail allows the legs of the figure behind to be seen below (Fig. 36). This same feature is also found on the Skå cope orphrey, it may be related to the prayer cavities on contemporary saints tombs such as that of the Confessor in Westminster Abbey. Here again an opportunity to stress the sacramental aspects has been exploited in the suggestion of the tomb, looking rather like a shrine, having already taken the form of an altar covered with a green cloth. The gesture of Mary holding the grave clothes, which lie on top, draws attention to their transformation into the corporal. The effect that the accumulation of imagery devoted to Christ's humanity and subsequent Passion has, is to signal the magnitude of the sacrifice made on behalf of sinful man. This sacrifice was being reenacted in the Eucharist. Through its efficacy salvation was made available for the assembled faithful in the form of the symbolic body and blood of Christ. That this was so is again underlined by the action of Nicodemus in the Entombment, where, although holding his jar of ointment or spices, he clearly points to the wound in Christ's side from which issued the blood and water of the Eucharist (and Baptism) - and the Church. Thus it can be seen, as indicated above, that the imagery was directly connected to the activity of the High Mass. Through it, the words and actions of the liturgy were linked to the cope, which encompassed all the mysteries and consequences of the Incarnation and, at the same time, made actual the channel between the earthly and the heavenly through which the gift of redemptive grace could be received. 37

This last function of the vestment is made clear by the Marian cycle in the central section of the cope, but is demonstrated in action through the inclusion of Noli me Tangere and the Descent into Limbo (Figs. 53 and 54), both of which deal with sinners who have been redeemed and forgiven by virtue of Christ's infinite mercy. The allocation of the most important part of the vestment to the Mother of God serves finally to vindicate the suggestion that the cope has an important and vital contribution to make within the context of the liturgy. As the Queen of Heaven, the Virgin acted as Intercessor for mankind, in the presence of God to whom all the prayers of the Mass
had been directed, and as the channel through which grace could flow to earth. This article of faith was spelled out in the Collect for Masses of the Blessed Virgin Mary:

O God, who wast pleased that thy Word should take flesh in the womb of blessed ever-virgin Mary, through the message of an angel, grant unto us thy supplicants, that as we believe her to be truly the mother of God, so we may be aided by her intercessions before thee.

Since Mary had been chosen as the vessel for the Incarnation, she was taken to be the Bride of God which, by extension, equated her with the Bride of Christ and the Church. In this way the Coronation of the Virgin was directly related to the triumph of the Church. This allegorical interpretation was linked typographically to the Old Testament accounts of both Esther and Ahasuerus, and the marriage of Solomon to his Bride in the Song of Songs: "Come from Lebanon, my bride ... come and thou shalt be crowned" (Cant. 4:8). Using the Psalms forty-four and forty-five: "Astitit regina a dextris tuis, in vestitu deaurato ..." (The queen stood at thy right side in clothing of gold ...), and the Song of Songs, scriptural sources were made to compliment the apocryphal legends of the Virgin and served to account for her elevated rank. Having been expounded by such figures as Ambrose, St. Bernard and St. Augustine, the dramatic climax of Her life came to be seen as the consummation of her victory, and that of the Church. The concept was authorised, again from the scriptures, in the Book of Revelation where the allegorical meaning was made clear: "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." (Rev. 21:2).

The choice of the Death, Assumption and Coronation of the Virgin together make visible both the unique nature of Mary (Figs. 40, 55 and Pl. 12), as chosen by God to be received bodily and spiritually in the Court of Heaven, and the special role she played as intermediary between the two spheres. Located at the focal point of the entire iconographic programme, shown as the Bride of Christ and His equal, the Virgin sits finally at His right hand and shares His throne. An angel places a crown on her head as she turns to worship the Father and receive His blessing; censing angels
directly above sanctify the scene and the holy figures, making explicit the exalted nature of the ultimate triumph of the Virgin. Adorned as she is with the crown of everlasting life and reverenced above the angels in a union of the mortal and the immortal, her coronation signified the completion and fulfilment of all the promises made to man.

It should be noted that the inclusion of the Assumption of the Virgin is a clear indication of an attitude of theological belief regarding the doctrinal significance accorded to the Virgin. The essence of divinity which Mary—alone of women—held, made possible the miracle by which the humanity of Christ was assured, without violation of the purity of His mother. On this cope the Mother of God is assumed in full glory: surrounded by a mandorla and accompanied by angels, the body of the Virgin is seen leaving the earthly sphere and moving towards the heavenly. This event belonged to Immaculist imagery, indicating the concept that the Virgin was part of God’s scheme for the redemption of mankind from the beginning of time, before Creation; that she was always pure, exempt from the punishment of death and, hence, had the power to impart grace herself as an active agent of salvation. Although not officially sanctioned by the Church of Rome, at this date this was the prevailing contemporary stand among the English clerics and there is nothing particularly surprising to find the bodily assumption depicted. The cult of the Virgin reached back to Anglo-Saxon times in England where the Feast of the Immaculate Conception was first celebrated. The continued growth in the popularity of the Virgin reflected interest in her part in the Incarnation of the Logos, and in the humanity of Christ. However, the decision to include the scene in the first place, and to accord it such prominence through its crucial location, is likely to have reflected a personal interest — it is possible that this was seen as an opportunity to spell out the doctrine in detail.

The direct ascent of the central iconography as it progresses up to the top of the cope also represents pictorially the steps for provision of a means of grace through the Virgin. It acts as the equivalent of an emotional thrust heavenward, and provides an uninterrupted channel from earth below to the Celestial City above, linking the
assembled congregation with the otherworldly region and giving visual expression to the words uttered by the celebrant:

... this marriage of the Lord and the Church is accomplished not only in the Passion and the Resurrection of the Word; it continues, throughout all the reign of the Church, in the wedding chamber of the sacraments, through Baptism and the Eucharist which are a participation in it.\(^{44}\)

The way is clear for the passage of prayers to heaven and grace to earth, assisted by the presence of the angelic host referred to at the outset, and which is known to have been an essential element at the celebration of the Eucharist. The ubiquitous nature of the lamp-bearing censing angels spread over the surface of the embroidery is, thus, central to the proposed function of the cope as it is used during solemn High Mass. There are direct references to their presence at the altar in the liturgy, while their place of honour surrounding the throne of God, in the Celestial Hierarchy which is present at the Mass, is well documented.\(^{45}\)

The question of emphasis on the Anagni cope has been seen to be of a general nature rather than a specific one which, instead of directing the eye, is used to inform and orchestrate the overall content of the programme in its entirety. If the hypothetical function for the cope is accepted—according to it a vital role in the context of the Eucharist—the emphasis can be seen to work simultaneously in support of both concepts - meaning and function. On this vestment the chosen iconographic images are closely tied to the Church, its establishment and work through teaching and dispensing salvation, and the performance of the Eucharist itself. The mystical marriage of Christ with His Church offered the possibility of redemption to the congregation, assembled in this context to participate in a symbolic, and dramatic, reenactment of the life, passion and resurrection of the Son of God. By encompassing these themes within the representations, and by the authority conferred on the wearer through the vesting prayers as the ceremonial robe was put on, the call to worship inherent in the act of processing would be implied through the splendour of the cope.
In addition, during the liturgy of the pre-Mass, the visual confirmation of the reality of the words being said and sung at the steps of the altar by the images, would have set the scene and helped with the preparation of the faithful for readiness to receive the sacraments. The angelic presence would have played its part by making actual the movement between the earthly and the heavenly, bringing the two zones together in shared worship. Despite the ornate, complex and comprehensive decorative schemes found within churches, and despite the emotive quality of the words and the music, no other single article would have had the power to hold within itself such multifarious meanings, or perform such an awesome task. The chasuble, regarded as the most sacred of vestments since it was worn during the Canon of the Mass, could not work in this way partly because it was necessarily curtailed for practical reasons, but also since it was confined to use at the altar which was generally hidden from the congregation at the crucial part of the service. In spite of these serious purposes, the cope was still able to incorporate personal touches in its iconography as demonstrated by the selection of both unusual episodes and unusual interpretations.

To move from the Anagni cope to that of Bologna serves to demonstrate visually, and with considerable force, the point about the variety among the known medieval vestments (Frontispiece and Pl. 13). At first sight these two robes appear to have little or nothing in common, apart from both being completely covered with figurative ornamentation and having the same muted colouring. The Bologna cope, dated uncertainly by Christie as early fourteenth century, is clearly of a later time than that of Anagni, probably belonging to the last years of the thirteenth century. The more sophisticated structural framework bears a much closer resemblance to that of the Lateran in having an architectonic layout, but there that similarity ends also. Far from being fancifully decorative arcades, here the architectural components—resembling blind arcading—relate to true architectural forms, recognizable, clearly defined and rational, although the somewhat insubstantial columns seem out of proportion to the load they are made to carry. Unlike the overcrowded Lateran cope where the
framework becomes absorbed into the overall mass of ornamentation, here it stands out sharply and impresses itself on the viewer's eye before any of the narratives can be appreciated. This is the result of a greatly simplified, but quite majestic, plan: comprising only two tiers, which give a total of just nineteen compartments as opposed to thirty on the Anagni and twenty seven on the Lateran and Pienza. The arcades are surmounted by narrow bands containing an imposing series of heads mounted within geometrical frames,46 and a glorious celestial orchestra fills the spandrels. The surface of the cope is beautifully articulated by the contrasting elements of the vertical narrative compartments and the "horizontality" of these semi-circular divisions. Paradoxically, as well as breaking up the different zones of decoration, by echoing the shape of the cope itself, these bands serve also to unite the parts and continually draw the eye back around the field of decoration. The simplicity and regularity of the arcaded compartments establishes a rhythmic flow which propels the narrative over the surface of the vestment and allows for a coherent reading and understanding of the imagery. Unfortunately these aspects can only be fully effective when the robe is seen completely extended.

It is perhaps a misnomer to label this design "simplified" since it displays a sophistication which, to twentieth century minds, represents an advance on the earlier example. Given the great diversity of organizing frameworks it would seem that the choice of any particular type was simply a personal one, made by the patron possibly from a series of examples put forward by an artist, or as a copy of something seen and admired elsewhere. Since the design layout determined how many scenes could be incorporated, and whether secondary themes might be accommodated in any resulting spaces, it would have been a crucial factor from the very beginning, and hardly something to be left to chance.

It is only possible to guess, on the basis of common sense since the paucity of documentation leaves no alternative, whether the plan determined the narratives, or vice versa. It is most likely that a patron would have outlined what theological aspects he wished on his vestment, and then perhaps worked with a designer to see how best to
display these on the semi-circular field of decoration. The results might well have arisen from consideration of both of the determining factors. If the contention can be maintained, that didactic considerations were not what determined the iconographic programmes, then both content, and the formula used to display it, would appear to be areas where personal preference could decide the outcome. The so-called "chronological" development of the different types of festive cope plans, does nothing to interfere with such an idea. It is probable that a patron would wish, at the very least, to be in "fashion", and parallels with the growing complexity seen in contemporary architecture can be found in the devices used to break up the field of decoration for the decorative embroidered programmes.

The most obvious consequence of the much reduced number of scenes should be that the representations are larger, better spaced out and able to be appreciated more readily, and indeed this is largely the case. Interestingly, however, the size of the main protagonists is not so very different: on the Anagni cope they can be approximately 12" high; on the Lateran approximately 10"; the Bologna approximately 13" and approximately 11" on the Pienza. This can be explained, in part, by the finished size of the vestment which in the case of the Bologna cope, at 4'10" x 10'7", is smaller by comparison with the Anagni at 5'3" x 11'8" and the Lateran at 5'2½" x 11'½" (these figures represent the width at the centre back and the length of the straight edge). Although the outside border and the orphrey are lost, which means that the original dimensions will have been greater, this is still measuring like with like since both the other examples carry decoration to the outside edges. The height is made up of 20" for each arcade, 5½" for the heads and the remaining 7" belonging to the missing hood; but the spandrel spaces which allow the angelic host to participate, inevitably cut down the amount of room for the narrative figures, which brings them in line with the other examples in spite of there being only two tiers.

Again the principal representations cover incidents from the two main Christological narratives, the Christmas and Easter cycles; eleven in the lowest register devoted to the birth and infancy of Christ and seven to His death and
resurrection at the top. These central themes found on each of the copes, link them in a way which is suggestive of a direct relation to the proposed function of the vestment - as a symbolic pre-Mass robe. It is found, as before, that nothing disturbs the overall stability of the representations and the muted colour which envelopes the surface in a soft, predominantly golden, glow. It is to be remembered that the original colour will have been much sharper and possibly brighter, but interesting to note the uniformity of whatever fading has taken place. This applies to each of the four pontifical copes and *opus Anglicanum* generally. Again there is nothing which is visually arresting when viewing the entire surface of the cope; neither colour nor layout have been used to direct attention, nor has the structure been adapted in any way to allow prominence to any particular episodes. However, the design is distinctive in its own way since it has no central axis, although the Crucifixion is situated in what has been seen to be the most important location - at the top of the centre back. There is no other instance of this apparent departure from traditional formats amongst the remaining nineteen vestments, but the Crucifixion is not always confined to the central space, it is part of the body of the narratives on the Anagni cope. The spacing of the compartments gives an even number in the bottom register and an odd number above. This inevitably means that the middle of the lower register will fall in between scenes--the Massacre of the Innocents is on the left and the Presentation in the Temple on the right--which gives a choice of either emphasising two of them or having a continuous chronological flow. Strangely, having decided on the latter of the choices, the very last scene presents a mysterious curiosity by finishing off a cycle of the Life of Christ with the Martyrdom of Thomas Becket (Fig. 56). Amongst the small number of oddities found in the body of *opus Anglicanum* copes, this must rank as the most strange, and possibly the most difficult to account for.

A couple of conclusions may be drawn from this interesting deviation from what has seemed to be normal practice. Firstly, as suggested above, it indicates that although the centre back panel is clearly the obvious place for crucial doctrinal issues, it need not necessarily be used in this way. In other words, there was no particular
formula decreed by church authorities to which artists or ecclesiastics had to conform. This is confirmed by the seemingly arbitrary pictorial use made on this cope of the outside edges, and further supports the idea that design and layout, iconographic content and composition, were indeed matters determined on the basis of individual taste, selection and interpretation. It also helps to account for the amazing variety both of imagery and format among the twenty known vestments. Secondly, following on from this, it has now been demonstrated that, even given a liturgical application for the robe, personal preferences could be accommodated without detracting from the crucial ecclesiastical concepts. The range of choice for decorative programmes was extensive. In addition, the suggestion that didactic concerns did not determine the pictorial decoration, or any use made of the images on these copes, must now be self-evident.

Nothing can be learned from the scenes which meet up at the front openings of the cope: the Annunciation is opposite the Martyrdom of Thomas Becket, and the Entry into Jerusalem faces Noli me Tangere. It may seem paradoxical to find that the vestment which presents its imagery with the greatest clarity has singularly failed to use the available opportunities to deliver a particular message, or to direct attention to any specific aspect of the iconography. This leads to the question of whether there are other pointers to indicate a thematic emphasis in its imagery which might tie it to its ecclesiastical context in the same way as seen on the Anagni example. Leaving the Becket martyrdom aside for the present, the rest of the representations have been seen to fall neatly into the two Christological cycles. One of the first things to notice is the absence of any Marian themes or emphasis this time; when the Virgin appears it is as the Mother of Christ, handmaiden of the Lord, instrument of the Incarnation, and fellow-sufferer at the crucifixion. Nothing is seen to indicate her personal triumph over death, her symbolic association with the Church, or intercessory role.

Of the limited number of eighteen scenes eleven belong to the Nativity cycle, and, as on the Anagni cope, four of these are devoted to the story of the Magi, shown sequentially and chronologically. The events selected match those on the earlier
vestment: the Magi before Herod, the Journey of the Magi, the Adoration and the Dream. Given that there are only a possible twelve compartments for the Nativity cycle, it is doubly curious that four should be allocated to the Magi in this way instead of the more usual single Adoration. Although the traditional scenes, from the Annunciation through to the Presentation in the Temple, are all incorporated there is still a small number of other subjects—such as Christ with the Doctors or either of the Corn or Palm Tree Miracles—which could have been used to fill up the spaces. Inclusion of another Martyrdom at the outset would also have balanced the programme; alternatively events from the life of the Virgin could have preceded the Nativity cycle. This suggests that the emphasis on the Magi was intentional and doubtless in response to a request from the patron, as has also been proposed for the Anagni selection. Possible interpretations offered for the motive behind the inclusion of this feature in that instance drew on the theme of monarchy, the subjugation of the earthly authority to the heavenly and the spread of Christianity throughout the world. Again, any or all of these conceptions might be equally valid and could serve to elucidate its presence; however, unlike the previous example, the evidence here does tend to suggest a greater likelihood of a royal commission.

Although they share the same iconographic formats these compositions display a higher degree of animation and greater exploitation of costume, which highlights the royal status of the characters through the repeated use of vair. In the Dream, the Kings sleep, on a strange form of makeshift bed comprising four draped posts, underneath an expansive coverlet made entirely of this precious fur. Herod, whose rank is already made clear by his crown and lining his cloak with vair, is given additional authority by his arms akimbo holding erect the sword of justice and by placing his throne on a raised podium. The aggressive pose of the tyrannical ruler, this time with his leg crossed on his knee, is reinforced by a sinister expression on his upturned face and the threatening attitude of his arms. The feeling of menace is echoed in the armed figure behind who guards the throne, depicted leaning forward poised for action, sword at the
ready. His grotesque facial features make it quite clear that the visiting Kings are in a hostile camp.

The most striking difference between the two series is found in the Dream where, as just mentioned, the Magi sleep, lying covered this time, in a hammock-type bed with a very ornamental pillow/bolster, rather than seated on a bench. In addition, there seems to be dialogue between the angel and the closest king who is wide awake in contrast with the other two, whose sleeping heads are turned away and rest on their hands. In the Journey there is an interesting parallel in the use of a piebald horse whose markings are, however, strangely inconsistent; there is no attempt to include three complete animals this time but a sense of movement is conveyed through the disposition of numerous feet and the agitated attitude of the head of the middle horse. On both of the copes a costume splits open exposing a king’s leg and foot in the stirrup, but in the Bologna cope a carefully fashioned tunic, draped over the ornate saddle-cloth, also falls open to reveal the body underneath; this attention to detail is noticeable throughout the representations. In the Adoration the Virgin (Fig. 57), crowned this time to indicate her elevated status as Queen of Heaven and descent from the royal House of David, is seated on an elaborate raised architectonic Gothic throne, a rare occurrence in opus Anglicanum. Here, the eldest king has retained his crown, which is more usually removed as a gesture of respect for the divinity of the infant being worshipped.

These features, while demonstrating different interpretations deriving presumably from later models, shed little light on the questions being asked of the iconography. However, unlike the Anagni interpretation, this time there is an undoubted stress on the regal status of the various protagonists which may be an indication of royal patronage.

Looking at the rest of the narratives, some of the singularities are matters of compositional differences, such as the absence of the dove and vase of lilies in the Annunciation; but others are more significant. The two heads in the Visitation are close enough to be evocative of the kiss or embrace which signifies conception in the Golden Gate scene of the life of the Virgin; however, having just seen the Annunciation, nothing more than an affectionate greeting may be intended. Elizabeth,
unusually portrayed here as a young girl, is the first human to testify to the divinity of the Virgin's child, and her words serve to confirm the miraculous conception just witnessed. In the Nativity the ox and ass, eating from a trough, are now lying in the foreground. The sacramental emphasis which has been noted elsewhere is not to be found in this interpretation; here the Virgin cradles the tiny infant in her arms, the heads of the mother and child are almost touching and they exchange tender glances. There is no hint of foreboding, rather it is an intimate portrait of a family in somewhat more opulent surroundings than is customary. The bed, similar to that seen with the Dream of the Magi, is richly draped and covered with another blanket of vair, and the child is not in the usual simple white cloth or swaddling clothes but dressed in a distinctive fashion. Joseph completes the group, seated on a stool and pensively fingerling his beard. The background space is filled with a curtain thrown over a bar, the Byzantine convention to indicate an interior and an odd touch to find in this characteristically English decorative scheme.

In the midst of a conventional Annunciation to the Shepherds the angel, which is a particularly beautiful creation with realistic anatomical modelling, is given an unusual coronet, described by Christie as "a crown of vine leaves". The Flight into Egypt is an expansive version which includes the young man, carrying a bundle on a rod over his shoulders, who leads the ass while looking out for the well-being of the travellers in his care. Here again the affection of the mother and child is indicated, the two heads are tightly enclosed in an oval shape made from the Virgin's halo, cloak and encircling arms. Nothing detracts from the simple domestic situation of the threatened family making their escape; no reference to either the fallen idols or the miracle of the palm tree is visible.

In the Massacre of the Innocents three different atrocities are still presented with an economy which, nevertheless, graphically conveys the horror of the situation. This is due in part to the striking motif of a severed head held by one of the mothers; a child skewered at the apex of the composition; and the dramatic classical motif of a grief stricken seated figure tearing at its hair, with a headless body slung across its feet.
One of the armoured assassins wears a strange coronet which bears a close resemblance to that noted on the angel annunciate. The deaths of the innocent children under such violent conditions brought them the reward of being regarded as the first martyrs to the faith; understood as having been baptised in blood, they could join the Company of Heaven and take their place among the saints by the throne of God. This is made explicit in the Book of Revelations: "and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God ... and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.". The inclusion of this massacre of Holy Innocents, commemorated as a minor double feast on December 28th, was appropriate to both the historical context and that of the calendar of Church festivals.

Far from embracing His impending destiny, this time the Christ child, being placed on the altar, pulls away from the veiled hands of the respectful Simeon in the Presentation. The conflict between the mother dutifully presenting her son, and the child's unwillingness to co-operate, is imaginatively conveyed by the diagonal swing of His body. Joseph is in attendance, as he was at the Nativity and the Flight, standing passively at the back, characterized by his flat Jewish hat and carrying the sacrificial doves in a basket; no handmaiden is included. In this interpretation great care has been lavished on the altar which is ornately carved and draped with a richly braided cloth. The inclusion of a lamp at the apex of the composition may be to indicate an interior setting.49

Moving to the top tier of images the Passion begins with a very ambitious composition of the Entry into Jerusalem (Fig. 58). It incorporates a complex and full-scale entrance lodge, at the top of a flight of stairs to the city, within which citizens watch the procession and a youth spreads his cloak on the ground before the approaching Christ, who rides side-saddle on the ass His right hand raised in blessing. Two disciples bring up the rear and in the middle, poised precariously in the branches of a full-height acorn tree rather than the sycamore of the Bible, a figure, who must be Zacchaeus as mentioned in Luke 19:3-4, leans out for a better view of the event. A number of free-floating oak leaves represent the branches which were strewn in the
way of Christ; similarly, under the donkey a pair of branches of "vine" leaves is lying, seemingly detached, on the ground. The incorporation of oak—reflected at the opposite end in the garden of Noli me tangere—and vine leaves, instead of the more appropriate olive, sycamore or palm, may result from the model the artist is relying on. Alternatively, the oak could have been included because it was a symbol of Christ, was among the types of wood from which the Cross was considered to have been made, or that it also represented the strength of Christian faith under duress. Any one or all of these interpretations would be relevant since they serve to underline the forthcoming Passion with its torment and sacrifice. This single scene has incorporated all the various actions which are recounted in the different Gospels in a masterly composition which fills the compartment but remains uncrowded. The same cannot be said of the neighbouring Betrayal where the sense of over-crowding infuses the scene with a tension entirely appropriate to the event (Fig. 59). The large-scale figure of Christ is being attacked on all sides as He stands immobile and benignly blesses His accuser. In the foreground Malchus receives his punishment: "Simon Peter having a sword, drew it, and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear ...", John 18:10. The sinister nature of the tormentors is indicated in different ways; by the use of grotesque facial features, a Phrygian winged hat and a coloured figure.

The Flagellation is next to the Crucifixion—which is distinguished by an extraordinarily long inscription above the cross—and is balanced by the Resurrection on the other side; the three scenes follow conventional iconography but the pair of angels at the tomb are unusual in not being matched. While they both swing censers, the left angel—whose robe is curiously allowed to overlap the previous scene—is vested in a distinctive garment seemingly made from a patterned damask or brocade fabric (Fig. 60), braided at the cuffs, elbow, knee and hem. As the vestment for a deacon whose role is to assist the Officiant at the Mass, this is an overt reference to the sacrificial undertones inherent in both the cycle and the scene. At the front of the tomb, clumsily clustered together, are four sleeping soldiers instead of the more conventional three, fully covered in chain-mail with large emblazoned shields. This is followed by
the first of only four instances in *opus Anglicanum* of the *Descent into Limbo* (Fig. 61), beautifully composed to fill the space and fit the shape of the compartment, with the pennant of the resurrection cross fluttering at the apex. The fearsome head of Leviathan covers two of the three sides of the frame; the artist has masterfully created a cavernous opening formed by huge jaws with menacing teeth, and folds of skin which merge into the rich mane falling from the fierce brow above a glaring eye and flaring nostrils. The picturesque demon holds six fully characterized busts, led by Adam and Eve, with hands reaching out in supplication to Christ. He is seen full height carrying the cross as the symbol of His triumph over death, and striding across the mouth towards the sinners and pagans He is to rescue. This is a vivid realization of the mouth of hell which brings the concept alive without the need for further extraneous details.

After this powerful rendition the cycle is finished with the tranquillity found in the garden setting of the *Noli me Tangere* which, by contrast, is almost poetical in the gentle curve of the majestic figure of Christ, echoed in the form of the twin-branched oak tree scattering its leaves in every corner of the scene. Far from preventing communication, in this reminder of the *Corpus Christi*, Christ seems actually to be about to touch the kneeling Magdalen, who is presented without her usual attribute of the jar of ointment. Christ's almost protective gesture in a sense reflects the tenderness seen earlier in the relationship between the Virgin and Child and picks up the more generally benign mood of the imagery on this cope. The selection of resurrection episodes is interesting since, rather than focussing on the witnesses to the miracle, they cover a number of different aspects: the actual triumphal moment, the liberating consequences of Christ's victory and the affirmation of the event by the revelation to the Magdalen.

These representations, which maintain their doctrinal accuracy in spite of the points of interest just outlined, are the work of an assured and sophisticated artist. There is a grace and refinement about the figures which has led scholars (among them Lethaby, Brieger and Montefusco) to suggest links with the Court Style associated with Westminster in the last quarter of the thirteenth century. However, this artistic
sophistication, and the marked structural difference, do nothing to diminish the "family" connection revealed between the Bologna and the Anagni vestments: it is clear that the concerns were shared, as was the thematic emphasis. Crucial theological concepts--such as the Incarnation, the dual nature of the Son of God, the role of the Church in the history of Salvation--have been incorporated within complex extended Christological cycles, which were still able to accommodate personal preferences without the loss of dogmatic integrity. The historical stories encapsulated in visual terms allowed the robes to operate as ecclesiastical exemplars, within a religious application which fitted the robes for use in celebrations of solemn High Mass on special feast days. While the earlier example carries an additional stress on the work of the Church, the imagery of both is addressed to the sacramental aspect of the life Christ and the divine mysteries which surrounded His coming and His resurrection commemorated in the Eucharistic sacrifice.

This of course brings to the fore the tantalising question of patronage which, as has been apparent throughout, can offer no solid grounds for assumptions. However, given that the celebration copes are individual creations, no other instance exists where a Christological cycle incorporates an isolated martyrdom situated in one of the few available crucial locations. Where saints appear they are either paired--as on the Lateran cope--or used as the "narrative" substance as on such examples as the Pienza, Vatican or Toledo copes. The most obvious explanation for such a strange deviation is that the inclusion of the martyrdom of Thomas Becket, in this instance, was the result of an order from the purchaser, either to suit his own interests or those of the intended recipient if the cope were to have been a gift. The prominent location would surely also have been something chosen by the patron. A few possibilities suggest themselves for the choice of the renowned English saint: it could have been someone's name saint; an institution or location's patron saint; the recipient's church being dedicated to Saint Thomas, or the 29th of December as the Saint's feast day somehow made it an appropriate image to incorporate in a Christmas cycle. Alternatively, it could have had something to do with what the Saint stood for, or because someone chose to be
associated with the account given in The Golden Legend of the "depth in his great humility" or his teaching of "the people with words and good deeds".52

As well as the elusive significance of the scene's out-of-context appearance, there is also the question of its placement. Being situated in this prominent spot right at the front of the cope, would suggest that the martyrdom was a matter of some considerable importance to the patron, for whatever reason. The repeated and blatant use of the luxury fur and the castellation, might have some bearing on the issue, reflecting the possibility of a noble connection at the least, or even, and perhaps more likely, a regal one. Christie deals with the problem in a suitably ambiguous fashion: "it is a puzzling example to place, for there are conflicting elements in its composition.", and further on simply, "the odd scene illustrates the martyrdom of St. Thomas of Canterbury."53 The scant information known tells only that the cope was formerly held in the Convent of St. Domenico, which throws no further light on the question of patronage, or on any of the other problems associated with the robe. The cope--one of eight--listed in the 1390 inventory of gifts to the priory of St. Domenico: "Item unum pluviale magnum cum figuris contextum de auro et fuit domini benedicti pape" (Likewise one large cope with figures covered in gold and it was of the blessed lord pope),54 is taken to be the Bologna cope (sometimes referred to as the San Domenico cope), although there is nothing describing it as being of the opere anglicano which is common in other extant contemporary inventories. From a Perugian inventory of his wardrobe belonging to 1758, it is known that Pope Benedict XI, a Dominican in office between 1303-4, owned English embroidered copes: "Item ... unum pluviale pretiosum ad imagines de opere anglicano ... Item unum pluviale pretiosum de eodem opere ad imagines" (Likewise ... one precious cope with figures of English work ... one precious cope of the same work with figures).55 On the basis of these entries it is not possible to state categorically that the Bologna cope is one of them; indeed the vestment could possibly have been given by any pope falling heir to it up to 1390. However, given the scholarly work of Montefusco to substantiate the connection, and the lack of fresh evidence, it seems fair to accept the proposal.56 She
suggests that, if this is the identical vestment, the date would provide a *terminus ante quem* for the robe's manufacture. Montefusco then uses this, along with similarities found with the Westminster Retable and the Court Style generally, to support her contention that it belongs to the last decade of the thirteenth century.\textsuperscript{57}

Her dating of c1290-1304 would give a choice of four popes as possible patrons - none having the Christian name Tomaso. Among these are Nicholas IV who presented the Ascoli Piceno cope to his birthplace, and the Benedetto Gaetani already associated with the Anagni cope; but no connection is directly established by any known documentary source between any of the four popes and the Bologna cope. The letter detailing the bequest of Nicholas IV is crucial since it is evidence that copes were regarded in much the same way as land, to be willed with strict conditions attached if it were felt necessary. The cathedral in Ascoli received its vestment in 1288 with orders that it was to be used only for "*diebus utamini sollemptibus et festivis...*", and that the Chapter was absolutely prohibited to sell, pledge or part with the robe "*pro quavis ipsius necessitate...*". The significance of such a gift is made clear, as is the veneration with which it was regarded.\textsuperscript{58} The English monarch at the time was Edward I (1272-1307), whose wives were Eleanor of Castille and Margaret of France; however, there is no record of any cope having being gifted from any of these individuals. If King's idea is remembered--that a papal accession was marked by the gift of a cope from the English crown, which he takes to be the provenance of the Bologna cope\textsuperscript{59}--it would seem most odd that within a matter of months of receiving such a munificent offering, the pope were to have disposed of it.

Failing any concrete evidence of patronage from the iconographic programmes, there remains the possibility of information lurking in the secondary themes. A series of nimbed heads without attributes is found in the two dividing bands between the images: twenty two in the lower and nine in the upper, framed in the same eight-pointed medallions of the Westminster Retable (Fig. 62).\textsuperscript{60} They lack the coherence of proportional spacing seen with the narrative panels and, hence, do not tie in with them; in fact, the heads, grouped more or less in pairs, seem to be oblivious to all except
their opposite number. In spite of their seeming indifference, however, the figures are related to the drama being enacted around them since they consist of apostles, saints and/or prophets - in other words, the Company of Heaven. Each is characterized (two are tonsured), but identification is largely a matter of speculation with the exception of three, possibly four, individuals in the top tier, and the group is distinguished by a representation of the only "Veronika" head of Christ in opus Anglicanum (Fig. 63, also Fig. 23). This delicate and beautifully rendered head is the only one facing to the front; located in the central spot directly above the Crucifixion it is in the tradition of the famed Matthew Paris drawing, and similar devotional images in manuscripts. Evoking associations with both the road to Calvary--when the sudarium received the miraculous imprint of Christ's face, as Veronika mopped His brow--and the crucifixion seen below; the image also bears a resemblance to representations of Christ in Majesty, and thereby can be seen to refer to the resurrection and the Second Coming. When originally worn, the point of the triangular hood of the cope would have fallen directly above this image which would have directed attention to it; however, being only about five inches high, the tiny face could hardly have served the usual purpose - to encourage meditation and devotion. Nevertheless, the inclusion in this section of the heavily symbolic face, provides a thematic focal point and allows the "sub-text" to carry greater weight both theologically and iconographically.

The medallions, bounded for the greater part by decorative "acanthus" foliage (Fig. 64), on the top tier are distinguished by having the distinctive ornamental touch of a series of alternating pairs of realistic birds, which replace the leaves of the lower band. This would seem to be a restrained foretaste of what was later expanded into fanciful bird capitals on the Lateran cope, and the picturesque orphrey and border of the Pienza. Reflective of the English fondness for natural details--of animal, bird or plant life--the creatures appear to have no other function than to provide decoration, although they may possibly be intended to differentiate between the two registers in order to impart greater significance to the figures in the top.
Clearly this generalized pictorial interpretation was all that was required since greater steps would have been taken to ensure recognition, were this to have been of significance. This time, however, being already beatified rather than enduring torture, and being also largely anonymous, their primary purpose may be tied to the links they provide with the Eucharist by illustrating the words of the liturgy. Since it would have been equally possible to fill these dividing bands with neutral or abstract decoration, the inclusion of the saints was clearly deliberate, and possibly even obligatory. Their presence endorses the connection with the history of the Church as well as with the Mass, and more particularly with the Creed, indicating the continuity and mounting store of grace.

The Bologna cope, like the Anagni, accords an important place to the angels in its iconographic programme, using them not merely for censing but to provide musical harmony from the celestial realm, with which to dignify and honour the earthly celebration of Holy Communion in which they participate. Their presence was acknowledged in the Introit and the importance of this was underlined later by the angelic prayer - the Sanctus. Situated in the spandrels, with extended wings which fill the triangular shape (Pl. 32), the angelic choir is seen in three-quarter height, robed and supported on (or emerging from) ornate and very colourful mounds of cloud. Their wings are delicate but sturdy, with the feathers carefully demarcated and banded in different colour combinations to provide infinite variety throughout the sequence of their outstretched form. Each of the thirteen in the lower zone is concerned to make its orchestral contribution; they play different instruments which include various stringed citerns ("violins"), a harp, short and long horns, cymbals, a "zither" and wonderful set of bells, the sound of which is mysteriously conjured up as the angel is seen to strike them. They fit naturally into the pictorial scheme and, unlike the equally remarkable choir on the Lateran cope, can be clearly viewed in conjunction with the narrative cycle.

Those in the upper register, of which there are eight, are representative of a different angelic responsibility; they carry crowns which are held out over the Passion
scenes to underline the gravity and significance of the events taking place below. As a dual symbol indicating either sovereignty or the victory won by a particular group of saints, a small golden crown, or aureola, was the particular reward or mark of distinction granted, in addition to the halo, as a "special degree of glory which distinguishes [martyrs, virgins or confessors] ...". Awarded only after death when the blessed reach eternal life in heaven, crowns being held by angels near, or in a scene, indicate that the suffering being depicted is to be recompensed by the eventual attainment of the precious diadem. Christ, as the pre-eminent martyr, virgin and doctor, through the example of His life and death, serves as the ultimate role-model for the faithful to imitate and follow. The attending angels who watch over His suffering on behalf of mankind, illustrate the eventuality of elevated rank within the Celestial Hierarchy and emphasise the enormity of the sacrifice. Over the Resurrection, the angels hold tiny badge-like discs in addition to the crowns (Pl. 14), an interesting deviation which, by recalling the communion wafer, serves as a reminder of the Eucharist. Further sanctification is added to the narrative of the Passion by the two angels which appear on either side of the hood having just emerged from the heavens; swinging their censers, the dramatic panorama spread out below is enveloped in the scented smoke.

As has been indicated, the opulence which characterises the Bologna cope is suggestive of a royal connection; however, according to the dating given by Montefusco, the decade in question encompasses only a single investiture of note, that of Boniface VIII who is associated with the Anagni vestments. Having gone full circle, the most obvious indication for the commissioning of this embroidery brings the enquiry back to the business of the inclusion of the Becket martyrdom (Fig. 56). The eucharistic content is marked by the vested deacon, a sub-minister at the Mass, and the covered chalice with the prepared Host set in the middle of the altar. The saint, not the Officiant since he wears his cope, kneels as if in anticipation of receiving the sacrament. The scene is divided in the middle, possibly symbolically, by the staff which the tonsured priest holds out helplessly to deter the four assailants, surging

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forward as a body towards the resigned figure of Becket. With the expected attention to detail, the square altar is sited on a tiled floor which is rendered with a pragmatic attempt at diminishing perspective. Although the same subject is found in the Ramsey Psalter, where it forms the central scene of a tri-partite design, the interpretations clearly do not depend on the same model although both have a similar pose for the dying saint. The assailants, who are fully armed, have been identified by Christie as Sir Reginald Fitzurse and Sir Edward Grim, but it is not clear if this identification depends on recognition of the heraldry on the panel or historical evidence. Unfortunately, no solution to the questions listed with regard to this episode can be offered. Neither has anything which followed from the extended Magi cycle added to the speculations concerning this feature, either to confirm or deny ideas already propounded in the case of the Anagni narratives.

With the exception of this tantalizing representation, the iconographic programme has yielded nothing which can be seen to contradict the findings of the previous enquiry. The account of the life and death of Christ seems to be entirely conventional and comprehensive; as a narrative cycle it is complimented and expanded by the secondary themes to complete the vestment's relevance for the suggested function. When combined with the parade of sacred personages, grouped around the triumphant figure of the Lord, the magnificent heavenly choir reassures the faithful of the presence of the Celestial Hierarchy, the truth of the Resurrection and the promise of redeeming grace to be dispensed at the Eucharist. What has been found on this cope is not so much "emphasis" but rather a "concentration", where everything contained in the narrative cycle points to the same crucial theme of the Incarnation, without which there could be no Eucharist. The Becket martyrdom apart, there is nothing to break the flow through from the moment of conception to the last appearances of the resurrected Christ. Even the ornamental aspects have been kept to a minimum, leaving nothing to detract the mind from contemplation of the ultimate mystery which is to be celebrated for the benefit of the faithful. Again it has been seen that all the essential components necessary for the cope to function as the pre-Mass call to worship, visual
demonstration of the events and witness to the actuality of the words to follow, are in their place.
Brief accounts of *opus Anglicanum* are given by such art historians as Margaret Rickert, *Painting in Britain: the Middle Ages*, London, 1965; Peter Brieger, 1957; Joan Evans, *English Art 1307-1461*, Oxford, 1949; a number of articles devoted to individual pieces are to be found in the *Burlington Magazine*, and W.H. Lethaby has written short critical pieces in periodicals. Books devoted to the topic are few in number and include: Christie, 1938; King, 1963; Montefusco, 1970; Brel-Bordaz, 1982; Wallis, 1988; Fanelli, 1990. There are also brief references to the topic in most historical accounts of embroidery.

That this was the case has been proved by Kyser, 1990, who used the iconography of the Ascoli Piceno cope to tie the vestment to a commission, from either English noblemen or Richard II, as a diplomatic gift to regain papal approval after the early 13th century rebellion of the English against papal authority and intervention.

Donning the vestment served to transform the wearer, in much the same way as an actor assumes the identity of a character when he puts on their costume. While many of the rest of the clerics and members of the Choir would also be wearing copes to begin with, theirs would be simple and of largely undecorated cloth, even if they were silk. Martimort, 1969, 104.

Light has always been associated with the presence of God. Although no documentation directly equates the cope with symbolic light, it could be seen to surround the wearer, in much the same way as an aureole, with a divine essence which, in its turn, reflected back over the congregation in the coloured rays which emanated from its golden jewelled surface.

There are also a chasuble, a pair of dalmatics, and a second cope reconstructed from its earlier fragmented state. These are all catalogued by Christie, 1938, 101-110.

With regard to the alterations after quoting an inventory entry from an 1858 citation, Christie says: "Although noted in the inventory as a chasuble, the vestment, to which it is suggested the entry refers, is now, and probably was originally, a cope. Internal evidence, however, points to its having been at
some period temporarily transformed from a cope to a chasuble, a change
easily effected by joining up the lower part of the front and removing the
hood. At the centre top of the cope, where the small hood once hung, a
triangular shaped piece of linen, different in texture from that forming the
ground of the cope, has been inserted. The embroidery which decorates the
inserted panel is by a different hand from the one that worked the vestment.
The inference drawn from this added fragment is that when the cope was
transformed into a chasuble, the space left plain by the removal of the hood,
which is always an ornamental feature, required the introduction of a
decorative panel, otherwise the upper half of the central roundel would have
been bare of ornament”.

The insertion is as Christie says from what I could make out, but I have only
seen the cope in poor light behind glass without the aid of a stepladder. Apart
from this there was nothing to indicate the changes outlined. They were

Where the underside-couching has worn lines appear in place of the stitchery.
Without being able to see the fabric freely it is impossible to say whether these
lines represent underdrawing to guide the embroiderers, or are tracks made by
tiny holes still visible from piercing the backing ground with the linen holding
threads. To me they have the appearance of drawn lines but it is hard to
conceive that anyone would have gone to the trouble of marking out the
background stitching. The way to ensure regularity is to count the threads of the
fabric and there is no reason to think this could not have been done in the
medieval period. Chapter 2, n.57 above. Farcy asserts this to be the usual
procedure and illustrates it with the Lateran cope which he says is “a striking
element of counted background ...”. Farcy, 1890, 127.

Christie, 1938, 99. This is the inventory recorded by Montault and found in
the archives of the cathedral at Anagni. While visiting the church I was
denied access to any and all documentary evidence and so have no idea if this
inventory is still in existence today, nor if it would have yielded any further
information about the history of the cope. The information given here has not,
as a result, been able to be checked, but the account given by Montault in
1858 is as Christie has written apart from some inaccuracies in the copying.

This statement does not seem convincing but, while no alterations were visible
as far as could be determined, it was not possible to view the top edge
satisfactorily to either confirm or deny it. However, it seems unlikely that not
long after receipt of such a magnificent vestment it would have been altered
from a cope into a chasuble and, further, it seems hardly credible that after
having been a chasuble, the cope could have been resurrected without obvious
signs of the reconstruction process. But, since Christie is known to have
handled each of the vestments, and would thus have seen evidence at the
back, there do not appear to be grounds on which to disagree with her. If an
earlier date were determined for the cope, there would then have been a long
enough interval for the alterations to have been carried out.

Christie, 1938, 99, citing Montault. Chapter 1, 14, above re: “contexta”.

Ibid., 99. Nothing further is either known or published about this comment so
it is impossible to say on what it is based; however, if its accuracy could be
ascertained, it would at the very least provide a terminus ante quem of c1303 for the vestment.

Peter Brieger, *English Art, 1216-1307*, Oxford, 1957, 210. Brieger believes the figure style is related to that of de Brailes which would bring the vestment closer to the start of the so-called "great period" around 1250. He attributes the later dating to the inventory entry referred to above. Montefusco, 1970, 24, also shares the notion of an earlier date.

The regularity with which these angels appear on these copes seems to indicate their function to relate to a particular purpose associated with the vestment itself, rather than to individual iconographic programmes. As the thesis progresses, this idea will be developed.

This feature is by no means unique in *opus Anglicanum*, and of the whole gamut of subjects depicted in these embroideries, the *Coronation of the Virgin* appears more than any other, including the *Crucifixion*. This accords well with the contemporary interest in the Virgin in England, and the growth of her cult which was particularly strong there.


Christie, 1938, 101, explains that "It illustrates a legend related ... in an incunabulum of the fifteenth century, but not mentioned in the Golden Legend, the Apocrypha, or Vincent of Beauvais. The story refers to an incident of the flight into Egypt. Herod's soldiers when in pursuit of the Infant Jesus chanced upon a labourer reaping his wheat; when asked if he had seen a woman carrying a child, he replied, 'Yes, when I was sowing my corn.' So the pursuers turned back. It seems the Holy Family had met the labourer just before, and while he and the parents talked, Jesus had put His hand in the sack and strewn the ground with corn which immediately grew and ripened as if it had been sown a whole season."


Barbara Lane, "Ecce Panis Angelorum": *The Manger as Altar in Hugo's Berlin Nativity*, *Art Bulletin*, 57, 1975, 476ff. The words come from a verse in the Sequence of the Mass for the Feast of *Corpus Christi*: "Lo! upon the altar lies, /hidden deep from mortal eyes, /bread of angels from the skies /made the food of mortal man."

An earlier verse spells out the connection between Christ and bread; and between the initiation of the Mass at the Last Supper and the perpetual Mass in which the faithful were participating: "See to-day before us laid /the living and life-giving bread, /theme for praise and joy profound; /The same which at the sacred board /was by our incarnate Lord /given to his apostles round."


The use of the same extended cycle in manuscripts may have been a reflection of the popularity of the liturgical drama - the Play of Herod. It is also to be found in the St. John's Psalter. In the Adoration of the Magi on the Anagni cope, however, the Virgin is not crowned showing her predominantly in her capacity as Theotokos, the Mother of Christ, rather than the Queen of Heaven. This may also be an indication of the Virgin as sedes sapientia. Schiller, 1971, Vol. 1, 23-25.

The cope also carries an image of the Virgin and Child, situated where the hood would have been, but since it belongs to a later date it is not being considered with the overall programme.

Kyser, 1990, 171-175.


For a comparison of the various representations to be found on each of the four copes under investigation see Appendix I.

There are examples in manuscripts, for instance in the Gough Psalter where the falling idols form a major part of the composition. Egypt was seen as a land of darkness given to idolatrous worship but ripe for conversion as signalled by the Flight. The theme is explored by Michael Camille, The Gothic Idol, Cambridge University Press, 1989.

These features may relate to the anti-semitism of the later 13th and 14th century in England, as a consequence of which they suffered banishment in 1290, and were forced to wear distinctive clothing. Camille, 1989, 181.

Henderson, 1959, Chapter 9.

This motif is explored by Rosemary Muir-Wright, "An image fit for a king: the Glazier Psalter reconsidered", Journal of Medieval History, 19, 1993, 69-124. In this article she demonstrates that the cross-legged pose, which began as a signal of kingship deriving ultimately from Antiquity, had come to be understood also as image of tyranny by mid thirteenth century: "Thus the pose became a pliable symbol which could lend itself to contemporary images of rule, tyrant or sovereign as required." (p.94).


The historical development, iconographical themes and theological content of the death, burial, assumption and coronation of the Virgin have been fully researched and explained recently in a definitive account by the renowned scholar Philippe Verdier.

The Sequence in the Office for the Feast of the Assumption makes clear the special nature of the Virgin and her powers as intercessor: "With God now reigning, mercifully pardon /Our evil deeds, and ask for us all good. /O gracious mediatrix, next to God /Our only hope, commend us to thy Son /That we in highest heaven may Alleluias sing." Warren, Vol. 2, 1911, 467.

The Gradual from the Office of the Feast of the Assumption describes this triumph: "This day the virgin Mary ascended into heaven: rejoice because she reigneth with Christ for ever." Ibid., 466.

The Collect for the Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary (August 15th) spelled out the article of faith: "Let the honoured festival of to-day ... on which the holy mother of God under-went temporal death, yet could not be holden by the bonds of death; because she bare incarnate of herself thy Son our Lord". Ibid., 465.


Isaiah 6:1-3; Ezekiel 1 and 10; Rev. 4.

Pseudo-Dionysius - The Complete Works, trans. C. Luibheid, The Classics of Western Spirituality, SPCK, London, 1987. The Celestial Hierarchy indicates the nine orders of angels and outlines the different responsibilities of each rank; additionally, angels were thought to be entrusted with care of the Church, Hebrews 1:14.

Montefusco suggests that the combination of both architectural and geometric divisions demonstrates that the different types of structural frameworks were not mutually exclusive. Montefusco, 1970, 28.

Christie, 1938, 8.

Ibid., 160. She also makes reference to the angel holding a scroll which, if true, is another rather unusual touch although the artistic convention of writing the appropriate words on a scroll was frequently employed.

Christie's interpretation—that a ray of light, symbolizing the Holy Ghost, comes from the apex to touch Simeon's halo and inspire his recognition of the child—is unconvincing since the line is clearly a pulley for the lamp suspended above the figures. Ibid., 160.

It is also found on the Anagni, St Maximin and St. Bertrand-de-Comminges Passion copes.

Montefusco, 1970, 45 ff. Affinities with the Westminster Retable are cited: notably the linear elegance of some of the figures, a number of heads and the eight-pointed compartments found on both (and on the Vatican cope). There is no reason to contradict Montefusco's claims which bring the Bologna cope into
the last years of the thirteenth century, rather than the early fourteenth as suggested by Christie (see p.171 above). The retable has been dated most recently as c1270 (Age of Chivalry, eds. J. Alexander & P. Binski, London 1987, 340).


53 Christie, 1938, 159.

54 Ms. 240/7574, campione II, Fondo S. Domenico, c. 94v, State Archives of Bologna.

55 P. Galletti, Del vestarario della Santa Romana Chiesa, Roma, 1758, 66.

56 Montefusco, 1970, 35ff

57 Ibid., 45ff

58 For the full letter see Fanelli, 1990, 15.

59 Donald King, "Ricami Inglesti nell'Italia del Medioevo", Fanelli, 1990, 30.

60 Suggested by Paul Binski to be the high altar frontal given by Henry III "before 1272 ...". "What was the Westminster Retable?", Journal of the British Archaeological Association, Vol. 139/40, 1986-7, 157. See n.51 above.


64 This is splendidly illustrated on the Pienza cope where angels holding out crowns, as the promise of their heavenly reward, hover over both Margaret and Catherine while they endure their earthly torment. Most of the angels in the spandrels above the Passion scenes on the Bologna cope also indicate the prize of martyrdom with the crowns they hold above Christ's suffering and humiliation.

65 The reason for its inclusion in this instance has to do with the establishment of the parish church of Ramsey Abbey and its dedication to St. Thomas, as explained by Sandler, 1974, 118. The psalter is dated before 1310.

66 Christie, 1938, 160.
CHAPTER FIVE

THE COPE

as

ECCLESIASTICAL EXEMPLAR
The Lateran cope is introduced by Christie with the statement "Tradition declares that the vestment has rested in its present sanctuary, the Basilica of St. John Lateran, since it was worn there by Pope Boniface VIII at the celebration of the first Jubilee in 1300." (Pls. 15 and 16). There is nothing to show where this information came from. She also states that "the cope bears evidence of dating from about that time" and adds that its "English origin has never been questioned". The same absence of documentary evidence encountered with the first two copes prevails with the third one to be studied. As the first Christian basilica to be built the Lateran was viewed, and may still be in some minds, as the cathedral of Rome. It was constructed on land gifted to the new Church around 313AD by Constantine after his conversion, and the adjacent palace was home to most of the medieval popes, many of whose tombs line the walls of the nave. Given this illustrious pedigree it is not surprising to find one of the splendid opus Anglicanum robes in the treasury, but there are no indications about who it might have belonged to nor how it came to be there.

In this case, while the vestment is badly worn in a number of places, it retains its original orphrey; however, the outside border is missing and the morse is not considered to be original although dating from the same time. Like the others it carries decoration over the entire field of design which is again articulated with an arcaded plan, the second of three architectonic examples. As such it is obviously very different from the Anagni vestment and by eschewing the architectural accuracy, seen on the Bologna example, is also quite different from it. In its essence it is closest to the Pienza cope which adopts a very similar scheme, but the visual coherence found on the later vestment is missing. The geometric clarity of the first robes has here been replaced by an energetic and animated plan which allows for no visual respite. This feature could be interpreted as indicating an horror vacui, were it not that each component is an essential theological element in the visual orchestration of the function of the robe. The overall structure of the design scheme is complex and employs a fanciful construction composed of bands of foliate arcading; however, the orphrey niches are characterised by strictly architectonic forms complete with elaborate
pinnacles (Fig. 65). Each of the three layers of the pictorial representations is again separated by secondary imagery, this time held within a series of hoops which take the place of spandrels, and no space is left unadorned. The background here, as with the Anagni and Bologna vestments, is entirely covered with gold thread and the coloured silks of the narrative areas have faded again to the muted "antique" shades which characterise opus Anglicanum.

The immediate effect of this plethora of ornamentation is one of undeniable splendour, but one which succeeds in masking the highly sophisticated and carefully integrated plan, unmatched by other opus Anglicanum vestments. The difference in approach demonstrates one of the ways in which embroidery was able to keep pace with artistic developments found in such areas as architecture, tomb sculpture and illumination. The Lateran cope's use of lobed ogival arcading—complimented by fleshy crockets and highly ornamental finials—which succeeded the more formally austere, pointed arches of the Bologna cope, reflected the move in England from "High" Gothic to the Decorated style. These architectural elements supply the most obvious starting place in a search for a date, since any stylistic evidence on the copes must always be conditioned by the nature of the models which may have been copied. Seen first most notably on the Eleanor Crosses—on the Hardingstone Cross c1291—and in the later St. Stephen's Chapel, the ogee arch was to be fully exploited in a decorative sense in England from the beginning of the fourteenth century. Because of its association with royal projects it is sometimes said to characterise the "Court Style" and indeed its adoption for luxury items, such as the opus Anglicanum celebration vestments, may be seen as another manifestation of this idea. From the merest hint of things to come found occasionally on the Bologna cope—the enclosing arch of the Flagellation for instance—the body of the Lateran carries a simple but consistent curvilinear arcade. The crockets and finials accord fully with those used externally on the stalls in St. Peter's chapel, and internally on tomb structures such as that of Walter de Grey in York Minster from c1320. King has proposed somewhat vaguely that it belonged to "several decades later ..." than the 1300 Jubilee from which Christie takes
her date; however, drawing on the above evidence it is probably better placed somewhere between 1300-20.

As on the Anagni and Bologna copes, here again a check for visual emphasis, on first impression, yields no indication of the viewer's attention being directed to any special scene or part of the robe. The muted colour is neutral in tone and lacks any saturated areas or jarring notes which could attract the eye. However, a more concentrated look reveals that the entire centre back panel has been accorded singular treatment (Pl. 17), evident in the extra width of the structural framework and its articulation. The only single instance of such treatment in the body of extant copes, it allows for particular emphasis to be given to the Crucifixion (Pl. 18), both in the amount of space it occupies and the shape of the enclosing arcade. Being the only part of the surface where a coherent panel could be outlined and seen clearly, this extra width is easily accommodated and not really apparent until the scenes are looked at individually. Then it is noticeable that the shape of the Coronation of the Virgin does not match the rest of the structural plan (Pl. 19). It has been cleverly adapted to incorporate the hood, thereby providing each of the figures with their own setting.

Following on from this, it is seen that the Crucifixion immediately below, is given a very distinctive and decorative form. It appears to both protect and project the groups of figures inside its boundary, which follows the silhouette made by their positions and the shape of the cross. Although taking up more space than any other scene, the compartment still fits neatly into the body of the design and bears the same ornamental finials along the contours. Even so it cannot be said to be "of a piece" with the rest of the supporting framework since it owes its structure entirely to the appearance of the composition it contains.\(^5\) It is however, this shape, together with the additional height and width of the compartment, which is responsible for the emphasis. It has allowed the height of the cross to be unusually extended, thereby dramatically raising the figure of Christ well above those of the grieving Virgin and St. John. The Nativity, the last scene on the panel, is distinctive only in having the same width as the two scenes above.
The artist has ingeniously managed to provide the extra space with minimal disruption to the secondary tiers of imagery, which partially explains why the viewer is not immediately struck by the deviation. Nevertheless, the intention is to highlight the importance of this section of the cope and, at the same time, to give additional significance to the Crucifixion. Both position and emphatic framing combine to demonstrate that the iconographic programme, although still all-embracing and comprehensive, has an overriding concern which orchestrates the narrative selection (and probably also the various interpretations). There can be no mistaking the readily identifiable Christological focus, which clearly underlines a sacramental theme yet again. This time it is likely that the design subtlety of this central emphasis would have been appreciated without reference to the full iconographic programme.

The message of this cope is contained in a series of familiar episodes which is entirely conventional and has nothing to disrupt the coherence of the plan. The scriptural representations are laid out with strict chronology within a symmetrically balanced programme devoted principally to the Passion. Also incorporated are Marian themes around the central narratives of the Incarnation and the Resurrection, by which Christ atoned for the sins of mankind, gave himself for its deliverance, and finally rose to make possible its redemption. These vital stages of the economy of salvation are connected to the rememorative aspects of the liturgical Office, its historical context and, thus, to the establishment of the Church on earth. Because of the straightforward nature of the narrative selection with its stated emphasis, and in spite of the superabundance of the secondary imagery, it is possible in this instance to begin from the three crucial scenes in the centre and work backwards. Having made a decision, this time at the outset, as to the chosen thrust of the overall programme, the other scenes can then be studied to see if they reinforce the suggested interpretation.

The distinctive emphasis on this vestment allows the three central scenes to act as a form of precis of the full pictorial cycle, thus making clear the iconographic slant of the garment as a whole. This kind of "short-hand" served to do the work of entire programmes on some copes such as that in the Vatican. Even within this abbreviated
history of salvation there is scope to make clear the primary concern: the sacramental theme. Inclusion of Marian aspects highlights the role of the Virgin, through whose obedience and humility the Word was made flesh. In addition to a celebration of the perpetual sacrifice of Christ, the function of the liturgy was also the dispensation of grace, with its promise of regeneration and salvation, conferred through the eucharist in response to the prayers of the faithful. The Virgin was instrumental in this, acting as mediator by virtue of her unique place in God’s plan. This is one of the theological aspects made explicit with the Coronation, conventionally located at the apex, showing Mary as seated at the right hand of God the Father and crowned as the Queen of Heaven. (Coronation is actually a misnomer, what is depicted on the Lateran cope is the Triumph of the Virgin, since she is already crowned.) These liturgical links, spelled out visually, are expanded by complimentary and secondary imagery where a number of martyrdoms of individual saints and the second amazing heavenly orchestra of musical angels can be found.

The martyrdoms—which depict the actual means and moments of death rather than beatified martyrs installed among the Company of Heaven—are here linked to the main theme by analogy in a number of ways. The first and most obvious connection to be made is with Christ. By depicting the death of the saints it shows their sacrifices to be direct reflections of the original sacrifice made by the Son of God. Branner makes this same connection explicit in his study of the Sainte-Chapelle in Paris where, martyrdoms were depicted in the dado arcade. The virtuous nature of their exemplary lives as saints was likened to that of Jesus, their virtues taken to be among His. As such the example of their staunch devotion, for which they too had unquestioningly withstood torture and made the ultimate personal sacrifice, can be understood as the pre-eminent role model for the assembled faithful. Further, by hiding none of the brutality of these slayings, the sacerdotal mood of the emphatic Crucifixion is again picked up and used to expand the sacramental aspect of the programme.

Seen as adding to the accumulated store of grace, first established by Christ, these deaths also had enduring significance within a liturgical context, recognition of
which was made a number of times throughout the Office of the Mass, notably in the *Confiteor* and the Creed.⁹ The crucial part played by martyrdoms in the historical process of survival of the earthly Church is spelled out in the Creed. What seems to be emerging is that it is this vital affirmation of faith which the iconographic programmes of these pontifical cope was reinforcing visually. Recitation of the Creed was central to the preparatory stages for Communion; it was attested to by the entire assembled body, standing and facing the altar. The congregation was further admonished to venerate and invoke the saints during worship; their presence also having been assured since they formed part of the Celestial Ranks present at the Eucharistic celebration. In this aspect, the secondary function of their place on the cope was related to their intercessory role, and the contribution they too could make in the transmission of grace. As a final vindication of their inclusion in an ecclesiastical cycle, their presence was also justified by their place in the liturgical calendar, which would accord them their individual feast, and a place in the assembly of All Saints, a feast celebrated annually on November the first. This calendar may have determined the choice of saints; alternatively, it may have been subjective or purely arbitrary. Nevertheless, the various levels of meaning inferred by their presence would have been largely unaffected whoever had been included, but a "by-product" of their inclusion would have allowed for a wider application of the vestment's use among the annual feast days. Hence, being an area where freedom of choice could be operational once more, issues of patronage come to mind.

Again there is no indication that this cope had been waiting on the shelf for a buyer.¹⁰ The articulation of the iconography is so finely tuned it bears the hallmarks of having been commissioned with quite specific requirements which were realized by very sophisticated, specialized and highly skilled individuals at every stage. To mix narratives from the lives and deaths of Christ and the Virgin with other topics, generally relating to the saints, prophets or ancestors of the holy figures, was not unprecedented in *opus Anglicanum*. Here the representations succinctly encompass the humanity of Christ; the history of the Church; its timeless mission and role in the
Redemption; devotional and inspirational models, and specific aspects which make a significant contribution to the setting for Mass. Although the selection of saints incorporated within the programme could indeed have been a general one, it is more likely that this provided an opportunity for some element of direct personal involvement, either by the inclusion of a name saint, patron saint, or one active in an area dear to the heart of a patron or donor. On this cope the saints are symmetrically laid out in two sets of four in the bottom row, one on each side, and they are matched in pairs across the design:

Andrew - Nov. 30  Bartholomew - Aug. 24  
Edmund of Bury - Nov. 20  Thomas of Canterbury - Dec. 29  
Laurence - Aug. 10  Stephan - Dec. 26  
Margaret - July 20  Catherine - Nov. 25

giving two disciples, two English martyrs, two deacons and two virgins.11

These couples are, in the main, natural and conventional but there does not seem to be any very good or obvious reason for pairing the disciples Andrew, elder brother of Peter, with Bartholomew. Both were fishermen, and both carried on missions after Pentecost but in different parts of the East; little is known or recorded about Bartholomew whose renown would appear to have rested on the confusion over his name. The suggestion was that he could have been the Nathaniel mentioned by John,12 who wrote that Jesus said of him: "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile." His writings, seen as apocryphal, were condemned in a decree of Pseudo-Gelasius in the late fifth century; and there was confusion also over the manner of his death, but it was generally thought to have been by flaying at the order of King Astyages in Greater Armenia. Andrew had been a disciple of the Baptist before becoming the first to be called by Christ, and bringing his brother to join the select band of twelve. Although he was reputed to have been martyred on a saltire cross, it was not until the fourteenth century that this association was established; and, as with so many saints, his relics were claimed to be held in a number of places such as Patras, Rome and Scotland. The relics claimed by the Lateran—those of saints Peter and Paul,
Cyprian, Justin and Caesarius--do nothing to connect the cope with the basilica in any way.

The inclusion of two English saints has been put forward as contributing evidence of the cope's English origin and there would seem to be little reason to dispute this (Fig. 66). While there is nothing to have prevented a foreign patron requesting an English saint, it is perhaps less acceptable to think that they might have wished to include more than one. The cult of Thomas Becket quickly became well established after his martyrdom in 1170 and canonization in 1173; it spread throughout the Continent and his shrine at Canterbury became arguably the most noted place of pilgrimage in England. This renown, partly resulting from the scandal of his murder and partly from his struggle to uphold the liberties of the Church for which he gave his life, made the saint less an English figure and more a Christian martyr, to be venerated by any and all of the faithful. The more obscure ninth century Saint Edmund of Bury, an East Anglian king martyred in the fight against the Danes and said to have died with the name of Jesus on his lips, was nevertheless very popular and a favourite royal saint. He was the usual match for St. Thomas.

Margaret and Catherine (Figs. 67 and 68), as Eastern royal virgin martyrs, were frequently paired in an artistic context and are common in English psalters; as are the saints Laurence and Stephan, deacons appointed to assist the apostles and bishops as their missions expanded and Christianity developed. Stephan as the proto-martyr had a prominence not shared by the others. Recruited by the apostles as one of the original seven deacons, his work for the Church centered on preaching and the distribution of alms. It was his denunciation of the Sanhedrin, at which he levelled the charge of having murdered Christ, which led to his being stoned to death outside the walls of Jerusalem. Saul, while not participating in the actual stoning, held the robes of some of those who did take part. Living with his guilt was believed to have led to his eventual conversion about which St. Augustine said: "If Stephan had not prayed, the Church would not have gained Paul." Laurence (Fig. 69), of Spanish origin, another deacon to whose example was attributed the conversion of Rome and the end of
paganism in the city, was "perhaps the most celebrated of the Roman martyrs ...". This pairing of the two deacons also put together the first martyr with the first Roman martyr. His legend told of how he advised his torturers, burning him to death on a gridiron, to turn him over since he was already well-enough "cooked" on the first side - the ultimate in a demonstration of the Roman virtue of *equanimitas*.

Among this group of eight disparate martyrs, are to be found men and women of high and low birth, individuals representing both a personal commitment to faith and actions on behalf of the mission of the Church; those who taught, officiated, made conversions, worked miracles and defended Christianity. They are united by their sufferings, oppression and by having given their lives for their beliefs, being condemned without exception with the approval of the State and, in most instances, by the express command of the ruler. The lives of these human figures with whom the faithful could identify, and who could be interpreted collectively as a representative selection of the Communion of Saints, between them encompass the gamut of virtues expected of followers of God.

Some of the secondary meanings could have been appropriated for the cope by the inclusion of the figures simply as saintly icons, as found on the Vatican or Toledo copes. But by choosing to represent the moment and manner of death, the most dramatic interpretation possible, the primary sacrificial thrust of the programme is reinforced and strengthened. In addition, in six of the representations the Kings are actually present, either actively striking a blow or watching the execution being carried out. Thus, as well as acting as devotional and inspirational models of behaviour and self-sacrifice, the role of these depictions of saints could possibly be extended to suggest the oppressive, tyrannical nature of the authority of the State, as opposed to that of the Church. This would seem to suggest that it would be more likely to have been an ecclesiastic, rather than a monarch, who commissioned the vestment. There is the further reminder of this idea of the subjugation of the State to the authority of the Church inherent in the *Adoration of the Magi*, with the earthly rulers bowing to the
primacy of the Divine. Neither is there any use made of vair, the royal fur, on this cope.

Finally, the name of the reigning Pope Boniface VIII (of the Anagni and Bologna vestments) was Benedetto Caetani, which allows for no personal link with the selection of saints in this instance. It would, however, have been an entirely plausible choice to have been made by an English king ordering a cope to be offered as a gift. Alternatively, could it be that the cope was destined for a specific location--dedicated to one of the named saints--rather than an individual; or was it indeed for an event such as the Jubilee? After an influx of pilgrims to the shrine of St. Peter, at the Christmas of 1299, Boniface determined to mark the new century by making 1300 the first Anno Sancto, and to allow generous dispensations of indulgences for pilgrimages to the Roman basilicas. The resulting prosperity for both the Church, and many Roman citizens, may be seen as a brief peaceful hiatus during the troubled reign of the worldly Caetani pope. The inventory of 1295, and his patronage of artists of the highest calibre--such as Giotto, Cavallini, Arnolfo di Cambio and the Cosmati--bear witness to Boniface's love of ceremony, material splendour and self-aggrandisement at the expense of the pastoral and spiritual needs of his flock. 15

If the suggested connection with the 1300 Jubilee is to be taken seriously, a theme reasserting the supremacy of the Church in the lives of the people, would have been entirely appropriate and complimentary to the Eucharistic content. 16 However, it is clear that the cope could not have been made for the Jubilee since it was February 1300 before the event was decided on. It would then have been a happy coincidence if the robe were already in the possession of the pope, who might indeed have worn it at the time of the pronouncement of the bull, made from the loggia of the Lateran palace and commemorated in "Giotto's" fresco. 17 Such an eventuality would have neatly tied the vestment to a date somewhere between 1295 and 1300, since it does not appear in the Santa Sede inventory. Unfortunately this speculation is not tenable due to the unreliability of the stated "tradition", and the absence of any documentary (or visual) evidence to support it. While it seems unlikely that the cope belonged to Boniface, all
that can be said with conviction is that the robe was not commissioned to be worn at the Jubilee, nor as a gift in celebration of it. It is entirely possible that the cope somehow arrived at San Giovanni at a later date. Nevertheless, whatever prompted its manufacture the message of the cope would seem to be directed towards ecclesiastical concerns within a Eucharistic context, in very much the same way as the Anagni example.

Returning to the ecclesiastical representations, of which there are nineteen, the viewer is faced with a series of very sophisticated compositions; some--like the Last Supper--are filled with figures while others--like the Resurrection--may have only a single full-size character (Figs. 70 and 71). All play their part in the unfolding drama with an artistic precision and emotional force which equals anything found in contemporary manuscripts or wall paintings. The middle tier of imagery contains an uninterrupted cycle of the Passion which flows around the vestment from its introduction by the Last Supper to its close with the Supper at Emmaus (Fig. 72), both from the outside edges of the lowest row. That great care has been lavished on the layout of this programme as a whole can be demonstrated by these two scenes, which end up facing each other from the different sides of the cope when worn. They compliment one another since both are concerned with a meal. Both have the figures composed behind tables which match, fill the foreground and allow the robes to be seen below the coverings, a more complicated interpretation than simply letting the cloth fall to the floor. These similarities indicate that their respective positions, while entirely correct in terms of chronology, nevertheless, cannot be the result of an accident. More significantly, both of the episodes are closely related to the forthcoming taking of the sacraments, the symbolic reenactment of the Last Supper where the body and blood of Christ replace the bread and wine with which the original meal was celebrated. These overt references to the sacrificial aspect of the imagery—as the actions of the Eucharist itself repeat the original sacrifice—tie the cope to the liturgy in the most direct manner possible but, at the same time endorse the sacrificial accent claimed for the iconographic programme generally. In a number of other instances
where the Passion cycle is represented—the Bologna cope for instance—the introductory scene is the Entry into Jerusalem, where the inference is clear but the additional sacramental accent is missing.

The symmetrical exactitude just demonstrated is consistent throughout the programme, which shows structure and imagery to be fully integrated at every stage; the fanciful arcading has been put together to accommodate the various parts which go to make up the whole. This approach differs from the robes where a geometrical form contains the narratives—for example the Syon or Passion copes (Figs. 34, 73 and 74)—and the secondary features have to be made to fit into whatever shape results from the abutting compartments. The enclosing arcades have been narrowed at the top, a necessary adjustment dictated by the semi-circular design of the garment, and something which becomes more exaggerated as they progress towards the high point of the hood. This is an instance of where a technical solution has made a definite contribution to the pictorial content. The resulting movement has the effect of compressing the compartments and seeming to gather in the compositional elements around the focal point of the cope, a feature perhaps not appreciated when the robe was in use.

The two outside scenes in the middle register are also suitably paired: the Betrayal and the Doubting of Thomas which demonstrate denial and disbelief on the part of some of the disciples (Figs. 75 and 76). The full cycle is divided to give the suffering of the Passion on the left hand of the crucifixion, and a demonstration of the promise of redemption with Resurrection scenes on the right hand side. This juxtaposition allows for equal weighting of the human and divine aspects of the nature of Christ as attested to in the Creed. The balance of negative and positive consequences of the Passion on the Lateran cope differs from the Anagni where little attention was given to the joyful fulfilment of the promise of salvation. Another noticeable difference occurs with the actual resurrection. On the earlier Anagni cope the concept of a risen Christ is portrayed by the three women at the empty tomb; however, it is the physical resurrection, as Jesus steps out of the ornate stone
sarcophagus, which is found on the Lateran (Figs. 39 and 71). The figure of Christ, carrying the resurrection cross and in the act of blessing, fills the full height of the compartment, giving a vertical accent to balance the horizontality of the tomb. The composition is put together in a way which stresses the isolation of the Son of God by His monumental scale, but seems to surround Him with a calm spirituality. Instrumental in this are the two tiny, but carefully drawn and entirely substantial, censing angels who kneel at each end of the stone; the movement of the censers conveys the idea of the issuing smoke and resulting perfume, which would have sanctified and filled the atmosphere. The sleeping figures of the soldiers have also been incorporated, fitted neatly under the tomb structure by virtue of their small scale, which has done nothing to obscure either their military costume or their weapons. Such intricate detailing would seem to be born of an artist's sense of pride and pleasure in his work; without being able to inspect the underdrawing it is impossible to say whether they belonged to the draughtsman or the embroiderer.

Anomalies of scale, which for the suggested date could be interpreted as archaising or attributed to the use of older models, are to be found in a number of the narratives. This medieval tradition, used for the conventional reason of according minor figures a correspondingly less important place in the compositions, served both to minimize their role and to direct attention to the protagonists. In the case of works, such as copes, which would be viewed from a distance, this could also be an aid to easier recognition, something which can be seen in this instance with the Resurrection where the figure of Christ is allowed to stand out. Comparing the neighbouring Three Marias at the Tomb (Fig. 77), which has an identical format, the effect of changing scales is evident: there is a feeling of space, almost a suggestion of depth with Christ coming forward and the angels poised behind in the Resurrection, which is missing in the more crowded companion piece. Here the angel, occupying half the space, is accorded greater status both by being slightly larger but also by being placed at the front on the tomb, an effect which seems almost to press it to the "picture frame" or project it into our space. The Marias are grouped together on the right hand side
behind the sarcophagus, which splits their figures and marginally diminishes their importance. However, the angel, vested in white and by way of explanation pointing towards heaven, has spread its wing reassuringly around the women whose fear and anxiety are shown in their facial expressions and hands.

The role of this angel is clearly spelled out by the manner of dress - the figure is in a full-length ecclesiastical costume. This is a notable distinction--the only example in opus Anglicanum, for this scene, but found also in the Peterborough Psalter--since the angel of the Annunciation is more conventionally dressed in coloured secularized robes (Fig. 78), but identifiable by the decorative peacock-feathered wings. The representation follows the account in St. Matthew's Gospel which tells of "the angel of the Lord descended from heaven ... his raiment white as snow ..." who appeared to the three Maries telling them "Fear not ye: for I know that you seek Jesus, which was crucified. /He is not here: for he is risen ..." (Matthew 28:1-8). McNamee has suggested that the origin of a vested angel in this episode from the Passion, may stem from the use of clerical costumes in certain of the religious plays enacted within churches; in this case, the Easter trope. If this part were to have been played by a deacon in the drama, it would follow that his would be the appropriate costume for the pictorial representations, as was seen on the Bologna cope. The dramatic association between the play and the pictorial representation of the episode ties the imagery closely to the context of the liturgy, within which the play may have been incorporated on occasion. Hence, the vested angel becomes symbolical and again carries eucharistic meanings by reflecting the role of Christ both as officiant and sacrifice; in addition, the tomb doubles symbolically as an altar. This form of symbolism has been seen on the Anagni cope where the crib in the Nativity functioned in the same way. Although having moved through the agonies of the Passion into the Resurrection, the sacramental aspect and liturgical links are still being emphasised, other representations--such as that on the Anagni cope--retain the more traditional form of coloured robes for the angel which carry a less overt symbolic interpretation.
The idea of narratives complimenting each other applies to the middle register in its entirety. Composed of a group of nine scenes, the two pairs which flank the Crucifixion share the same format; and, in like fashion, the Betrayal and Christ before Pilate contain crowds of figures while the corresponding Doubting of Thomas and Noli me Tangere, each revelations of the risen Christ, appear to be echoes of one another (Figs. 75, 79, 76 and 80). Apart from being an entirely conventional and traditionally accepted part of the Passion and Resurrection imagery, the particular relevance in this instance of the incorporation of Noli me Tangere is again tied to the suggested context for the use of the cope. The only revelation of the risen Christ to a woman, and that one a prostitute although penitent and reformed, was to Mary Magdalene. This singular honour was made doubly impressive since it was not accorded even to His mother. The haloed saint kneels humbly looking up at Christ, hands pressed together in a gesture of prayer and supplication; the jar of ointment lies before her on the ground and her form is silhouetted by the twin-branched tree which delineates the garden setting. Christ, with His wound clearly showing above His full robe, falling in voluminous folds down His right side, is slightly removed from Mary but leans towards her. He blesses her with His right hand and holds the resurrection cross with its long pennant in His left. The arrangement of the composition has been adapted to echo the shape of the containing arcade with Christ's head at the apex. The interplay between the protagonists is made explicit by the eyes and hands of Mary which direct the attention to the face of Christ, where His eyes and slight inclination of His head, in turn, take account of both the absolving blessing and its recipient.

When functioning within a liturgical context, such as the Mass itself, this image is closely related to the theme of the Corpus Christi, as the pictorial representation of the divine mystery of the presence of Christ in the Host. His warning of "Touch me not" makes reference to His bodily state since, although resurrected He has yet to ascend. As witness to the dual nature of Christ through the manifestation of the miraculous confounding of death, Mary learns that the promise remains unfulfilled.
The eucharistic reference is clear since, without the Resurrection and Ascension, redemption was not possible, and the sacrament could not be offered.

The Doubting of Thomas shares both compositional format and meaning with the previous scene. Although part of a group of disciples, Thomas is at the centre, kneeling in front, while the others are standing pressed closely together behind - "piled up" in the traditional medieval pictorial manner. The differences between the two representations of Christ are slight. In each He wears the same voluminous robe and carries the resurrection cross, but this time without the pennant. His head, unadorned in the Noli me Tangere, is here bounded by a twin-coloured twisted band which probably represents the crown of thorns, missing in the Crucifixion. The scene can be understood in a number of ways: as further evidence and visible proof of the truth of the Resurrection; as a manifestation to even the most sceptical of the congregation of the actuality of the event, and as an additional emphasis to the sacrificial theme already noted. The wound is not only clearly depicted, Christ--now transfigured--is actually grasping Thomas' hand, as if to push the disciple's fingers deeper into His side; there can be no mistaking what is happening. In these adjoining scenes all of the wounds from the Crucifixion are highlighted, as indeed they are also in the Resurrection; perpetual reminders of the ultimate mystery - of the initial human sacrifice and of the consequent sacramental Corpus Christi.

The care which has been taken with the narratives is seen also on the figures. On this cope Peter is consistently given the expected individualisation through his hair and beard, silver instead of coloured, and is otherwise most usually identifiable by the large keys which he carries. Where Paul is present he faces Peter flanking Christ on His left side, and is similarly identifiable by the conventional balding head with the single curled fore-lock. Much is made of costume on this cope; there is a host of interesting details including such aspects as the robes of Christ in the Betrayal and the Supper at Emmaus, Pilate's in the Christ before Pilate, the Virgin's at Pentecost, the different outfits of the tormentors in the Passion and the Martyrdoms, the use of vair for linings or collars, and the different types of armour. The detailing is an important
feature of the narratives and structure of the entire cope; it is evident both in the breadth of the individual episodes—for instance, the incorporation of Malchus in the Betrayal, or Pilate washing his hands at the trial—and in the attention to the architectural elements, the integrated angelic host and the decorative birds and flowers. A demonstration *par excellence* of how incident, ornamentation and fundamental doctrinal concepts can be combined to produce an article of overwhelming richness and beauty, yet pregnant with theological and doctrinal symbolism combining matters historical and spiritual, concrete and abstract, visible and invisible. The representations are brought to life by the expressive animation of the actions and gestures of the figures, seen most clearly in the martyrdoms which are executed with relish. The pathos of the crucifixion is fully rendered by the grieving Virgin and St. John, their pain being echoed in the attitudes of the three Maries a little later.

The pictorial representation of the fundamentals of the Eucharist is continued with the three scenes which, through their juxtaposition and separation from the body of the narrative, are seen to encompass the Incarnation as a compliment to the more comprehensive Passion cycle. Bounded at each end by the hagiographic sequences, the Annunciation, Nativity and Adoration of the Magi are separated from the general narrative (Figs. 78, 81 and 18), this allows their concise account of the initiation of God’s plan for salvation to have a greater impact. By being situated directly under the Passion in the crucial central zone, they are connected to it and metaphorically support the events above like a stem with roots. They also provide the foundation for a symbolic upward thrust to the iconographic programme by the axial flow initiated with the Nativity. This makes possible a concise account of Christ’s role as the agent of man’s salvation: incarnate, crucified and triumphant. It also makes plain the duality of the nature of Christ; His humanity being expressed in the Nativity and sacrificial death, and His divinity in the resurrection apparent in the Coronation (Pl. 19). From this it can be seen that the cycles on this vestment work both in a left to right movement across the surface in the three registers, and, passing through these, from bottom to top at the same time. In contrast to the Anagni vestment, which has a somewhat
idiosyncratic approach to the overall narrative layout, the assertive cohesion of the parts on the Lateran is a further indication of just how much care must have been lavished on the design plan. It also demonstrates a confidence which allows it to move away from the straightforward chronological presentation of the Bologna cycle, into a sophisticated plan--unmatched in opus Anglicanum--which required greater input from its audience.

It is by virtue of the dual nature of Christ, one of the fundamental tenets of the Western Church staunchly asserted in the early centuries against heresy and all Eastern claims for a differing dogma, that the Virgin Mary came to assume such importance in the Church. As the Mother of God, Theotokos, she made possible the Incarnation on which the Church, and all its teachings and beliefs, was founded, and by which Salvation became a reality. On this cope, attention is again drawn to her significance by the Coronation, and the imagery of the top register where she is in the forefront of each representation. Mary, haloed only in the Annunciation (Fig. 82), bareheaded in the Nativity (Fig. 83), crowned in the Adoration, is without the customary veil of purity in all three. Apart from this, no deviations from expected compositional formulae are found but there are differences from the other two examples. On the Anagni and Bologna copes the Virgin is characterised by her white veil, while on the Lateran she is only seen bareheaded with long golden tresses. The Anagni Annunciation shows the Virgin holding a book but with a throne behind her, the Bologna has no indication of the dove of the Holy Spirit or the vase of lilies, but shares the traditional lectern with the Lateran version. The Virgin's gesture changes in each of the three interpretations, and there is no evidence of her royal lineage with vair lining for her robes in any instance. The angel's scroll features prominently on all three vestments, with the written "Ave Maria ..." legible in the case of the Bologna and Lateran and probably simply worn away on the Anagni cope.

Each of the three Nativities is individualised in some way. On the Anagni with the swaddled baby remote from the worried and preoccupied Mary and Joseph, who seem to be ignoring Him; the Bologna with the Virgin's bed heavily draped under a
blanket of vair, and a Byzantine curtain thrown over a rod in the background suggesting and interior setting; while the Lateran makes features of the crib, which takes the form of a carved altar, the Virgin's bed with its throne-like high back and the fully grown standing baby child. The Adorations are all composed with the expected elements with differences as before for the Virgin's headwear: haloed and veiled on the Anagni, crowned, haloed and veiled on the Bologna and crowned and haloed on the Lateran. Again a feature is made of the Gothic architectonic throne on the Bologna, where vair is noticeable on three of the figures and the kneeling, oldest king retains his crown as he presents his offering. The Lateran version has interestingly reversed the compositional formula.

These variations, while not of any iconographic significance, are of interest since they serve to demonstrate once again the originality of the representations found on each vestment. They could be reflective of a wide range of models in the source materials; a degree of autonomy on the part of the artists; or, less likely but more straightforwardly, carelessness resulting from a lack of supervision. While it is not possible to determine definitively how the differences arose, they make it clear that each vestment was an individual creation, characterised by its autonomous imagery and conceived as a single unified piece of work. No signs are to be found—as in manuscript production—as different hands having been responsible for the representations within any single programme, nor is there any evidence of workshop "hallmarks", apart from the techniques used. These features serve to substantiate the suggested situation for production: that of a single workshop specialising in the celebration copes, drawing together teams of experienced workers under a Master on receipt of a commission.

The placing of the Crucifixion directly above the Nativity makes clear the sacrifice to come. It emphasises the eucharistic nature of the imagery, in accordance with the forthcoming climactic, rememorative sacrifice, to be perpetuated in the Solemn Mass. Although the holy child is held by His mother, the empty crib has the form of an ornate stone sarcophagus/altar, very similar in construction to the tomb
found in both the Resurrection and the Three Maries, although smaller. The correspondence is not accidental, rather it is a powerful symbol. It makes a direct visual link with the eventual suffering on the cross, by again drawing attention to the connection between the tomb of the Passion and the manger of the Incarnation. This would have been a parallel which could have been understood without the benefit of any great theological learning. On a lighter note, it would appear that the artist enjoyed depicting the ox and ass; their splendid huge heads lean right over the crib as they strain to participate in the moment of family intimacy, entirely filling the central space under the star at the apex of the arcade.

Moving up to the top register, the group of four scenes depicted there represents crucial moments in the history of Salvation, the Church and the life of the Virgin and could be viewed as the completion of a Marian cycle begun with the Annunciation in the lowest band. The Ascension is set beside Pentecost on the left hand side of the Coronation (Figs. 84 and 85), while on the right are two Marian episodes, the Virgin told of Her Death and her Assumption (Figs. 86 and 87). This selection of representations demonstrates the Virgin's presence—as witness to her son's human suffering by crucifixion, and subsequent divine ascension— at crucial moments for the history of the earthly Church, which was built on Mary along with the Apostles. The moment when Christ departed from the mortal sphere having completed the work of atonement, begins the compact cycle of five narratives which this time moves inwards to the centre from each side. The establishment and mission of the Church is alluded to in Pentecost, when the disciples received their charge to build on the foundations laid by the teachings of Christ. In this scene and the Ascension, heaven is indicated by a short band of the characteristic undulating clouds seen earlier; these same distinctive forms are used throughout to support the angelic host.

The Assumption is an assertion of the Virgin's exemption from the consequences of Original Sin, it makes clear her defiance of death and unique place in God's plan as she ascends in triumph to her final heavenly reward - enthronement in glory as the Bride of Christ. Unlike the Anagni example, where the Virgin is robed in
the conventional white given to martyrs and risen souls on their spiritual assumption, on the Lateran cope she is depicted with her earthly clothes, which makes clear that this is a more momentous bodily assumption. Possibly this is taken from The Golden Legend where it says: "And straightway Mary's soul went to her little body ... and was assumed into the heavenly bride chamber, a multitude of angels mounting withal."\(^{21}\)

The two supporting angels are quite distinctive and unlike any others seen on this cope; however, their costume with its prominent white knotted band is found on several examples of opus Anglicanum and in the Chapter House at Westminster.\(^{22}\) Each has four peacock-eyed wings which would suggest that they are Cherubims, among those angels which were thought to be closest to God and representatives of Divine Wisdom.

The Marian cycle found on the cope encompasses all the current doctrinal aspects of her cult: her immaculacy and perpetual virginity; her unique position as the Mother of the Godhead; her triumph over Death and Original Sin; her miraculous Assumption and consequent Coronation, and not least, her central role in the provision of Salvation and dispensation of Grace. However, within the suggested eucharistic context for the copes, the Marian imagery underlines the Incarnation, and the part it played in the ritual. Her selection, sanctification in birth and her life offered proof of the duality of Christ, and His earthly being. Only by asserting the "divinity" of Mary could the "humanity" of the incarnate Godhead be emphasised. Incorporated among the rest of the fundamental Christological narratives, within a tightly structured plan, this assertion expanded the doctrinal content of the programme. It also contributed to the presentation of a comprehensive account of the dogmas of the Church in visual form - abstract concepts made actual and recognizable. Taken together, the events of the top register encapsulate the fulfilment of the Old Testament promise. They demonstrate the merciful action of the transference of Grace, dispensed by God the Father, in the person of Christ. He is seen enthroned in the centre, holding the orb which denotes Him as having dominion over all, beside the Virgin crowned as the Queen of Heaven and Mediatrix, who He blesses. She receives this favour in humility, her hands raised and pressed together in the gesture of supplication, head slightly bent and eyes downcast.
The narratives reach their climactic moment with the Coronation, as would be fitting within the context of the liturgy, which is concerned with the forgiveness of sin and redemption of mankind through the Eucharist. The connection between the cope and the celebration of solemn High Mass is thereby firmly established. As a final post script to this impressive iconographic programme, in the centre of the orphrey is to be found an image of Christ in Majesty. By turning the figure around forty five degrees it has been made a part of the narrative sequences below, and sits above the hood capping the central axis in a position of absolute authority over the programme in its entirety. Notable in this interpretation of the conventional hieratic representation, are the raised hands which display clearly the wounds of the cross. This puts the seal on the sacrificial emphasis which has been seen to pervade the choice of representations, their composition and connections, and confirms this as having been the primary concern for the mysterious patron, either for himself or for the recipient were the cope to have been a gift. There is now overwhelming evidence of a shared foundation for the orchestration of the distinctive iconographic programmes of each cope, which reflected their common role within their primary liturgical function. This was to give a visual manifestation of the ultimate mystery, to be witnessed by the faithful in the presence of the celestial Hosts during the drama of the Mass.

Mention of the orphrey draws attention to the fact that this is one of the few original examples remaining intact (Fig. 65). Designed with alternate architectural and geometrical compartments, it is decorated with a series of three kings, three mitred clerics vested in chasubles, and four angels, arranged on either side of the central Christ in Majesty. Identification of the figures is tantalizingly problematical since, were it possible to determine who was who, some light could possibly be thrown on the issue of patronage. Quite apart from the difficulty of examining the orphrey, the condition of the embroidery makes reliable identification impossible in some cases. Only two carry symbols as far as can be seen: a sceptre and two arrows for St. Edmund of Bury (?); a sceptre and wreath (?) for St. Louis of France (?)/St. Edward the Confessor (?) who, as the friend of St. Thomas of Canterbury, could be paired with
him, since there seem to be a couple of archbishops in the company. Having both St. Edmund and St. Thomas on the body of the cope, it seems strange to find them again here. Were the other martyred saints also repeated a parallel could be suggested between the cope and its orphrey, but the seemingly random selection confounds a meaningful interpretation. Identification of the saintly French king would seem to have been made in the nineteenth century by Farcy, and to have been accepted by Christie; if it is indeed St. Louis his inclusion could only be explained by some personal connection which can only be guessed at.

Angels make two distinctive appearances on this cope, on the orphrey and again across the full span of the vestment's surface, intimately related to the pictorial narratives yet with a purpose of their own. On the orphrey, as the only instance in opus Anglicanum, four angels are associated with the four Evangelists. Although a common artistic theme for all forms of ecclesiastical decoration, neither the four figures nor their winged symbols appear among the huge range of imagery found on the copes, with this single exception. Unlike the heavenly choir, these angels are enthroned, the symbolic creatures are at their sides, and they rest their hands on jewelled books indicating the different gospels; a tiny scroll carries the name of each Evangelist. There is a clear liturgical connection here since various readings were taken from the four gospels; but the references raise more questions than answers, since the apparent propriety of use makes their absence from the traditional artistic repertoire all the more exceptional. Apart from being an interesting example of the form an orphrey might take, the chosen figures appear to have little connection with the iconographic programme beyond possibly again indicating a royal commission. However, as manifestations of the bringing of the Word of God to mankind, the evangelistic references recall the Logos as made flesh in Jesus Christ, and as spoken by His ministers.

As with the other copes, the use made of the angels here is very much more complex than that of mere ornament. The insistent presence of these celestial beings continues to assert itself, calling out for the recognition and understanding their
contribution demands. Here, once again, the distinctive proof of the unity of the earthly church with its heavenly counterpart is demonstrated through the role of the angels. While the narratives encompassed scriptural matters, theological concerns, correspondences and allegorical analogies with the liturgy, they remained visual representations, albeit linked symbolically, on a decorative vestment worn in the early stages of the ceremonial. It was as a result of the participation of the angels that the images assumed the particular relevance which tied the robe to the specific liturgical context within which it was then able to function. This interaction made the vestment an active part of the liturgy itself. The presence of the celestial beings at the sacramental proceedings was invoked at the start by the officiant with the prayer:

Exaudi nos domine sancte pater omnipotens eterne deus: et mittere dignare sanctum angelum tuum de celis: qui custodiat, foveat, protegat visitet et defendat omnes habitantes in hoc habitaculo, per christum dominum nostrum.

(Hear us, O Lord, holy Father, almighty everlasting God, and vouchsafe to send thy holy angel from heaven to keep, cherish, protect, visit, and defend all who dwell in this habitation, through Christ our Lord.) Thus, the angels on the cope served as a visual link, and were witness to the actuality of the presence of the Heavenly Company manifesting the coming together of the two worshipping assemblies. This animation of the narratives allowed them to play their part by both reflecting events, historical and actual, and by illustrating the crucial beliefs to be witnessed and attested to during the Mass. Unlike the celestial choir on the Bologna cope in this instance the angels are individualized in their representation and pose (Pl. 20), as well as by their activities, although again they are all part of a single unit as members of a heavenly musical ensemble. Great care and consideration has been given to their contribution to the iconographic programme, and, although they are smaller in scale than the protagonists, their importance is clearly stated by both their ubiquity and the special way in which they are integrated throughout.
Some contradictions are to be found in the generalized biblical descriptions of the leading ranks of cherubims and seraphims, this probably accounts for the different artistic interpretations which may give either of them four or six sets of wings. The literary source of the narrative context can usually be relied on to determine which of these two ranks is being depicted. They are regularly found on *opus Anglicanum* vestments alongside the more humble angels, and any rank may be occupied within the storied compartments or the adjoining spaces. Examples of the whole gamut of their responsibilities are scattered throughout the great copes, and this is well illustrated by the Lateran vestment which makes good use of their narrative functions and decorative potential, as well as their more crucial contribution as heavenly witnesses to the earthly celebration. It is this aspect which is of greatest interest to the use made of angels on the different copes. Those found with distinctive parts to play in the narrative cycles need no further explanation but, to regard the others as decorative devices filling spaces is to ignore the fundamental belief in the cult of angels made plain in the pre-Mass prayers.

The importance of music in the great feast-day celebrations underlined the sanctity of the occasion, and the inclusion of this host of beautiful delicate players, with their amazing range of instruments, served as a fitting reminder and guarantee of the participation of the Divine for the faithful. The angelic choir, as the choristers of heaven, demonstrate their joyful contribution to the dramatic rites being enacted, simultaneously in both spheres of the created universe, in much the same way as the sculpted angels which adorn Westminster, Lincoln and Wells cathedrals. Far from being a mere allusion to the musical aspect of the ceremonial rites, the imagery gathers together the full Celestial Hierarchy on the cope. They bring it alive with their supernatural song and thereby make visible the physical union of the earthly and heavenly communities, both absorbed with contemplation of the most sacred of mysteries - the Eucharist.

The symbolic nature of the liturgy shows it to be an earthly sign of a sacred mystery, a supernatural reality perceived only by faith. The pictorial nature of the cope
served both to illustrate this and to act as an assurance of God's presence among the worshippers. The combination of this crucial function with the part played by the cope in linking the earthly and heavenly spheres establishes a specific role for the vestment. The three selections of iconography closely examined thus far can be seen to match - a sacramental emphasis is common to each. This gives credence to the conclusions drawn from the Anagni and Bologna vestments, in particular the one which makes plain the essential contribution a robe of this type made to the pre-Mass setting, which gave it its liturgical function. With its vital contribution being made at the outset of the Eucharistic celebrations, the cope was eminently suited, both in form and application, to carry the symbolic allegorical material of theological themes.

Among the existing nineteen copes known to us today the last one to be looked at, belonging to the cathedral of the Italian hill town Pienza, has been described as "the most complete ... and surely one of the most elaborate and costly productions of its kind". Time spent studying it closely served only to validate the truth of this opinion, and the opportunity to view it in situ confirmed its magnificence both visually and technically (Pls. 21 and 22). Not surprisingly neither its date nor country of origin are known and, as before, scholars—from Micklethwaite and Mannucci to Christie and beyond—have disagreed about both over the years; however, in this case, it is now generally agreed that the Pienza cope is an English piece. The evidence for this statement comes from the particular types and use of stitchery, the fanciful framework and the profusion of natural details. Suggested as belonging to c1300 or the second quarter of the 14th century, the cope certainly represents opus Anglicanum at its most mature stage which would put it closer to 1325. The most striking and notable feature of this pontifical robe is that the entire iconographic programme is devoted to females - a great rarity and surely in some way related to the nature of its commission.

What is known comes first from a single piece of documentary evidence relating to the history of this vestment, which tells that it was donated to Pienza cathedral by Pius II (1458-64) in 1462, which makes it clear that there can be nothing connecting its commissioning to this pope. Neither did it form part of the
existing papal inventory, since this same document tells that it was given to Pius, during his term of office as a recompense for sanctuary, by Thomas Paleologus, Despot of Morea, who had fled from invading Turks in 1460.\textsuperscript{28} The Pope's somewhat precipitate disposal of a vestment of this magnificence can be easily explained. The building of Pienza's model Renaissance \textit{piazza}, instigated by Pius as a monument to his own renown, was completed by 1462. The achievement was marked by a decree which raised the status of the church to a cathedral, and by the changing of the name of the town from Corsignano to Pienza.\textsuperscript{29} Being there at the time, it is likely that the Pope chose the ceremony of dedication and celebration to make his gift. However, he remained in Pienza and was still there on September 21, 1462, which was an important feast day for its citizens and would have been an equally suitable moment. The donation of such an esteemed item to this obscure and remote cathedral will have been an extenuation of Pius' intention to embellish his native town, and thereby glorify his own name in a way which had proved impossible in Rome.\textsuperscript{30}

The only other likely piece of documentary evidence has already been looked at; it relates to the claim that the cope matches a description in a papal inventory made at Avignon in 1369.\textsuperscript{31} As a result of these two pieces of evidence the issue of provenance becomes doubly complicated. Depending on the validity of the 1369 entry, as many as three different explanations are necessary to account for the years between the cope's manufacture in the early 14th century, and Pius' acquisition of it in 1460. An appearance of the vestment in the papal inventory is readily acceptable, but if it should be the same cope some explanation of how it came to be in the possession of the Despot of Morea has to be found. It seems unlikely that, once in the papal wardrobe, there would have been any reason to offer such an expensive and sacred vestment to an insignificant ruler who was in no position to render service to the head of the Western Church. A pontif might, however, have had occasion to offer such a valuable gift to either the Byzantine Emperor, or the Patriarch of the Eastern Church, for political reasons, notably in the hope of smoothing the path to a reconciliation between the two
factions of the Catholic world. After the Fall of Constantinople in 1204, the papacy had made repeated attempts to heal the breach.

The period between the date when it is suggested by the inventory that the cope would have formed part of the papal wardrobe, and the later acquisition by Pius, covers almost a hundred years during which there were seventeen popes from Urban V to Pius II. There were also, in this time, eight Byzantine emperors and some fourteen Patriarchs to whom it might have been presented. Clearly, the gift of a vestment of this prestigious nature and such ostentatious materials would have been an appropriate article to send to Constantinople as an act of diplomacy, possibly at the time of a coronation or an investiture, the more so since both the saints whose lives are depicted on the cope are from the East - Saints Margaret of Antioch and Catherine of Alexandria. As a personal gesture from the reigning Pontif, an article reserved for his own especial use would carry the clearest message of a hoped for rapprochement. In this instance the robe would have demonstrated such a concept visually through the iconography, which also included shared doctrinal issues through representations of the life of the Virgin. If sent to mark the crowning of an emperor, the cope could have done honour to both the State and the Church since, as the Head of the Church, the Patriarch crowned the Emperor, who himself was seen as the Viceregent of God on earth, the Protector of the Church and guardian of authority. The suitability of a gift with a doubly symbolic nature--acceptable to the Emperor but able to be worn only by the Patriarch--makes this a very plausible explanation.

Although something of the same kudos could be attached to the sending of the vestment for a patriarchal investiture, the possible benefits to be gained might then be restricted to ecclesiastical matters. Nevertheless, the attraction of being the Pope responsible for bringing about such a coup as the long desired union between the Churches, would surely account for any magnanimous gesture which it was within their power to make, and the particular suitability of the Pienza cope in this instance is obvious. However, these suggestions account only for the presence of the vestment in Constantinople, whether in the Emperor or the Patriarch’s possession. How then does
Thomas Paleologus obtain it? The antagonistic relationships among members of the last Byzantine dynasty are well known; but this does not preclude the Emperor's having given it to his brother, assuming it were his to give. It seems much less likely that the Patriarch would have had occasion to make a present of it, were it to have belonged in his treasury. It is always possible, however, that the Despot did not come to own it through legitimate means.

If the 1369 inventory entry were to be accepted, there is then the problem of who was the original owner/donor of the cope. It could have belonged initially to an ecclesiastic or to a religious institution in England who, at some later stage, had reason to offer it to a pontiff, or make a bequest of it. It could have been commissioned directly by a reigning pope for his own use remaining as part of the papal wardrobe on his death. Alternatively it could have been gifted by an English monarch to mark the accession of a new Head of the Church perhaps, as has been suggested for several copes. The Ascoli Piceno cope as one of these, has been linked hypothetically to Henry III or more likely Richard of Cornwall as a gift for Clement IV; that of the Vatican with its papal tiara for Nicholas III from Edward I, or the "Lost" cope for John XXII from Edward II.

Were the 1369 item found not to match the Pienza cope exactly, a variation of these same options would also hold true in any explanation of the origins of the vestment and its passage to Byzantium. It is hard to imagine a situation where an individual cleric or a religious institution might offer a gift of this nature to the Patriarch (much less the Emperor). It is also unlikely that the Eastern spiritual leader would directly order from England a vestment for his own particular use, and indeed no instance of such a situation has been recorded or imagined. With many churches dedicated to the Virgin Mary, and some to Saints Margaret and Catherine, the vestment could have been commissioned as part of an individual treasury. Alternatively a ceremony of consecration of a church building, or an addition or alteration to it, would have proved a fitting time for the first appearance or blessing of a robe of this type. It is possible, however, that a cope distinguished by the unique all-female iconography
might have belonged to an abbess or the institution to which she was attached. Additionally, gratitude for God's mercy or grace received, could be suitably demonstrated by the donation of a cope of this nature, thereby conferring a mark of honour on the chosen recipient. This form of costly artefact could also be offered as an act of atonement; the particular iconography in each case would then relate to the donor, or the institution selected to benefit. Any of the three virgin martyrs could have been patron saints of a member of a royal or aristocratic family, or those to whom an institution was dedicated, and this could have been a nunnery which may possibly have felt, for whatever reason, that it would be more appropriate for the cope to belong to the Patriarch.

By this late stage the reputation of opus Anglicanum was well established, and there would be nothing untoward for the Emperor himself to have made the original request for the cope, either for his own coronation or even possibly for his wedding. A case can also be made, as has just been done for a papal gift above, for the commissioning of this sumptuous cope as a diplomatic gesture by an English king or the Western Pontif to the Emperor. In such an instance there would be more interests at stake than purely religious ones - diplomatically and politically the King could benefit from such generosity. A coronation, investiture or wedding would all have presented a suitable opportunity for a demonstration of support or good-will in this manner. Since some of the earliest copes were imperial mantles an emperor might himself have wanted to hold one among his ceremonial attributes, this would mean that it would have been within his power to dispose of it, if he should have so desired.

Mention of the ceremony of marriage brings to the fore one final possibility: the cope could have been ordered as part of a dowry by a future wife of an emperor. In 1326, Anne of Savoy, daughter of the great Count Amadeo V of Savoy, arrived in Constantinople to marry the future Emperor Andronicus III (1328-41), her Coronation took place in the same year. Links between the House of Savoy and the papacy were close, several of the family holding important positions and involved in diplomatic missions on behalf of the Vatican. Thus, the religious connections were strong,
visits to England would have provided the opportunity to commission embroidery directly, and there would be possible personal gain if the iconographic selection could be made to incorporate overtures from the West to the East, within the chosen theme. After 1341, as Dowager Empress, Anne was to become a powerful figure in her own right; however, considerable financial resources were necessary to find her fight for control and she is known to have sold vast numbers of treasures for this purpose. From this information it clear that in Anne of Savoy there is both a likely donor and also a possible channel through which the vestment could have passed eventually into the hands of the Despot of Morea.

The iconography fits such an eventuality for a number of reasons: firstly, the singular nature of the exclusively female imagery would be instantly understandable, with the Eastern connection speaking for itself. Secondly, the role of Saint Margaret would then function on three levels as follows: to highlight the intended's virtue, to signal her intellectual suitability as a consort, and to call up protection for the crucial matter of succession. Although Catherine is generally paired with Margaret this was not automatic and other figures could have been chosen. However, in this instance her presence serves to emphasise the qualities of virtue, courage, endurance, humility with dignity and, most especially, intellectual ability and learning. The coupling of these particular saints would stress the nobility and purity of a potential bride, at the same time serving to underline the necessity of perpetuating such virtues by recalling the example of these virgin martyrs. While inclusion of the Virgin Mary needs no explanation from either a theological or moral perspective, the emphasis given to her in this instance would suggest that the feminine accent of the cope is of primary importance, indeed it makes the vestment unique among luxury products of an ecclesiastical nature.

Regardless of either of the pieces of documented evidence, the question of who first commissioned and/or owned the Pienza cope remains. From this standpoint, many of the possibilities just outlined above are seen still to be equally valid on the basis of the imagery alone, with certain aspects lending greater support to one or other of the
various suggestions. Having stressed the curiosity of the entire narrative programme resting on the lives of three brides of Christ, a female patron or recipient is entirely likely. Although the joint depiction of saints Margaret and Catherine is a commonplace in medieval art, most particularly in a devotional context, to find an extended pictorial narrative of the life of either one is not. That each should have been treated in this manner on a single piece of work confers a much greater seriousness on their presence in this context. That this is indeed the case is further reinforced by the particular choice of incidents, apparently taken from the accounts in The Golden Legend.

Although there are six compartments devoted to the life of Margaret, episodes have been conflated to extend the account, giving a total of nine different stages. For instance, the third scene where her imprisonment is depicted the later angelic protection is also included, or the last where the soul is carried off after the beheading, which follows the torture suffered in the cauldron (Fig. 88, R.H. scene and Fig. 89, R.H. scene). Catherine has seven devoted to her story but, apart from her dying being coupled with the carrying of her soul to heaven (Fig. 90, bottom right corner), each scene is a complete temporal moment in itself. The usual convention of reserving the centre back panel exclusively for depictions of the most sacred mysteries of Christian doctrine, has here been strangely ignored. In this instance running the theological themes through the middle of the design field could have ensured an equal narrative balance and would not have disturbed any chronological sequence either. However, this unusual feature is not without precedent since a similar situation pertains on the Bologna cope.

There is a certain similarity in the legends of these two noble virgin saints: each face the same temptation, as young attractive desirable maidens, to give way to the pleasures of the flesh; they are both responsible for a number of conversions; each is tortured to death for refusing to give up their devotion to Christ, and each is required to demonstrate their intellectual capabilities through disputation with men. The narrative representations are exactly tailored to emphasise these very aspects (Figs. 91 - 96). Catherine's vision of the Virgin Mary, and her miraculous marriage with Christ
in the Heavenly City, after preparation in the desert with the hermit Adrian, are totally ignored. Instead confrontations with Olybrius, Maxentius and philosophers, alternate with scenes of torture, imprisonment and death along the full length of the bottom register. Great care has been taken to depict a variety of grotesque physiognomies; tormentors are seen to relish their gruesome tasks; crowns are very much in evidence, either on rulers or borne by angels as a mark of the impending martyrdom of the girls. Rather than merely signal the prisons, they are made to fill the entire frame, with meticulously detailed brickwork and twin towers which confine their innocent captives. There is nothing peaceful or comforting about these images, instead hands gesticulate wildly, violent actions inflict pain or death on humans and creatures alike; authority, repression and hardship are everywhere apparent. This visual emphasis on suffering, consummated with the ultimate personal sacrifice, links this celebrational cope with the other three examples.

Two complete registers of imagery are devoted principally to the life and death of the Virgin, but incorporating a special emphasis on the birth of Christ. In common with the other demonstrations seen of the contemporary importance of the cult of the Virgin this choice of narratives, in itself, presents nothing unusual. What is distinctive, and notable, is their combination with saints Margaret and Catherine to give the exclusive female emphasis, and the remarkably full apocryphal account of the death of the Mother of God. It is yet another manifestation of the expected concern linking the Incarnation with suffering, sacrifice and the ultimate reward of redemption, now seen to pervade these representational programmes as a consequence of their proposed function within a liturgical context. Further, less importantly but none the less significant for the suggested provenance, a regal and secular reminder is conveyed by the insistent use of vair for garments and castellated buildings.

Although the cycle of the Virgin's death is to be found on the Syon cope (Fig. 34), it covers only her death, burial and coronation. Where it is possible to make comparisons between episodes, the manner of depiction demonstrates entirely different interpretations. Here, six of a total of fourteen scenes are directly concerned with the
death, burial and assumption of Mary (Pls. 23 - 26); this is excluding the Coronation of the Virgin which, because of its ubiquitous nature, cannot be seen as notable. One of these--The Apostles Told of the Death of the Virgin (Pl. 23, Fig. 97)--is unique among the existing opus Anglicanum copes; the Virgin herself is not visible in this episode, nor is her head seen or her body indicated in the Funeral (Pl. 26, Fig. 98). This event, with the body of Mary clearly depicted, is found again only on the Syon cope, and included with it is the incident of Thomas receiving the girdle from the soul of the Virgin, which here is being borne to heaven by angels. The Pienza version of the Funeral has a different emphasis and shows instead the story of the High Priest; Thomas receiving the girdle forms part of The Apostles at the Empty Bier (Pl. 25, Fig. 99). Of the six known interpretations of the Assumption (Pl. 25, Fig. 99), that on the Pienza cope is the only one where the figure of the ascending Virgin is not contained within a mandorla - in this version she is being carried by the actual figure of Christ.

These scenes, unusually for this cope, are not in a chronological sequence; instead they are spread over two registers since there are only four narrative frames in the top tier. Hence, the complex cycle of six/seven scenes devoted to the Virgin and the Christ child, which otherwise is in strict chronological order, is bounded at each end with an episode of the account of Mary's death. This accommodation of the extended pictorial representation of the death of the Virgin makes clear that it is the focus of the vestment. When the cope was worn and the two sides met at the front, a pre-eminent position was conferred on four scenes of the already significant iconography, and a counterchanged course for the chronological sequence was established. The Coronation of the Virgin (Pl. 27, Fig. 100), the crucial theological moment for this vestment as for the others, compliments the emphasis so far noted. To further highlight the significance of this doctrinal mystery, the frame is given the distinctive double arcade found earlier on the Lateran vestment. This neatly contains the twin heads of Christ and Mary who otherwise share the same space. Through this visual manifestation of the special nature of the Virgin, and the detailing of her miraculous triumph over death, the mystery of the Incarnation and the dual nature of
Christ were given greater emphasis. The scenes point ultimately, however, to the role of the Church and the dispensation of the Eucharist, both of which depended on the truth of these events for their actuality.

The scenes in the middle band give visual form to the Incarnation, and demonstrate the steps by which the young girl, Mary, was prepared to bring Christ into the world for the salvation of mankind. Her Presentation in the Temple signals her early devotion and obedience to the service of God (Pl. 23). She is shown simply as a maternal figure in the Nativity (Pl. 27), while nimbed and crowned in the Adoration of the Magi (Pl. 25), her role as the Queen of Heaven is made clear. An allusion to her continued purity is to be found in the scene where Christ is presented. This time the interpretation couples the Presentation with the Purification by giving the handmaiden a tall candle to carry (Pl. 26, Fig. 97), which refers to the procession for the Feast of the Purification - Candlemas. The miraculous powers conferred on her are demonstrated by the episodes of the High Priest and the Girdle; and finally, the ultimate reward of reunion with her son, as the Bride of Christ, is achieved through her divine assumption. Thus, her triumph and passage to the Court of Heaven, as a result of which she fulfils her predetermined role in the plan of Salvation, have been made visible to the faithful here on earth. Enthroned in the celestial kingdom at the right hand of God the Father, the Coronation of the Virgin shows her ultimate victory over death, and gives visual form to the final realisation of the Promise of Resurrection.

The regal status and various different qualities—primarily those of women, as both wife and mother, but more especially as mediator or consort—demonstrated by the particular imagery of the Virgin on this cope, are reflected by the use of Margaret and Catherine as supporters for the main thrust of the iconography. The suitability of such a vestment as an offering at the time of an imperial marriage is thus established; the repeated appearance of castellation and crowns, royal figures and vair for costume, serve only to underline this context. The particularity of the pictorial messages has been achieved without compromising the ecclesiastical nature of the garment, and has been carried out with doctrinal and canonical exactitude, while also conforming with
conventions established by earlier opus Anglicanum copes. In this way the general issues, encompassed by the various sacred scenes, impart a timeless quality to the vestment which would have allowed it also to function equally well at any of the major Church festivals in the calendar.

A dramatic liturgical connection is made quite emphatic this time with the incorporation of the twelve Apostles--each with their supposed contribution to the Creed--located again in the spandrels which here form the lower part of heart-shaped compartments for the figures (Figs. 92). There is nothing else on the processional copes which can even be equated with this feature, spread over the full span of the bottom register. Great care has been taken with the figures to demonstrate extensive diversity in both characterisation and gesture. They have been made to fit the shape of the compartments, whose width is filled by the lettered scrolls, and are very animated seeming to engage with the faithful by leading them in the crucial spoken attestation. The tailored shapes for the secondary figures can be seen as an "advancement" from the hoops of the Lateran cope; they also offer a more successful resolution to the difficult elision of the columns as the design narrows towards the neck.42

The animation of the Apostles is echoed by that of the eight Old Testament ancestors of Christ located in the second tier of spandrels (Pls. 24 and 25). As well as providing a scriptural link with the written Word and demonstrating the continuity of worship of the pre-Christian and Christian church, these historical figures testify to the fulfilment of prophesies and the nature of revelation. Their incorporation into the iconography links up with the scene of Pentecost, and directs attention to the establishment of the early Christian Church. Thus here again there is evidence of the authority invested in the wearer of the robe as the representative, in an apostolic continuity, of Christ on earth. Bearing imagery which reflects the reason for the assembly, which spells out and affirms the overall plan of redemption and which signals the symbolic marriage of Christ with His earthly Church, the cope could move among the faithful acting as an ecclesiastical exemplar. In addition, the liturgical context for the robe was made clear visually with images which reflected both the
actual texts of the Office, and the ecclesiastical basis with its history and doctrinal concepts. The expected reassurance of the celestial presence during the Eucharist is contained in two beautiful censing angels at the apex on either side of the hood (Pls. 24 and 25, Fig. 100). They again reflect the priestly actions of the Mass as they issue from the heavens to sanctify the robe and bless the events and figures depicted around them.

After close examination of the four chosen pontifical copes it has been found that, inspite of their widely differing narrative cycles the underlying premise of the iconography is directed by the same concerns in each case. These findings could be expanded if other examples of opus Anglicanum robes were to be studied in the same way. The sacramental emphasis incorporated within the ecclesiastical content has demonstrated a thematic consistency which leaves no doubt about the liturgical function of the vestments. The exclusivity of these luxury items clearly fitted them for occasions of particular splendour as liturgical show-pieces. The expansive treatment of the sacred histories has been shown to have made abstract theological doctrines visually explicit, while at the same time spelling out the place of the Church on earth. Having thus established this liturgical context, there remains to be revealed the third and most significant dimension of these celebration copes - the precise Eucharistic connection.
Christie, 1938, 149. King, 1963, 41, says "This tradition is incompatible with the style of the cope which must have been made several decades after that date".

Christie puts the Lateran cope before that of Bologna, which she dates as early fourteenth century. After referring to the inferior quality of the Bologna cope she compares the two calling the Lateran "a far greater work of art. To rank the two pieces in the same class is impossible; they are poles apart." These remarks are in direct contradiction to the assessments given by Farcy, 1890, 125 and Alford, 1886, 320. It would seem that entirely subjective standards have been used to determine the quality of the pieces.

Ibid., 152.

Similar "hoops" can be seen on the Vich cope. This treatment of the "spandrels" results in irregularities, as the bands dimish to fill the field of design, although they are less noticeable on the Lateran. Due to the nature of such arcaded designs the problem is never fully resolved, but the introduction of the heart-shaped compartments on the Butler-Bowden, Pienza and "Lost" copes succeed in disguising the problem.

Ibid., 152.


R. Branner, "The Painted Medallions in the Sainte-Chapelle in Paris", Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, Vol. 58, Part 2, 1968. Branner indicates that "It is not impossible that the painted medallions were related to a tradition of textiles that is all but lost to us today. Among the objects closest to the murals in form, subject, and general programme, are a number of thirteenth century copes covered with roundels or quadrilobes containing scenes of martyrdom of saints. As the priest wore the cope during mass, the scenes were associated with the sacrifice of Christ in somewhat the same manner as the quadrilobes in the chapel were associated with the relics of the Passion." (p.8). The Uppsala, Ascoli Piceno, and reconstructed Anagni copes have just this form.

Pelikan, 1978, 175.

As an article of faith, belief in the Communion of Saints was attested to in the Creed spoken during the liturgy. Revelations describes the assembled company: "the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times then thousand, and thousands of thousands ...", Rev. 5:11; "a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands ...". Rev. 7:9, the original sources for all further theological discussion. Pelikan, 1978, 174-184.

This remark relates to the suggestion that "by the thirteenth century it is clear that merchants were well established as middlemen, anticipating demand and facilitating production." (my underlining). The comment is followed by
examples of the documented gifts from English royalty, and high churchmen, of
copes to pontiffs, each of which must surely have been specially
commissioned. Staniland, 1991, 55. It is necessary to make the distinction, as
explained in Chapter 2, 79, between lesser embroideries made for general
purchase and the precious, fully embroidered, luxury items which served as
diplomatic gifts.

The feast dates are from the Salisbury Calendar.
The following texts were consulted for the section on the saints: The Book of
Saints - The Benedictine Monks of St Augustine's Abbey, 1939; J. Derek
Holmes & Bernard W. Bickers, A Short History of the Catholic Church, Burns
Delaney, Dictionary of Saints, Kaye & Ward Ltd., 1980


The Book of Saints, 1939.

In the early fourteenth century, with the decline of papal authority after the
on-going struggles with Frederick II, the "Sicilian Question" and, more
recently, the Clericos latios, a pope or high cleric might well have felt such
imagery to be appropriate propaganda as an attempt to reinforce its authority.


The suggested message of the Ascoli Piceno cope asserts the same papal
authority while possibly having been a pro-monarchial commission.

Gontard, 1959, 304-5. In the remaining fragment of the fresco, Boniface can be
seen to be wearing a cope but it does not seem to bear any relation to the
Lateran vestment, instead it would appear to be of damask possibly with an
embroidered orphrey. It is significant that no image has yet been uncovered, in
manuscripts, panel or wall painting, of a figure wearing a fully embroidered
cope. This indicates that they were neither common nor even visually familiar,
which supports the idea that the copes which remain represent the greatest part
of the output.

M.B. McNamee, "The Origin of the Vested Angel as a Eucharistic Symbol in
Flemish Painting", Art Bulletin, Vol. 54, 1972, 263-278. However, she seems
to agree with Jeanne Villette who says: "that the angel vested in ecclesiastical
garb does not become a commonplace iconographic device in Western art
until the late fourteenth century, and that, even then, it was most extensively and
consistently employed only in Flanders and in the parts of Germany,
France, northern Italy, Spain, and Portugal which were most influenced by
Flemish art." (p.263). While both angels are censing in the Bologna
Resurrection, the one on the left hand side is vested as a deacon. The
significance is clearly eucharistic in such an instance also - a very early
example in the West?

McNamee, 1972, 268-9

Lane, 1975, 476ff

For example the Syon, Vatican and St. Maximin copes. This feature has also been taken as signalling the "Court Style" and an indication of London based production.

Farcy, 27. He also says of this cope that the hair, beards and facial features were embroidered but the skin of the face and the hands "ont été simplement peints...". I cannot agree with this since I could see no evidence to support the claim. The finest strand of silk was used to delineate areas of skin which consequently would be the first part to show wear; there are frequently needle holes remaining to indicate where formerly there had been stitchery.


Christie, 1938, 178.


Sigismondo Tizio, Historiarum Senensium ad Renarum origine ad annum 1528, Vol.IV, Manoscritto segnato G.I.31,-G.II.36,-40, Biblioteca Chigiana, Siena. This is currently held in the Vatican Library; the volumes have been searched but the references did not match and have not yet been retraced. Mannucci quotes the original text. Mannucci, 1929, 2.

During his term of office, Pius continually attempted to raise European support for a crusade against the Turks, whose sacking of Constantinople in 1453 had affected him deeply. This may well explain why he chose to assist Paleologus, whose gratitude extended to include the right arm of St. John the Baptist and half of the head of St. Andrew - relics he is reported to have brought with him for safekeeping along with the cope. Sigismondo Tizio, 1528.

Paleologus was a brother of the Eastern Emperor, John VIII, who gave him (and his brother Demetrius) Morea, the distant outpost of the diminished empire far from the centre of power, over which to rule, (Donald M. Nicol, The Last Centuries of Byzantium 1261-1453, London, 1972, 391).

There are several accounts of this project, for example R.J. Mitchell, The Laurel and the Tiara, London 1962, 243 and 252. The new cathedral was dedicated to Our Lady which would have made the iconography of the cope especially relevant. A museum was established to house the collection of Pius' personal possessions donated to the cathedral.

Although the donation is documented by Tizio it is 1940 before it appears in any written record held in the cathedral. See Chapter 3, 101, above.

Chapter 3 above.

This ties in with the diplomatic role envisaged for the supposed gift of the Ascoli Piceno cope to Clement IV by Kyser, 1990, 195.

Nicol, 1972.


Two such ceremonial robes belonged to Emperor Henry II (1002-24), one supposedly his coronation robe--the Sternenmantel--and the other "thought to have been made for Henry to wear at the dedication of Bamberg Cathedral in


As a quasi-royal household, the House of Savoy was connected to both English and French royalty through marriage, the links were particularly close during the thirteenth century. Boniface (of Savoy) was Archbishop of Canterbury from 1241-1270. A.J. Taylor, "Count Amadeus of Savoy's Visit to England in 1292", *Archaeologia*, Vol. 106, 1979, 123ff., tells of precious cloth being brought from Lucca, and details the lavish scale of expenditure on the nineteen week trip. Amongst the many and varied articles bought in England two cloths of gold with images, presumably embroidered, and vestments to be used as albs, were noted.

37 Margaret, of royal descent, remains chaste in spite of suffering torture and death after refusing to succumb to the advances of the Provost Olybrius. She is the patron saint of childbirth having emerged unharmed from the body of the dragon who had consumed her.

38 For instance Sts. Faith, Helen, Agatha and Agnes, who are all to be found in *opus Anglicanum*.

39 Catherine, daughter of the King of Cyprus, withstood the Emperor Maxentius; made many pagan converts through her skilled intellectual arguments with philosophers, and also suffered a prolonged and tortuous martyrdom. She is the patron saint of education and learning.

40 *The Golden Legend* gives an account of "The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary" which tells of her death.

41 *The Golden Legend* account of the Assumption also incorporates this legend.

42 This same feature is also found on the Butler Bowden cope, and a variation can be seen on the watercolour of the "Lost" cope. The cope of the Virgin carries an embryonic form of this final development.

43 See Appendix V.
CHAPTER SIX

THE COPE

as

EUCHARISTIC EXEGETE
The following chapter deals with the third area within which this so-called non-liturgical vestment has been shown to have held a crucial place. Wallis, Brebordaz and King have dealt with the gamut of embroidered ecclesiastical iconography in a generalised fashion. While a necessary and important preliminary exercise, an obvious weakness is apparent in the failure to address the issues which arise out of the findings. It is essential to indicate why particular themes were selected; how—and if—they were related to the use to which the various vestments were put, and within what contemporary context they were operational. It is not enough to categorise themes from the emphasis they demonstrate such as: Redemption; Redemption stressing the importance of the Virgin as Intercessor, or Incarnation. Neither is it sufficient merely to draw attention to a supposed lack of a Christological emphasis. Nor can embroidered iconography be simplistically explained away by saying that it served to concentrate the mind of the worshipper on the most important parts of the Mass, or helped the clergy to contemplate.

So far in this study the cope's primary, and arguably most obvious, function as an ecclesiastical processional robe, used to mark significant celebrations of High Mass amongst other occasions, has been well demonstrated. Following on from this the "continuous narrative" images on the chosen examples have been examined. They revealed careful expositions in coherent representational programmes, principally of Nativity, Passion and Marian cycles, all characterised by a clear sacrificial emphasis. While the doctrinal theology of the cope iconography was thus identified there is an urgent need, especially in the light of the thematic consistency which emerged demonstrating a common focus, to explain the significance of the adoption of these specific ideas. The personal element of these programmes was also observed and commented on even if it could not be satisfactorily attributed. There remains then finally to investigate what part the cope played within church ritual; to ascertain if this additional context influenced the choice of imagery, and to see if it is possible that the distinctive thematic unity was connected to the liturgical ceremony within which it functioned.
The conclusions drawn from close examination of the festive copes made clear that the representations, far from being merely decoration to transform a mundane outdoor cloak into a celebrational vestment, belong to sophisticated iconographic programmes, multi-layered in meaning and complex in function. Encompassing history, scripture and doctrine the disparate strands come together if the pictorial cope is viewed as an entity, in the liturgical context within which it is known to have operated. Here, having previously stood alone in primary and literal interpretations, the representational themes unite and will be shown to tie the vestment as a whole to words and actions of the Office. Through this means, a significant section of the liturgical celebration was accompanied by a visual exegesis and pictorial remembrance. Further, interpreting the iconographic programmes in the light of the extended ecclesiastical context, makes clear the complex symbolic and pre-existent function of the copes, and shows them to be intrinsically related to this particular setting. However, such is the extensive range of the imagery that, while incorporating the entire theology of the Eucharist, it still retains its ability to speak in the more generalised terms which account for the suitability of these precious robes for such a wide variety of occasions.

The ecclesiastical occasions for the wearing of pontifical copes as elaborations of examples for standard usage, would have included all the greatest Christian celebrations of Christmas and Easter, the most solemn double feasts and, as with the Use of Sarum, all Sundays in the year. All of these involved the enactment of solemn High Mass (or Pontifical Mass), with the appropriate collects, psalms and prayers, and were attended by large gatherings of the faithful as well as numerous clerics. At such times, having fulfilled its obligation as a vehicle of church propaganda during the processional part of the ritual, once within the presbytery the use of the cope was extended into the liturgical context. Thus, already the sacrificial emphasis can be understood through its intimate connection to the eucharistic aspect of the Mass, and can be seen to be directly aligned to the liturgical drama to be enacted within its designated location. For the duration of the preparatory first section of the Office in
the Middle Ages, the celebrant retained his presentation cope, thus clearly offering an
opportunity to tailor iconography to this particular context.

The term "liturgy" requires a brief explanation since it is widely and rather
freely used for a number of unspecified situations. In its fundamental meaning "liturgy"
referred solely to the Mass; however, in more recent times it has come to encompass
any and all of the public worship of the Church. It is not an original label—the
favoured word to indicate pre and early-Christian religious gatherings was
"assembly"—but came into being in the 16th century.6 Previously, the Jews were
convoked to regular worship in assemblies; they understood from the Old Testament
that at such times the presence of God was assured:

And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God; and they
stood at the nether part of the mount.

And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon
it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the

With the institution of the New Covenant by Jesus, the faithful were again called
together, as members of the mystical Body of Christ, to form the Church, thereby
creating a second assembly which was to have the same assurances as the first and
would meet in the same manner: "For where two or three are gathered together in my
name, there am I in the midst of them." (Matt. 18:20). It was to take several centuries
for the full programme of Temporale and Sanctorale fixtures,7 which make up the
annual liturgical cycle, to evolve, but it was within this embryonic framework that the
symbolic vestments, copes included, were later to play their part. In the text which
follows, unless otherwise specified, when the word liturgy/liturgical is found, it is to
be understood to refer strictly to the Office of Holy Communion—the Eucharist or
Mass—performed in the midst of the assembled faithful, or, on occasion, privately for
the clergy.

As a symbolic act the liturgy itself was shrouded in mystery, both in terms of
the way in which it operated to carry supplication and praise to God and the redeeming
grace of God to mankind, and also in the sacramental concepts embodied in it. During the celebration of the eucharist Christ was present in two forms, reflecting his dual nature: symbolically as the historical, sacrificial and risen Son of God, and mystically through the transubstantiated bread and wine which became his crucified body and blood. All these aspects relating to the nature of Christ are incorporated in the iconography of the celebrational copes. The entire mystery of the divinity of the Son of God--subsumed within his human form and thereby allowing for the incarnation, passion and ascension--was central to the rememorative aspects of the drama. The eucharistic rite, however impregnated with divine mysteries, nevertheless belonged to, and was ordained for this world. It was conducted in the earthly church by ministers consecrated through the Apostolic Succession, and, while it had arisen as a result of a direct command of a human Christ, it comprised in reality the fulfilment and culmination of Old Testament prophecies and visions:

And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. Luke 24:44, also Luke 4:21; 24:27.

The celestial visions of Isaiah and Ezekiel, on which the earlier Jewish temple worship had drawn in its development, were viewed with the same reverence by the first Christians who, like the Hebrews, also accepted them as the Word of God. This was but one way in which the continuity between the practices of the Synagogue and the new Church was demonstrated.

The ancient and respected Judaic roots offered a rich treasury of tradition and, in some instances, belief, on which the priests of the New Covenant could build as they formulated their own rituals and doctrine. They too saw the Old Testament as writings inspired directly by God. The message of His divine will, as communicated to holy persons and prophets who alone had been seen as worthy to witness the existence of God, known to them as Yahweh. Incorporation into the canonical version of the scriptures conferred the necessary authority on the Old Testament accounts for the
information they contained to be adopted as articles of faith and church doctrine. Much of the medieval understanding of the celestial hierarchy derived from these early sources of revelation expounded later by theologians, who also made clear the parallels between the earthly and heavenly assemblies and the connections of their acts of worship. Supplementing the orthodox texts had been the various apocryphal writings and the Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, books such as the Apocalypse of Abraham and the Testament of Adam belonging between c200 BC - 200 AD, and the liturgical literature from Qumran of c100 BC - 100 AD. Relying on these sources, details of the divine council of Yahweh had been built up to give a picture of a star-filled heaven populated by innumerable ranks of celestial presences. These guards, heralds, attendants and administrators were occupied around the enthroned Yahweh in continual hymns of praise. The belief also existed that it was possible for redeemed humanity to attain this angelic state (making up the number to replace the "fallen" angels). Further, as a result of theophanies—for instance Moses' witness of the burning bush—it was accepted that the presence of God could be experienced on earth.

This early understanding of the ranks and operations of the Heavenly Hosts formed an important part of fundamental doctrine inherited by Christianity, and it is vital to comprehend the full picture since so much of what was to follow was modelled on it. The mystical revelations recounted particularly by Ezekiel and Isaiah, together with other references from a number of Old Testament books such as Genesis, Psalms and Job, provided an authoritative account of the celestial kingdom which—according to Christianity—the earthly one was supposed to mirror. From this it was learned that the Lord, Yahweh, enthroned and set apart, was worshipped, blessed, glorified and praised:

Among the gods there is none like unto thee, O Lord...

All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, O Lord

and shall glorify thy name. Psalm 86:8-9,

by all those over whom He held the position of ruler and judge: "God standeth in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among the gods." (Psalm 82:1). At such times of
revelation the Assembly had been seen formally convened and operational, either as a form of "parliament" or "court" where decisions were made and rulings given (Genesis 1:26; Psalm 99), or preoccupied with the business of worship. The exalted company—given different names in different places, among them gods, the mighty ones, congregation, the sanctified ones, angels and hosts of heaven—12—which made up the hierarchical Assembly was composed of ranks distinguished by appearance, varying degrees of enlightenment and a series of duties. While the primary concern of the members was the never ending praise of the Creator (Pl. 28), their other responsibilities included such things as advising Yahweh; conveying His commands to mankind, for whom they served as protectors; carrying important pronouncements to earth and overseeing punishments.13 In an attempt to convey the enormity of this angelic company witnesses could only offer indeterminate estimates in terms which tried to indicate the innumerable hosts: "thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him ..." (Daniel 7:10).14

The various accounts of the celestial kingdom related in both Testaments were substantial enough for theologians to draw up complex hierarchies many centuries later, notably in the sixth century writings of the mystic Dionysius the Aeropagite, and to make explicit the relationship to and relevance for the earthly Church. By the medieval period angels, belief in which was reinforced at the Council of Nicea in 325, were considered to be below God as His creations but, as celestial beings, held to be higher than man:

When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained;

What is man ... ?

For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels ... . Psalm 8:3-5.

Like God himself, they were not seen as part of the natural world and were considered to be beyond time, having existed before the creation of the Universe. They were further understood to be invested with a higher intelligence than man in spite of their
incorporeality. Although several "Orders" of the angelic beings were mentioned in the
New Testament:

For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth,
visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions or principalities,
or powers ... , Colossians 1:16, also Ephesians 1:21,
the Old Testament was principally concerned with Seraphims and Cherubims. Isaiah,
writing around 742-700 BC and recounting his visionary attendance at the Divine
Assembly, tells that:

I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train
filled the temple.
Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered
his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. Isaiah

While Ezekiel, the sixth century BC prophet, deals at greater length with the
Cherubims (Pl. 29)--also seen in a vision of heaven--about which it is learned that
"they had the likeness of a man ..." (Ezekiel 1:5) with human hands, feet and faces
(Ezekiel gives them each four types of faces from the attributes of the Evangelists) and
four wings each which: "were stretched upward; two wings of every one were joined
one to another, and two covered their bodies." (Ezekiel 1:11). Later he tells that they
were propelled additionally by wheels and that: "their whole body, and their backs,
and their hands, and their wings, and the wheels, were full of eyes round about ..."
(Ezekiel 10:12). Yahweh is Himself seated between these cherubims (Psalm 99:1),
and they were emulated in the decoration of Solomon's temple where they had an
important part to play (1 Kings 6:27-29). The picturesque accounts of these creatures
offered by the prophets allowed medieval artists to give full reign to their imaginative
powers in their depictions of the formless beings (Pl. 30). The numerous appearances
of both seraphims and cherubims on opus Anglicanum vestments are further testament
to the beauty of some of these interpretations.
The Psalms made clear the importance of the celestial hymns of praise to Yahweh, but more specific information came again from Isaiah who, in his mystical vision, was privileged to hear the words of the seraphims as they cried out to each other: "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory." (Isaiah 6:3). In the New Testament, the Book of Revelations gives a manifestation of the continuity between Jewish and Gentile experience when a duplicate vision of this celestial activity was recounted, containing the same cry:

And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.

And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever ... Rev. 4:8-9,

and involving the same "ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands ..." (Rev.5:11). John chose to write in this fashion in emulation of the Old Testament apocalypse so, while there were close parallels, the distinction between the two visions was, however, of great significance. The later account was understood to describe the celestial wedding feast of the Bride of Christ, attendance at which would be possible for the faithful when the Second Coming was made actual. As Christianity came to be formalised, and exegetical work on the Word of God, the scriptures and general doctrinal matters evolved, links were made clear between the heavenly banquet and the liturgy of the earthly assembly - the Church.

In The Celestial Hierarchy, Dionysius expands on earlier writings and exegeses to give what came to be the definitive text on angelology. His works generally were also testament to the importance of the notion of an hierarchical ordering of things to the medieval mind. Apart from the celestial hierarchy, the same principle was seen to operate with the ministers of the earthly Church, and additionally among the ranks of the faithful, in the Scriptures, the Sacraments and some of the liturgical practices and accessories. Dionysius made clear that all down the line emanating from God, each
being was imbued with their own defined limit of enlightenment through the workings of the hierarchy:

For I have already stated, as discussed in the scriptures, that the ranks of heaven do not possess the exact same enlightened understanding of the sights of God. It is God himself who directly enlightens the primary ranks, through whose mediation he grants indirect enlightenment to the subordinate ranks, in proportion to capacity, and he does so by spreading among them the shining splendors of the divine beam. 15

By this system, all the highest orders had their own attributes as well as all those of the lesser ones who, in their turn, only had their own. Those closest to God and seen as united with Him--Thrones, Seraphims and Cherubims, all of equal rank--had the greatest understanding of Him through the three levels of spiritual knowledge: purification, illumination and perfection. They were the first to hear His pronouncements with no intermediary. Theophanies, visions of God and instances of divine enlightenment alike, were understood to come about through the mediation of the angels, many instances of which were to be found in both the Old and New Testaments.

Given the place the hosts of heaven held in doctrine and the Scriptures, theology and the liturgy, is it easy to understand their ubiquity in opus Anglicanum. However, on the celebration copes the liturgical application serves to animate their particular ministering angels, illuminating their functions and showing their direct involvement in the proceedings. 16 As the House of God on earth, Gothic ecclesiastical buildings were understood to encapsulate Heavenly Jerusalem: all the various elements orchestrated in combination to emulate the celestial city, drawing on the descriptions of the temple of Solomon. Once inside these buildings, the faithful recognised themselves to be in the presence of God. They further understood that participation in the most sacred ritual of the Mass meant also the sacramental participation in the heavenly liturgy, conducted by the celestial company. The altar, and the bishop, were surrounded by the angelic hosts--"At that moment Angels surround the Bishop, and the whole of the sanctuary, and the place around the altar is
filled with heavenly powers in honour of Him who lies there.\textsuperscript{17}--whose activities were recounted in the Office, and whose great song--the \textit{Gloria in excelsis}\textsuperscript{18}--was incorporated into the first stage of the earthly liturgy. It is in direct response to these aspects that angels, principally seraphims and cherubims, were to be found on the pontifical copes which, as has been seen above, were retained for the introductory part of the Eucharist.

That this was indeed the case is further reinforced when the ritual of the Mass itself is considered. The second part, the sacred Canon of the Mass, was introduced by the \textit{Sursum corda}, \textit{Sanctus} and the \textit{Benedictus} after those unfit and the catechumens had left. By this point the congregation had been called to prayer, made their confession and acknowledged their need for mercy. They had completed the litany of petitions, given thanks for the goodness of God, and reaffirmed their faith through recitation of the Creed. The preparatory stages thus completed, the celebrant was then seen to be vested in the eucharistic garment--the chasuble (if a bishop were in attendance and not the celebrant, he would have then taken his place at the side, retaining his cope)--in readiness for the climactic action of the elevation of the Host at the moment of transubstantiation. It is surely fitting that the change of mood and increase in solemnity should have been accompanied by the \textit{Sanctus}, the majestic and joyous cry of the angels, to whose heavenly voices those of the earthly choirs joined--\textit{Et ideo cum angelis et archangelis}--to mark the single moment of unity between God and His Church. The biblical song was the sacred hymn chanted in the heavenly kingdom as witnessed by both Isaiah and John. It attested to the presence of the angels around the congregation and was an affirmation of the transcendance of God, Lord of Hosts - a guarantee of His existence. Serving in this liturgical context as a culmination chant, the \textit{Sanctus} echoed the role it had had in the Old Testament Pseudepigrapha - the Books of Adam and Eve, and served to inform the congregation of the spiritual point they had then reached. As a formal prayer, the \textit{Sanctus} could be understood to open the way to union with the divine; the triple refrain signalling the significance of the moment and the consequence of the words:
Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus Dominus Deus sabaoth.
Pleni sunt celi et terra gloria tua.
Osanna in excelsis.
Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini.
Osanna in excelsis.

(Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts; heaven and earth are full of thy glory. Osanna in the highest. Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. Osanna in the highest.)

Although its brevity belies its importance, the Sanctus carried with it a weight of sacred and historic association which stretched back through the Early Christian liturgy to Synagogue prayers, and to its ultimate Old Testament scriptural derivation and original documentary source in Isaiah. Known then as the trisagion--the thrice holy--its adoption into religious ritual served to assert its authority. As well as this important function, its incorporation into Christian liturgy provided the historical affirmation of the link between the heavenly and earthly ceremonies and the continuity of the old and new assemblies. These aspects, as proof that the Church was fulfilling its responsibilities, made it an appropriate climax to the first, and opening to the second part of the Office. The singing of the Sanctus was also the very moment that the celebrational cope was removed. The presence of the company of angels on the robe can thus be seen to have functioned visually in much the same way as the Sanctus did verbally. It had affirmed their own actual but invisible presence, had made manifest the connection between the two rituals, and, by so doing, had signalled indisputably the place and role of the cope within this sacramental liturgical context. The wearing of the embroidered ceremonial vestment in itself was evidence of, and tribute to, the glory of God as indicated by the words of the Sanctus. Along with these weighty responsibilities, the presence of the embroidered angels provided the dramatic setting for the rest of the imagery in the same way that the church was the sacred setting for the eucharist.
On a number of the festive copes some, or all--the two copes at Anagni are notable for this--of the angels are to be seen carrying censers with which they sanctify and ennoble the various narrative scenes around which they kneel or hover (Pl. 31) As an ancient established tradition originating in imperial practices, censing had been officially sanctioned for religious ritual during the Carolingian era where the incense was taken to be holy and, as such, used as an offering to God in a propitiary sense. It came to Christianity from Old Testament rites:

And he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the Lord, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small and bring it within the vail:

And he shall put the incense upon the fire before the Lord, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat ... Lev. 16:12-13,

and was applied to both persons and fixtures such as the altar or the gospel book. In addition to consecrating and conferring honour, purifying and protecting, the rising clouds of the sweetly scented oil were interpreted symbolically as the prayers of the congregation ascending heavenwards to God:

And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.

And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand. Rev. 8:3-4; also Psalm 142:2.

The actual vessel itself, generally made in ornate form from a precious metal, was seen as being a small-scale replication of the Church at prayer.

The process of burning the incense was also seen symbolically, as indicated by the prayer which accompanied its use during a stage of the Mass: "May the Lord enkindle within us the fire of His love, and the flame of everlasting charity". As well as having these symbolic properties, censing operated both visually by the swinging motions and sensually through the spicy odour, as a means of heightening religious solemnity. Its use during the sacramental rememoration of the Last Supper, with the act
of transubstantiation as the climactic moment, was both emotive and dramatic. Earlier, as the celebrant processed through the confines of the church in his festive cope, the faithful would have had the opportunity to see the angelic hosts performing actions to be emulated by the earthly ministers during the liturgical rite. Some festive copes carry censing angels only on either side of the hood (usually as supporters to the Coronation of the Virgin, Pl. 27 and Fig. 100). In spite of this diminished presence they are able to fulfil the same generalised function since this is the most conspicuous position on the robes, the point from which everything flows, and returns to, in all directions. In understanding the iconography of the celebrational copes this pictorial angelic gesture serves to further stress the connection between the robes and the context of the eucharistic Office.

Music and psalmody were important components in the liturgy, along with the incorporation of polophony the ecclesiastical chants came to be extended and elaborated through means such as alternations and anaphoras. This was especially so for the great feasts celebrated with Pontifical or solemn High Masses. Such enrichment of what was already a dramatic ceremony would have further engaged the senses of the faithful, assisting with the creation of an otherworldly atmosphere to heighten the mystery associated with the sacramental ritual. The angels of two of the luxury copes—the Bologna and the Lateran—reflect and compliment the importance of the contribution made by music (Pls. 32, 20 and 33). In the spandrels, emerging from or balanced on clouds—with wings fully outstretched on the Bologna cope much in the same way as the original spandrel angels at Westminster Abbey—can be found entire celestial orchestras with an astonishingly wide and varying range of instruments. As before their activity was not accidental. In common with those preoccupied in censing the sacred images, the angels here provided the music of the spheres which accompanied the heavenly liturgy, and can be understood to have been acting in concert with the melodic choral chants and hymns of the earthly ritual.

Identifying these crucial links with the content of the pre-Mass ritual and the embroidered angels on the celebration copes, leads naturally to consideration of the
other aspects of the iconographic programmes to see if their presence can be accounted for in the same way. The origins of the Mass lie, of course, in the Last Supper. Christ's command "do this in remembrance of me" was carried out by the Apostles, whose authority was further reinforced by the descent to earth of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Stemming from the Jewish Paschal meal, the ritual, which was to form the central act of worship of the new Church, implied a feast to begin with. As other features were adopted, principally the reading of the Scriptures—the Word of God—the connection with a meal was dropped, as was the custom of an evening celebration. The content of the Office was to vary widely during the years which followed its inauguration until the early ninth century. At this time a relatively standardised Roman version was generally adopted, largely as a result of the work of Alcuin under the command of Charlemagne. However, whatever the local variations may have been, the central actions involving the bread and wine remained constant. What also remained of primary significance throughout was the concept of the assembly and the notion of worship as a collective activity. Of the annual cycle of the Church liturgy—daily, weekly, temporale and sanctorale—the Eucharist had always held its place as the foremost mystery. As the most important of the sacraments, the dramatic rites carried within them a manifestation and guarantee of the truth of God's promise of salvation to mankind. They were further to be understood as a prefiguration of the celestial reward awaiting the faithful: a place ultimately in the eternal heavenly assembly gathered around the throne of the Almighty.

As indicated the first part of the medieval Mass was responsible for bringing the assembled congregation to a state of readiness in order to receive the sacramental bread. This was achieved by working through a sequence of readings, prayers and chants, each dealing with a particular aspect of worship but connected to the overall work of salvation and deliverance of grace. After vesting, the ritual was initiated with the bidding prayers, recounted as the celebrant processed through the confines of the church calling for the attention of the faithful. From his position at the end of the procession, he moved along the nave, passing through the congregation symbolically
gathering them together to present them at the altar as members of the mystical Body of Christ seeking the remission of sins. From this unobstructed vantage point the vestment, worn in persona Christi by the representative of the people, would have had the greatest exposure and could have been most fully appreciated by the lay assembly. While some might have simply identified such scenes as the Crucifixion, the Nativity or the Coronation of the Virgin, to the initiated the theological implications of the imagery would have prompted thoughts of the purpose of the miraculous life of Christ, and the redemptive implications of His divine mission among men. These doctrinal matters formed the core of the sacramental ceremony to be performed and around which its words and actions were woven.

It has already been pointed out that variations in the order of the Office existed. However, a simplified general outline of the pre-Mass preparatory stages will serve to illustrate the standard textual content of all the principal aspects. After the bidding prayers and the Introit, the celebrant gathered up the petitions of the congregation with the prayers at the foot of the altar—the confiteor, misereatur and the indulgentiam (or Absolutionem)—finishing with the oration when the priest reverenced the table of the Lord, and its sacred accessories, while incensing was done. Next came the litany with the kyrie eleison—public recognition of the need for salvation and the invocation of God's mercy—followed by thanksgiving through the Gloria. Instruction was received with the readings from the Old and New Testaments—the Epistle and the Gospel—which came after the prayers of the Church had been presented, through the mediation of Jesus Christ, at the throne of the Almighty. With completion of the full and explicit affirmation of faith contained in the Creed the catechumens, and others not able to participate in the sacred mystery, departed. This left the oblation rites—offertory, oblation, incensation, washing of hands, and the Secret—before the Preface, Sanctus and Benedictus which introduced the sacrificial Canon of the Mass. Various prayers, chants and hymns interspersed these principal items which together brought the assembled earthly Church to a state of purity in readiness to receive the gift of grace. Throughout the proceedings the luxury copes in centre stage led the way, acting on
behalf of the faithful bringing their prayers and receiving the Word of God through the mediation of the ordained minister, while also keeping them abreast of the dramatic ritual. In addition the imagery would have signalled the presence of the Host for those who could see the cope but not the altar.

As well as the general association of the vestment to the context of the pre-Mass, further precise links can be made if more of the textual material is looked at. A similar situation to that found with the Sanctus prevails with the Creed, which is almost fully translated into visual images. Recitation of this critical affirmation of faith identified the true believer since it covered, then as now, the essentials of Christian doctrine. Its importance—and the most direct reference to it—is manifest most particularly through the representations of the Pienza cope (Fig. 92). In each of the lower twelve heart-shaped spandrel compartments an apostle holds a scroll, inscribed with the section of the Creed he was said to have contributed at the first Pentecost. The full prayer is thus spread around the entire span of the robe, supporting the miraculous events happening above on which the belief was founded. The apostles are named above their heads and the gothic script is almost as legible today as it must have been all those centuries ago. Their expansive gestures engage the spectator whose eye is propelled from one to the other; a sophisticated device which encouraged the scrolls to be read in the same sequential way that the words were recited. The startling originality of this unique presentation demonstrates how each of the celebration copes used the ecclesiastical material to entirely different ends, always doctrinally accurate but also always fully exploiting the decorative potential of the various components in highly sophisticated ways.

No other example is so overt but nevertheless the representations on each of the festive copes examined spell out, as visual exegetes of the spoken Creed, the selection of the Virgin Mary as the vessel through which the miracle of the divine birth of the Son of God was made actual. The humanity of Christ is presented in references to events of his earthly life. In most instances there are depictions of his final torments and the crucifixion itself; but his passion, death, resurrection and ascension are made
clear in other ways: inclusion of scenes such as Pentecost or the Coronation of the Virgin. The Anagni and Bologna copes carry interpretations of the Descent into Limbo, but whatever selection of episodes is used the references are comprehensive and unmistakeable. These events bear witness to the dual nature of Christ, as well as illustrating the historical steps by which God's gift of Salvation was made available to mankind. A generalised omission of Old Testament narratives has already been pointed out but, as was shown with the Sanctus, other aspects draw attention to the links and chronological continuity through time - the inclusion of prophets ("Who spake by the prophets") being the most favoured means. Their presence, coupled with the apostles, Pentecost or scenes of the Death of the Virgin indicate the fulfilment of prophecies and the establishment of "one holy and Apostolic Church" under the direction of Peter, as ordained by Christ for the dispensation of grace, the sacraments and, most especially, the Eucharist.

When looking, within a wider context, at the representational scenes on the four copes involved, the Nativity, Passion and Marian cycles as ecclesiastical exemplars was demonstrated. On each of the robes three chronologically early episodes are to be found: the Annunciation, Nativity and the Adoration of the Magi - the only three scenes common to them all. Beyond the primary iconographical identification and within the specific context of the eucharist, the iconological interpretation encompassed the miraculous Incarnation as evidence of the divine nature of Christ (with the consequent implications for the Virgin). According to convention, the birth of God incarnate was presented as a human event, and followed by a demonstration of the subjection of earthly rule to the heavenly, as recognition of the arrival of the Messiah. Already this particular combination of narratives provided evidence that God's plan had been initiated and that the earlier prophecies were reaching fulfilment. As further proof of the cope's connection with the liturgical proceedings, the economy of salvation had thus been set in motion in a visual counterpart.

On the Pienza cope these events are part of a Marian cycle rather than a Christological one; thus, inclusion of the Presentation and Marriage of the Virgin
underlines both her fitness to be chosen to bear the Son of God and the notion of her being God's elect and, as such, part of His original plan (Pl. 23, Fig. 97). The emphasis on the Virgin--found throughout the repertoire of copes--was entirely appropriate given that the Marian cult was at its height during the time of opus Anglicanum. This devotion to Mary had resulted in making her the focus of many feasts and liturgical ceremonies, as well as the patron of numerous churches. The cult was sanctioned by the Church--most particularly in England--and confirmed during the pre-Mass ritual where her name was invoked at different moments. The Ave Marie made clear from the outset, after the Pater noster, that Christ was God incarnate delivered to the world by the uniquely blessed Virgin:

\[
\text{Ave marie gratia plena: dominus tecum: benedicat tu in mulieribus et benefictus fructus ventris tui Iesus.}
\]

(Hail, Mary, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.) The maternal role was reiterated in the Creed: "born of the Virgin Mary"; in addition, she was confessed to and petitioned in the Confiteor:

\[
\text{Confiteor deo beate marie et omnibus sanctis eius et vobis ... precor sanctam mariam, omnes santos dei, et vos orare pro me.}
\]

(I confess to God, to blessed Mary, to all the saints, and to you ... I pray holy Mary, all the saints of God, and you, to pray for me.) Among other textual changes or insertions, a special version of the Gloria in excelsis existed for use on her feast days, which incorporated something of both her historical and symbolic roles. The imagery of the Blessed Virgin Mary's heavenly coronation as the Bride of Christ--an image which capped many of the iconographic programmes--was the visual interpretation of the promise of salvation, perpetuated and affirmed by the liturgy of the earthly Church. It connected the Mother of God to the Office actively as model, representative and intercessor, and offered a triumphant theological and pictorial climax in the proof of man's resurrection. Thus the place of the pronounced Marian emphasis is easily understood in relation to the liturgical context, prevailing dogma and contemporary
doctrinal thinking. Again the decorative themes of the celebration copes can be seen to be taking their cue from the demands of their ecclesiastical function, expanding the repertoire of visual exegesis to signal the central role of the Virgin, through historical time to the context of the immediate present with her place in the earthly liturgy.

As the rest of the programmes is worked through what is found is a continuing visual exegesis of the rememorative aspects of the liturgy, and its eschatological intimations related to the eternal wedding feast. By presenting pictorial records of the entire history of salvation, each in their own individual way, the initial conception was carried through to its ultimate conclusion thus embracing the complete theology of the eucharist. Moving through various selections of the life of Christ, or the Virgin, they came to events of the Passion, which culminated in the supreme humiliation and triumph of the crucifixion, missing only on the Pienza cope. The Cross was the central focus of worship for medieval christians, and the most potent symbol of the human sufferings of the divine Son of God. Made from the wood of the Tree of Life and/or Knowledge (according to legend and/or exegesis), the connection served as a reminder of the Fall, which had originally made salvation necessary through the introduction of sin and death into the world. The cross was understood as both the implement of Christ's death and also his triumph over it, as well as representing the defeat of sin and the devil. It marked the watershed between the human and miraculous manifestations of God incarnate. It was incorporated in Christ's distinctive halo as an artistic "identity tag"; provided the plan for cathedrals; was echoed in the shape of some orphreys; stood in enriched form on the altar; was carried at the head of processions, was invoked for blessings and as a sign during services, and stood as a ubiquitous signal of deep symbolic value and import. The Eucharist itself had come into being through the Cross, which ultimately had been the instrument by which redemption became possible for mankind.

Thus the Crucifixion was followed naturally by pictorial representations of the miraculous events of the resurrection, which made clear the fulfilment of the earlier prophesies and the promise of God to the faithful. Through these comprehensive
programs the essential dogmas of the Church were encapsulated, interpreted and conveyed visually. They covered the fundamental aspects of the concept of mankind's need for atonement; the provision of grace through the humanity and life of the Son of God, and the assurance of ultimate redemption, resurrection and heavenly reward in the Offices of the Church and the intercession of the Virgin:

But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels,

To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect,

And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things .... Hebrews 12: 22-24.

The imagery, while indicating the theology of the eucharist, also demonstrated the reason for the presence of the laity at the sacrament, and was a guarantee of its truth and of that of the teachings of the Church.

Underlying all the particularised instances where the imagery is explicitly tied to the liturgical context of the pre-Mass, there is another and more generalised theme contained within the iconographic programmes. Along with the sacramental intimations which flow through the cyclical variations of the representations, can be found evidence of the Church through historical time, as suggested by the Creed. It followed from this that the luxury copes symbolised also Christ's marriage with his Church. The Christological cycles encompassed the Annunciation standing for the Incarnation which set the Economy of Salvation in motion. The presence of the prophets was complimented by that of the saints, signalling the continuity of sacred personages through living time and indicating the growing numbers of the heavenly ranks. After their singular devotion to the service of God they had been granted the ultimate reward of life everlasting, becoming both exemplars and mediators who could be invoked to intercede on behalf of sinful humanity. Through their personal sacrifices they contributed to the "treasury of grace" on which the faithful could draw. The part
played by the saints—virgins, martyrs and confessors—in the life of both the Church and
the faithful was reflected in the imagery of the great copies in different ways. The
Massacre of the Innocents was on both the Anagni cope and the Bologna, which also
incorporated them as secondary images; the Lateran carried single episodes depicting
the moment of martyrdom, and the Pienza used narrative cycles. Clearly they too were
essential to the liturgy both through their attendance as part of the company of heaven,
and through textual references notably in the Creed. 27

Each of the components of the full iconographic programmes has now been
 singled out and in every instance has been seen to be related in some way to the
proceedings of the medieval pre-Mass. Omissions, 28 such as apocalyptic material,
references to the Last Judgement or the Baptist, need not trouble us further since, it is
now obvious, they could have had no place within such a context. It is perhaps all the
more remarkable, given this seeming prerequisite for the imagery, that so much
individuality has been encountered along with the fixed fundamental doctrinal,
thedral and liturgical themes. In every area the pontifical copies have demonstrated
a rare level of excellence seldom combined with such faultless precision.

Thus the celebrational garments had a symbolic presence in the ceremonial,
signalling the role of the wearer as the representative of Christ's church on earth
through historical time as he literally become the living Church. No other vestment
carried such import, fitting the wearer to be in the spotlight in the first part of the
ultimate dramatic and sacred experience, offering visible evidence of the Church on
earth and thereby conferring its authority—which came direct from God—for the
enactment of the sacramental mystery on behalf of the assembled congregation. From
the Introit to the Sanctus the pontifical copies could also be seen themselves to be
operating in a variety of ways in setting the scene for Mass. At the same time, through
the carefully contrived representations, they offered visual parallels illuminating the
words and actions and making actual the mystical and dramatic ritual performed at the
altar. Far from being a "non-liturgical" vestment, the cope had a crucial contribution to
make to the solemn pre-Mass ritual, offering a visual counterpart to the earthly
ceremony - itself a counterpart of the celestial liturgy. Further, when worn in procession it affirmed the community of the Church on earth and its continuity from its foundation in the plan of salvation. Clearly a treasure such as this, with its powerful secular potential, its important public nature and its sacred liturgical function, would be a highly desirable and prized possession and an entirely appropriate diplomatic or political gift.
In particular: Wallis, 1988; Brel-Bordaz, 1982, Chapter 2; King, 1963.

Wallis, 1988, 18, states that vestments have symbolic importance in the liturgy serving to emphasise thought and ideas, but does not indicate how this would have worked.

These assertions are all drawn from Wallis.

See Chapters 4 and 5 above.


Martimort, 1969, 78; also Chaps. 1 and 5, for further information on this topic.

For classification of feasts, Sundays and ferias, Sandon, 1984, x-xi; for the Salisbury Calendar, xii-xiv.


B.D.Spinks, The sanctus in the eucharistic prayer, Cambridge, 1991. Also Part 1, 1ff. for fuller information on this and some of the material which follows. Also Martimort, 1969, Chapter 5.

Doubt has been cast on where the first Christian community may have evolved since the recovery and scholarly study of the Dead Sea Scrolls has demonstrated the importance of the contribution made by the Essene Jews.

Jungman, 1959, 378.

Ps. 86:6-9; Joel 3:11; Ps. 82:1; Isaiah 13:3; 2 Sam. 14:17,20; Deut. 4:19.

1 Kings 22:19-22; Joshua 5:13-16.

Pseudo-Dionysius says: "These numbers, enormous to us, square and multiply themselves and thereby indicate clearly that the ranks of the heavenly beings are innumerable. So numerous indeed are the blessed armies of transcendent intelligent beings that they surpass the fragile and limited realm of our physical numbers." Pseudo-Dionysius, 1987, 181. This edition of his works has been consulted throughout the thesis.


See Appendix V.

St. Chrysostom on the Priesthood, T.A. Moxon, London, 1907, 146. Chrysostom goes on to say: "I myself... heard some one relate the following story:--'An old and venerable man, who was accustomed to see visions, told...[that] at the moment of the Sacrifice he had seen on a sudden... an host of angels, clad in white raiment and encircling the altar, and bowing their heads toward the ground as though they were soldiers standing in the presence of a King. For my part, I believe the story'."

This great song of jubilation was itself given to man by an angel at the time of the Annunciation to the shepherds - Luke 2: 8-14. The ferial Preface
immediately proceeding the *Sanctus* tells that "angels praise thy majesty, dominions adore, powers tremble, the heavens, and the heavenly hosts, and the blessed Seraphim unite in one glad voice in extolling thee. Together with whom, we pray thee, that thou wouldest command that our voices should have entrance, humbly confessing thee and saying ...", Warren, 1911, 40.

20 For the Use of Sarum, Sandon, 1984, 24; Warren, 1911, 23 and 32; for the Roman Mass, Jungman, 1959, 12-3.
21 It had been hoped to glean some information to assist with more exact dating from these instruments, but no response was received to communications with the recognised British authority in this field.
22 The order of the various processions is illustrated in Bailey, 1971.
23 The visual image this action conjures up equates the cope with the Virgin of Mercy, protectively surrounding supplicants with her cloak.
24 The legend and fifteen variations of the Creed are discussed in C.F. Buhler, "The Apostles and the Creed", *Speculum*, No. 28, 1953, 335-9. He does not use the Pienza cope among his sample; its divisions do not tally with any of those he lists.
J.D. Gordon, "The Articles of the Creed and the Apostles", *Speculum*, No. 40, 1965, 34-9, adds further variations and offers reasons for this lack of concensus. He suggests that the order of apostles in Acts 1:13 is most likely to have provided the original sequence, and that the variations arose when further clauses were added to the first versions. Again there is no exact match in any of his combinations with the Pienza version.
Rock, 1892, 272. Rock gives a historical outline covering the five versions of the Creed.
From Table I of Wallis, 1988, 321, it can be seen that there is no match for the Pienza version with any of the additional examples she had selected. In other words, as far as can be discerned, the Pienza Creed has no known model or imitator.
25 For information on the elevation of the Virgin to cult status: Ancona, 1957.
26 According to Jungman, 1959, 205, there were times when for the *Misereatur* "a special phrase was prefixed like, 'By the prayers and merits of the holy Mother of God, the Virgin Mary, and all His saints,'" to increase the solemnity.
27 The size of this community was indicated in Rev. 7, v.9: "I beheld ... a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands". This was part of the Lesson for the Feast of All Saints (November 1st.) - Rev. 7: 2-12.
28 See Chapter 1, 38 above.
APPENDICES
## APPENDIX I

**Scenes Found on Anagni, Bologna, Lateran and Pienza Copes**

<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>INFANCY</strong></th>
<th><strong>ANAGNI</strong></th>
<th><strong>BOLOGNA</strong></th>
<th><strong>LATERAN</strong></th>
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<td>Annunciation</td>
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<td>Visitation</td>
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<td>Nativity</td>
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<td>Annun. to Sheps.</td>
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<td>Corn Miracle</td>
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<td>Mass. of Innocents</td>
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<td>Pres. in Temple</td>
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<td>Magi before Herod</td>
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<td>Journey of Magi</td>
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<td>Ador. of Magi</td>
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<td>Dream of Magi</td>
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<td>Christ with Drs.</td>
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<td>Christ before Pilate</td>
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<td>Mocking of Christ</td>
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<td>Crucifixion</td>
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<td>Descent into Limbo</td>
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<td>Supper at Emmaus</td>
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<td>Noli me Tangere</td>
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<td>Doubting of Thomas</td>
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<td>Death of Virgin</td>
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<td>Stephan</td>
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<td></td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Censing Angels</td>
<td>(30)</td>
<td>(19)</td>
<td>(27)</td>
<td>(27)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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APPENDIX II

Iconographic Range of Passion Scenes from which Programmes may be Compiled

Entry into Jerusalem
Payment of Judas
Washing the Feet
Last Supper
Garden of Gethsemane
Betrayal
Denial and Repentance of Peter
Christ before Pilate
Mocking
Scourging
Crowning with Thorns
Ecce Homo
Carrying the Cross
Stations of the Cross
Christ Stripped of His Garments
Raising the Cross
Crucifixion
Deposition
Pieta
Bearing the Body of Christ
Entombment
Resurrection
Three Marys at the Tomb
Christ Appears to His Mother
Descent into Limbo
Noli me Tangere
Doubting of Thomas
Road to Emmaus
Supper at Emmaus
(Miraculous Draught of Fishes)
Ascension
(Pentecost ?)
### APPENDIX III

**Other Narrative Cycles with the Passion Cycle on opus Anglicanum Copes**

(dating taken from Christie)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ANAGNI (A)</td>
<td>Dated late 13th century</td>
<td>Nativity and Life of Christ, Marian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST. MAXIMIN (M)</td>
<td>&quot; late 13th century</td>
<td>Nativity, Marian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PASSION (P)</td>
<td>&quot; c1300</td>
<td>(Coronation of the Virgin)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LATERAN (L)</td>
<td>&quot; c1300</td>
<td>Nativity, Marian, Martyrdoms of Saints</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOLOGNA (B)</td>
<td>&quot; early 14th century (?)</td>
<td>Nativity, (Martyrdom of Thomas Becket)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOST (Lo)</td>
<td>&quot; 2nd ¼ 14th century (?)</td>
<td>Nativity, Marian</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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## APPENDIX IV

**Comparisons with Passion Scenes from opus Anglicanum Copes**

**VELLETRI SCenes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scene</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>L</th>
<th>Lo</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Entry into Jerusalem</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Betrayal</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christ before Pilate</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td>P</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flagellation</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrying the Cross</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td>P</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crucifixion</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deposition</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>M</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entombment</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three Maries at the Tomb</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Descent into Limbo</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>P</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noli me Tangere</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>M</td>
<td></td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Road to Emmaus (?)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**OTHER PASSION SCenes FOUND ON COPES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scene</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>L</th>
<th>Lo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Last Supper</td>
<td></td>
<td>L</td>
<td>Lo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washing the Feet</td>
<td></td>
<td>P</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garden of Gethsemenne</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Lo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payment of Judas</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mocking</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resurrection</td>
<td></td>
<td>L</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doubting of Thomas</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supper at Emmaus</td>
<td></td>
<td>L</td>
<td>Lo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ascension</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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13 12 14 11 7 13
## APPENDIX V

### FORM AND CONTENT ON KNOWN OPUS ANGLICANUM COPES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COPE NAME</th>
<th>FRAME</th>
<th>SUBJECT</th>
<th>ANGELS</th>
<th>CENTRE PANEL SUBJECTS (from top downwards)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Uppsala</td>
<td>Circles</td>
<td>Saints</td>
<td>spaces</td>
<td>2 Censing Angels, Coronation of V, Stoning of St. Stephen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ascoli Piceno</td>
<td>Circles</td>
<td>Popes</td>
<td>2 censing*</td>
<td>Veronika Head, Crucifixion, V &amp; Child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vatican</td>
<td>Barbed qf.</td>
<td>Saints</td>
<td>spaces</td>
<td>Coronation of V, Crucifixion, V &amp; Child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anagni</td>
<td>Circles</td>
<td>Narrative</td>
<td>spaces</td>
<td>V &amp; Child + Angels, Coronation of V, Assumption of V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Maximin</td>
<td>Circles</td>
<td>Narrative</td>
<td>spaces</td>
<td>Censing Angels, Coronation of V, Assumption of V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V &amp; A-Tree of J.</td>
<td>Vine Scroll</td>
<td>Jesse</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>V &amp; Child, King Solomon, King David</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salzburg Tree of J</td>
<td>Vine Scroll</td>
<td>Jesse</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>V &amp; Child, King Solomon, King David</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passion</td>
<td>Geometric</td>
<td>Narrative</td>
<td>2 censing</td>
<td>Coronation of V, Pentecost, Ascension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virgin</td>
<td>Arcading</td>
<td>Saints</td>
<td>2 only**</td>
<td>Christ Standing, V &amp; Child, Amunciation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lateran</td>
<td>Arcading</td>
<td>Narrative</td>
<td>spandrels</td>
<td>Coronation of V, Crucifixion, Nativity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toledo</td>
<td>Arcading</td>
<td>Narrative</td>
<td>orphrey</td>
<td>Coronation of V, Crucifixion, Christ Carrying Cross</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bologna</td>
<td>Arcading</td>
<td>Narrative</td>
<td>spandrels</td>
<td>Crucifixion, Nativity, Adoration of Magi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steeple Aston</td>
<td>Barbed qf.</td>
<td>Saints</td>
<td>orphrey</td>
<td>Coronation of V, Nativity, Adoration of Magi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vich</td>
<td>Arcading</td>
<td>Saints</td>
<td>spaces</td>
<td>Coronation of V, Nativity, Amunciation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butler Bowden</td>
<td>Arcading</td>
<td>Saints</td>
<td>spandrels</td>
<td>Coronation of V, Nativity, (St. Catherine)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pienza</td>
<td>Arcading</td>
<td>Narrative</td>
<td>2 censing</td>
<td>Coronation of V, Nativity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lost</td>
<td>Arcading</td>
<td>Narrative</td>
<td>spandrels</td>
<td>Crucifixion, Nativity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* These are on the hood. There is another pair "supporting" the Virgin and Child - lowest central roundel.

** There may have been others but the damage makes it impossible to tell

Order of copes is based on the sequence used by Christie
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and

Eucharistic Exegetes

CHRISTINE LINNELL
January 1995
Complete citations for sources may be found in the Bibliography at the end of the text. All photographs, except where otherwise specified, were taken by the author.

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Fig. 83 Nativity, detail: Lateran Cope

Fig. 84 Ascension, detail: Lateran Cope
Fig. 85 Pentecost, detail: Lateran Cope

Fig. 86 Virgin told of her Death, detail: Lateran Cope
Accounts of the Lives of Margaret and Catherine
(as found on the Pienza Cope)

MARGARET

1. Margaret spins and tends her sheep. Olybrius passes on horseback and is struck by her beauty.

2. Margaret brought by two men before the enthroned provost.

3. Margaret beaten and imprisoned. Issues from the dragon, piercing his mouth with a spear received from an angel.

4. Devil tempts Margaret in prison, she overcomes him.

5. Margaret is tortured in front of Olybrius.

6. Margaret immersed naked in a cauldron of boiling water. She is beheaded and then carried to heaven by an angel. Dove brings her martyr’s crown.

CATHERINE

7. Catherine before the Emperor Maxentius who tries to convert her to paganism.

8. Disputation with the philosophers who Catherine converts to Christianity through her powers of persuasion.

9. Philosophers (500!) executed as they sleep, their souls carried to heaven.

10. Catherine refuses to give up her faith and is condemned by the Emperor.

11. Catherine imprisoned, fed by angels and visited by the Empress and Porphyry who are converted.

12. Catherine between the wheels which are stopped by angels. Pagans killed as the knives turn on them.

13. Catherine executed. Two angels carry her soul to Mount Sinai where she is buried.
Fig. 87 Assumption, detail: Lateran Cope

Fig. 88 Scenes from the Life of Margaret, detail: Pienza Cope
Fig. 89 Scenes from the Life of Margaret, detail: Pienza Cope

Fig. 90 Scenes from the Life of Catherine, detail: Pienza Cope
Fig. 91 Scenes from the Life of Catherine, details: Pienza Cope, showing join in fabric running down right hand side
Fig. 92 Scenes from the Life of Catherine, details: Pienza Cope
Fig. 93 Scenes from the Life of Catherine, detail: Pienza Cope

Fig. 94 Scenes from the Life of Catherine, detail: Pienza Cope
Fig. 95 Scenes from the Life of Catherine, detail: Pienza cope

Fig. 96 Scenes from the Life of Catherine, detail: Pienza cope
Fig. 97  *Apostles told of Death of the Virgin* and *Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple*, details: Pienza Cope

Fig. 98  *Funeral of the Virgin* and *Presentation in the Temple*, detail: Pienza Cope
Fig. 99 *Apostles at the Empty Bier and Assumption*, details: Pienza Cope, also showing the hood, part of the orphrey and a censing angel.

Fig. 100 *Coronation of the Virgin and Nativity*, details: Pienza Cope.