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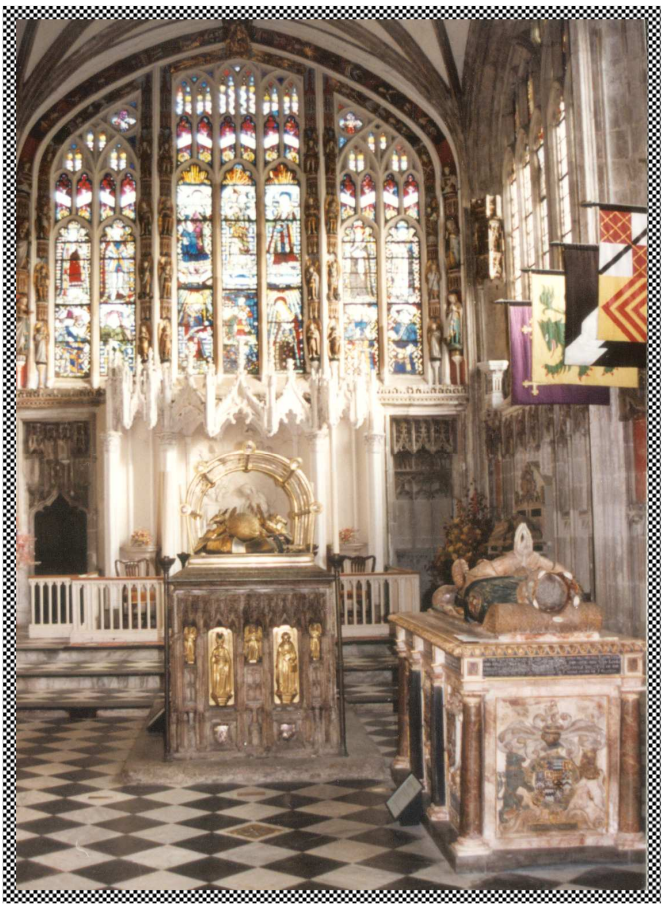
The Beauchamp Chapel, A Sermon in Stone



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MA in Christian Spirituality

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ABSTRACT

The Beauchamp Chapel, more properly named the Chapel of our Lady, located at the south-east corner of the Parish Church of St. Mary in Warwick, is one of the finest surviving chantry chapels in the country. It was built at the beginning of the fifteenth century according to the instructions of the powerful medieval magnate Sir Richard Beauchamp to house his mortal remains.

The structure and iconography of the Chapel provides a window through which can be glimpsed something of the spiritual beliefs which prevailed at the time it was erected. However, it also bears the imprint of the momentous spiritual shifts that have occurred since its inception.

This dissertation explores some of the religious and political changes that have taken place during a period of just over five hundred years which have influenced the changing attitudes to spirituality in England. It examines the way in which these shifts have impressed themselves into the very fabric of this Chapel. It reflects on the reasons why this Chapel survived and managed to absorb the tensions which led to the destruction of many other such buildings.

It finally considers how, despite the vicissitudes that have impacted on it during its long history, the Chapel has managed to retain a spiritual presence that still has something to say to those seeking a spiritual dimension in their lives in the twenty-first century.

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CONTENTS

Introduction

The skyline around the Midland town of Warwick is dominated by the tower of the Collegiate Parish Church of St. Mary. This magnificent building[1] attracts visitors from all over the world. One of the most prominent features in the Church is the Chapel of the Blessed Virgin Mary, widely known as the Beauchamp Chapel as it houses the remains of Richard Beauchamp, one of the key players in the fortunes of late Medieval England.[2] Lisa Evans describes it 'one of the most lavish family burial chambers in England, excluding Westminster',[3] but to the Medieval mind, as a chantry chapel, it was much more than that. Here the term 'chantry' is defined as an endowment to pay for a priest to celebrate sung Masses for the soul of the deceased donor; while a 'chantry chapel' is a chapel dedicated to the performance of these chantry duties.

The aim of this dissertation is not to provide a comprehensive study of chantry chapels, but to explore the way in which changing attitudes to spirituality have impressed themselves into the very fabric of this particular chapel. There are many and varied understandings of what spirituality is – what the study of this one particular building illustrates is the complex manner in which concepts of the spiritual interact with the religious, political, and wider cultural shifts within any given society. An examination of the historical developments that lie behind the art and architecture that this chapel encompasses, reveals a spiritual shift from what might be called 'piety', described by David Cornick as 'manifested in devotion to God and duty towards others',[4] to a modern experiential understanding of 'spirituality' as individual quest. Both definitions have a place and a value – what is interesting is the way that a building absorbs these changing spiritual mores and the insight that this may offer to us now in our post-modern 21st century spiritual quest.

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[1] Awarded the highest five star rating in Simon Jenkins, *England's Thousand Best Churches* (London: Penguin Books, 1999; repr. 2009), 715.
[2] See fig. 1.
[3] *The Times*; Wednesday, July 18th, 2007.
[4] David Cornick, 'Reformation and Spirituality', John Bowden (ed.), *Christianity the Complete Guide* (London: Continuum, 2005), 531. The term 'piety' rather than 'spirituality' will generally be used throughout the early chapters of this dissertation, although there will be instances where 'spirituality' will be used to indicate a shift in meaning. The form of Medieval piety here is that of an aristocratic, political and deeply conservative nature.

An exploration of the attitudes of individuals and institutions in each period towards such media as religious art and architecture, including their views regarding the impact of spiritual values on them, can provide a lesson on how we understand spirituality today. This journey is one that holds to the view expressed by, Philip Sheldrake that:

> Spiritualities do not exist on some ideal plane outside the limitations of history. The origins and development of spiritual traditions reflect the specific circumstances of time and place as well as the psychological state of the people involved.[5]

Throughout history humanity has placed importance on the afterlife. Indeed researchers have found burial grounds of Neanderthal man dating to 60,000 BC with animal antlers on the body and flower fragments next to the corpse indicating some type of ritual.[6] Yet the early Church, despite the fact that the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus were its defining event, was slow to develop specifically Christian responses to death and dying.

Nevertheless, by 1,000 AD there had emerged a fully developed ritual process around death, burial, and the incorporation of souls into the otherworld and, by the Middle Ages, death had become a predominant theme in medieval piety pointing towards the transitory nature of life and the ultimate importance of eternity.[7] This was a time when the feast days, fast days, religious symbols and rituals of the Catholic calendar governed not only the life of the individual and the whole community, but also exerted an influence that extended into the afterlife with people being constantly reminded both of their own mortality and of the future consequences of any specific course of action.

The heyday of chantries and chantry chapels was the 14th and early 15th century. For the people of the time, death was an ever-present reality which took place at the heart of the community and was experienced as an integral part of life's natural process. Death in childbirth was

[5] Philip Sheldrake (ed.), *The New SCM Dictionary of Christian Spirituality* (London: SCM Press, 2005), 39.
[6] Wyoming Funeral Directors Association, *History Of Funeral Customs.* Accessed at: http://www.wyfda.org/basics_2.html
[7] For example, 'The Danse Macabre' [Dance of Death] was a popular artistic motif in the late Middle Ages. It spoke of the inevitability of death for all from king to peasant.

commonplace, infant mortality was high,[8] and many died at an early age from conditions which today are curable. In addition, warfare, in particular the war with France which lasted from 1337 to 1453, and periodic epidemics of the plague[9] also decimated the population. In this climate people were constantly reminded both of their own mortality, and the Last Judgement.

However virtuous any individual had been, it was held that hardly anyone went directly to heaven after death. Consequently the concept of an intermediate state of purgatory had developed.[10] This was understood by some as a 'state of ordeal and suffering which could last almost for eternity',[11] while for others it was a place of pain and purging, which purified those destined for heaven and made them fit to meet God.[12] The prospect of purgatory was terrifying, and ensured that people's passage from this life to the next and their entry to heaven became matters of the utmost importance.

However, the church taught that it was possible to reduce the amount one suffered in purgatory through the purchase of 'indulgences' which exempted sinners from some of the suffering.[13] These could be earned by such acts as the 'Seven Corporal Works' which included feeding the hungry, clothing the naked and burying the dead.[14] Endowing churches,[15] visiting shrines and embarking on pilgrimages[16] were also considered efficacious but the most popular action was to leave instructions that one's soul would be prayed for by mourners at masses financed by the deceased, usually through provisions outlined in their will. This service or 'chantry' could take place at any altar in the church and, in its simplest form, consisted of a celebration of the

[8] It is possible that up to half of all children did not live to be 20. See Blore Heath, *1459: Life in Medieval England*.. Accessed at: http://www.bloreheath.org/medlife.php?ref=medlife
[9] Particularly the Black Death epidemics of 1348 - 50. Mike Ibeji notes that some estimates put the death toll at around 30-40% of the general population with recurrences in 1361-1364, 1368, 1371, 1373-1375, 1390 and 1405. Information accessed at: http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/middle_ages/black_01.shtml
[10] Simon Roffey, *Chantry Chapels and Medieval Strategies for the Afterlife* (Stroud: Tempus Publishing – an imprint of The History Press, 2008), 16.
[11] Ibid., 16.
[12] Ibid., 55-57.
[13] Ibid., 54-55 notes that some individuals were buried with their indulgences as proof of promised remission.
[14] Ibid., 58.
[15] Ibid., 63.
[16] Sarah Hopper, *To Be a Pilgrim – The Medieval Pilgrimage Experience* (Stroud: Sutton Publishing Limited, 2002*),* 15-16.

'Trental' when thirty masses were said in a short period of time, frequently a month.[17] However Roffey records that for the rich 'requests for the masses in the hundreds or even thousands were not unusual'.[18]

The most elaborate preparation for the afterlife for the very rich was the erecting of a separate chantry chapel in which these services could be regularly sung [or chanted] for the repose of their souls. It was this practice that was followed by Richard Beauchamp as he planned the tomb[19] to house his mortal remains in the south-east corner of the Collegiate Church of St. Mary.

The first chapter of this dissertation will focus on the beliefs which influenced the creation of the Chapel by Richard Beauchamp. Chapter Two will examine how the shifting sands of religious life in the Tudor period and the Reformation impacted on the Chapel. Chapter Three will first outline the perils that faced this and all chantry chapels during the rise of Puritanism which culminated in the era of the Commonwealth and speeded the movement away from piety towards a spirituality that demanded an individual response. It will then outline the attempts made to remedy the effects of that period of iconoclasm and the efforts expended to protect the Chapel from other forces which threatened to destroy it. Finally it will look briefly at the more recent history of the Chapel.

The last section of this dissertation will examine what, if anything, the Beauchamp Chapel, in the light of its history, structure and the changes that have impacted on it, has to say to us in the 21st Century in terms of spirituality.

[17] Roffey, *Chantry Chapels*, 21.
[18] Ibid., 21.
[19] David Brindley, *Richard Beauchamp: Medieval England's Greatest Knight* (Stroud: Tempus Publishing Ltd., 2001), 146-150.

Chapter 1

Beauchamp the Builder

> I will that when it liketh to God, that my Soule depart out of this World, my Body be interred within the Church Collegiate of our Lady in Warwick, where I will that in such Place as I have desired, (which is known well) there be made a Chappell of our Lady, well, faire and goodly built; within the middel of which Chappell I will that my Tombe be made…Also, I wish that there be said every Day, dureing the Worlde, in the aforesaid Chappell that (with the Grace of God) shall be thus new made, three masses…[20]

The extract above is part of the Last Will and Testament of one of the most important men in the early years of the 15th century. Richard Beauchamp[21] was born on 28th January, 1382, at Salwarpe, near Droitwich in Worcestershire. His father Thomas, a soldier and politician of considerable influence, was also tutor and Guardian to King Richard II.

On Thomas's death in 1401 the nineteen-year-old Beauchamp became 13th Earl of Warwick and soon began to carve out a considerable reputation for himself. For the part he played in defeating the Welsh rebel Owen Glendower, Beauchamp was made a Knight of the Garter, the height of medieval chivalrous honour. His other exploits included a two-year pilgrimage to the Holy Land.[22] A late fifteenth-century document, *The Pageant of the Birth, Life and Death of Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick,* which details his travels in depth, is now in the British Museum, although David Brindley warns against assuming that this document consistently relates reliable historical detail.[23]

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[20] British Library, *The last Will and Testament of Richard Beaucham.* See also Theatro cheldoniano, *Historia vitae et regni Ricardi II. Angliae regis, a monacho quodam de monacho quodam de Evesham consignata Accesserunt, praeter alia, Joannis Rossi Historiola de comitibus warwicensi. Landsdown* . Accessed at: http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=E27Wm95UDd0C&pg=PA240&lpg=PA240&dq=%22The+Last+Will+and+Testament+of+Richard+Beauchamp%22&source=bl&ots=ZxmbV0y8hB&sig=3GtN8gzy3x9GzkvEAxW66Q7lCL0&hl=en&sa=X&ei=TV0dT97vBIygOpb6tJgI&sqi=2&ved=0CE4Q6AEwAw#v=onepage&q=%22The%20Last%20Will%20and%20Testament%20of%20Richard%20Beauchamp%22&f=false

[21] In this dissertation the title 'Beauchamp' will refer to Richard Beauchamp (1382-1439).

[22] Brindley, *Richard Beauchamp*, 38.

[23] Ibid., 22. For additional information on Beauchamp and his family see Alexandra Sinclair, *The Beauchamp Earls of Warwick in the Later Middle Ages,* Ph.D. thesis, London, 1987.Access via: http://www.history.ac.uk/history-online/theses/thesis/beauchamp-earls-warwick-later-middle-ages

In 1410, Beauchamp became a member of the council charged with governing the country during the indisposition of King Henry IV,[24] and remained involved in politics at the highest level as a senior member of the royal household for the rest of his life. This included playing a key role in the dispute with France.[25] Following the King's death, Henry's son came to the throne as Henry V and in 1420 Beauchamp arranged Henry's marriage to Katherine, daughter of Charles VI of France. Tradition has it that in 1422 Henry V, on his deathbed, gave his son Henry VI into the care of his close friend and companion Beauchamp.[26] As Henry VI was still very young, it fell to the Council to ensure the security of the Kingdom and this included dealing with the French problem. Beauchamp returned to France where he was appointed to the command of Rouen and was the authority presiding over the trial and martyrdom of Joan of Arc.

Beauchamp returned to England in 1427, to become 'head of a financial and land holding which was, by the 1430's, among the richest in Europe'.[27] This he had achieved through a combination of shrewd management, inherited estates, two advantageous marriages as well as from ransoms and the spoils of war.[28] However, some five years later he was appointed by the young King to the post of Lieutenant of the English Dominions in France. Having made his Last Will and Testament, written just prior to his final departure for France,[29] Beauchamp died in the castle at Rouen on 30th April 1439 aged fifty-eight.

It would appear from his Will that Beauchamp had given some considerable thought to his final resting place, and the wealth he had accrued enabled him to insist that his memorial would be one that reflected his position in society. However Brindley maintains that it is unlikely that it is possible to deduce anything of Beauchamp's personal faith in the magnificent edifice that his wealth enabled him to plan, claiming that 'the concept of personally chosen faith would have

[24] Brindley, *Richard Beauchamp*, 47.
[25] Commonly called the Hundred Years War.
[26] Brindley, *Richard Beauchamp*, 105. Although Brindley acknowledges that there is some evidence to the contrary.
[27] Ibid., 132.
[28] Ibid., 132.
[29] Ibid., 138.

been incomprehensible to someone of Beauchamp's time'.[30] Similarly Doreen Rosman sees the Christian faith as 'not something individuals chose but something they were born into, an integral part of the texture of society'.[31] Eamon Duffy, while accepting that 'among the higher gentry at least there were signs of a privatising tendency', such as the growing proclivity to secure for themselves private chaplains and devotional treaties, nevertheless maintains that:

> the overwhelming impression left by the sources for late medieval religion in England is that of a Christianity resolutely and enthusiastically orientated towards the public and the corporate, and of a continuing sense of the value of co-operation and mutuality in seeking salvation.[32]

Nevertheless, there was evidence of a burgeoning belief in the need for personal repentance. Manuals that aided personal devotion, such as the *Meditations Vitae Christi*[33] circulated widely, and the influence of the preaching order of Dominican friars[34] had spread throughout the country. Beauchamp did own a volume, now known as the *Trevisa Manuscript*, which included debates on the nature of spiritual and temporal power, but the tone of the writing was staunchly defensive of the established Church, denigrating the impact of such innovations as the preaching friars.[35]

This conservative outlook is reflected in the fact that, although Beauchamp's Lady Chapel was certainly a private Chapel, elements such as the space itself, the windows, the statuary, the paintings, the tomb itself and the provisions Beauchamp made for masses to be said within it, are pointers which reveal much about the piety of the time which emphasised the acquisition of virtues for the salvation of souls, and it is these components that will be explored in this chapter.

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[30] Ibid., 149.
[31] Doreen Rosman, *The Evolution of the English Churches, 1500-2000* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 12.
[32] Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars – Traditional Religion in England 1400-1580* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1992; repr. 2005), 131.
[33] See, Holly Flora, *The Devout Belief of the Imagination: The Paris 'Meditationes Vitae Christi' and Female Franciscan Spirituality in Trecento Italy (Disciplina Monastica)* (Belgium: Brepols Publishers, 2010).
[34] The first members of the Order had appeared in Oxford in 1221. See Kenneth O. Morgan (ed*.), The Oxford History of Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 179.
[35] Brindley, *Richard Beauchamp*, 26. See also Charles F. Briggs*, Giles of Rome's De regimine principum, reading and writing politics at court and university, c.1275-c.1525* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 88.

Architectural Space.

The footprint of the Chapel is large compared to most existing chantry chapels attached to churches in England.[36] Its size and architectural grandeur not only reflects the status of Beauchamp as 'among the greatest English nobles of the Middle Ages',[37] but also echoes the 13th century belief that religious buildings were considered to be, 'representation[s] of the heavenly Jerusalem, the ideal city according to the Apocalypse'.[38]

For Lawrence Lee, ecclesiastical buildings of the medieval time were also spaces in which those who entered, 'embarked on a spiritual journey akin to pilgrimage, a journey dictated by the symbolic structure of the journey.'[39] Since earliest Christian times, the priest and congregation faced east in the direction of the rising sun, awaiting the Second Coming of Christ. On the north side, associated with darkness, cold, and evil, were placed elements from the Old Testament, whereas New Testament narratives were placed on the light south side. Decorative elements on the west side, associated with humanity, typically featured iconography designed to remind the faithful that, just as they entered this Church, the time would come when they would face judgement on entering the next world.[40]

The Beauchamp Chapel also appears to have followed these principals. The inner east façade was adorned with elements portraying Christ, the heavenly hierarchy and some chosen saints – a view that Beauchamp, who with his family were also portrayed in the east window, would hope to see at the Second Coming. On the west wall of the Chapel the large 'doom' painting executed

[36] It is 86 sq. yds., compared to that of the Bridge Chantry Chapel in Wakefield which is 140sq. yds. Information accessed at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chantry_Chapel_of_St_Mary_the_Virgin,_Wakefield#Structure
[37] Brindley, *Richard Beauchamp*, 154.
[38] Catherine Brisac, trans. by Geoffrey Culverwell, *A Thousand Years of Stained Glass* (London: Macdonald and Co. Publishers Ltd., 1984; 1986 ed.), 34.
[39] Lawrence Lee, George Seddon, Francis Stephens, *Stained Glass* (London: Mitchell Beazley Publishers Limited, 1976; repr. London: AH, 1982), 14.
[40] In the same way the morality plays of the time also depicted an individual's progress from birth to death. The most famous example and perhaps best known medieval drama is *Everyman* (author unknown). Everyman receives Death's summons, struggles to escape and finally resigns himself to fate. Deserted by Kindred, Goods and Fellowship, only Good Deeds goes with him to the grave. See http://www.luminarium.org/medlit/everyman.htm

by John Brentwood[41] in 1449, illustrated the final judgement which would see the Godly going to Heaven, and the Godless being consigned to Hell. This sombre painting served as a constant reminder[42] of the cosmic context of life on earth and a warning of the possible fates that awaited each individual in the afterlife.[43]

Because of subsequent damage it is difficult to know with certainty whether the device of placing Old Testament iconography on the north wall and that depicting New Testament material on the South wall was followed. However Elsie Kibble maintains that the quotations in the middle window on the north side suggests that the figures on the North wall are likely to have been the Old Testament prophets Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obediah, Micah, Habbakuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi. She also speculates that the South windows would have contained material from the New Testament, such as an Annunciation Scene with images of the Virgin Mary and St. Elizabeth.[44]

Although specific parallels between the Church's teaching and the stories that appeared on the walls are hard to track down, painted frescoes were not only to teach Christian truth as it was understood, but also to improve people's behaviour through moral instruction and example. Besides the popular depiction of the Last Judgement, other subjects such as 'The Seven Works of Mercy',[45] Saints[46] and angels[47] also found favour. By contrast, paintings of Christ's earthly

[41] John Brentwood was a 'steyner' from London. He was covenanted 'to paint fine and curiously on the west wall of the chapel, the dome of our Lord God Jesus, and all manner of devices and imagery thereto be-longing, of fair and sightly proportion' for which he was to receive £131. 6s. 8d. Information from, 'The borough of Warwick: Churches', The City of Coventry and Borough of Warwick (1969*), A History of the County of Warwick,* Vol. 8, 522-535. Accessed at: http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=16057&strquery=Brentwood

[42] Most 'doom' paintings were in the body of churches where they could be seen by all, not in chantry chapels.

[43] Murals in churches were intended to illustrate religious teachings. Pope Gregory (c. 540-604) wrote that pictures of the Bible stories were intended to enable the illiterate, and that included some members of the clergy, to 'read' the Bible through the pictures painted on the walls of churches. Art was the literature of the illiterate. Given this as the artists' purpose, clarity of narrative rather than illusionism or innovation, was the goal. For more information see Janetta Rebold Benton*, Materials, Methods, and Masterpieces of Medieval Art* (California: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2009), Chapter 3.

[44] Elsie R. Kibble, *The Stained Glass in the Collegiate Church of St. Mary Warwick* (Leamington Spa: Warwick Printing Company Ltd., 2005), 13.

[45] A fine example can be seen in St. George's Church, Trotton, West Sussex.

[46] Such as the fresco of St. George & the Dragon in St. Lawrence's Church, Broughton, Bucks.

[47] This image can still be picked out on the north wall of the Chapel close to the altar.

ministry appear to have been less widespread and surviving examples are very rare.[48] The Church may have permitted painting as a means of instruction and edification but this was hedged around with certain conventions.[49] To confuse the piety of the simple by innovations and individual impulses was considered a serious matter.

The Iconography of the Chapel

Besides the positioning of religious artefacts around the chapel, the painted stone figures, the images depicted in the stained glass and the wall paintings were all seen as fulfilling a function according to medieval symbolic theological beliefs.[50] Unfortunately the wall paintings have not survived, with the exception of one faint rendering of an angel.[51] The stained glass also sustained considerable damage[52] but almost half of the East widow survived to give an insight into the spiritual mindset of the late medieval world.

For instance, the figures in the window depicting the saints had huge significance. Indeed, Emile Mâle considers 'it may well be that the saints were never better loved than during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries'.[53] From carvings on the gable-ends of houses, to lavish colourful images that filled the churches, they were a constant reminder of an unseen but very potent world. Not only were saints' days times of feasting in the Christian calendar,[54] saints *per se* also fulfilled other functions. They were seen first and foremost as 'friends and helpers'.[55] In return for devotion, not to be confused with the worship afforded to Christ,[56] the saint would pray for the client during life, continuing to pray for the soul of their patron after death thus reducing time in purgatory and interceding for them at the Last Judgement.[57]

[48] One rare example showing the 'Raising of Jairus' Daughter' exits in the Church of St. Michael and all Angels in Copford Green, Essex, painted c.1130.
[49] See Roger Roswell, *Medieval Wall Paintings* (Suffolk: Boydell Press, 2008), 124-126.
[50] For examples of this symbolism depicted in stained glass see, Lee et. al., *Stained Glass*, 32-33.
[51] See fig. 2.
[52] This will be considered in the Chapter 3.
[53] Emile Mâle, *Religious Art in France: the Late Middle Ages,* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1987), 147.
[54] Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars,* 41.
[55] Ibid., 160.
[56] This concept will be dealt with more fully in Chapter 2.
[57] Roffey, *Chantry Chapels,* 16.

This devotion also included a veneration of items associated with their heavenly protector. For medieval Christians, contact with tangible relics of Christ and the saints provided a unique bridge between earth and heaven. Such relics were seen as a way to come closer to the saints and thus form a closer bond with God. Some relics were body parts, such as a bone, but more often they were everyday items such as a small piece of cloth that had been used by the venerated one or even a fragment of a item with which they had been in contact.[58] The relics housed in St. Mary's, probably in a small vestry behind the Chapel altar, included:

> Part of the chair of the patriarch Abraham, the burning bush of Moses and the manger in which Jesus was laid; of the pillar to which he was bound when he was scourged; a thorn from His crown, a piece of the cross; part of the towel in which His body was wrapped by Nicodemus; some hair of the Virgin Mary, bones of the Innocents and part of the penitential garment of St. Thomas, Archbishop of Canterbury.[59]

Such was the veneration of relics that individuals often undertook pilgrimages to shrines of holy people where they could view objects associated with the saints, often purchasing a badge or memento as a means of acquiring something of the spiritual protection of the saint.[60]

Medieval spiritual and secular life was closely interwoven, and both incorporated a rigid hierarchical system. On earth 'In principle there were two kinds of authority…the spiritual authority of which the pope was head, and the temporal authority of emperors and kings and lesser potentates'.[61] In the spiritual realm the order of precedence was Pope, archbishops, abbots, archdeacons and canons; then at the bottom of the pile the parish clergy and the clerical rank and file. There was a corresponding division throughout society leading down from emperors to kings, princes, great lords, knights and, a great way below, peasants. Therefore it is hardly

[58] For further information on the role of relics, see Peter Brown, *The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1981; repr. 1982).
[59] For a full list see C.R. Fonge (ed), *The Cartulary of St Mary's Collegiate Church, Warwick* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell and Brewer Ltd., 2004), 343.
[60] Sarah Hopper*, To Be a Pilgrim,* 131. In the 1930's, when Beauchamp's tomb was disturbed, a pilgrim badge was discovered but the origin of it is unknown. For more information on pilgrim badges see Hopper, 132-134.
[61] Rosalind & Christopher Brooke, *Popular Religion in the Middle Ages – Western Europe, 1000-1300* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1985; repr. 1984), 47.

surprising that this concept of class-system was also seen as applying to the heavenly realm,[62] with the idea of having intermediaries to approach God being not only appropriate but essential.

The saints Beauchamp chose to include in the East window of his Chapel were all British Saints being the Royal Saint Thomas of Canterbury,[63] Saint Alban,[64] Saint Winifrid of Wales[65] and Saint John of Bridlington.[66] The reasons for all of these choices are not recorded but Brindley believes that they all held some significance for Beauchamp. St. Thomas was a Saint of international reputation[67] who upheld the notion of chivalry in that he was martyred for resisting the King's attempts to curtail the power of the Church.[68] St. John of Bridlington was closely associated with Henry V's court of which Beauchamp was a member and indeed the King's victory at Agincourt was attributed to the aid given by that particular saint.[69] Richard himself had recovered from an illness at the town of St. Albans, and St. Winifid of Wales was the Patron Saint of the church in Shrewsbury where he had received his Garter. Such was his devotion to these saints that Beauchamp bequeathed a gold statue of himself to each Monastic house patronised by these four saints,[70] all of which survive in their original form.

Returning to the composition of the East Window; it is not possible to ascertain with any certainty the configuration of the lower panels.[71] However, it is likely that the figure of the Virgin Mary, to whom the chapel was dedicated, and who inspired the deepest devotion in late

[62] Ibid., 38.
[63] For more information on St. Thomas see *New Advent*, *The Catholic Encyclopedia.* Accessed at: http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/14676a.htm
[64] For more information on St. Alban see *New Advent.* Accessed at: http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/01252b.htm
[65] For more information on St. Winifrid see *New Advent.* Accessed at: http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/15656a.htm
[66] Also known as Saint John of Twenge. For more information on St. John see *New Advent.* Accessed at: http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/15105b.htm
[67] See fig.3.
[68] Added to which his tomb was the final destination for the pilgrims in Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales.*
[69] For more information on St. John of Bridlington see *Patron Saints Index*. Accessed at: http://saints.sqpn.com/saintj9n.htm . The other saint mentioned in this respect was Saint John of Beverly.
[70] Brindley, *Richard Beauchamp,* 138-139.
[71] Kibble, Stained Glass, 6-7.

medieval England, took pride of place in the middle of the window in the original glazing scheme.[72]

The cult of Mary came second only to that of Christ himself and 'towered above that of all the other saints'.[73] 'The Five Joys of Mary'[74] formed the subject matter for many prayers and meditations. There were many statues of Mary with the most common portrayal being that which was displayed in the rood screen of most churches showing Mary with St. John standing one at each side of the cross. This scene served as a reminder of the Sorrows of Mary, the 'Mater Dolorosa', which could act as a bridge between her and any of her devotees who themselves were experiencing the sorrows of the death of their loved ones through such calamities as the plagues. This also enabled them to metaphorically stand beside Mary and share in her sorrows at the death of their Saviour.[75]

The manifestation of this link can be seen in the words of the 'Obsecro Te', a lengthy prayer to the Virgin contained within the *Horea,*[76] which Duffy maintains 'quickly found favour with the laity'.[77] The final section of the prayer speaks of the benefits that could be accrued through the intercessions of Mary. Some of these could be enjoyed during earthly life but by far the greatest was 'the spiritual gifts a Christian requires to get to Heaven'.[78] For, if Christ is really judge and arbiter at the end of time, who better than his Mother to intercede for a human sinner. Therefore it is hardly surprising that the effigy of Beauchamp lies with his hands slightly apart so that he can clearly see the figure of Mary looking down from a boss in the ceiling above his head.[79]

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[72] Ibid., 7.
[73] Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars, 256.*
[74] Annunciation, Nativity, Resurrection, Ascension and Mary's Coronation in Heaven.
[75] In Chapter 81 of *The Book of Margery Kempe*, Margery is described as ministering to the Virgin Mary directly after Jesus' death: Than the creatur thowt, whan owr Lady was comyn hom and was leyd down on a bed, than sche mad for owr Lady a good cawdel and browt it hir to comfortyn hir, and than owr lady seyd onto hir, "Do it awey, dowtyr. Geve me no mete but myn owyn childe"' The creature seyd agen, "A, blissyd Lady, ye must nedys comfortyn yowrself and cesyn of yowr sorwyng." See Lynn Staley (ed.), *The Book of Margery Kempe: a new translation, contexts, criticism* (London: W. W. Norton & Co., 2001), 186.
[76] Scriptural prayer books, the material for which was largely drawn from the psalter.
[77] Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars,* 233.
[78] Ibid., 263.
[79] See fig. 4.

Many of the painted stone figures surrounding the East window also remain almost as they were when they were placed there. They include God, at the apex of the window seated upon a throne, with the 'thrones' – one of the nine orders of angels – on each side of him.[80] These figures are a remarkably complete survival of the careful iconography of the chapel and are considered as an extension of the window glass. This heavenly hierarchy[81] continues down the borders and mullions featuring the other eight orders, seraphim, cherubim, virtues, powers, dominations, angels,[82] the archangels Michael and Gabriel, and principalities, along with the shields of the Beauchamps and their connections.

The larger stone saints surrounding the window are, on the north side, St. Barbara who has the tower in which she was imprisoned in one hand and a book in the other, and St. Catherine, not with a wheel but with the sword used to behead her. On the south side, St. Mary Magdalene holds the pot of ointment with which tradition suggests she anointed Christ[83] and St. Margaret of Antioch stands on Satan in the shape of a dragon who, according to legend, swallowed her.[84] Again we have no indication as to the reasons for their inclusion, but one interesting idea put forward by Brindley is that there may be something significant in the inclusion of St. Barbara and St. Catherine – the two voices heard by Joan of Arc![85] Whether this might have been due to guilt, recompense or as 'insurance' against the anger of the Saints is open to speculation.

Yet it was not just the spiritual realm that was featured in the window. The traceries, still in their original form, contain not only seraphims and the Gloria, but also scrolls or pennants with the words 'Louez Spencer – tant que vyray'.[86] In addition Kibble believes that the subject matter in the lowest portion of the window was Beauchamp himself, flanked by his two wives Isabella

[80] See fig. 5.
[81] For further information see Louise Nelstrop with Kevin Magill & Bradley B. Onishi, *Christian Mysticism – An Introduction to Contemporary Theoretical Approaches* (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2009), Chapter 5, 'Hierarchy', 108-119.
[82] These included the Angel of the Expulsion. See fig. 6.
[83] John's Gospel (John 12:1-9) identified the woman who poured ointment over Christ's feet as Mary, the sister of Lazarus, not Mary Magdelene. Matthew 26:6-13 and Luke 7:37-50 both describe her as a nameless woman.
[84] However the cross she carried in her hand so irritated the dragon's throat that he was forced to disgorge her.
[85] Brindley, *Richard Beauchamp*, 149.
[86] Translated as 'Praise Spencer as long as I live'– the Motto of Lord Despencer, a title Beauchamp gained through his marriage to Isabella.

Despencer and Elizabeth Berkeley, his son Henry, and his daughters Anne, Margaret, Elizabeth and Eleanor. While pointing out that the religious imagery should not be viewed as mere decoration but 'visible proof of the presence of saints and their intercessory powers',[87] Roffey also acknowledges that the fabric of chantry chapels was also intended to 'create potent symbols of personal and corporate prestige, piety and influence'.[88]

Kenneth Hyson-Smith sees the Church in England in 1384 as being 'firmly established as the second power in the land after the Crown, and arguably without equal in the comprehensiveness and complexity of its institutional organisation'.[89] There were some rising signs of anti-clericalism and anti-papalism,[90] with Gayk seeing this period as marking a significant shift: 'In England for the first time arguments against images were being put forth by lay men and women in the vernacular'.[91] Nevertheless, despite these signs of disaffection, this was still a time of relative secular and ecclesiastical order so it would have seemed appropriate that ecclesiastic elements such as the saints should be portrayed side by side with Beauchamp and his family in the window. Indeed, it was an example of the connection that still existed between piety and power; God was King over all, but on earth the King was still God's chosen one and his representative on earth.[92]

Not only were the subjects in the windows symbols of magnificence, but so was the high quality of the material and workmanship of the stained glass. All of the windows were commissioned from John Prudde of Westminster, Henry VI's own Royal Glazier. The covenant states that;

> John Prudde doth covenant to glass all the windows in the new Chapel in Warwick with glass beyond the seas,[93] and with no glass of England. It is to be the strongest

[87] Roffey, *Chantry Chapels*, 74.
[88] Ibid., 117.
[89] Kenneth Hyson-Smith, *Christianity in England From Roman Times to the Reformation,* Vol. II, 1066 to 1384, (London: SCM Press, 2000), 230.
[90] Ibid., 245. See also Christopher Cannon, *Middle English Literature: a cultural history* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2008), Chapter 2, 'Insurgency', 40-42, and Shannon Gayk, *Image, Text and Religious Reform in Fifteenth Century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).
[91] Gayk, *Image, Text and Religious Reform,* 1.
[92] This position would more properly reflect the status of the Pope, but for his subjects the King's power was more immediate.
[93] Probably Flemish glass.

> glass and of the finest colours of blue, yellow, red, sanguine, purpure and violet, so to make rich and embellish the matters, images and stories…[94]

These were to be newly traced and pictured by another painter employed by Prudde, and from these the stained glass was to be executed. As little as possible of green, white and black were to be used as these were considered inferior. Prudde himself was to take charge of the glass when wrought and set it up in the chapel windows. For this he was paid two shillings a square foot – a very considerable sum considering that the usual charge for glass was between 7d. and 1 shilling even for prestigious buildings. Indeed, the elaborate windows given by Henry VI to Eton College only cost 1s 4d per square foot.[95] The final cost of the windows was about £100.[96]

However the windows have more to reveal than just the status of the Earl. For example the Tracery Lights on the side windows hold clues regarding worship in the Chapel. The two pairs situated closest to the altar show angels playing fifteenth century instruments,[97] while the other four windows depict angel musicians with scrolls some of which contain music. One work is *'Gaudeam omnes in domina, diem festum celebrantes'*, referring to the Festival of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary. This was sung in antiphonal form as an introit at the beginning of Mass and Kibble speculates that it was also sung as Beauchamp was lowered into his tomb.[98] What is sure is that music, under the patronage of Beauchamp, was very important within his household.

Two composers were employed by him, Robert Chirbury[99] and John Soursby,[100] both of whom had also served in the Royal Household Chapel in Rouen. Alexandra Buckle argues that the

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[94] Kibble, *Stained Glass*, 2.
[95] Brindley, *Richard Beauchamp*, 148.
[96] This would be equivalent to around £46,000 in 2005. Information accessed at: http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/currency/results.asp#mid
[97] See fig. 7. These windows are of great significant interest to students of early music.
[98] Kibble, *Stained Glass,* 12.
[99] For more information see, Alexandra Buckle, *An English composer in royal and aristocratic service: Robert Chirbury, c. 1380-1454.* Accessed at: http://oxford.academia.edu/AlexandraBuckle/Papers/62/An_English_composer_in_royal_and_aristocratic_service_Robert_Chirbury_c._1380-1454
[100] An example of Soursby's music can be found on the C.D., Page, Gothic Voices, *The Service of Venus and Mars* (Limited Edition, Hyperion, 2003), track 14 – Sanctus.

polyphonic music played in the Chapel may well have been written by one of these two late medieval composers. According to Buckle:

> Beauchamp's specification of Lady Mass 'with note' is a reminder that he had been an avid patron of music…His executors thus designed a space for him that celebrated music…They went further by including substantial musical iconography in his final resting place.[101]

The Tomb

The quality of all of the ornamentation in the Chapel indicates the wealth and power of Beauchamp. The total cost for the Chapel was £2,400 but the structure that dominated the Chapel, the Tomb,[102] added an extra £720 to that sum.[103] Elements in the construction of the tomb including its position, composition, iconography and motto can be seen as echoing the piety of the age.

The tomb was placed, in accordance with the tradition of the time, close to, and immediately in front of the focus of power – the altar.[104] Roffey maintains that 'Burial close to the altar forged a connection with the mass and its implicit intercessory efficacy and highlighted one's tomb or memorial to those participating in the mass'.[105]

The materials chosen for the tomb were of the highest quality as befitted one whose status in the earthly hierarchy was in the highest echelons. The step and the top of the elaborately carved chest was a slab of Purbeck marble, a material Linda Monckton claims was:

> a prestigious one and was selected for the great reredos screen of contemporary date in Westminster Abbey and was used for the chests of Edward III and Richard II in their Westminster tombs, the latter precedent for the design of Beauchamp's own tomb chest.[106]

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[101] Alexandra Buckle, 'Fit for a King – Music and Iconography in Richard Beauchamp's Chantry Chapel', *Oxford Journals*, 38/1, February 2010). Accessed at: http://oxford.academia.edu/AlexandraBuckle/Papers/93000/Fit_for_a_King_Music_and_Iconography_in_Richard_Beauchamps_Chantry_Chapel

[102] Other tombs were added subsequently in the Tudor Era.

[103] Therefore the total cost would have been an estimated one and a half million pounds today.

[104] See fig.8.

[105] Roffey, *Chantry Chapels*, 154.

[106] Monckton, Linda, 'Fit for a King? The Architecture of the Beauchamp Chapel'. *Architectural History*, Vol. 47, 2004. Accessed at: http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0066-622X%282004%2947%3C25%3AFFAKTA%3E2.0.CO%3B2-O

It is John Essex who is usually recorded as having carved the tomb,[107] but other sources indicate that it was a collaboration between Essex, who worked from St. Paul's Churchyard in London, and John Bourde of Corfe[108] who is also mentioned in the original contract for the tomb.[109]

On the top of the tomb lies Beauchamp's life-size effigy, believed to be the only cast-metal effigy of a non-royal figure before the sixteenth century. This was cast by William Austen of London in latten, an alloy similar to bronze, and covered in gold by Bartholomew Lambspring assisted by Roger Webbe, a barber whom Brindley speculates may have been included due to his surgeon's knowledge of anatomy,[110] and John Massingham, 'a kerver' [carver].

Brindley posits that is it unlikely that the effigy is an accurate portrait, and that 'The armour is of a style first made in Milan more than a decade after Beauchamp's death, and so could not have been his own.'[111] This may very well be so, yet the intricate details, such as the raised veining on the hands indicate a desire for a high level of accuracy.[112] Perhaps the effigy was based on a lost portrait of Beauchamp as a young man, for it does seem to be a likeness of someone and a desire for exactitude would resonate with the growing desire at that period to represent accurate physical features. Whereas in the Romanesque Art of the early Middle Ages faces lacked individualism and were even interchangeable,[113] late Medieval artists, sculptors and painters began to embrace the Gothic style[114] which was beginning to portray individual features. This gave rise to the flowering of Renaissance Art.[115] This puzzle is one to which a solution is unlikely to be found.

[107] Brindley, *Richard Beauchamp*, 147.
[108] John Blaire & Nigel Ramsey, *English medieval industries: craftsmen, techniques, products* (London: The Hambledon Press, 1991; repr. as paperback, 2001), 54.
[109] *Accounts of the executors of Richard Beauchamp for the building of the Lady Chapel in St. Mary's Church, Warwick.* Document preserved in the British Museum as Add 28,564.
[110] Brindley, *Richard Beauchamp*, 147.
[111] Ibid., 147.
[112] See fig. 9.
[113] As in *Madonna of the Holy Trinity*, painted around 1260, for the Church of the Trinity in Florence by Cimabue.
[114] As in *St. Jerome,* painted between 1360 and 1365 by Theodoric of Prague.
[115] As in *An Old Man and his Grandson,* date unknown, by Domenico Ghirlandais (1449-1494).

During the medieval period the link between the earthly kingdom and the heavenly kingdom also found expression in myths and legends of the fight between good and evil. The heavenly war, as portrayed in the Scriptures,[116] was also to be fought on earth. This not only involved participation in the Crusades, but also encouraged warriors to imitate the heroes who engaged in holy quests such as that involving the Holy Grail.[117] Brindley maintains that the illustrations in the *Pageants* are meant 'to portray Beauchamp as a knight in the chivalrous tradition'.[118] This may be the reason that Beauchamp's head rests on a swan, part of the Beauchamp crest, which Brindley maintains implies descent from the legendary hero Lohengrin[119] who appears in much medieval folklore and literature.[120] Although such a claim on the part of Beauchamp appears to have been based on no known fact, it was a common one associated with more than one noble family, and represented in English literary tradition by the late fourteenth-century verse romance *Chevelere Assigne*.[121] Perhaps the notion of claiming some connection with such a noble Knight was irresistible to one considered by Brindley, to be 'one of the last great figures of chivalry'.[122]

Another possibility is that Beauchamp was claiming kinship with the family of Godfrey of Bouillon,[123] a medieval Frankish knight who was one of the leaders of the First Crusade.[124] After the successful siege of Jerusalem in 1099, Godfrey became the first ruler of the Kingdom of Jerusalem, although he refused the title 'King of Jerusalem' as he said that title belonged to God. Idealised in later accounts, Godfrey was included among the ideal knights known as the Nine

[116] Bible, Revelation 12:7.
[117] One writer who embraced the idea of knightly quests was Sir Thomas Malory, the author of *Le Morte Darthur*. It is claimed in literature from The British Library that Malory, a resident of Warwickshire, fought under The Earl of Warwick. Accessed at: http://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/onlineex/englit/malory/ However, as the date given for this is 1462 and Beauchamp died in 1439 it was Richard Neville, Beauchamp's son-in-law who was the Earl at the time.
[118] Brindley, *Richard Beauchamp,* 153.
[119] Ibid., 147.
[120] Lohengrin, a knight of the Holy Grail, and hero of the 15th century epic *Lorengel,* personified the Code of Chivalry that dictated that a Knight should be brave and fearless in battle but also exhibit cultured Knightly qualities showing themselves to be devout, loyal, courteous and generous. These ideals are also expressed in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight,* a late 14th-century Middle English alliterative romance outlining an adventure of Sir Gawain, a knight of King Arthur's Round Table. (author unknown).
[121] Lui Yin, 'Richard Beauchamp and the uses of romance'. *Medium Aevum,* Fall 2005, Accessed at: http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_hb6408/is_2_74/ai_n29237232/
[122] Brindley, *Richard Beauchamp*, 154.
[123] c.1060-1100 AD.
[124] This would have been an indirect link as Godfrey did not marry.

Worthies.[125] In fictional literature, Godfrey became the hero of numerous French *'chansons de geste'* dealing with the crusade.[126] By the 12th century, Godfrey was already a legend among the descendants of the original crusaders. This may be no nearer the truth than the story connecting Beauchamp directly with Lohengrin, yet if there was no bloodline relationship with these heroes of old, Beauchamp certainly claimed descent from Guy of Warwick.[127]

Guy, now also known to be a legendary character, was a hero of the Romance genre.[128] The story goes that Guy fell in love with the lady Felice[129] who was of much higher social standing. In order to wed her he had to become a knight and to achieve this he needed to prove his valour in chivalric adventures which included battling fantastic monsters such as dragons, giants, a great boar and the Dun Cow.[130] He succeeded and, on his return, wed his lady. However, full of remorse for his violent past, he embarked on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Eventually he returned privately and lived out the rest of his life as a hermit in a cave overlooking the River Avon at a location still called Guy's Cliffe.

'Guy's sword' remains on show in Warwick Castle but Beauchamp's effigy in the Chapel also bears a sword appropriate to his status. Another feature of the effigy which bears witness to Beauchamp's status in the temporal hierarchy is that, while under his right foot is the Beauchamp bear, under his left foot is the Despenser griffin of his second wife Isabel Despenser. This denoted his position of importance within both prominent aristocratic families.

[125] These were nine historical, scriptural and legendary personages who personify the ideals of chivalry established in the Middle Ages. They included Charlemagne, King Arthur, Godfrey of Bouillon, Julius Caesar, Hector, Alexander the Great, King David, Joshua and Judas Maccabeus.
[126] These songs allegedly connected Godfrey's ancestors to the legend of the Knight of the Swan, the inspiration for Wagner's opera *Lohengrin*.
[127] Brindley, *Richard Beauchamp,* 153.
[128] This genre, which flourished from the 13th to the 17th century, has been accorded the title 'Matter of England' by modern scholars. It deals with the locations, characters and themes involving English history or traditions and which show some continuity between the poetry and myths of the Anglo-Saxon period as well as themes, motifs and plots deriving from English folklore.
[129] 'Felice' has the meaning happiness.
[130] There is still a public house in Warwick called 'The Dun Cow'.

Nevertheless, despite all these knightly attributes, the fact that the position of Beauchamp's hands allow him to gaze upwards to the figure of the crowned Queen of Heaven emphasises that, although the Chapel may have become known as the Beauchamp Chapel, for Beauchamp it was also dedicated to the most powerful Saint available to intercede for him in the afterlife and he wished to keep his eyes firmly fixed on her. The whole effigy is surrounded by a cage-like construction built to support a fabric cover, tapestry or velvet, called a 'hearse',[131] which would have been removed to reveal the effigy only when mass was said for his soul.

Around the sides of the tomb were set niches containing fourteen figures or 'weepers' interspersed with angels and miniature bears and ragged staffs.[132] The figures were cast by William Austen of London in latten, an alloy similar to bronze and covered in gold.[133] Weepers were living people who would mourn the death of the person in the tomb and whose intercessions could add weight to those of the saints. On one side of Beauchamp's tomb are female weepers and on the other side are male weepers – all of them notable members of Beauchamp's family[134] and the nobility, and each identifiable from the enamelled coats of arms around the base.[135]

'Medieval society was a hierarchy, and the orders of the heavenly host resembled the earthly society'.[136] Therefore, just as Mary because of her high status as Queen of Heaven, was placed higher – and thus potentially given more power – than the apostles, evangelists and universal

[131] There are only two other such hearses in the country - one over the figure of Robert, son of William the Conqueror in Gloucester Cathedral, and the other in the church at West Tanfield in North Yorkshire.
[132] It is sometimes held that the Bear and Ragged Staff did not become a single emblem until the time of Richard Neville, but the Warwickshire Records Office maintains that Beauchamp's privy, or private seal has a crest supported by two bears each holding a ragged staff. Information accessed at: http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/web/corporate/pages.nsf/Links/2AA8F837EFE001B180256A38003531A9
[133] Exact specifications are listed in the original contracts in the document Add 28,564, preserved in the British Museum.
[134] See fig. 10.
[135] At the head of the tomb are representations of Beauchamp's son Henry, and Cecily Neville, Henry's wife and daughter of the Earl of Salisbury. Other weepers were; Beauchamp's daughter Ann and her husband, Richard Neville, 'the Kingmaker', who was also Cecily's brother; Eleanor, Beauchamp's second daughter by his first marriage and her second husband Edmund Beaufort, Duke of Somerset; Beauchamp's eldest daughter Margaret and her husband John Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury; Elizabeth, Beauchamp's third daughter by his first wife and her husband George Neville, Lord Latimer; Humphrey Stafford and his wife Ann Neville and Richard Neville, 5th Earl of Salisbury and his wife Alice.
[136] Brooke, *Popular Religion in the Middle Ages, 32.*

saints,[137] it is possible that Beauchamp considered that having all those highly placed human individuals to mourn him would reduce his time in purgatory considerably. Nevertheless, by the time the Earl was finally installed in his resting place, his son Henry and Henry's wife Cecily were themselves dead.

The inscription around the tomb is interesting in that it is in English. Sir William Dugdale,[138] quotes Beauchamp as requesting that 'In the two long plates they shall write in latine in feine manner all such Scripture of Declairation as the said Executors shall devise'.[139] However, it would appear that his executors were prepared to deviate from this instruction as Brindley considers that the final inscription is probably the first monumental eulogy written in the English language.[140] This was a reflection of the growing use of the mother tongue in ecclesiastical and secular affairs rather than the more conventional French. Indeed between 1360 and 1400 English replaced French in the army and Law Courts, and in 1348 English became the medium for teaching in the schools.[141] The text of the inscription around the tomb reads:

> Prieth devoutly for the sowel whom God assoille of one of the moost worshipful knightes in his dayes of manhode and conning, Richard Beauchamp, late Eorl of Warrewik Lord Despenser of Bergevenney and of mony other grete lordships whos body rcsteth here under this tombe in a fulfeire vout of stone set on the bare rooch. The which visited with longe siknes in the castel of Roan therinne decessed ful christenly the last day of april the yer of our Lord God A.D. MCCCCXXXIX he being at that tyme lieutenant genal and governor of the royalme of Fraunce and of the duchie of Normandie by sufficient autoritie of our sovaigne lord the king Harry VI. The which body with grete deliberacon and ful worshipful conduit bi see and by lond was broght to Warrewik the III day of October the yer above seide and was leide with ful soleime exequies in a feir chest made of stone in this churche afore the west dore of this chapel according to his last wille and testament therin to reste til this chaple by him devised in his lief were made. Al the whuch chapel founded on the rooch and alle membres therof his executors dede fully make and aparaille by the same auctorite the dide translate fful worshipfully the seide body into the voute aboveseide. Honorid be God therfore.[142]

[137] Ibid., 33.
[138] For more on Dugdale see full text of *The life, diary, and correspondence of Sir William Dugdale ... : with an appendix, containing an account of his published works, an index to his manuscript collections, copies of monumental inscriptions to the memory of the Dugdale family, and heraldic grants and pedigrees*. Accessed at: http://archive.org/stream/lifediarycorresp00dugduoft/lifediarycorresp00dugduoft_djvu.txt
[139] William Dugdale, *The Antiquities of Warwickshire* (London: Thomas Warren, 1656), 355.
[140] Brindley, *Richard Beauchamp*, 147.
[141] See THE CHURCHinHISTORY INFORMATION CENTRE. Accessed at: http://www.churchinhistory.org/pages/misc/firstbible-english.htm
[142] Text from the Beauchamp Tomb in the Beauchamp Chapel.

Here too we have an indication of the ties between the spiritual and the temporal for, despite the injunction to pray for Beauchamp's soul, it would appear that it was his knightliness rather than his piety that is emphasised here.

The foundation stone of the Beauchamp Chapel was laid in 1443, some four years after Beauchamp's death, with the building and its decoration being completed in 1460. However Beauchamp's body was not moved from the position by his father into the tomb built for him until some fifteen years later.[143] As his remains were placed into the tomb the presiding Bishop offered up the prayer that, just as God had wished the bones of Joseph, son of Israel, to be taken on the wanderings by the Israelites until they found their resting place in the Promised Land,[144] so the bones of Beauchamp, could at last have their final resting place in the magnificent Chapel just as he had planned. Thus, once again the link between Beauchamp's temporal status and that of an Old Testament hero was seen as comparable.

Provisions for the Chantry Masses

As previously mentioned, a chantry was a service rather than a place, based on an unquestioning belief in the intercessory role of the saints, the need to offset the perils of purgatory by good works and the duty to provide for the spiritual well-being of this family. Having engaged with the first by the placing of saints in the Chapel, the second by the funding of the Chapel, it was necessary to ensure that the spiritual welfare of Beauchamp and his family did not go astray.

St. Mary's had been a Collegiate Church, served by a Dean and canons since 1123 when Henry, 1st Earl of Warwick, had begun the foundation of the college by the establishment of one prebend, which was an endowment providing income for one canon. Henry's son Roger had given sufficient property for the maintenance of six other prebends. The small community came together daily to celebrate Mass and the seven canonical offices.

[143] It is claimed that this procrastination was caused by his daughter Anne, who wished to delay the final completion of the will until her three half sisters died so that their share would fall to her and not to their offspring.
[144] Brindley, *Richard Beauchamp*, 149-150.

Beauchamp's will specified four daily masses to be celebrated in his chapel to secure his soul and the souls of his family,[145] two to be Masses of the Dead, and the third a Mass following the weekly votive cycle. However, the fourth was the Lady Mass that Beauchamp especially asked to be 'with note'.[146] Provision was thus made for three chantry priests to sing the masses 'for ever'. Rather than just an act of religious individualism, this indicated a piety that acknowledged communal responsibility. Roffey maintains that, not only the individual benefited from the quantity of prayers as they 'more powerfully enhanced the intercessory element of the ritual',[147] but that 'the laity, in turn, benefited from even more elaborate and plentiful ceremonies and the spiritual efficacy of the mass itself.'[148] This he maintained was due to the fact that the laity 'sustained an inherent feeling of spiritual and psychological security from it'.[149]

However the desire of Beauchamp for chantry masses to be celebrated in perpetuity was not fulfilled, for the world-order Beauchamp had served was quickly passing and the power once assumed by such magnates was in decline. Within two or three generations of his death, the medieval order came to an end. Politics, the Royal succession, the unwillingness of some sections of the population to unquestioningly obey the edicts of Papal authority,[150] and the proliferation of printed literature,[151] all made a contribution to the chaos that was to herald the Reformation. These forces were to make a significant impact on the system Beauchamp had put in place for the good of his soul for, within seventy-five years of his being ensconced in his magnificent tomb, the voices had ceased by order of the King.

[145] Within 16 years of the completion of the Chapel six of Beauchamp's relations also had their resting place in the Chapel, these being; Sir Henry Neville (Son of Lady Latimer), Oliver Dudley (Son-in-law of Lady Latimer), George Neville, Lord Latimer, (Son-in-law of the Founder), Joan Bouchier (Widow of Sir Henry Latimer), Richard Plantagenet, (Second son of George, Duke of Clarence), and Elizabeth Lady Latimer (third daughter of the Founder).
[146] Buckle, Alexandra, '"Of the finest colours": Music in Stained glass at Warwick and Elsewhere', *Vidimus*, 46. Accessed at: http://vidimus.org/issues/issue-46/feature-2/
[147] Roffey, *Chantry Chapels,* 19-20.
[148] Ibid., 20.
[149] Ibid., 20.
[150] Hyson-Smith, *Christianity in England* (Vol. II), 201.
[151] In 1476 Caxton established the first printing press in England in Westminster.

Chapter 2

Tudor Turmoils

During the years following the building of the Chapel there was much turmoil on the national stage. In 1461 the House of Lancaster had given way to the House of York, which had itself been ousted in 1485 by Henry VII who established the Tudor dynasty. Locally however, Warwick in the late 15th and early 16th century remained a small town dominated by the Castle and St. Mary's Church. Local historian Paul Bolitho sees the town as one in which the feudal power of the Earls of Warwick still exerted considerable influence and where:

> the lives of the citizens were also governed to a large extent by the Church, and the magnificent addition of the Beauchamp Chapel of our Lady in the previous century reminded them of their allegiance both to the spiritual and temporal powers'.[152]

Yet this long-established regime was under threat and, along with it the Chapel itself.

In order to uncover the reasons for this state of affairs, it is necessary to consider the changes which occurred in the light of the historical background that precipitated them. One result of the close partnership between Church and State was that any instability in one area was liable to impact on the other. They had always been somewhat uneasy bed-fellows[153] and by the time of Edward III the upper echelons of English clergy, as well as some sections of the laity, had grown increasingly impatient regarding the extent to which the Pope assumed jurisdiction over affairs in England.[154]

The works of such 14th century writers as William Langland[155] and Richard Rolle[156] also illustrate the growing unease among an increasing number of the populace concerning certain aspects of church policy. Yates claims that, 'Whereas the theology of the medieval schoolmen was extremely sophisticated and argued on sound philosophical principles, that of the average

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[152] Paul Bolitho, *Warwick's Most famous Son, The Story of Thomas Oken and his Charity* (Warwick: The Charity of Thomas Oken and Nicholas Eyffler, 2003), 1.
[153] L.F. Salzman, *English Life in the Middle Ages* (London: OUP, 1926; repr. 1929), 109, maintains that as far back as the 11th century William 1st had refused to accept the Pope as his overlord while Henry II (1154-1189) had also struggled to make the church submit to the state in matters of law.
[154] See Hyson-Smith, *Christianity in England* (Vol. II), 33.
[155] Such as *Piers Plowman.*
[156] Such as T*he English Prose Treatises of Richard Rolle De Hampole.*

man and woman in the parish, or for that matter of the parish priest, rarely rose above the level of popular superstition'.[157] This view however fails to take account of the fact that, at that time, the reverencing of images, for example, was seen not as idolatry, but as an accepted means of connecting with God via material constructs. Duffy maintains that, although the charms, rituals and incantations for protection were seen as problematic to the guardians of official Christianity:

> it would be a mistake to see even these 'magical' prayers as standing altogether outside the framework of the official worship and teaching of the Church. The world-view they enshrined, in which humanity was beleaguered by hostile troops of devils seeking the destruction of body and soul, and to which the appropriate and guaranteed antidote was the incantatory or manual invocation of the cross or names of Christ, is not a construct of the folk imagination. Such ideas were built into the very structure of the liturgy…[158]

However there were those for whom this was unacceptable, such as the 14th century theologian, lay preacher and Bible translator John Wyclif for whom the Bible alone was authoritative and fully sufficient, containing 'all that was necessary to salvation'.[159] Indeed the proliferation of relics and statues, along with other pictorial images, had long been a contentious issue within the church. Gayk, while acknowledging that 'images and books have long been considered parallel modes of representation', points to an underlying tension between the two media:

> Christianity was represented as a religion of the book in battle with religions of the image. The early church's rejection of images was largely contingent on its reading of scriptural injunctions against idolatry (and most notably those found in the Decalogue and the *Liber Sapientiae*), but its position also derived from the church's desire to maintain distance between Christian practices and those of the contemporary pagan and imperial religions, in which the veneration of images was commonplace.[160]

This position was compromised during the time of Constantine when Christianity became the state religion,[161] but the debate continued. While the 6th Century Bishop Serenus of Massilia [Marseilles] destroyed paintings and statues to protect his congregation from idolatry, the Pope, Gregory the Great, proclaimed that pictures enable those who could not read to become

[157] Nigel Yates, *Liturgical Space – Christian Worship and Church Buildings in Western Europe 1500-2000* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 2008), 7.
[158] Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars,* 279.
[159] See Hyson-Smith, *Christianity in England* (Vol. II), 267.
[160] Gayk*, Image, Text and Religious Reform,* 5.
[161] Romans of consequence, wishing to make their mark, donated statues etc. to churches such as the image installed by Constantine of his mother, *St. Helena, with the True Cross* in Santa Croce in Gerusalemme.

acquainted with the stories. 'Dulia', the lesser form of worship as in the reverence shown to people or corporeal artifacts, was permissible, while 'latria' was worship due only to God.

Wyclif however argued that while images could conceivably be useful as aids to devotion, they should not be venerated with either latria or dulia.[162] Indeed, he considered even that limited use to be dangerous – potentially leading to idolatry. Wyclif's followers, known as Lollards, not only preached biblically-centred reforms[163] but took a far more reactionary stance concerning images. Again Gayk posits that:

> Although the extent of iconophobia and iconoclasm in fact varies widely in extant Lollard writings, the issue of images seems to have served as a litmus test for determining late medieval heresy. [164]

The disquiet regarding this, and other aspects of life within the church, was widespread by the late 15th century and, on the Continent the work of Martin Luther[165] and Zwingli,[166] both critical of the alleged corruption of the pre-Reformation church, provided a catalyst for the development of Protestant theology and Protestant forms of Christian worship.

Scarisbrick might claim that on the whole, English men and women did not want the religious changes which came to be embodied in the Reformation and were 'slow to accept it when it came'.[167] Yet besides the influence of the reformers, there were at least three other major contributory factors that mitigated for change. Firstly there was the protracted financial burden of the war in France at a time when the plague had devastated the population. Secondly there was a significant increase in lay education which gave the newly literate middle classes a chance of voicing their concerns. Thirdly there was disillusionment with the Church in general, in the

[162] Gayk, *Image, Text and Religious Reform*, 9.
[163] See Kantik Ghosh, *The Wycliffite Heresy: Authority and the Interpretation of Texts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), for an indepth view of the Lollard attitude to Biblical texts.
[164] Gayk, *Image, Text and Religious Reform*, 10.
[165] Luther (1483-1546), a German priest and professor of theology, denounced the theology of indulgences in his Ninety-Five Theses in 1517. His refusal to retract all of his writings at the demand of Pope Leo X and the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V resulted in his excommunication by the Pope and condemnation as an outlaw by the Emperor.
[166] Zwingli (1484-1531), a leader of the Reformation in Switzerland, was influenced by the writings of Erasmus and began to preach ideas on reforming the Catholic Church including attacking the use of images in places of worship.
[167] J.J.Scarisbrick, *The Reformation and the English People* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd., 1984; repr. 1997), 1.

light of the Great Schism in Western Christendom.[168] Nevertheless, in England, the later years of the 15th century remained a time of relative stability between State and Church.

Henry VII

Henry VII[169] and Pope Innocent VIII[170] had an 'understanding', with the Pope proclaiming the right of King Henry VII and his descendants to the English throne, despite his rather dubious claim based on the fact that he was the last reasonably legitimate male descendant of Edward III.[171] Henry himself was:

> meticulous in his religious observances, his alms-giving, his patronage of churches and religious orders, his respect for saints and relics, and endowed prayers for his soul. All of these characteristics, together with his tactful and respectful relations with the papacy, gave him a generally recognized reputation as a sound churchman.[172]

However, on the King's death in 1509, his second son Henry came to the throne[173] as Henry VIII and matters concerning the relative powers of King and Pope came to a head – a situation which was to impact not only on the Beauchamp Chapel but on all religious establishments in the country.

Henry VIII

Henry VIII may have begun his reign a devoted son of the medieval Catholic Church but this state of affairs would last only insofar as his ambitions were not thwarted. Yes, he would challenge heresy,[174] but when he perceived that Papal influences threatened his royal prerogative a breach was inevitable.

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[168] In 1378 the papal court in Rome and an Italian was elected pope as Pope Urban VI. The cardinals in the French interest refused to accept him, declared his election void, and named Clement VII as Pope. Clement withdrew to Avignon, whilst Urban remained in Rome. Western Christendom could not decide which one to obey. The spectacle of two rival Popes, each holding himself out as the only true successor of St. Peter, continued for about forty years and injured the Papacy more than anything else that had happened to it.
[169] 1485-1509.
[170] 1432-1492.
[171] 'Pope Innocence VIII.' *New Advent, The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Accessed at: http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/08019b.htm
[172] S. B. Chrimes, *Henry VII,* English Monarchs Series (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), 304.
[173] Henry's elder son, Prince Arthur had died in 1502.
[174] His famous *Assertio Septem Sacramentorum,* condemning the 'heresy' of Luther, earned him the title 'Defender of the Faith' from a grateful Pope Leo X in 1521.

The priorities for Henry were for the English throne to 'stand comparison with royalty and all that surrounds the monarch in any other country in Europe',[175] and also the 'unavoidable and highly emotive matter of securing the future as a healthy male heir that was crucial in settling the succession, and thereby giving a measure of steadfastness to the Tudor regime'.[176] Therefore, when the Pope refused Henry's request to divorce Queen Katherine, who had failed to provide him with the heir he needed, in order to marry Anne Boleyn, his trust in the Papal governance suffered an irredeemable blow.

Henry's belief that he should have the final say in all matters that directly affected the country was the springboard for his restructuring and reformation of the English church. It is true that the various Acts of Succession[177] were related specifically to the succession, but other legislation dealt with the relationship between the King and the Pope and the whole structure of the Church in England. These included the Statute in Restraint of Appeals,[178] and, perhaps the most significant, the 1534 first Act of Supremacy.

This document granted King Henry VIII of England Royal Supremacy, which means that he was declared the supreme head of the Church of England, an action that hardly surprisingly resulted in Henry's excommunication. Henry's response was to pass the Treasons Act which made it high treason, punishable by death, to refuse to acknowledge the King as such. Indeed by 1536 Henry declared that he wished the people to be 'fed with wholesome doctrine not seduced with filthy and corrupt abominations of the bishop of Rome or his disciples and adherents'.[179]

Henry took it upon himself to demonstrate tangibly that he, not the Pope, would determine what happened in England. To that end Henry instigated the suppression of many monasteries and

[175]Kenneth Hyson-Smith, *Christianity in England From Roman Times to the Reformation,* Vol. III, 1384-1558, (London: SCM Press, 2001), 199.
[176] Ibid., 200.
[177] These Acts of 1533, 1534 and 1536 related to the legitimate heirs to the throne.
[178] This Act passed in 1533 made accepting papal authority, or following papal rulings in church, in both faith or other matters, illegal.
[179] Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars*, 387.

pilgrimage shrines in his attempt to bring the church to heel.[180] This heralded a considerable period of instability which changed the landscape of the church in England for ever.

In Warwick, St. Sepulchre Priory was dismantled in 1536[181] and the Blackfriars Friary was dissolved in 1538. This would have had an impact on the town, but in nearby Coventry the effect of the dissolution was catastrophic. St. Mary's Priory in Coventry had been by far the largest single creator of industry in the town with the result that, after the event, the population fell from around 7,000 to somewhere in the region of 3,000.[182]

Canterbury also suffered greatly. Income from pilgrims visiting Thomas Becket's shrine had made it a rich foundation. However Henry's enmity towards Becket was implacable. Not only was his shrine demolished in 1538 but Henry also ordered that Becket's bones were to be destroyed.[183] Denounced as an upholder of the powers of the Pope, and a rebel against his King,[184] it was decreed that, not only was Becket no longer to be reverenced a saint, but his likenesses were to be removed from all churches, chapels, and 'His name was to be erased from all liturgical books, and his Office, antiphons, and collects to be said no more'.[185] Whether this was really 'to the intent that his grace's loving subjects shall be no longer blindly led and abused to commit idolatry,'[186] or to demonstrate that all power in England now rested with the King is open to conjecture.

Interestingly it is Becket who provides a link with the Beauchamp Chapel. If Henry was serious about eradicating all reference to Becket, why was his effigy in the Chapel stained glass left untouched? Perhaps the edict never reached Warwick, or maybe the people managed to 'forget'

[180] Also to fill his dwindling coffers with the wealth that had been amassed by these organisations.
[181] The Priory was granted to Thomas Hawkins in 1546 with the material from the building being incorporated into the mansion built in 1556. For more information see *County Records Office History*. Accessed at: http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/web/corporate/pages.nsf/Links/3FC3B8D6DE560A1F8025731A0056E0E8
[182] Rob Orland, *Historic Coventry, England, Coventry – Some History*. Accessed at: http://www.historiccoventry.co.uk/history/history.php#top
[183] For more information see Scarisbrick, *The Reformation*, 85.
[184] Becket's violent disagreement, which eventually resulted in his martyrdom, was with Henry II.
[185] Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars,* 412.
[186] Ibid., 412.

the identity of the figure in order to preserve it. We may never know the answer to that conundrum but, even though the Chapel remained undamaged for the time being, it soon ceased to function in the way Beauchamp had planned.

One local man who witnessed this change was Thomas Oken. Oken, was born in Warwick in the first decade of the 16th century.[187] During his lifetime he amassed a considerable fortune as a mercer and, by the time of his death in 1573, he had witnessed the reigns of all five major Tudor monarchs.[188] Bolitho sees this whole period as one in which 'the changes they [the populace] experienced were far more drastic in their eyes than those which we take in our stride today'.[189]

Oken was first and foremost a man of considerable civic pride and throughout this turbulent period did all he could to protect the assets of the town. Dugdale, writing in 1730, speaks of Oken thus, 'I must not omit to point at the particular Pious Works of the same Thomas Oken'[190] but little is known of Oken's personal beliefs. What can be gleaned from his Will is explored towards the end of the chapter, but as St. Mary's was seen then, as now, as the civic church, it seems he held that it merited what protection he could offer it.

One year after Oken had become Master of the town's united craft Guild of the Holy Trinity and St. George, Henry engaged in further depredations of church and also guild property. The Beauchamp Chapel itself was never a guild chapel,[191] nevertheless, following the surrendering of the priory to the crown in 1536 by prior Robert Radford,[192] it appeared that it too was in danger.

[187] The exact year is not known but Bolitho believes it to be around 1509.
[188] Six if the short reign of Lady Jane Grey is included.
[189] Bolitho, *Thomas Oken*, 3.
[190] Dugdale, *Antiquities of Warwick*, 77.
[191] There were some guild chapels in St. Mary's, but the main one in the town was a chapel built by Beauchamp's father Thomas, 12th Earl of Warwick. Situated over the gatehouse in the town's west wall, it was initially given to the Guild of St. George in 1383 and eventually became the Guild Chapel for the United Guilds of Warwick.
[192] According to the Warwickshire C.C. website, Radford was given a pension of £5 per, annum. Information accessed at:
http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/web/corporate/pages.nsf/Links/3FC3B8D6DE560A1F8025731A0056E0E8

In 1545 the Chantries Act [193] was approved. This Act, now more correctly called the Dissolution of Colleges Act, stated that all chantries were guilty of representing misapplied funds and misappropriated lands and that in future their properties would belong to the King for as long as he should live – an act designed to help Henry relieve the monetary pressures of the war with France.

There were probably over four thousand chantry chapels or similar institutions in pre-Reformation England, each capable of supporting at least one priest.[194] This Act, not only led to the re-defining of the relationship between the living and the dead but it also had practical implications. Leaving aside the loss of livelihood for chantry priests, Roffey claims that 'the dissolution of the chantries also involved the effective dismantling of many of the institutions associated with the chantry foundations, such as schools, hospitals and almshouses'.[195]

In Warwick the removal of the endowment to the Beauchamp Chapel for three chantry priests along with its chantry status[196] certainly had a direct effect on the townspeople. These priests had not only been required to say daily masses for the soul of Richard Beauchamp for ever, but had also taken some responsibility for schooling within the parish.[197] Nevertheless all was not lost.

In 1544, knowing that its property would be confiscated, St. Mary's Church voluntarily surrendered its assets and collegiate status to the Crown. However, by judicious negotiation,[198] Thomas Oken managed to persuade the King's commissioners to restore to the town, under the

[193] Now in the National Archives, Kew.
[194] Masonovitch, Ivan, 'Changes in the English Church under Edward VI (1547- 1553)', *The British History Site: Society and Religion*. Accessed at: http://www.etrusia.co.uk/eng_chu1.php
[195] Roffey, *Chantry Chapels*, 168.
[196] Granted to it in 1123 by Earl Roger. See Fonge, *The Cartulary of St Mary's,* 22, item 19. At the same time the chantry at St. Anne's altar in St. Mary's, founded in 1401 by one of the Trinity Guild's founders Robert Walden, also ceased to function, Fong, *The cartulary of St Mary's Collegiate Church, Warwick,* lviii.
[197] Shirley Wallis, *Thomas Oken, St. Mary's Church and a Remarkable Parishioner* (Booklet produced in St. Mary's Parish Office, 2000), 6. Shirley Wallis is a guide at St. Mary's.
[198] Exactly what pressure Oken exerted is not recorded. However his status as Guildmaster, his links with Coventry, an important centre at the time for the cloth trade, (he granted property to the Coventry Capper's Company), along with the business acumen that he would have needed to have acquired his considerable property portfolio (see Bolitho, *Thomas Oken*, 18) give the picture of a man of considerable authority.

guise of the misnamed King Henry VIII Charity, the property of the Church, including chantry assets and Guild assets.[199] On May 15th the town also received a Charter which the Guild had been able to purchase from the King for £39. 13s. 4d. through the sale of some of its land.[200] This Charter established a Corporation of burgesses to manage the properties, and continuity was maintained because the members of the Guild became the first burgesses.[201] The members of the Corporation were bound by oath to attend morning service, occupying the pews previously designated for the Dean and canons and liable to incur fines should they not attend.[202] These actions maintained the old links between Church and town and, although they were focussed on St. Mary's as a whole, it also added a layer of protection on the Beauchamp Chapel.

Henry himself never repudiated the doctrines of the Catholic Church:[203] nevertheless his actions eventually resulted in a separated church, the Church of England. Instead of conflict between the Pope and the Monarch, the country during the Tudor era became embroiled in conflict based on the religious persuasion of the Monarch influenced by his or her advisors.

In 1547 another more far-reaching Chantries Act was passed but Henry did not live long after the Act's passage, dying that same year. This document not only proscribed any offering of prayers for the dead but gave orders for the physical removal of all images in chantry chapels.[204] This varied from whitewashing over wall paintings to total destruction.[205] The implementation of this Act was to be the task of his successor and it was executed very vigorously indeed.

[199] *The Charity of Thomas Oken & Nicholas Eyffler.* Accessed at (history page): http://www.thomasoken.org.uk/
[200] Bolitho, *Thomas Oken*, 5.
[201] The actual Guild was abolished in 1548.
[202] Jean Field, *Kings of Warwick* (Studley, Warwickshire; Brewin Books, 1995), 65.
[203] Indeed some scholars, such as Christopher Haigh, *English Reformations:Religion, Politics, and Society under the Tudors* (Oxford: OUP, 1993), 167, hold that in terms of his beliefs Henry died a Catholic – though Haigh adds the proviso 'rather a bad one' – rather than a Protestant.
[204] Roffey, *Chantry Chapels*, 168-169.
[205] For further information see Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars*, Chapter 13, 454-477.

Edward VI

On his death Henry's sole surviving nine-year-old son was crowned Edward VI, and the pace of change quickened. Indeed from the beginning of Edward's reign it was clear which way the wind was blowing. In his coronation oration Cranmer addressed the young monarch thus:

> Your Majesty is God's vice-regent and Christ's vicar within your own dominion and to see, with your predecessor Josiah, God truly worshipped and idolatry destroyed, the tyranny of the Bishop of Rome banished from your subjects, and images removed.[206]

For the young Edward the comparison between him and the youthful Old Testament King was highly significant. Just as Josiah had established the importance of God's written word and purged his realm of false images[207] so the task confronting Edward would be to purge the church of 'idols' and to promote Biblical teaching. Cranmer's was not a lone voice; indeed most of Edward's advisors were of the Protestant or evangelical[208] persuasion, including Edmund Bonner[209] and Stephen Gardiner.[210]

The message to the people was that the Bible, rather than church tradition or ecclesiastical doctrine was the final source of authority for all Christians. No amount of good works could earn salvation, which comes by faith in Jesus as the Christ.[211] Good works were rather an outward sign of inward salvation. For those who had previously had little opportunity to read the Bible for themselves and had been brought up with the idea that one could earn or even buy indulgences this was revolutionary. Indeed MacCullock sees the changes planned by Edward and his advisors as 'designed to destroy one Church and build another in a religious revolution of ruthless thoroughness'.[212]

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[206] Paul Ayris & David Selwyn (eds.), *Thomas Cranmer, Churchman and Scholar* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: The Boydell Press, 1993), 139.
[207] Bible, II Kings; 23.
[208] In this instance 'evangelical' indicates those within the Established Church who exhibited an enthusiasm for the propagation of the Gospel.
[209] Bishop of London.
[210] Bishop of Winchester.
[211] For more information see Loades, *Revolution in Religion,* 37-39.
[212] Diarmaid MacCullock, *Thomas Cranmer* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press; 1996), 366.

During Edward's short reign the stripping of the remaining Catholic paraphernalia from the churches continued and the implementation of the 1547 Act completely suppressed 2,374 chantries and guild chapels and authorised inquiries to determine all of their possessions.[213] Roffey quotes examples such as Nunney where even the iron bars of the founder's tomb were considered for appropriation,[214] while the chanteries in the Augustinian Priories in Smithfield and Southwick, London were converted into a blacksmith's forge and stables.[215]

The Chapel in Warwick seems to have escaped lightly. Indeed Beauchamp's tomb, which included an instruction to 'Prieth devoutly for the sowel whom God assoille of one of the most worshipful knighttes in the dayes of manhode and conning, Richard Beauchamp', was unharmed. Many chapels had the lead stripped off the roofs in order to make restoration impossible and indeed the Beauchamp Chapel, the Dean's Chapel and the Chapter House in St. Mary's were scheduled to be treated in this way. However the Chapel was saved by the man charged to ensure the work was done.

John Dudley was custodian and administrator of Warwick Castle for the Crown.[216] In applying for Warwick Castle, of which he had acquired the joint constableship in 1532, he claimed descent four generations before from Margaret, Countess of Shrewsbury, eldest of the three daughters of Richard Beauchamp by his first wife. As Margaret was one of the weepers on Beauchamp's tomb it would be reasonable to assume that he did not want to risk having the image of the very person on whom he based his claim vandalised.[217] Nevertheless, in 1549 the 'paschall standard' was removed, and in 1550 the box which had contained the pyx and the iron,

[213] For more information see Loades, *Revolution in Religion: The English Reformation 1530-1570* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1992), 28-29.
[214] Roffey, *Chantry Chapels,* 168.
[215] Ibid., 169.
[216] He was created Earl of Warwick in 1547.
[217] In 1551 John Dudley was created Duke of Northumberland, and was executed in 1553 for his attempts to have Lady Jane Grey crowned Queen, upon which his estates reverted to the Crown.

stone, and timber from the high altar of the Church and Our Lady's altar in the Beauchamp Chapel were all sold.[218]

It is likely that this was the period when the painted figures on the walls received their first coat of whitewash[219] – one that could be removed if the religious climate was to change.[220] We shall never know what happened to St. Mary's remaining relics in their rich caskets. It is likely that the plate, ornaments and jewels were diverted to the King's treasury and the rest either sold or destroyed.

However this ceased in 1553 when Edward died and, despite the machinations of John Dudley[221] who vainly sought to maintain his Protestant power base by proclaiming Lady Jane Grey, the wife of his son Lord Guildford Dudley, as Queen; the Crown passed to Edward's Catholic half-sister Mary.

Queen Mary

It is possible that Dudley could have actually had Jane proclaimed as Queen in Warwick;[222] however he, along with Lady Jane and her husband, were executed, and two of his sons[223] found themselves imprisoned in the Tower of London. As loyal servant of their liege lord, Oken and the other burgesses may also have found themselves in some danger. However, perhaps to their relief, Queen Mary actually granted the town a further Charter on November 12th, 1554[224]

[218] W.B. Stephens (ed.), *The Borough of Warwick Churches*. 1969. Accessed at: http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=16057
[219] This was a common practice. See Rosman, *The Evolution of the English Churches*, 38.
[220] Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars,* 583.
[221] Now also Duke of Northumberland.
[222] Bolitho, *Thomas Oken*, 6, mentions a lease of property in the town belonging to Oken himself dated 'the 20th of July, 1st year of [Queen] Jane, 1553'.
[223] The future Earls of Warwick and Leicester.
[224] Charter of 1554 (WA 1/1); enrolled C 66/882 mm. 6-8. Information accessed at: 'The borough of Warwick: Political and administrative history, 1545-1835', *A History of the County of Warwick*: Vol. 8: The City of Coventry and Borough of Warwick (1969) URL: http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=16054

allowing the corporation full incorporation for general municipal purposes not granted in the 1545 Charter.[225] This magnanimous action gives some credence to Duffy's claim that:

> The phrase most commonly used to describe the religious policy of the reign, the 'Marian reaction', reveals more about the assumptions of those who use it than about the objectives of the churchmen to whom it is applied.'[226]

Duffy sees the Marian church leaders as seeking to promote:

> a version of traditional Catholicism which had absorbed whatever they saw as positive in the Edwardine and Henrician reforms, and which was subtly but distinctively different from the Catholicism of the 1520s.[227]

Whether this apparent desire for establishing national unity and the demand forbidding religious disputations was indeed led by the Queen or was considered expedient by her advisors remains for the most part uncertain. Nevertheless, alongside the restoration of the essential ingredients necessary for traditional Catholic worship, no sanctions were imposed for reading or owning a Bible,[228] despite the assertion by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Reginald Pole, who reiterated the traditional medieval view that it was penitence not knowledge that was the true way to salvation for 'they are most apte to receyve light that are more obedyent to follow ceremonyes than to reade'.[229]

Duffy maintains that the programme of reconstructing the ritual framework and sacramental nature of traditional pre-reformation religion was widely accepted and soon established itself in the parishes.[230] Indeed for those willing to return to the 'old' faith there was probably a sense of

[225] In order to strengthen the powers of the Corporation, the Lordship of the Leet was granted to the Corporation by that Charter. This effectively gave the Mayor the appointment of High Bailiff; and the Town Clerk the Stewardship. The Court Leet of Warwick has never ceased to function and until 1948 performed certain administrative functions relating to the Commons and St. Mary's Lands. This particular function is now in the hands of the District Council. However, the Court Leet has always been used and still is today, as an advisory body in calling attention of the elected representatives to anything amiss or for the betterment of the town. The present Jury is fixed at 24 persons. For more information see *The History of Parliament, British Political, Social and Local History*. Accessed at: http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1509-1558/constituencies/warwick

[226] Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars*, 524.

[227] Ibid., 526.

[228] The English Parliament in 1543 passed a law forbidding the use of any English translations other than the 'Great Bible'. Tyndale's New Testament was specifically prohibited, and later Wyclif's and Coverdale's Bibles were also banned. It was decreed a crime, as it had been in medieval times, for any unlicensed person to read or explain the Scriptures in public.

[229] Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars*, 531.

[230] Ibid., 526.

relief as they once again celebrated the Mass according to the traditional liturgy.[231] In *The Voices of Morebath* Duffy, referring admittedly to a specific locality, speaks of 'the imminent evaporation of the gains which the Reformation had made in the West Country over the previous six years',[232] and the restoration of Catholicism being 'eagerly taken up all over the Country'.[233] This may be something of an exaggeration as Hylson-Smith sees this period as one of considerable uncertainty, with many of Mary's subjects seriously concerned regarding her resolution to marry the Catholic Prince Philip of Spain.[234]

This fear was substantiated by the fact that, following their marriage in 1554, Mary immediately summoned her third Parliament, the main purpose of which was to 'obtain the necessary approval for the national submission to Rome'.[235] With this achieved, Mary started out on an increasingly militant religious policy and Duffy maintains that, within a short time, 'England had never experienced the hounding down of so many religious deviants over so wide an area in so short a time'.[236]

One book documenting the extent of this persecution is Fox's *Book of Martyrs,*[237] a history of the lives, sufferings and triumphant deaths of the early Christian and Protestant martyrs. However, while Fox's gruesome and enormously detailed accounts of the martyrdoms of Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer are generally considered accurate, some scholars such as Mozley, warn that Fox often treated his material casually, and any reader 'must be prepared to meet plenty of small errors and inconsistencies.'[238]

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[231] Rosman, *The Evolution of the English Churches,* 40.
[232] Duffy, *The Voices of Morebath,* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2000; repr. 2003), 152.
[233] Ibid., 154.
[234] Hyson-Smith, (Vol. III), 254.
[235] Ibid., 258.
[236] Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars,* 560.
[237] Fox's own title for the first edition (as scripted and spelled), was *Actes and Monuments of these Latter and Perillous Days, Touching Matters of the Church.*
Relevant passages can be accessed at: http://www.ccel.org/f/foxe/martyrs/fox116.htm
[238] John Mozley, *John Foxe and his Book* (London: Society for the promotion of Christian Knowledge, 1940), 155.

As far as can be ascertained no individual was put to death in Warwick for their religious beliefs at this time. However, during the reign of Henry VIII, in nearby Coventry between 1512 and 1522 nine people were burnt at the stake for their religious beliefs and in Mary's reign another three were dispatched.[239] Among those was the Rev. Lawrence Saunders who was remembered at a Memorial service in 2005 to mark the 450th anniversary of his death on February 8th, 1555.[240]

On the other hand, it appeared that, for the time being, St. Mary's and the Beauchamp Chapel were secure. Indeed as it is known that the timber of the high altar in St. Mary's was re-purchased in 1554-5, the altars[241] remade, and various books, a pyx, a Lenten cross, and a painting were among other things bought.[242] However, the comparatively short reign of Queen Mary[243] came to an end with her death in 1558, and her half sister Elizabeth came to the throne with her own ideas regarding the spiritual life of her subjects.

Elizabeth I

Queen Elizabeth, although brought up in the Protestant tradition,[244] had outwardly been both Protestant and Catholic as she negotiated the treacherous currents of her sibling's courts. Her Protestant councillors warned Elizabeth that the Pope commanded the foremost loyalty of her Catholic subjects and only a swift and strong blow could ensure their fear and forced loyalty. However, Elizabeth appears to have held the view that it was better to let them go publicly to Protestant services and then do as they wished at home, so long as they did not plot against her. As she herself is alleged to have said, she had "No desire to make windows into men's souls".[245]

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[239] Eleven of the twelve - for an unknown reason Master Archer is missing - have their names inscribed on two monuments in the City. The first stands on the site of The Hollows, where they were burned, and the second which was created during the rebuilding of Coventry after World War II, is embedded in the wall inside Broadgate House.
[240] Reported in *The Coventry Evening Telegraph*, January 5th, 2005.
[241] There were many other altars besides the high altar including one from the 13th century, dedicated to St. Katherine and St. Margaret. For more information see Stephens, *The Borough of Warwick, Churches,* 522-535. Accessed at:
http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=16057
[242] Ibid.
[243] 1553-1558.
[244] Queen Elizabeth I (1533-1603). Information accessed at: http://www.elizabethi.org/contents/biography/
[245] Queen Elizabeth I Accessed at, http://www.elizabethi.org/us/elizabethanchurch/queenandchurch.html

In practical terms the changes instigated by Mary disappeared from parish churches. The high altar in St. Mary's was removed in 1558 and services returned to a format similar to that of the early days of Edward. However, rather than being proclaimed Head of the Church in England, the Queen was proclaimed its Supreme Governor[246] and the young Elizabeth exhibited none of the religious fanaticism of her siblings. In one of the first meetings of Parliament, Elizabeth sought to restore Protestantism with the 1559 Acts of Supremacy and Uniformity but this was not to be the extreme Protestantism as seen during Edward's reign.

Nevertheless, this guarded tolerance had its limits and when in 1570 Pope Pius V issued a Papal Bull both excommunicating the Queen and pronouncing her deposed, the situation deteriorated. Not only did this encourage Catholic militancy[247] but it also increased anti-Catholic feeling[248] and led to the Act of 1571 which made it high treason to suggest that Elizabeth was a heretic and not the lawful Queen.[249]

Elizabeth reigned for 44 years and during that time England became largely Protestant,[250] although this was not the Protestantism of Luther or Calvin, but the reformed Catholicism that her father had espoused. Elizabeth still strove to follow a middle path and, while there were purges to efface the physical evidence of Roman Catholicism,[251] some Catholic features

[246] As is written in the introduction to the Articles of Religion in *The Book of Common Prayer*. In the reign of her father and brother, the monarch had been 'Head of the Church in England', but under Elizabeth, this was modified to 'Supreme Governor of the Church in England'. The change may have been made to appease Catholics who could not accept the monarch as 'Head of the Church' or it may have been made merely because Elizabeth was a woman.
[247] This resulted in such actions as the Babington Plot of 1586 and the planned invasion by Philip II of Spain known as the Spanish Armada.
[248] Although 200 Catholics were executed during Elizabeth's 45 year reign, most were executed specifically for treasonable acts, whereas the 300 Protestants executed in the 5 year reign of Mary were executed specifically because of their religious beliefs. See Hyson-Smith, *Christianity in England* (Vol. III) 261.
However, in the last year of Elizabeth's reign a Roman priest. Fr. John Sugar and his companion local man Robert Grissold (or Greswold) were imprisoned in Warwick gaol and languished there for a year. On 16th July both men were taken to Gallows Hill and executed. Sugar was hanged, drawn and quartered and Grissold, despite being given several opportunities to escape his fate, refused and was hanged. Information accessed at:
http://www.brgparish.org.uk/brg.php
[249] For more information see John G. Bellamy, *The Tudor law of treason: an introduction* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., 1975).
[250] Hyson-Smith, (Vol. III), 279.
[251] Such as the 1559 royal visitation recorded in C.J. Kitching (ed), *The Royal Visitation of 1559. Act Book for the Northern Province* (Durham: Surtees Society: repr.1972).

remained. These included the use of vestments during the communion service which had replaced the Catholic Mass,[252] and a tolerance of the signing of the cross.[253]

Elizabeth also demonstrated her willingness to compromise on some issues such as in the details contained in the Act of Uniformity of 1559.[254] Although she favoured a restoration of the 1549 Prayer Book, when the bishops supported the 1552 Prayer Book as being vague about most controversial matters and thus less offensive to Catholics, Elizabeth assented. Most Englishmen were content with this settlement. For example, in 1581, from an estimated population of 1885, no fewer than 1321 attended St. Mary's and took Communion at Easter. Nevertheless extremists on both sides felt it inadequate and the controversy rumbled on.

During the reign of Elizabeth the Beauchamp Chapel became the final resting place for four members of the aristocratic Dudley family. In 1584 Robert Dudley, the infant son of Robert Dudley and his wife Lettice,[255] was laid to rest close to the altar on the south side. In 1588 his father, the Queen's one-time favourite the Earl of Leicester, was also interred in the Chapel,[256] while one year later his brother Ambrose Dudley,[257] Earl of Warwick, also joined them. Finally Lettice was buried beside Dudley in 1643.

Although the two brothers claimed to have been descended from Beauchamp through their paternal grandmother, Margaret Beauchamp, and thus entitled to be buried in the Chapel, Roffey sees the imposition of large new elaborate tombs or monuments as a more subtle form of iconoclasm.[258] He maintains that, 'newly erected tombs were sometimes placed to invalidate the space formerly used for Catholic practices'.[259] There is no direct evidence that that was the

[252] Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars*, 589.
[253] Rosman, *The Evolution of the English Churches,* 45.
[254] For more information see Gerald Lewis Bray (ed.), *Documents of the English Reformation* (Cambridge: James Clarke & Co., 2004), Ch. 33, 'The Act of Uniformity, 1559', 329-334.
[255] Robert is often referred to by his sobriquet 'The Noble Impe'.
[256] For information regarding the funeral see J.R. Watkin, *The Life and Legacy of Robert Dudley* (Warwick: Warwick District Council, 2011), 28.
[257] Ambrose was made Earl of Warwick by Queen Elizabeth in 1561. See Watkin, *Robert Dudley,* 7.
[258] Roffey, *Chantry Chapel,* 173.
[259] Ibid., 173.

intention regarding the siting of the Dudley tombs in the Beauchamp Chapel, but the placing of Ambrose Dudley's monument in particular, certainly had that effect.[260]

The Tudor tombs, especially that of Robert and Lettice, are strikingly different from that of Beauchamp. Richard's tomb may have been opulent but that of Robert and Lettice,[261] variously attributed to one of the Johnsons of Southwark and to Joseph Hollemans of Burton,[262] is 'almost outrageous in its garish use of bright colours, gilding and motifs such as ribbons, strapwork, obelisks and allegorical figures'.[263] All this despite the fact that, in his will, Dudley had asked his executors to:

> take such Order for the Burial of my Body, as they shall think mete, always requiring that it may be done with as little pomp or vain Expences of the World, as may be, being persuaded that there is no more vain Expences than that in a convenient Tombe or Monument I wish there should be.[264]

One reason for this may have been the fact that the tomb was commissioned some time after his death by Robert's second wife, Lettice.[265] Although on Robert's death she married again, Lettice continued to style herself Lady Leicester and she probably wished the tomb she would eventually share with Robert[266] to reflect their standing and status as Earl and Countess of Leicester.[267] The somewhat less ornate tomb of Ambrose Dudley, 'the Good Earl',[268] who died

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[260] See fig. 11.
[261] See fig. 12.
[262] William Page (ed.), *A History of Warwickshire,* Vol. VIII in The Victoria History of the Counties of England Series (London: Dawsons of Pall Mall for The University of London Institute of Historical Research, 1908; repr. 1965), 528. Accessed at: http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=16057
For further information on both sculptors see K.A Esdaile, *THE INTERACTION OF ENGLISH AND LOW COUNTRY SCULPTURE IN THE 16TH CENTURY.* Accessed at:
http://www.jstor.org/discover/10.2307/750424?uid=3738032&uid=2129&uid=2&uid=70&uid=4&sid=47698780909647
[263] Brindley, *The Collegiate Church of St Mary Warwick – the Beauchamp Chapel*, 8.
[264] *Robert Dudley, last will, 1 August 1587.* Accessed at:
http://www.archive.org/stream/lifeofsirrobertd00leaduoft/lifeofsirrobertd00leaduoft_djvu.txt
[265] To the left of the tomb is a plaque upon which is written a poem dedicated to Lettice written by her great grandson Gervase Clifton which includes the words,

> 'She that in her yonger yeares
> Matched with two great English peares
> She that did supply the warrs
> With thunder and the court with stars'.

[266] Lettice died on Christmas Day in 1643.
[267] Following Robert's death Lettice married again, this time to Christopher Blount (later executed for High Treason).
[268] This sobriquet probably came about due to his quiet life style, which contrasted with the colourful persona of his brother, Robert.

in 1589, is nevertheless of richly carved alabaster and displays a great wealth of genealogical heraldry.[269]

On none of these tombs is there any suggestion that prayers were to be offered for the occupants interred therein.[270] Indeed the inscription on Robert Dudley's tomb, which is in Latin, begins with the words (trans.)'Sacred to the God of the living'.[271] It continues by attesting that Dudley lies, 'In certain hope of a resurrection in Christ', and then proceeds to list his titles and achievements:

> Earl of Leicester, Baron of Denbeigh, Knight both of the Order of the Garter and of St Michael, Master of the Horse to Queen Elizabeth (who distinguished him by particular favour), soon after Steward of the Queen's household, Privy Councillor, Justice of the Forests, Parks and Chases on this side of the Trent. From the year 1585 to the year 1587 Lieutenant and Captain General of the English army sent by the said Queen Elizabeth to the Netherlands: Governor General and Commander of the provinces united in that place: Lieutenant Governor of England against Phillip II of Spain in the year 1588, when he was preparing to invade England with a numerous fleet and army.

Thomas Oken died in 1573, so he did not see the transformation of the Beauchamp Chapel into a mausoleum for the Dudley Family. However, he had witnessed changes which had impacted on his town, and his church. Although, as has been said, there is no firm evidence as to Oken's particular religious convictions, there is documentation of the lengths to which he went to try to alleviate the effects of Henry's seizure of church property.[272] During his lifetime he was seen as a benefactor who purchased land, the profits from which were to be used to increase the Schoolmaster's wages and providing for the poor of the town.[273]

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[269] Although it was commissioned by Ambrose' third wife, Anne Russell, there is no available information regarding the designer of the tomb.
[270] See Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars*, 332.
[271] Both brothers were patrons of the Puritanism concern for furtherance of preaching despite the fact that this activity was discouraged by the official Church. In 1567, Robert and Ambrose. together with local gentry, founded a consortium which provided for 'the preachers of the Gospel in the county of Warwick'. See Lawrence Stone*, The Crisis of the Aristocracy. 1558-164* (Oxford: OUP, 1965: abr. ed., 1967), 338-339.
[272] Following the seizure of the Carthusian Convent of St. Anne in Coventry, Oken donated money in order that the building could be formally redeemed by the community. In return the Prior of that house granted an annual pension of £l. 6s. in 1538 'to our beloved and faithful Thomas Oken for his good and laudable services to us before this time given, and in consideration of 20 marks to us for the use of the aforesaid house given and paid when our said house was formally redeemed from the King, and other great benefits to the said house in divers ways.' Document in Warwick Record Office, CR2758/2.
[273] Dugdale, *Antiquities of Warwick,* 351.

However, it is the contents of his Last Will & Testament[274] that ensures Oken is still seen as an important figure in Warwick's past. His concern for the town led him to bequeath £5 for the maintenance of the highways of Warwick and a further £5 towards the building of the Market House. His concern for the poor was shown through leaving funds to enable the building of three almshouses, a sum of 80 shillings to be distributed to needy people within Warwick at Easter and Christmas and the funding of a schoolmaster for the 'petties' and children of the poor.

Oken did not neglect his Church, leaving:

> a payment of 12 shillings to three children or young men for the serving, singing or saying of such laudable service as shall be used in St Mary's Church. I will also leave 40 shillings for 4 quarterly sermons at St Mary's to be properly done. [275]

He also left money:

> for an annual service within the parish church of St Mary's, and a sermon to the praise of God, the preservation of the Queen's Majesty, and the tranquillity of the good estate of the said town of Warwick.[276]

Yet, perhaps mindful of the religious turmoils he had lived through, he stipulated that the service was to conform to whatever further changes might be enforced in the years following his death. No one could object to the themes of the sermon, dedicated to his God, his Sovereign and his beloved town, and his gift to poor people was an act of Christian goodness. After some controversy surrounding the validity of the will, a trust was set up to administer his estate.[277]

Oken, and all the congregation of St. Mary's, lived through more than the usual hazards of human existence. Ideas and beliefs, forms of worship, parameters of public responsibility and daily life, all were questioned, debated, and subject to constant change. Bolitho claims that:

> It is a tribute to the acumen of a man as conservative as Thomas Oken who loved the old order of things that he was prepared regretfully to accept that the time-honoured institutions of mediaeval Guild and Collegiate Church with dean and chapter had to

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[274] *Thomas Oken. His Last Will and Testament*, *November 24th, 1570.* (Warwick Record Office, CR1618/WA3/84/1).

[275] This and the following excerpt can be found in; Thomas Kemp, (ed.), *The Black Book of Warwick* (London: H. T. Cooke & Son 1898), Warwick Town Council and Record Office, CR3695.

[276] An Annual Service still takes place in St. Mary's in January and is followed by the Oken Feast.

[277] The Oken Trust is still in operation over four hundred years later and continues to provide accommodation for those who need it in the Guild Cottages and the dwellings on Castle Hill. Residents now pay a Weekly Maintenance Contribution [not rent] of between £32 and £48.

> go, and that he was equally prepared to enter uncharted waters and adapt the new means at his disposal for the future good of the town.[278]

In 1603 as the long reign of Elizabeth ended, many courtiers must have wondered what would be their fate under Elizabeth's successor James 1st.

James 1

As it happened James was to make no radical changes among the ministers who had served Elizabeth.[279] One who not only survived the change, but continued to benefit from royal patronage, was Fulke Greville, courtier, poet and playwright. From being one of Elizabeth's favourites he advanced under James to become Baron Brooke, owner of Warwick Castle.

According to Saunders, between 1604 and 1628, Fulke Greville was the dominant influence in Warwick and 'spent huge sums of money at St. Mary's Church, Warwick'.[280] This would almost certainly have given him the right to be interred in the famous and prestigious Beauchamp Chapel, where the great and good of earlier generations lay buried. However this location was becoming rather crowded! Instead the Dean granted him permission to lie buried impressively in the Chapter House in a large tomb constructed to his own design.

The inscription, 'Folk Grevill, Servant to Queene Elizabeth, Concellor to King James, and Frend to Sir Philip Sidney. Trophaeum Peccati', does not speak of great deeds or entreat prayers for the deceased but instead seems to reflect the spirit of his plays[281] which embody Greville's Protestant acceptance of the necessity of living in the world while yet being convinced of the irremediable fallibility and degeneracy of human nature since the Fall.

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[278] Bolitho, *The Story of Thomas Oken and his Charity*, 3.
[279] Godfrey Davies, *The Early Stuarts* – 1603 to 1660 (1959, Oxford: OUP, 1937; repr. 1959), 2.
[280] A.W.L. Saunders, *The Master of Shakespeare*. Accessed at: http://www.masterofshakespeare.com/monument.htm
[281] Plays such as *Alaham*, and *Mustapha. See* Wilkes, Gerald A. (ed.), *The Complete Poems and Plays of Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke (1554-1628), in Two Volumes: Caelica, Mustapha, Alaham* (New York: Edwin Mellen Pr., 2008).

However, the relationship between the King and his Parliament was far from harmonious. James was a monarch who believed that it was his duty to uphold vigorously his belief that he was 'God's vice-regent on earth'.[282] This inevitably caused tension between James and the House of Commons; indeed Parliament went so far as to 'deny that the King could make any alterations of law [regarding] religion except by consent of Parliament.'[283] During the years that followed these clashes became more frequent and, in the reign of his son Charles, were to cause even more damage to the country than any of the swings of the pendulum that had occurred during Tudor times. This too was set to be reflected in the events that were to make their mark on the Beauchamp Chapel.

[282] Davies, *The Early Stuarts*, 1.
[283] Ibid., 6.

Chapter 3

Ravage and Restoration

On Wednesday 14th June, 1643, a band of Puritan soldiers under the command of Colonel Purefoy entered the Beauchamp Chapel and commenced their work of destruction. They:

> did beat down and deface those Monuments of Antiquity; and not content with this, by the same Command they break down the Cross in the Market-place, not leaving one stone upon another, Purefoy all the while standing by, animating and encouraging them, until they had finished their so barbarous Work.[284]

To uncover the reasons for this apparently mindless vandalism it is necessary to review events that led up to it.

Roffey sees the Reformation as 'a series of events spanning the mid to late sixteenth century and stretching into the first part of the seventeenth century, with only a brief respite during the period of the Marian restoration between 1553 and 1558',[285] while Rosman claims that:

> By the end of the sixteenth century England had ceased to be a Catholic country. Its inhabitants may not whole-heartedly have embraced - or even understood - the main thrust of Protestant teaching but they increasingly regarded themselves as Protestants, not Catholics. They saw their church, the Church of England, as distinctly different from the Church of Rome to which they had once owed allegiance.[286]

Nevertheless, for some there was much in the Established Church that still appeared to reflect Roman ways, and such religious protest groups as the Baptists,[287] the Congregationalists,[288] and the Religious Society of Friends,[289] separated themselves from the Established Church. Rosman maintains that 'Separatism was rare'[290] but in it were the seeds that would eventually result in the early 17th century becoming a period of struggle between the two factions. The Church, with the backing of the Monarch, was determined to muzzle any opposition by denying them the use

[284] Bruno Ryves, *Mercuries Rusticus* (Cambridge: printed for Richard Green, 1685), 69-70. Modern spelling employed.
[285] Roffey, *Chantry Chapels*, 167.
[286] Rosman, *The Evolution of the English Churches*, 54.
[287] A group that evolved in Amsterdam, Holland, under the leadership of The English Separatist John Smyth in 1609.
[288] A group based on a theory of union published by the theologian Robert Browne in 1592. However, Rosman, *The Evolution of the English Churches,* reports Browne as later re-converting to the Church of England.
[289] A group, also know as Quakers, under the leadership of George Fox that focused on the priesthood of all believers.
[290] Rosman, *The Evolution of the English Churches*, 73.

of both main organs of public opinion; the pulpit[291] and the press'.[292] The response of its opponents was to infuse popular opinion whenever they could with 'the widespread hatred of popery claiming that popery and tyranny went hand in hand'.[293]

Charles 1

In 1625, on Charles' accession, this disharmony was exacerbated with Charles stating, 'I owe the account of my actions to God alone', being, 'convinced that there was a divine law commanding subjects to obey their King under penalty of God's judgement'.[294]

By 1641 the situation was so serious that Parliament produced *The Grand Remonstrance*, a document that listed all the grievances perpetrated by the King's government in Church and State. It emphasised the role of bishops, papists and 'malignant' ministers and advisers who were alleged to have deliberately provoked discord and division between King and Parliament. Along with political demands, it called for the setting up of an Assembly to supervise ongoing reform of the Church. It also demanded that the King's ministers should be approved by Parliament, with the right of veto over those it considered unsuitable.[295] The failure of Charles to approve this, or any course of action demanded by Parliament that ran contrary to his wishes, precipitated the outbreak of the 1st Civil War in 1642. This was more than a struggle for temporal power between the King and Parliament; it was the inevitable outcome of the struggle between those who supported the Established Church and 'those among whom Puritanism was rampant'.[296]

[291] Through the Royal Order of 1622, demanding that all clergy who were licensed to preach were to confine their preaching to some parts of the catechism, or a text from the Creed, the Ten Commandments, or the Lord's Prayer.
[292] Through the Proclamation of 1624, forbidding the printing or importation of any book dealing with religion, church government or matters of state until it had been approved.
[293] Godfrey Davies, *The Early Stuart,* 73.
[294] Ibid., 33.
[295] Ibid., 119-121.
[296] Ibid., 127.

Puritanism was passionately concerned with God and with godliness. Packer sees it as:

> a movement for church reform, pastoral renewal and evangelism, and spiritual revival; and in addition – indeed, as a direct expression of its zeal for God's honour – it was a world-view, a total Christian philosophy.[297]

This vigorous evangelical creed was seen by its adherents as a means of bringing the country back to a lively faith in God and this included a wiping out of anything that could endanger this.[298]

Just as Wyclif's followers 'became known for their distrust of visual signs',[299] for the Puritan, images that had once appeared to be devotional and sacred, were now seen as detestable idols that had to be destroyed or changed out of all recognition.[300] In August 1643 Parliament passed an Ordinance to the effect that offending religious images were not only to be removed, but defaced. It was not enough 'merely to remove from sight the objects which defined [the traditional] ideology, but they must also be seen to be destroyed.'[301] This determination to annihilate images indicates that they were still seen as having some power, linking them to past piety, now seen as sacrilegious.

Although Spraggon emphasises that the paucity of evidence for a nation-wide enforcement of this legislation forces her to speculate on this issue,[302] in 1643 William Dowsing was commissioned and salaried by the government to tour the towns and villages of East Anglia to destroy images in churches. His detailed account of the trail of destruction through Suffolk and Cambridgeshire survives and records how he and his men:

> broke down about a hundred superstitious Pictures; and seven Fryars hugging a Nunn; and the Picture of God and Christ; and divers others very superstitious; and

[297] J.I. Packer, *A Quest for Godliness: The Puritan Vision of the Christian Life* (Illinois: Crossway, 1990; repr. 2010) 28.
[298] See also Rosman, *The Evolution of the English Churches,* 62-63.
[299] Gayk, *Image, Text and Religious Reform*, 10.
[300] Such a transformation was enacted in the Church in Holstebro in Denmark, where the statue of the Virgin Mary was modified by the addition of a beard, into one of Jacob, while the Apostles who surrounded her were redefined as Jacob's twelve sons. See Yates, Liturgi*cal Space*), 12-13.
[301] Spraggon, Julie, *Puritan Iconoclasm During the English Civil War* (Suffolk: The Boydell Press, 2003), 81.
[302] Ibid., 130.

> 200 had been broke down before I came. We took away 2 popish Inscriptions with Ora pro nobis and we beat down a great stoneing Cross on the top of the Church.[303]

In Norwich Bishop Joseph Hall recorded the destruction within the Cathedral thus;

> Lord what work was here! What clattering of glasses! What beating down of walls! What tearing up of monuments! What pulling down of seats! What wresting out of irons and brass from the windows!…And what a hideous triumph in the market-place before all the country, when all the mangled organ pipes, vestments, both copes and surplices, together with the leaden cross which had newly been sawn down from the Green-yard pulpit and the service-books and singing books that could be carried to the fire in the public market-place were heaped together.[304]

The Midlands also suffered similar despoliation. Sherwood cites acts involving the destruction and sacking of ecclesiastical buildings notable in Worcester[305] and Lichfield.[306] Warwick, the centre of much military action,[307] was also home to a Parliamentary garrison,[308] so it is not surprising that St. Mary's attracted attention from those determined to eradicate any vestige of the 'old' order.

William Purefoy was no itinerant vandal, but a local man born into an ancient Warwickshire family. Following his time at Cambridge and Gray's Inn, Purefoy travelled to Europe where he became a devout Puritan of the Calvinist persuasion. On his return home he entered politics, being elected as MP for Coventry in 1628, and involved himself with the Puritan opposition to the policies of the King.[309] At the outbreak of war Purefoy not only held a command in Lord Brooke's Midland Association Army[310] but, as High Sheriff, was also tasked with keeping tight

[303]William Dowsing, with notes by Rev. C.H. Evelyn White, *The Journal of William Dowsing of Stratford, Parliamentary Visitor appointed under a warrant from the Earl of Manchester for Demolishing the Superstitious Pictures & Ornaments of Churches & c., within the County of Suffolk in the years 1643-1644* (Ipswich: Pawsey & Hayes, The Ancient House, 1885), 15.
[304] Spraggon, *Puritan Iconoclasm,* 187.
[305] Roy Sherwood, *The Civil War in the Midlands 1642-1651* (Stroud: Alan Sutton Publishing Ltd., 1992), 9-10.
[306] Ibid., 156.
[307] At least four major Battles took place within 30 miles of the town including;
1642 (August), Curdworth Bridge, the first skirmish of the Civil War, is around 24 miles from Warwick.
1642 (October) Edgehill, the first major conflict of the English Civil War, is around 12 miles from Warwick.
1645, Naseby, when Cromwell defeats the Royalists, is around 28 miles from Warwick.
1651, Worcester, at which Cromwell defeats Charles II and the Scots is around 29 miles from Warwick.
[308] Sherwood, *The Civil War in the Midlands*, 25. See also Commonwealth Exchequer Papers: *Assessments, Loans and Contributions: Accounts and Schedules: Warwickshire*. The National Archives, PRO, SP28/182.
[309] David Plant, *Biography of William Purefoy.* Accessed at: http://www.british-civil-wars.co.uk/biog/purefoy.htm
[310] Lord Brooke, Robert Greville who held the Castle at the time, was of Puritan persuasion.

control over local affairs. It was in this capacity that he undertook to oversee the 'cleansing' of St. Mary's.

It is interesting that Purefoy did not attend to this immediately. This may have been due to his cordial relationship with his commanding officer Lord Brooke[311] who, despite his Puritan beliefs, acknowledged the link between the Castle and St. Mary's.[312] However, following Brooke's death in March 1643 at the Siege of Lichfield,[313] Purefoy may have considered himself free to attend to the destruction of any idolatrous artefacts which still remained in the Warwick Church, particularly those within the Beauchamp Chapel.

The tombs themselves were largely undamaged despite the exhortations of such as Edmund Gurney[314] who denounced funeral monuments as being an example of the 'heathen practice to erect altars over the dead and then build temples over the altars turning the dead into the gods of the temple'.[315] This 'oversight' by Purefoy may have been due to his regard for Lord Brooke, or because he remembered that Robert and Ambrose Dudley who rested in the Beauchamp Chapel, had also supported the Puritan Movement.[316] Nevertheless the damage was considerable. The altarpiece, much of the stained glass,[317] and many of the sculptures in the niches were destroyed.[318]

[311] Plant, *Purefoy*. Accessed at: http://www.british-civil-wars.co.uk/biog/purefoy.htm
[312] Robert was the adopted son of his bachelor Uncle, Fulke Greville, buried in St. Mary's in the Chapter House.
[313] David Plant, *Biography of Robert Greville, 2nd Baron Brooke, 1608-43*. Accessed at: http://www.british-civil-wars.co.uk/biog/brooke.htm
[314] A minister from Harpley in Norfolk, a fellow of Corpus Christi, Cambridge and a staunch Puritan.
[315] Spraggon, *Puritan Iconoclasm,* 38.
[316] In his book, *Leicester and the Court: essays on Elizabethan politics*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), 50, Adams sees Dudley's purpose in patronising Puritanism as being 'to exploit religion to advance his own political ends.' However, Derek Wilson in *The Uncrowned Kings of England* (London: Robinson, an imprint of Constable & Robinson, 2005), 290, cites Dudley as being 'totally of the Calvinist religion'.
[317] Anthony King, *The Collegiate Church of St. Mary, Warwick* (Hampshire: Pitkin Pictorials, 1994), 6.
[318] The small chapel adjoining the Beauchamp also suffered considerable impairment to the plasterwork.

Although Parliament maintained that churches were not in themselves idolatrous,[319] 'the zeal of the puritan to reform anything and everything'[320] was all-embracing. In 1644 Parliament passed even more radical legislation against images,[321] including symbolic representations of any of the Persons of the Trinity, or of any Angel or Saint'.[322]

However, there is some irony in the fact that it may have been the very removal from places of worship of the religious artefacts, that had previously served to remind people of a spiritual dimension, that contributed to a weakening of the link between the spiritual and the common life. Religion became a specific activity, rather than part of everyday existence. This is illustrated by the fact that the sacrament had been newly limited. With the receiving of Holy Communion now restricted to those deemed spiritually fit,[323] there arose an alienation between the 'godly' and those who did not subscribe to the rigid Puritan ethic. Piety was giving way to a personal religion, albeit with political implications. Although buildings such as the Beauchamp Chapel were still seen as a source of concern, the intentionality of the individual was emerging as a prime consideration.

The Commonwealth

By 1649 the country had suffered seven years of intermittent warfare[324] and Parliament had emerged victorious. In February 1649 Charles was executed for high treason, and the country became a republic under the guidance of the Lord Protector, Cromwell. Throughout the ten-year period of the Commonwealth, legislation embodied the push towards the imposition of a 'moralistic' society. This included the introduction of a scale of fines imposed against

[319] Indeed an ordinance was passed in 1648 which required church buildings to be kept in a state of good repair,
[320] Davies, *The Early Stuarts*, 309.
[321] Spraggon, *Puritan Iconoclasm*, 124-125.
[322] In Dowsing's *The Journal,* reference is made to the removal of doves, symbolising the Holy Ghost, 15; lambs representing Christ, 15; the symbols of the evangelists such as eagles and lions, 28; and even a triangle seen as representing the Trinity, 27.
[323] Ibid., 90.
[324] The 1st Civil War took place between 1642 and 1645. The 2nd Civil war lasted from 1648 to 1649.

swearing,[325] a banning of such amusements as plays,[326] and the prohibition of any frivolity in dress.[327] Rosman pictures Cromwell himself as being 'intolerant of those people who seemed to oppose God's purposes.'[328] However Sherwood sees the government as having to deal with fanaticism from within its own ranks such as the Fifth Monarchists and the Levellers.[329] Rosman maintains that:

> A few radicals called for toleration of people of different religious persuasions but most sectarian groups were just as convinced as puritans or Laudians[330] that only faith as they understood it was acceptable to God.[331]

The use of the Book of Common Prayer was strictly forbidden, both in private and public worship 'under penalty of a year's imprisonment for the third offence'.[332] Anglican worship was officially illegal during the Commonwealth period 1649-1660, although those who wanted it still found ways to have it.[333]

However the winds of change were blowing again. Not only had the actions of the fanatics threatened the Puritan cause but, for those with no deep-seated religious convictions, there arose a general aversion to repressive legislation and prying morality. By 1660 the majority of the populace, having grown weary of the restraints imposed by Puritanism, supported the bloodless restoration of the monarchy[334] which resulted in the crowning of Charles II.[335]

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[325] Davies, *The Early Stuarts*, 306.
[326] Ibid., 311.
[327] Ibid., 310. Indeed on the previous page Davies mentions one Thomas Ellwood, who even gave up having buttons on his clothing deeming them examples of 'the vanities of dress'.
[328] Rosman, *The Evolution of the English Churches*, 99.
[329] See Sherwood, *The Civil War in the Midlands*, 167-168.
[330] Followers of Archbishop Laud – High-Church, Anglo-Catholics who revered the ceremonies and rituals of the visible church and stressed the vital role of the clergy in the spiritual life of the Church.
[331] Rosman, *The Evolution of the English Churches,* 99.
[332] Davies, *The Early Stuarts* , 201.
[333] Yates, *Liturgical Space,* 75.
[334] Ibid., 260.
[335] Interestingly Purefoy died in 1659 only one year before the Restoration of the Monarchy – a strangely fortuitous happening as, being one of the fifty-nine signatories of Charles I's death warrant, he would otherwise have faced possible imprisonment or execution.

The Beauchamp Chapel was never to recover its former majesty. That it had survived at all, while other similar buildings had been severely damaged or destroyed, was almost certainly due to the esteem in which it was held by local dignitaries. Dugdale, writing in 1656, noted:

> That the beauty of this goodly Chapel and Monument, through the inequity of later times, is much impaired, all that have seen it may easily discern, and thereby guess at the glory wherein it once stood.[336]

These words would indicate that there had already been another significant shift in the perceived status of the Chapel. No longer is there mention of its spiritual significance *per se* but instead it had begun to emerge as a thing of beauty to be admired aesthetically. Religious issues, which will be referred to briefly below, continued to be of deep concern during the reigns of Charles II and James II, but they were to have minimal impact on the Beauchamp Chapel, representing yet a further shift in attitude towards spirituality in terms of the extent to which it was believed to be inherent in material objects.

Charles II

Following his coronation the King attempted to bring about a peaceful settlement between religious factions in the realm. The Declaration of Breda, proclaimed:

> we do declare a liberty to tender consciences, and that no man shall be disquieted or called in question for differences of opinion in matter of religion, which do not disturb the peace of the kingdom; and that we shall be ready to consent to such an Act of Parliament, as, upon mature deliberation, shall be offered to us, for the full granting of indulgence.[337]

However Charles seemed oblivious of the strength of anti-Catholic feeling. His 1672 Declaration of Indulgences included the suspension of penal laws against Catholics[338] and the permission for Catholics to hold services in private houses. Parliament responded by compelling him to withdraw this Declaration and implement instead the first of the Test Acts, which required anyone entering public service in England to deny the Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation and take Anglican communion. Rosman posits that, 'Fears that Catholics

[336] Dugdale, *The Antiquities of Warwickshire*, 354. Modern spelling employed.
[337] *The Declaration of Breda* accessed at: http://www.constitution.org/eng/conpur105.htm
[338] This also included other Dissenters.

might regain power were intensified by the announcement that the king's brother and also his heir, James had converted to Catholicism'.[339]

James II

These concerns were justified by James' actions when he came to the throne in 1685. For instance, following the Monmouth rebellion,[340] James planned to appoint some loyal and experienced Roman Catholic officers to command the enlarged standing army. The possibility of an army led by Roman Catholic officers produced so much protest in Parliament that James prorogued Parliament.[341]

The 1687 Declaration,[342] which included the statement, 'We cannot but heartily wish, as it will easily be believed, that all the people of our dominions were members of the Catholic Church', [343] increased the alienation of the majority of James's subjects. So much so that, when the Queen[344] gave birth to a son, the fear that a Roman Catholic dynasty would be established reached a climax and some leading statesmen entered negotiations with William of Orange, the Protestant husband of James' elder daughter Mary,[345] to take the throne.

Nevertheless, despite these events, it had been considered 'safe' to begin a scheme of repair and restoration in the Beauchamp Chapel. One individual who played a part in this undertaking was Lady Katherine Leveson, [346] a grand-daughter of Robert Dudley. Her thoughts on its parlous

[339] Rosman, *The Evolution of the English Churches*, 113.
[340] This was led by Charles' illigitimate son, the Duke of Monmouth. It was crushed following the Battle of Sedgemoor in 1685.
[341] The 1685 Parliament.
[342] This included the suspension of all penal laws in matters ecclesiastical for not attending the established Church of England or not receiving communion according to its rites and the ending of the requirement that people take various religious oaths before advancement to civil or military office**.**
[343] *Declaration of Indulgence of King James II, April 4, 1687*. Accessed at: http://www.jacobite.ca/documents/16870404.htm
[344] Roman Catholic, Mary of Modena.
[345] Rosman, *The Evolution of the English Churches*, 114.
[346] Lady Leveson who owned land in Temple Balsall also left in her will funds to support the founding of a hospital, or almshouse there, for 20 poor women, widows or unmarried, who should each have yearly £8 and a grey gown with the letters K. L. in blue cloth thereon. Information accessed at: http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=42661

state at that time were recorded on the plaque on the north wall of the Chapel, it being 'much blemisht by consuming time and more by the rude hands of impious people'.[347] A letter dated 15th June, 1667, from Lady Katherine to Dugdale concerned the repair of the Beauchamp Chapel, and acknowledged him as a trustee.[348] He supervised the restoration work[349] financed with money donated by Lady Katherine in 1670.[350]

Sadly it proved impossible to reconstruct the windows to their original formation as so much of the glass had been lost or broken beyond repair. However, enough fragments remained for the East window to be glazed with original glass, albeit in a rearranged scheme.[351] Nevertheless there is a discontinuity in the piecing together of some of the figures of the saints, and the figure of Beauchamp suffered a strange fate. In the reconstruction of the figure it proved impossible to locate his head. Therefore, in order to complete the figure, it was replaced by the head of one of his close female relatives.[352] Such an openly playful, almost disrespectful, attitude illustrates a changing stance towards religious artefacts. We do not know whether this substitution was completed before Lady Katherine's death but, for such a feisty individual, it could perhaps have been a source of wry amusement! Happily, some of the tracery lights of the side windows survived, [353] but the main lights of the side windows were glazed in clear glass.

The original 'Doom', painting by John Brentwood, had also suffered significant deterioration and a replacement was commissioned by Dugdale in 1678. That it had survived at all was quite remarkable when so many similar paintings had been defaced. The painter, Richard Bird,

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[347] *Biographia britannica: or the lives of the most eminent persons* ..., Vol. 3. Original from University of Lausanne, printed for W. Innys, et al., 1815. Digitized 22nd July2010. Accessed as Google eBook at: http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=VolDAAAAcAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false)

[348] Merevale, HT17,Warwickshire Record Office, Z409(sm).

[349] Kibble, *Stained Glass*, 3.

[350] According to Warwickshire Natural History and Archaeological Society, *Notices of The Churches of Warwickshire, Vol. 1* (London: H.T. Cooke, 1847), 63; she donated £50 during her lifetime for immediate repairs, and bequeathed £40 p.a. in her will for the perpetual support and preservations of the building and monuments.

[351] See Kibble, *Stained Glass*, 3-8.

[352] See fig. 13.

[353] Buckle, Alexandra, '"Of the finest colours": Music in Stained glass at Warwick and Elsewhere', *Vidimus*, 46. Accessed at: http://vidimus.org/issues/issue-46/feature-2/

commissioned to provide a replacement.[354], had been instructed to paint one 'in the manner of Mr Michaelangelo'.[355] This painting would have almost certainly differed from the original version, and there are figures in the present version that show a definite attempt to include elements present in Michaengelo's fresco in the Sistine Chapel.[356] However, it is significant that those engaged in the restoration considered it acceptable to include a scene that would have been banned just a few decades earlier. It is likely that this was not seen in any way as a spiritual painting, but a nostalgic reminder of a bygone age, and further evidence of an increasing shift in understanding as to what constituted true religion and spirituality.

William & Mary

Much of the work on the Chapel had been completed by the time William and Mary ascended to the throne.[357] However, as their reign drew to an end, all this work was threatened when, in 1694, just over 200 years after the Chapel was completed, the main body of the Church was reduced to a smouldering ruin by the fire that destroyed a large part of the town.[358]

Local tradition has it that on September 5th, at around 2pm, in the vicinity of the Friends Meeting House, a spark jumped from a kindling torch onto a nearby thatched roof starting a small fire. In the strong wind the fire gained momentum and, despite the demolition of some houses in Jury Street in a vain attempt to create firebreaks, the fire spread up the High Street creating an inferno in the heart of the town. St. Mary's Church, some distance away from the

[354] In an old volume of churchwardens' accounts (1656-91) there appears this item:"1678. Paid to Mr. Richard Bird, his work in painting the Resurrection in Oyle at the west end of the (Beauchamp) chapel) (ye like before being decayed), £6." Accessed at:http://www.britishfarthings.com/Tokens/17th-Century/Warwickshire/Warwick.html
[355] Brindley, *The Collegiate Church of St Mary*, 11.
[356] These include the central figures in the Last Judgement. See figs.15 & 16.
[357] James and his family had fled to France.
[358] For more information see Michael Farr (ed), *The Great fire of Warwick: 1694: the records of the commissioners appointed under an act of Parliament for rebuilding the town of Warwick* (Stratford-upon-Avon: the Dugdale Society, 1992), xxiv-xxix. Also Thomas Kemp, *A History of Warwick and its People* (London: H. T. Cooke & Son, 1905) and Peter Borsey & Lindsay Proudfoot (eds.) *Provincial Towns in Early Modern England and Ireland: Change, Convergence and & Divergence* (1st ed., New York: Oxford University Press Inc., 2002), 151-170. Also Lise Evans, *Saved from the Flames*. Accessed at:
http://iccoventry.icnetwork.co.uk/coventrytimes/features/tm_headline=saved-from-the-flames%26method=full%26objectid=19971810%26siteid=50003-name_page.html#story_continue

fire, appeared to be a safe refuge. However, it seems that someone brought with them their still smouldering possessions thus starting a separate fire in the church, resulting in the total destruction of two thirds of the building.

Yet the esteem certain local citizens held for the Beauchamp Chapel was once again to be its salvation. One individual with a particular regard for the Chapel was the Parish Clerk, James Fish, for it was at least partly due to his actions that the Chapel still stands today. Besides being the Parish Clerk and a land surveyor[359], Fish was also a talented artist,[360] with a regard for history and architectural beauty. He was also personally involved with the pre-fire renovations of the Chapel and there exist letters from Fish to Dugdale informing him of the progress and problems encountered during the work.[361] Thus it is hardly surprising that, not only did he see in the Beauchamp Chapel something of great worth that should be preserved for future generations to enjoy, but he also wished to save the work so recently completed.

It is said that Fish along with four 'co-opted' parishioners, braved searing heat and crashing roof timbers to beat away flames which threatened the Chapel with destruction. What is recorded is that Fish was reimbursed by the Fire Commissioners the 4 shillings that he had paid to the men to put out the fire at the Chapel door.[362] Whether Fish himself took part in the operation in person is not officially recorded.

Plans for the rebuilding of the Church began at once[363] and, by the following year, fund raising was in full swing.

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[359] Evidence found at The National Archives, items L6/1032 – L6/1038. Accessed at: http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/a2a/records.aspx?cat=187-l6&cid=-1#-1

[360] A copy of his engraving depicting Warwick Castle is in the Royal Academy of Arts Collection. Accessed at: http://www.royalacademyprints.com/image/808493/james-fish-of-warwick-fl-ca-1690-94-warwick-castle-the-seat-of-lord-brooke-from-t-badeslade-&-j-rocques-vitruvius-brittanicus-volume-the-fourth-london-1739

[361] Letters in the *Dugdale Catalogue Letter Data*. Accessed at: http://www.xmera.co.uk/dugdale_cat/corres_lst.php?abc=F&id=27

[362] Farr, *The Great Fire of Warwick*, 413.

[363] For more information see Chatwin, Philip B. 'The Rebuilding of St Mary's Church Warwick', from the *Transactions of the Birmingham Archaeological Society, Vol. LXV 1943 and 1944* (Birmingham: Birmingham and Midland Institute; repr. Oxford: by Charles Batey at the University Press, 1949).

Queen Anne to Elizabeth II

Donations included a sum of £1000 from the new Monarch, Queen Anne. This amount[364] was commemorated in the Coat of Arms, Clock and Mace Stands currently located in the nave of the Church.[365] However, from this time forward there appears to be little interaction between the Church, and either sovereign or state. For that reason no future delineation will be made between the reigns of the Hanoverian monarchs or of the later royal houses.

By 1706 the Church was again open for worship[366] but, despite the efforts of Fish, the Beauchamp Chapel had suffered some damage. This further restoration of the Chapel took some considerable time, probably due to the shortage of available funds left after the main building had been completed. Whereas for Beauchamp no expense was to be spared in the building of the Chapel which was to assist in shortening his time in purgatory, now, as an historical edifice, it had to play second fiddle to the 'new' Church.

As part of the original rebuilding scheme, the outer side of the Chapel porch, completely destroyed in the fire, was rebuilt by Samuel Dunckley in 1704,[367] but other repairs awaited funding. In 1735 the reredos destroyed by Purefoy's men was finally replaced, crafted by William Collins from a design by Timothy Lightoler[368] depicting the Annunciation. The recently commissioned 'Doom', painted by Richard Bird in 1678 was badly damaged by the fire[369] and needed repairing. This was undertaken by Robert Moore in 1775 for the sum of £1.14s.[370] The

[364] A fifth of the total cost and equivalent to around £120,000 today.
[365] The Treasury also made a contribution, as did many local dignitaries and a letter was sent to all the Churches asking for assistance with the building costs. For more details regarding the rebuilding of the Church see, Chatwin, *The Rebuilding of St Mary's Church Warwick.*
[366] Interestingly the 'new' church was a building which ignored the then popular Neo-Classical style in favour of a rendition of Perpendicular Gothic similar to the rest of the church.
[367] On the vacancy following the death of the Baptist Minister Benjamin Bowyer, Dunckley also assumed oversight of the Baptist church in Warwick. Information accessed at: *Warwick Baptist Church* at*:* http://www.biblicalstudies.org.uk/pdf/bq/16-2_058.pdf
[368] Richard Gough, *Description Of The Beauchamp Chapel, Adjoining To The Church Of St. Mary, At Warwick. And The Monuments Of The Earls Of Warwick, In The Said Church And Elsewhere* (London: J. Nichols and Son, 1804), 24.
[369] *Visitor's Guide round the Collegiate Church of St. Mary, Warwick* (The Parochial Church Council of St. Mary, Warwick, c. 1967), 6.
[370] Matthew H. Bloxam, *Notices of the Churches of Warwickshire, Deanery of Warwick*, Vol.1, 64. Accessed at: http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=GgQIAAAAQAAJ&pg=PA85&source=gbs_toc_r&cad=4#v=onepage&q&f=false

final image is rather ill-defined and 'muddy', but whether this was due to any ineptitude by Moore, or to the attempts of later restorers is not clear. The removal of the damaged organ gallery under the 'Doom', considered beyond repair, was finally undertaken in 1795,[371] just over a hundred years after the conflagration.

One interesting event occurred in 1729 when, as a result of being weakened in the fire, the floor of the Chapel fell in and the chest containing the body of Beauchamp was ruptured. Although the body was reported as being intact, it soon decayed on contact with air. Nevertheless some individuals managed to procure some of Richard's hair which it is reported was subsequently made into jewellery.[372] This may seem a somewhat macabre action, yet it could also be seen as mirroring practices from its past when a pilgrim might purchase a memento at a shrine as a means of acquiring something which embodied for them an element of the spiritual significance of the saint. Doubtless a ring made from Beauchamp's hair would not have been seen as having spiritual power as did the relics of medieval times. However, just as ownership of relics obtained on pilgrimages were seen by some as maintaining a connection with the saints, so the later items can be seen as providing its owner with a unique link with the past[373] or a presumed figure of power. Despite the fact that religious changes had apparently severed the link between spirituality and religious artefacts, it would seem that, on an individual level, place and material items still exerted some influence on the imagination.

Indeed, although pilgrimages for religious purposes may have declined in England, a different kind of pilgrimage was now gaining popularity. It was in the late 18th century that 'modern' tourism began in earnest. The well-to-do might take a Grand Tour in Europe, but touring within the United Kingdom became a very real possibility. Prior to that, taking a trip for pleasure was rare; the traveller walked or rode along tracks which, during the winter months, were more like ill-drained ditches than roads. However, the fright of the Scottish rebellion of 1745 persuaded

[371] W.B. Stephens, *The Victoria History of the County of Warwick*, Vol. VIII (Oxford: O.U.P., 1969), 526.
[372] *Black's Picturesque Guide to Warwickshire* (Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black, 1872), 12.
[373] This will be expanded in the concluding chapter.

the government that roads for the rapid northward movement of troops were essential. Added to that, the increase in trade generated by the industrial revolution of the mid-1700's necessitated the introduction of turnpikes throughout the country.

With these new developments, country houses and other historical venues became magnets for tourists,[374] as did the Beauchamp Chapel. The late 18th century visitor to Warwick, having read about the splendour of the Beauchamp Chapel in Dugdale's *The Antiquities of Warwickshire,* might take away, not a holy relic, but a souvenir of the Chapel, to hang on his study wall.[375]

The Victorian era[376] was a period when the belief arose that the growth of knowledge, the application of reason, and commitment to scientific method would result in great progress and in the happiness of humankind. This time it was not the variety of Christian beliefs that became the target for disparagement, but Christianity itself. The theory of evolution proposed by Charles Darwin in his treaties *On the Origin of Species*[377] was seen as striking at core truths of Christianity, challenging the proposition that man was created by God and in His image. Indeed, during this Age of Reason, moral debates were increasingly de-coupled from matters of religious belief and doctrine, despite the efforts of such as Charles Spurgeon,[378] William Booth,[379] and the brothers John and Charles Wesley[380] who were fervent in defending and propagating what they saw as fundamental Christian truths.

Nevertheless, whatever the new 'elite' – the scientists – said, one issue, that of death, remained as deep a concern as it had been for Beauchamp. Indeed, in her book *Death in the Victorian*

[374] As recounted in such volumes as Smollett's *Humphrey Clinker* published in the 1770's, or Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice,* first published in 1813.
[375] The oldest print in general circulation is a copper plate engraving by B. Cole published in 1772, showing the whole of the church from the south side.
[376] Victoria reigned from 1837 to 1901.
[377] Published on 24 November 1859.
[378] Charles Haddon Spurgeon (19 June 1834 – 31 January 1892) was a British Particular Baptist minister well-know for his skill in preaching. His influence is still felt today in some branches of the church. He was strongly opposed to the liberal and pragmatic theological tendencies in the Church of his day.
[379] Booth, with his wife Catherine founded the Salvation Army, an organisation focused on reaching the neediest of English society with the hope of Jesus Christ.
[380] The brothers later contributed to the formation of the Methodist Church.

Family, Patricia Jallend raises the point that the abolition of purgatory and prayers of intercession for the dead left Protestants with the stark alternative destinations of heaven or hell.[381] At a time when Victorian art and literature abounded with 'deathbed scenes',[382] when the Queen obsessively mourned the death of her husband for 40 years, if the solace of praying for the deceased was forbidden, what comfort could the church offer?

One sentimental solution depicted by the hymnwriter Ira D. Sankey, writing in 1881, pictured deceased loved ones waiting to welcome the redeemed:

> They are watching at the portal,
> They are waiting at the door;
> Waiting only for my coming,
> All the loved ones gone before.[383]

a vision not so very far from that of appealing to long-dead saints to aid them in the afterlife! Counteracting this emotional picture, the Wesley brothers focussed on the doctrine of atonement which, in the Puritan tradition, argued that Christ died as a substitute for sinful human beings, and faith in the sacrifice on the Cross ensured salvation.[384]

However, events during the 20th century resulted in a growing awareness that, not only was science unable to provide answers to all human problems, but untimely death was still a stark reality. The death toll in the two great wars of around 80,000,000[385] affected the majority of families and had one interesting outcome. At the onset of the 1st World War, Randall Thomas Davidson, the Archbishop of Canterbury, acknowledging the need for the bereaved to mourn publicly, stated:

> The abuses of the chantry system need not now, nearly four centuries afterwards, thwart or hinder the trustful prayer of a wounded spirit who feels it natural and

[381] Patricia Jallend, *Death in the Victorian Family* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 18.
[382] Examples being the death of Little Nell in Dickens's *The Old Curiosity Shop,* and the painting *of Ophelia* by Millais.
[383] Ira D. Sankey, *Sacred Songs and Solos: Revised and Enlarged with Standard Hymns* (London & Edinburgh: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, Ltd., 1952), hymn number 1008.
[384] Evangelicalism also emphasised the doctrine of assurance of faith, usually acquired at conversion rather than baptism. This assurance contributed largely to the dynamism of the Evangelical movement, for assurance meant forgiveness of sins and ensured a cheerful, enthusiastic piety.
[385] *Source List and Detailed Death Tolls for the Primary Megadeaths of the Twentieth Century*. Accessed at: http://necrometrics.com/20c5m.htm#WW1

> helpful to pray for him whom we shall not greet on earth again, but who, in his Father's loving keeping, still lives.[386]

So, although the Chapel was never to return to the status of a Chantry Chapel,[387] the comfort that prayers for the deceased loved one may offer was rescued from the charge of heresy.

Nevertheless, its standing as an important historical building continued to act in its favour during the years of the Second World War. There was only one bombing raid on Warwick,[388] yet the town was taking no chances and, throughout the 2nd World War, Earl Richard was sandbagged and the hearse covered in protective iron sheets while the Custos slept in the chapel to be on hand in case of emergency.

In the ensuing years the Chapel suffered some deterioration but the 1/6d charged to its visitors in the 1960's helped towards its upkeep, and in 1970 it was given a thorough face-lift thanks to a major restoration programme supervised by the Danish expert Inger Norholt. [389]

Although there is now no charge to enter the Chapel,[390] it continues to require a significant input of funds to ensure its survival.[391] But is this building, albeit of exceptional value to historians and lovers of beautiful buildings, anything other than a reminder of past pieties and faded glories? For the casual observer the answer would most probably be "No" but, for those prepared to look deeper, it may indeed shed some light on some of the spiritual issues of today. It is to an exploration of this argument that the concluding chapter turns.

[386] Rosman, *The Evolution of the English Churches*, 271-273.
[387] Today it is the small intimate Dean's Chapel in St. Mary's that is frequently used by those seeking comfort in times of bereavement.
[388] This occurred in 1941. The blast destroyed the wall of a boys' orphanage and killed two men who were covered in debris as they walked on neighbouring Warwick Common.
[389] During that time much of the rich paintwork was renewed.
[390] As at 1st July, 2012.
[391] The 2012 campaign is seeking to raise the necessary £1,378,600 for repairs to the Chapel.

Chapter 4

Closure or Continuity?

For over 500 years the Beauchamp Chapel has recorded the spiritual tides of the past but what, if anything, can it contribute towards our understanding of spirituality in the 21st century? One way of considering this is to examine how some aspects of its various incarnations may shed some light on current issues. There are three aspects that will be considered in this respect. Firstly, the importance of the past in determining the present, secondly the need of the human spirit for spiritual food, and finally an appreciation of the inevitability, and even desirability, of change.

Footprints of the Past

In what has become known as the post-modern age, the erosion of long held beliefs and traditions which have hitherto undergirded society has spurred some individuals to seek after historical grounds which may help to explain some of their present life-issues. One aspect of this may be seen in the proliferation of family history web sites set up to facilitate those keen on discovering their roots and researching their ancestry.

The past is important for, not only does it show us where we came from, but, through the comparison with the spiritualities [or pieties] of past generations, much can be revealed about the present situation. An organic view of Christian history shows ways in which culture and religion interact and brings to the fore aspects which are emphasised in one era while being played down at other times. A study of the dynamics of 15th or 16th century Christian self-understanding, may also reveal something about Christian self-understanding as a whole. Looked at from that perspective the modern issues may be found to be not new in themselves, but rather new manifestations of phenomena which are identifiable elsewhere in the Christian story. For instance, the assertion by Gibbs and Bolger that we are now in a period when:

> The church continues to communicate a verbal, linear, and abstract message to a culture whose primary language consists of sound, visual images, and experience, in addition to words[392]

may even indicate that we are entering a neo-medievalist phase when images are once again invested with very real significance and power.

The initial manifestation of the Beauchamp Chapel as a chantry chapel indicates the emphasis placed by late Medieval Catholicism on death. Its masses and images all testify to the lengths to which individuals would go to ensure a safe passage to the afterlife. Although this may not be seen as having much relevance in our post-modern society, issues surrounding death nevertheless continue to exert a powerful influence.

In 1997 the country experienced an outpouring of grief following the death of Princess Diana which, Diana Taylor claims:

> changed the way the English performed their emotions – out with stiff upper lips and mean-spirited politics, in with touching, smiling and generous public displays of spontaneity...[393]

Within days of her death not only were shrines set up to her memory in the places where she ate, the gyms where she worked out and the hospitals she had visited, but there is evidence that she was being attributed spiritual power. On a card left on one of the thousands of bunches of flowers in front of the gates of Kensington Palace was the message, 'Guide us eternally from above',[394] as if Diana was being petitioned by the writer of the message in the same way as were the saints in the Chapel.

A 20th century icon may have replaced the statue of St. Catherine,[395] but it indicates that the desire for some form of contact with an identifiable yet powerful and elevated role model

[392] Eddie Gibbs & Ryan K. Bolger, *Emerging Churches: Creating Christian Community in Postmodern Cultures* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2005), 20.
[393] Adrian Kear & Deborah Lynn (eds.), *Mourning Diana: Nation, Culture and the Performance of Grief* (London: Routledge, 1999), 202.
[394] Jeremy Seabrook, 'Love and grief in a savage society' *TWN 3rd World Network*. Accessed at: http://www.twnside.org.sg/title/love-cn.htm
[395] See fig. 14.

remains in the collective psyche, despite the attempts of the reformers to expunge it. Tempting as it may be to ascribe a spiritual reason to the purchase for £540 of a desk rubber used by Princess Diana when she was at boarding school in Norfolk, it most probably had a purely mercenary motive. However, the noticeable increase in the Church shop's sale of such items as angel pin-badges could be seen as in some way mirroring the desire of medieval pilgrims for the supernatural protection offered by their collection of relics. This longing for protection in a struggle between good and evil is seen by Fugelso as a reaction to post-modernism with its relativism in which such terms as 'good' or 'evil' have tended to 'lose much of their sense of universal approbation or condemnation.'[396]

On a practical level, death has also reaffirmed its presence. In Medieval times it was part of the corporate life and involved the whole community, unlike the situation that existed by the latter half of the 20th century when death had become divorced from the communal life, generally occurring away from home in hospital or care home. However, in the 21st century the very fact of increased longevity has once again brought death into the public forum. Death and end-of-life issues are increasingly having an impact on, and becoming the responsibility, of the whole community. There is no room here to explore this issue[397] but society and the church are beginning to recognise the need to give them a similar level of attention to that which they commanded in Beauchamp's times.

The iconography in the Chapel can also be seen as drawing attention to the question of hierarchy. For the medieval mind the hierarchy of earth reflected that of heaven and, despite the Puritan 'purge' which sought to abolish that concept,[398] it continued to occupy a place within the human psyche. History indicates that it is an illusion that communities can exist totally devoid of structure. Indeed Hans Küng maintained that Christ had no thought of founding a new cult or

[396] Karl Fugelso, (ed.) *Studies in Medievalism XIX: Defining Neomedievalism* (Cambridge: D.S.Brewer, 2010), 38.
[397] See such publications as James Woodward, *Befriending Death*. (London: SPCK, 2005) and Una Kroll, *Living Life to the Full – A Guide to Spiritual Health in Later Years* (London: Continuum, 2006).
[398] For example the office of bishop was abolished in 1641. Rosman, The *Evolution of the English Churches*, 89.

religious structure, [399] yet within a very short time we read of apostles,[400] disciples,[401] and deacons[402] taking their allotted places in the emerging church.

Although the Monarch and the state have limited power over church affairs,[403] there remain powerful hierarchical structures within the Established Church in England.[404] Indeed there are those, such as Burgess, who are openly critical of aspects of the churches' institutional structure, maintaining that:

> The churches are deeply implicated in abuses of power which make them poor employers, unsympathetic listeners and insecure places to live, work and associate with others. Denial of these realities destroys hope, disillusions people against the gospel and leaves the churches with nothing to say to the world around them. [405]

Harsh words, yet a view in line with that of a worker at Pilson who states that, 'Its [the church's] history tells me that when it is a majority and has real power, it is as liable to corruption and injustice as any other institution.'[406] Although recognising that we cannot do without structure, it seems that every age needs its own Reformation and today this includes a requirement to consider the nature of hierarchy and structure within the church.

Is the present leadership within a church that claims to embrace inclusive contemporary Christian values open to all, irrespective of race, gender or spiritual preference, and willing to be shaped by encounters with new forms of consciousness? It needs to be one which values the contribution of all members, strong enough to absorb problems that may arise, while being supple enough to be open to the promptings of the Spirit; a Church which Küng maintains, at least in principal, was originally a community of freedom, equality and brotherhood and

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[399] Küng, Hans, trans. John Bowden*, Christianity - Its Essence and History* (London: SCM. Press, 1995; repr. 1999), 78.
[400] *Holy Bible,* Acts 1:26.
[401] Ibid., Acts 6:1.
[402] Ibid., Acts 6:13-4.
[403] For instance, the Queen formally appoints high-ranking members of the church on the advice of the Prime Minister, who is in turn advised by church leaders.
[404] For details see *The Structure of the Church of England*. Accessed at: http://www.churchofengland.org/about-us/structure.aspx
[405] Burgess, Neil, 'Seeking Fresh Expressions of Ministry'*, Modern Believing - Church and Society*, 2007, vol. 48:4, 29.
[406] Jones, Tobias, *Utopian Dreams – In Search of a Good Life.* (London: faber and faber, 2008), 171.

sisterhood.[407] Only then will it be able to shake off what Frost and Hirsch see as the 'credibility gap between the church world and the real world'.[408]

In a more pragmatic way the Beauchamp Chapel can give some insight into the results of conflicting traditions in past ages. The broken stained glass, the missing statues and the damaged stone in the Chapel indicate what can happen when violent pendulum swings in religion, culture and spirituality leave no room for tolerance. For Puritan reformers who maintained that there was no need of any intercessor between the individual and the Deity, there may have seemed cogent reasons for removing images that might pose a distraction from the serious purpose of attaining personal salvation. Tolerance of any contrasting viewpoint was frequently seen as anathema but this dogma also had the result of removing the old familiar patterns of the collective spirituality that had previously sustained the people and held their community together.

The result of past intolerance is there for all to see, but what damage to the faith may be caused by such intolerance today?[409] In the controversies surrounding such issues as female bishops and 'gay' clergy there is a need to avoid such polarisation and instead engage in honest discussion which nevertheless allows room for change and growth. Compassion on both sides is needed if the outcome is to be enhancing rather than damaging for, a broken statue can warn that, 'Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it'.[410]

Nourishing the Spirit

One contemporary understanding of spirituality is that, in order to nourish the spirit it is necessary to engage with what Sandra Schneiders defines as:

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[407] Küng, *Christianity*, 79.
[408] Michael Frost, & Alan Hirsch, *The Shape of Things to Come* (Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 2003; 4th repr. 2004), 20.
[409] Perhaps the aforementioned replacing of Beauchamp's head with one of his female relatives could be seen as a message from the past for the Church of England today!
[410] George Satayana, *The Life of Reason, or the Phases of Human Progress – Introduction & Reason in Common Sense* (New York: Charles Scriber's Sons, 1905; repr. 1920), 284.

> …that dimension of the human subject in virtue of which the person is capable of self-transcending in relation to the ultimate, whatever the Ultimate is for the person in question.[411]

According to Leland R. Kaiser this self-trancendency occurs when, 'old lines of separation disappear and former distinctions no longer bind you. You are part of much more than you know or imagine. The universe is interconnected – You are part of All That Is.'[412] This concept, which would have made no sense in earlier times, can find expression in the appreciation of beauty which Brown sees as playing an important part in theology and spirituality.[413]

In order to achieve this Rowan Williams posits that the senses have to be involved for, 'only the body can save the soul...the soul left to itself…is not capable of transforming itself.'[414] The standard Christian recipe for this is the 'given' of prayer and worship, both of which have featured in the life of the Chapel. However, just as Christ used physical items to reveal things of the spirit,[415] so spiritual truths can be revealed in material objects such as art and architecture.[416]

For instance, architect David Leslie maintains that:

> Architecture must nourish human satisfaction and encourage inner growth and be a framework for the personal fulfilment of the users. All these aspects add another dimension to our work, that we call the spirituality of architecture.[417]

Sheldrake sees Gothic architecture, of which the Perpendicular style of the Beauchamp Chapel is the third historical division of English Gothic, as expressing 'the limitless quality of an infinite God through the soaring verticality of arches and vaults.'[418] However, in a building considered as 'spectacular' and 'the only medieval chantry that stands comparison with Henry

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[411] Sandra Schneiders, 'Spirituality as an Academic Discipline', *Christian Spirituality Bulletin* 1/2, Fall 1993), 11.
[412] Leland R. Kaiser in Self Trancendence.org *, What is Self Transcendence?* Accessed at: http://www.selftranscendence.org/self_transcendence/what_is_self_transcendence/
[413] Frank Burch Brown, 'Beauty', Sheldrake (ed.), *The New SCM Dictionary of Christian Spirituality,* 145.
[414] Rowan Williams, *Where God Happens*, *Discovering Christ in One Another* (Boston: New Seeds, 2005), 115.
[415] For example, a lamp (Luke 11:33-36); a pearl (Matthew 13:45-46) and wineskins (Mark 2:22).
[416] David B. Perrin, *Studying Christian Spirituality* (New York & London: Routledge, 2007), 21.
[417] David Leslie, *Design Philosophy.* Accessed at: http://www.davidlesliearchitecte.ca/en/05_design_philosophy.htm
[418] Sheldrake, *The New SCM Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*, 'Light', 409.

VII's chapel at Westminster',[419] the architecture and ornamentation could also be seen as contributing to that which Wendy M. Wright maintains,

> in a compact, non-discursive manner, carries the developing interpretative layers of the Christian mystery [and can] facilitate the process of radical personal and communal transformation.[420]

Such a building has the capacity to push an individual beyond themselves which can be a truly transforming experience. This process may not be appreciated by casual visitors, yet they can be profoundly moved as they gaze at the light streaming through the stained glass in the Chapel in the same way as one can be moved by the beauty of the lantern tower of the Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King in Liverpool without being aware that it is depicting in abstract form the blessed Trinity.[421] Indeed tourists visiting the Church are frequently driven to record the effect the Chapel had on them in the Visitor's Book, with comments such as 'spectacular', 'inspiring', 'spiritually moving', 'a peaceful place for thought', 'the angels sing here', and 'a refreshing break from the busy street'.

Today the Chapel may not resound to the music so beloved by Beauchamp for, since the reformation, it has been seldom used for services.[422] Nevertheless the use of music has returned in a different manner. The art form that is the 'language of the soul made audible',[423] can be experienced at the regular concerts held in the Chapel during the summer, some including elements specific to the Chapel. For instance, in June 2012, the Gentlemen of the Choir of St. Mary's sang music from the Beauchamp Chapel windows[424] in a concert *Beauchamp Chapel Music by Candlelight.* Music has not ceased but has followed another path that can also be spiritually uplifting.

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[419] Simon Jenkins, *England's Thousand Best Churches* (London: Penguin Books, 2009), 715.
[420] Wendy M. Wright, 'A Wide and Fleshly Love', Dreyer, Elizabeth & Mark Burrows, (eds.), *Minding the Spirit: The Study of Christian Spirituality* (Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press, 20050), 314.
[421] *The Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King in Liverpool, the Authorised Cathedral Guide* (Norfolk; Jarrold Publishing, 2005), 14.
[422] The music in the widows is still sung in the Chapel by the choir on the Church's Patron Saint's Day.
[423] Don E. Saliers, 'Music and Spirituality', Sheldrake (ed.), *The New SCM Dictionary of Christian Spirituality,* 453.
[424] The Concert also included work by Tallis and Sheppard.

'The Only Thing that is Constant is Change' (Heraclitus, circa 500 BC).

In her article *Nothing Endures but Change,*[425] Alison Shacklady maintains that, within the church today 'we are faced with change at all sorts of different levels.' She cites both 'strategic' changes which affect the whole of the Anglican Communion and also issues which affect those who attend our churches at a local level.[426] Both sets of issues need to be dealt with sympathetically yet, if the church is once again to establish a tenable space within our modern culture, change is both inevitable and necessary for, as Lynch maintains:

> The data of contemporary life no longer fits the paradigm of traditional religion, and this creates pressure for a new spiritual paradigm to be developed which takes better account of contemporary experiences, values and concerns.[427]

The changes written in stone in the Beauchamp Chapel may be of help here. The post-modern perspective is that there has never been one way of living an authentic spiritual life, nor one sure way to union with God.[428] Beauchamp, the Tudor Monarchs, Oken, Purefoy, and all the other individuals who have left their mark on the Chapel, would all have considered themselves true Christians despite their differing expression of spirituality. Tradition, Scripture, and most recently, Reason have each held the high ground at various times yet Christianity has survived and it is the pendulum swings that have occurred in the understanding of spirituality through the ages which indicate that, whatever the future may hold, there is hope.

Indeed there is much to be said for a contemporary Christian spirituality that will not only be prepared to re-examine and reinterpret its own foundational narrative, but also:

> join together what modernity separated: the individual and the community, ideas and life, asceticism and mysticism, nature and grace, goals and processes… the sacred and the secular.[429]

[425] Alison Shacklady, 'Nothing endures but change', *The Reader*, Spring 2012, 109/1, 8-9.
[426] Ibid., 8.
[427] Gordon Lynch, *The New Spirituality* (London, New York: I.B.Taurus, 2007), 24-25.
[428] Michael Downey, *Understanding Christian Spirituality* (New York: Paulist Press), 68.
[429] Ann Astell, 'Postmodern Christian Spirituality: A Coincidentia Oppositorum?', *Journal of the Society for the Study of Christian Spirituality*, 1996, 4(1), 1-5.

No longer 'either/or' but 'and' will be the watchword. It will be ready to value and affirm different ways of living, worshipping and seeking for spiritual communion as long as they are not at odds with its core values as seen in the life of Christ. Such a vision has the potential to ascribe spiritual value both to 'high' church liturgy, Protestant preaching and hymnody, and the silence of monastic contemplation – all of which have featured in the life of St. Mary's during its long history.

Likewise it permits an acknowledgement of the spirituality in such fields as art, music, drama, film, dance and literature which also afford opportunities for interaction with that which transcends and facilitates the establishments of relationship with and through them. However potentially disturbing this may be, it demands a response which may ultimately lead to a new understanding of our relationship with God and each other. Such a transition may help to bring about the time when contemporary Christian spirituality will so transform the centre ground that:

> …it will be harder to think that the future of the church will take one clear and uniform institutional shape across the globe or even through local communities…. In some areas, the church is already beginning to exist in parallel lines, not in sealed compartments but in different styles and idioms and with real interchange.[430]

In conclusion, the Beauchamp Chapel survived change and still has a story to tell to those who are willing to search for it. Today it can speak to a community with a deep longing for understanding, and a burgeoning desire to 'find unity and wholeness both individually and in society.'[431] What message it has for future generations will be up to them to discover, but one thing is certain, it will also be subject to change.

[430] Rowan Williams, *Where God Happens,* 112.
[431] C. Kourie, 'The "Turn" to Spirituality', *Acta Theologica Supplementum 8, 2006*, 35. Accessed at: http://www.ajol.info/index.php/actat/article/view/52310/40935

Beauchamp was certainly no saint but his Chapel is nonetheless a place of pilgrimage. It records our past, is a source of beauty that can nourish the spirit and has the capacity to point us towards a rich future if it is permitted to do so for, to misappropriate T. S. Eliot:[432]

> Though armies trample over it,
> though sightseers come with guide-books looking over it; ...
> From such ground springs that which forever renews the earth.

[432] Eliot was in fact referring to Canterbury Cathedral in his play *Murder in the Cathedral*.

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Illustrations

Fig. 1 The Beauchamp Chapel facing West

Fig 2 The faint image of an Angel

Fig. 3 St. Thomas of Canterbury

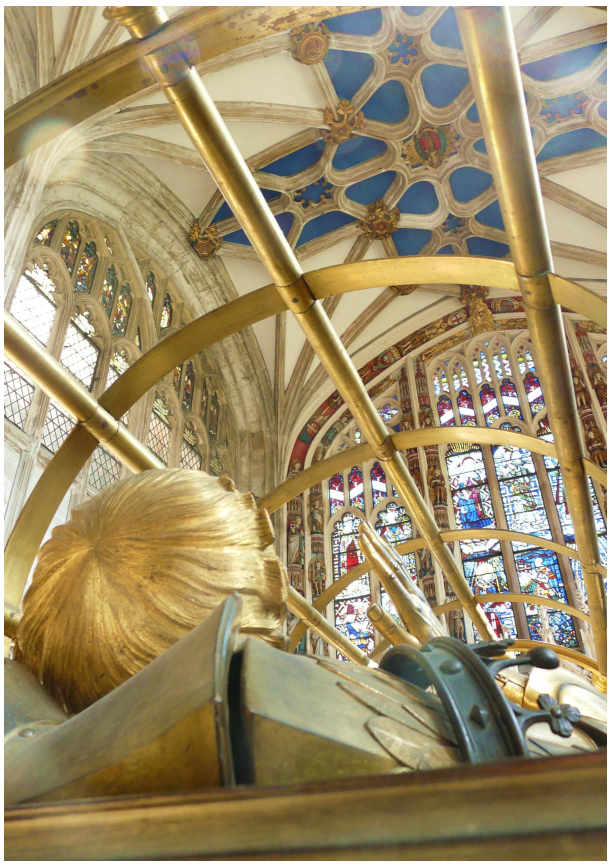

Fig. 4 Beauchamp contemplates the Virgin Mary

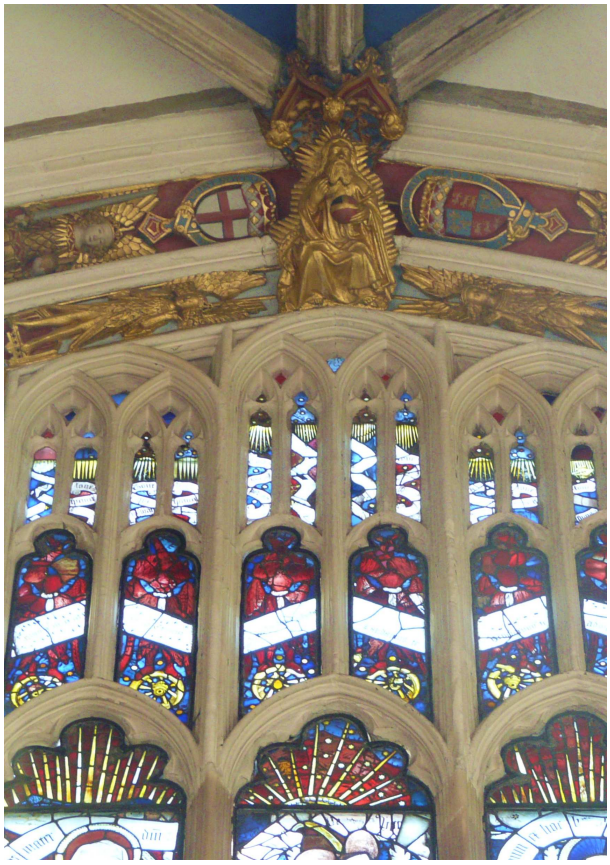

Fig. 5 The Heavenly Hierarchy (detail)

Fig. 6 The Angel of the Expulsion

Fig. 7 The Angel Orchestra

Fig. 8 Beauchamp's Tomb and the Altar

Fig. 9 Beauchamp's Hands

Fig. 10 Weepers (detail)

Fig. 11 The Tombs of Ambrose Dudley and Richard Beauchamp

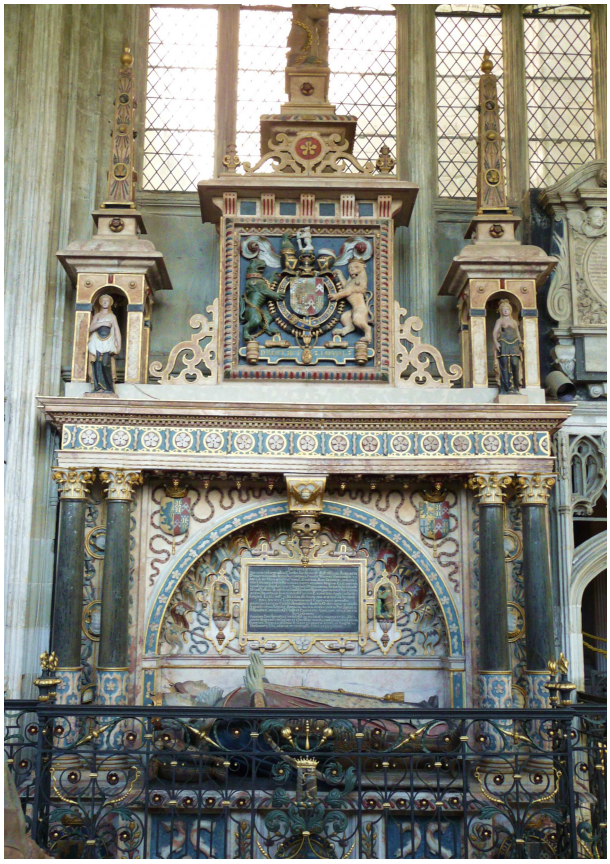

Fig. 12 Robert Dudley's Tomb

Fig. 13 Beauchamp with a Female Head

Fig. 14 St. Catherine and an Angel

Fig. 15 Central figures in the Sistine Chapel painting of the Last Judgement

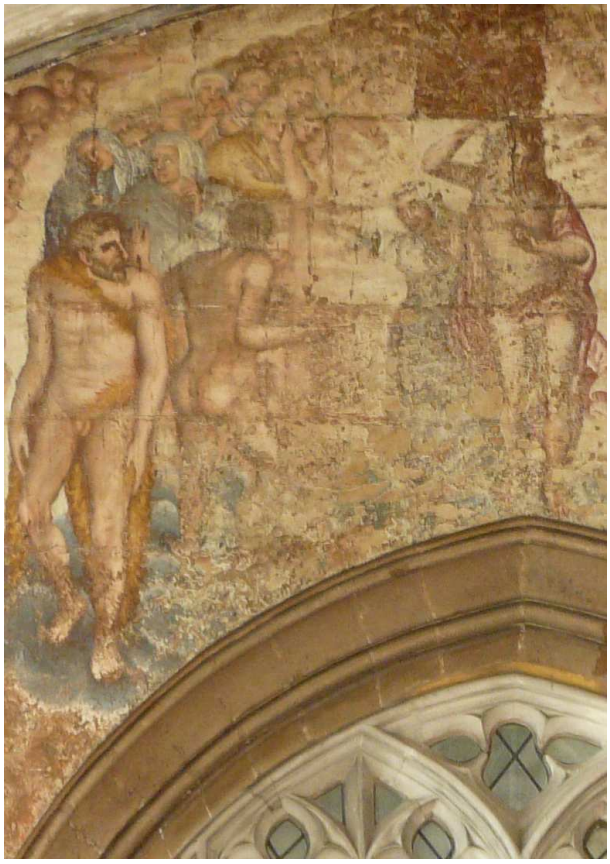

Fig. 16 Central figures in the Beauchamp Chapel 'Doom' painting