



15. Methodist Church

Further along St. Peter's Street, and set back from the road, is the Methodist Church with perfectly scaled portico. It is a Classical Revival building dating from 1811.

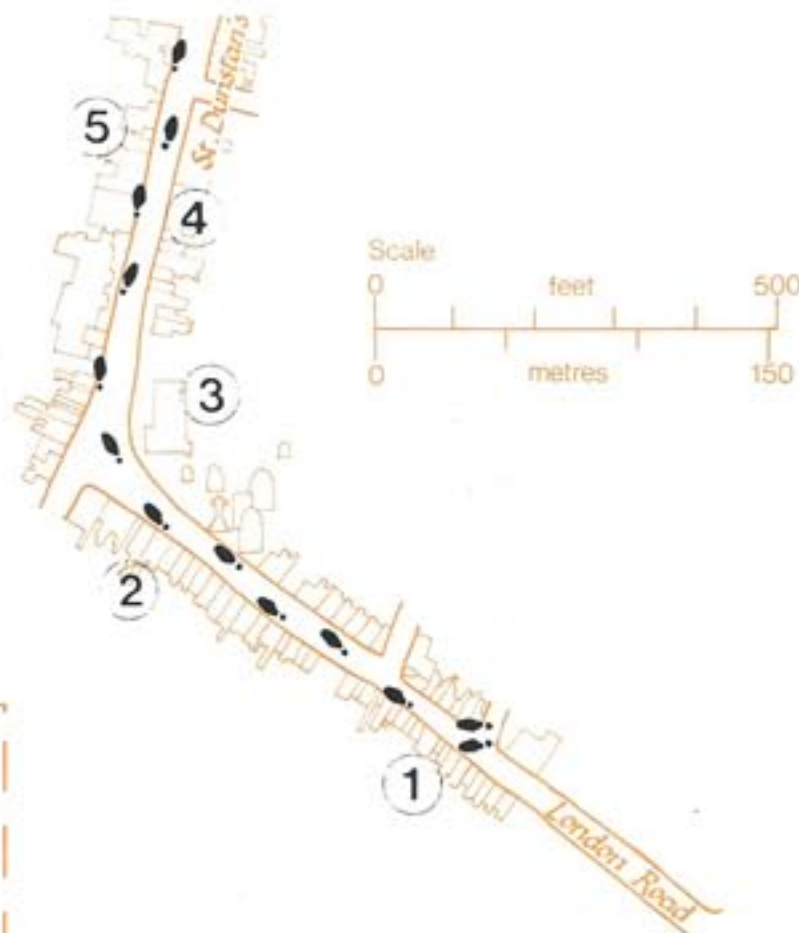


The shrine of St. Thomas Becket became a centre of medieval pilgrimage bringing considerable fame and prosperity to Canterbury. Geoffrey Chaucer visited Canterbury many times in his official capacity, and had property in Staplegate. Following Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales" the pilgrimages reached their height in the 14th century. The "Tales" described the journey made c. 1397 by a company of "wel nyne and twenty", who each pledged to tell two tales to while away the time on the long road to Canterbury.

Key

- Main route ———
- Detour ———
- Trail text number ①
- Continuation of text ———→

It is much easier to read, and follow the trail, in the correctly numbered sequence.



The walk starts in London Road at the entrance to St. Dunstan's Terrace.

1. Eight Bells Public House

On the opposite side of the road is the Eight Bells Public House. The inn sign pictures the Canterbury Bells. Pilgrims often stitched bells to the reins and trappings of their horses.



2. Nos. 1-5 London Road

Nos. 1-5 London Road are 18th and early 19th century houses – this group illustrates the development of domestic architecture from Georgian to Regency.

CHAS SCANS

Between 1977 and 2002 Canterbury Urban Studies Centre and Canterbury Environment Centre published around 30 guides and city trails describing various aspects of Canterbury's past. Both organisations were based in St Alphege church.

Between them they produced 14 titles in the 'Trails' series, and a further 16 titles outside the main series. All are now out of print and many are difficult (a few impossible) to find through normal second hand sources. Many contain information that is not readily available in other printed or on line sources.

CHAS (Canterbury Historical and Archaeological Society) is scanning a selection of these publications for uploading to the CHAS website as PDFs. In this way a new generation of readers and researchers can have access to this unique resource.

A full list of these publications appears on the CHAS website:

<http://www.canterbury-archaeology.org.uk>

Note: this publication was printed as a single large folded sheet

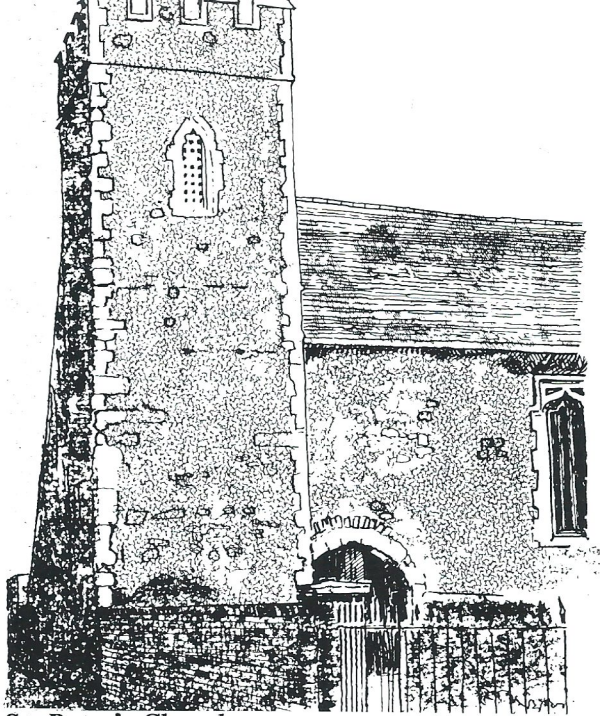


Canterbury City Trails No. 2

A PILGRIMAGE TO THE CATHEDRAL

This walk follows the last half mile of the journey trod by dedicated pilgrims long ago visiting the shrine of St. Thomas Becket at Canterbury Cathedral.

Based on an Original Idea of Tim Walker
Chartered Architect

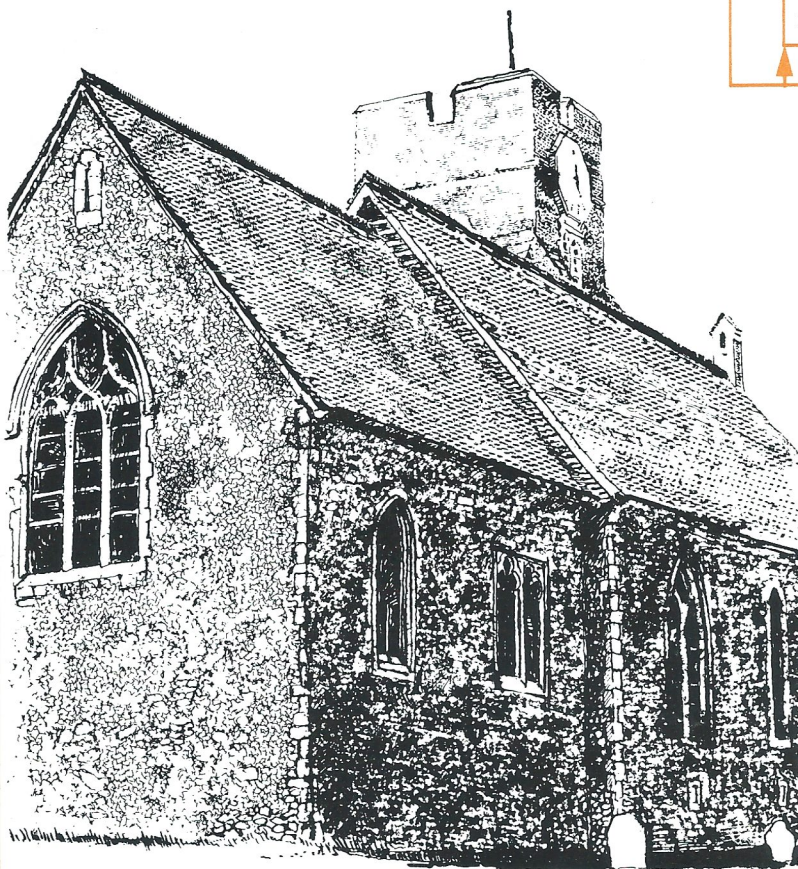


14. St. Peter's Church

On the same side, a little further on, is St. Peter's Church, a three-aisled hall church dating from the early Norman period. Incorporated in the small tower are a number of red tile fragments. The interior has kept its pre-19th century character — there is a fine Norman font and a late 17th century sounding-board.

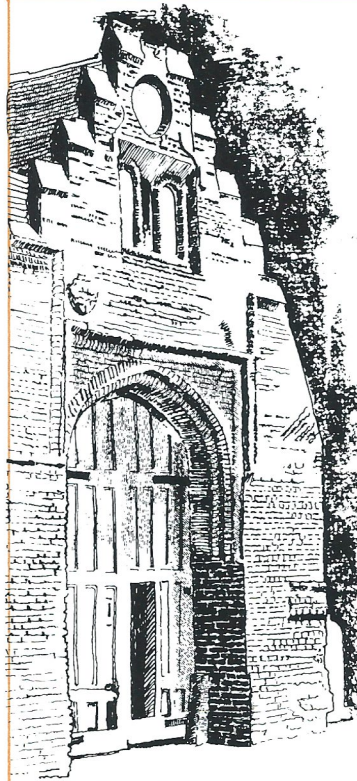
3. St. Dunstan's Church

St. Dunstan's Church, on the corner of London Road, contains flint masonry of the 11th century in the north wall. The tower, which contains a peal of six bells, and south aisle are 14th century. St. Nicholas' Chapel was founded by the Roper family in 1402-3 — the brickwork was rebuilt in the 16th century. The chapel contains the Thomas More window, put in on June 14th, 1973. The head of Saint Thomas More lies in the vault beneath the chapel.



6. St. Dunstan's Street

Continue walking along St. Dunstan's Street. The assortment of buildings on the right hand side of the street dates from many different periods and forms a richly textured pattern of shapes. Notice the slight irregularities in street alignment. Beyond the level crossing the variety of architectural styles is maintained and thirteen successive gables of buildings can be counted.

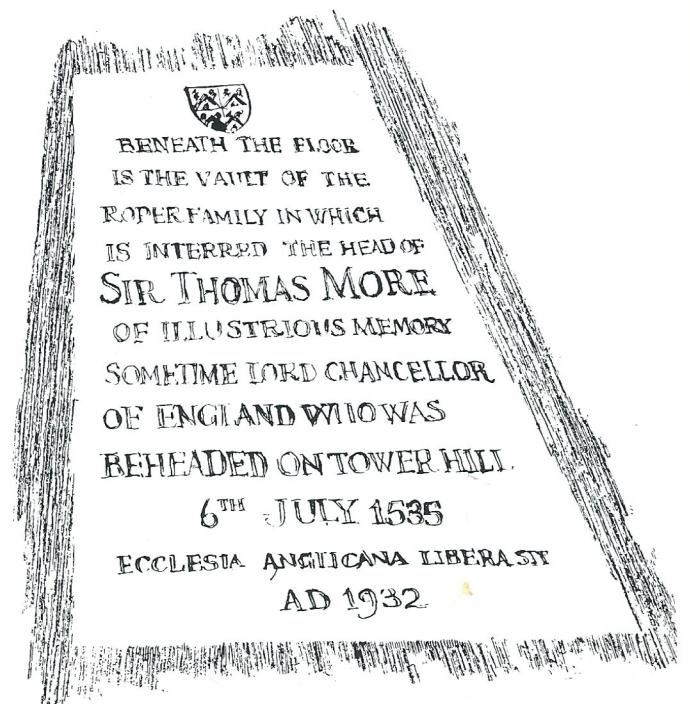


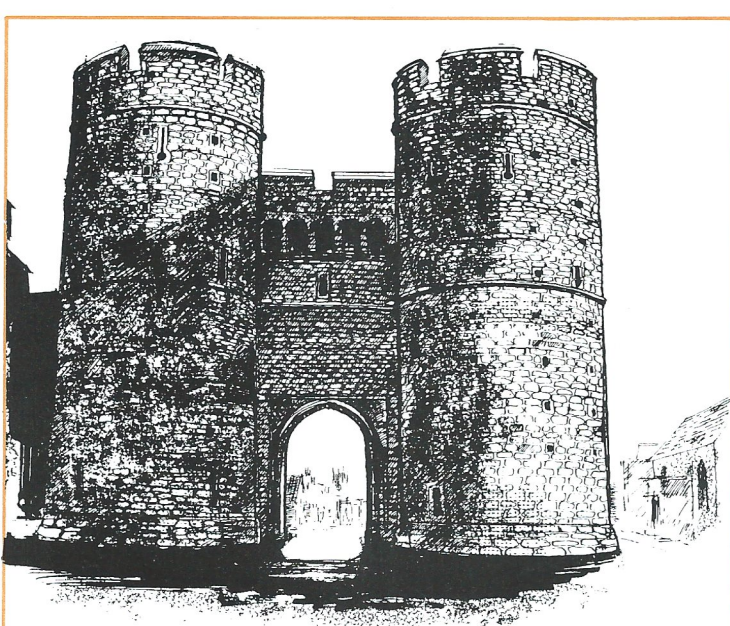
5. Roper Gateway

On the opposite side of the street is the Roper Gateway, a 16th century Tudor red brick structure, which once led to the home of the Roper family. It was the home of Saint Thomas More's daughter, Margaret Roper, who brought her father's head to St. Dunstan's after his execution by Henry VIII. The Roper home was demolished to make way for a brewery, and the premises are now occupied by an industrial firm.

4. St. Dunstan's House

Further along St. Dunstan's Street is St. Dunstan's House, a medieval house which has been given a Georgian facelift. Fragments of 15th century wall paintings survive in several rooms. The house has a date of 1750 on it.





11. Westgate

The end of the street is dominated by the Westgate, built over one branch of the River Stour. It is the only remaining example of the eight gates of the medieval city. The gate was possibly designed by Henry Yevele (who may have been the architect of the nave of the Cathedral) and was built by Archbishop Simon of Sudbury c. 1380 on the site of an earlier structure. It is made of Kentish ragstone and incorporates some bricks in its structure. Until 1829 the Westgate was used as the city prison. It was opened as a museum in 1906. A newel staircase leads to the roof of the gate from which there is a splendid view of Canterbury.

12. Holy Cross Church

Holy Cross Church was originally situated over the earlier Westgate but was rebuilt on its present site by Archbishop Simon of Sudbury c. 1380, when the new Westgate was built. The building is no longer used as a church and is now used as a council chamber.

Cross St. Peter's Place by means of the pedestrian crossing and enter St. Peter's Street — a mixture of building styles and frontages, where windows and overhanging upper storeys jut out over the pavements.



13. Sidney Cooper Building

On the left hand side of the street, opposite Black Griffin Lane, is the entrance to the Sidney Cooper Building. This building, formerly Canterbury College of Art, was founded as a school by the artist T. Sidney Cooper (1803-1902) who was born in the existing cottage on the site.



10. Falstaff Hotel

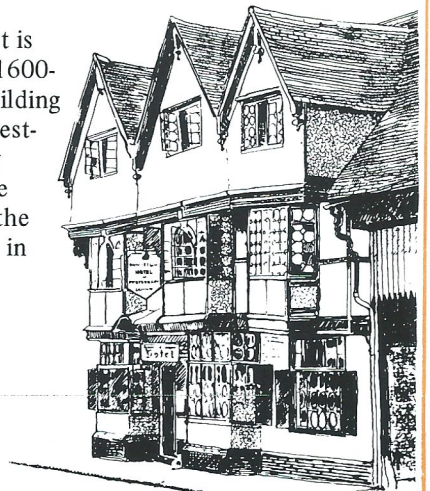
On the opposite side of the road is the Falstaff Hotel. It existed in 1403 as the "White Hart" for the accommodation of pilgrims who arrived at the City after the gates were shut. This was one of a number of inns which grew up in St. Dunstan's Street to accommodate pilgrims.

9. Westgate House

Further along St. Dunstan's Street, on the corner of Linden Grove, is Westgate House (No. 87). This is a well-proportioned, four-square mid-Georgian house built about 1725. The rain water heads are 1760.

8. "House of Agnes"

No. 71 St. Dunstan's Street is the "House of Agnes" (c. 1600-1620), a timber-framed building now used as an hotel and restaurant. The first floor bay windows date from the late 17th century, and part of the ground floor was modified in the 18th century.

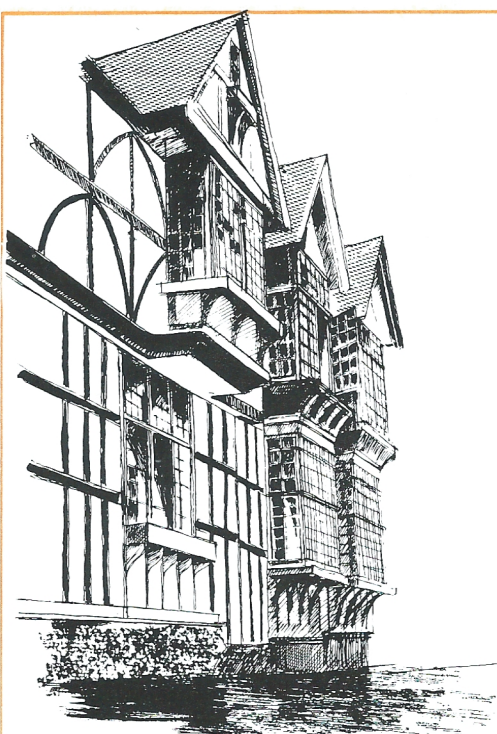


7. Canterbury West Station

Canterbury West Station is next to the site of the terminus of the Canterbury-Whitstable railway. This railway, opened in 1830, was one of the earliest passenger railways in the world.



Now turn the sheet over to follow the rest of the trail.



19. "Weavers" houses

At the King's Bridge (c. 1180) there are the picturesque, much restored, half-timbered "Weavers" houses whose gables overhang a branch of the River Stour. Only the fabric of the houses on the street is c. 1400, altered c. 1570; the half-timbering effect on the outside is a fairly recent addition. The rest of the building, comprising the two end gables over the river, dates from the 1930s. The building has been converted to a small shop and a café. The replica of a ducking stool hangs over the river. There are river trips on the "Weavers" ferries in the summer months – tickets for the boats are sold in the shop.

18. All Saint's Lane

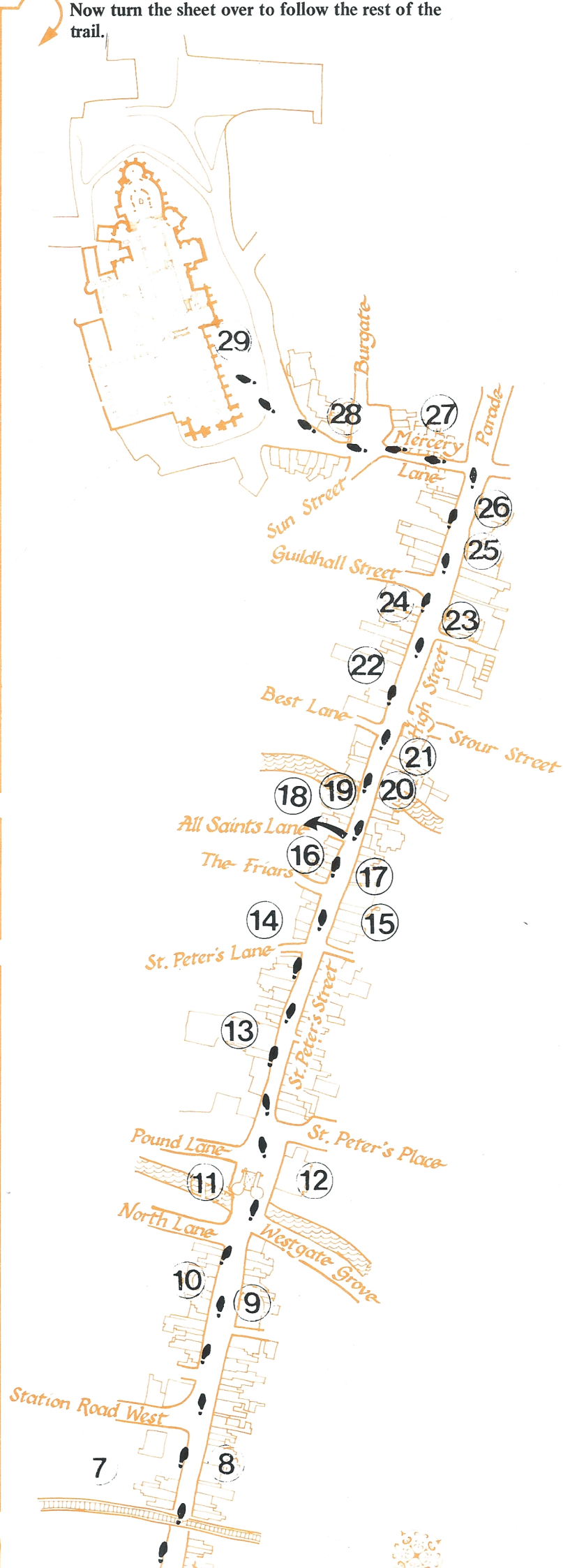
Before you reach the King's Bridge, take a short detour into All Saint's Lane. This is a narrow cul-de-sac leading to All Saint's Court, a restored late 15th century half-timbered building.

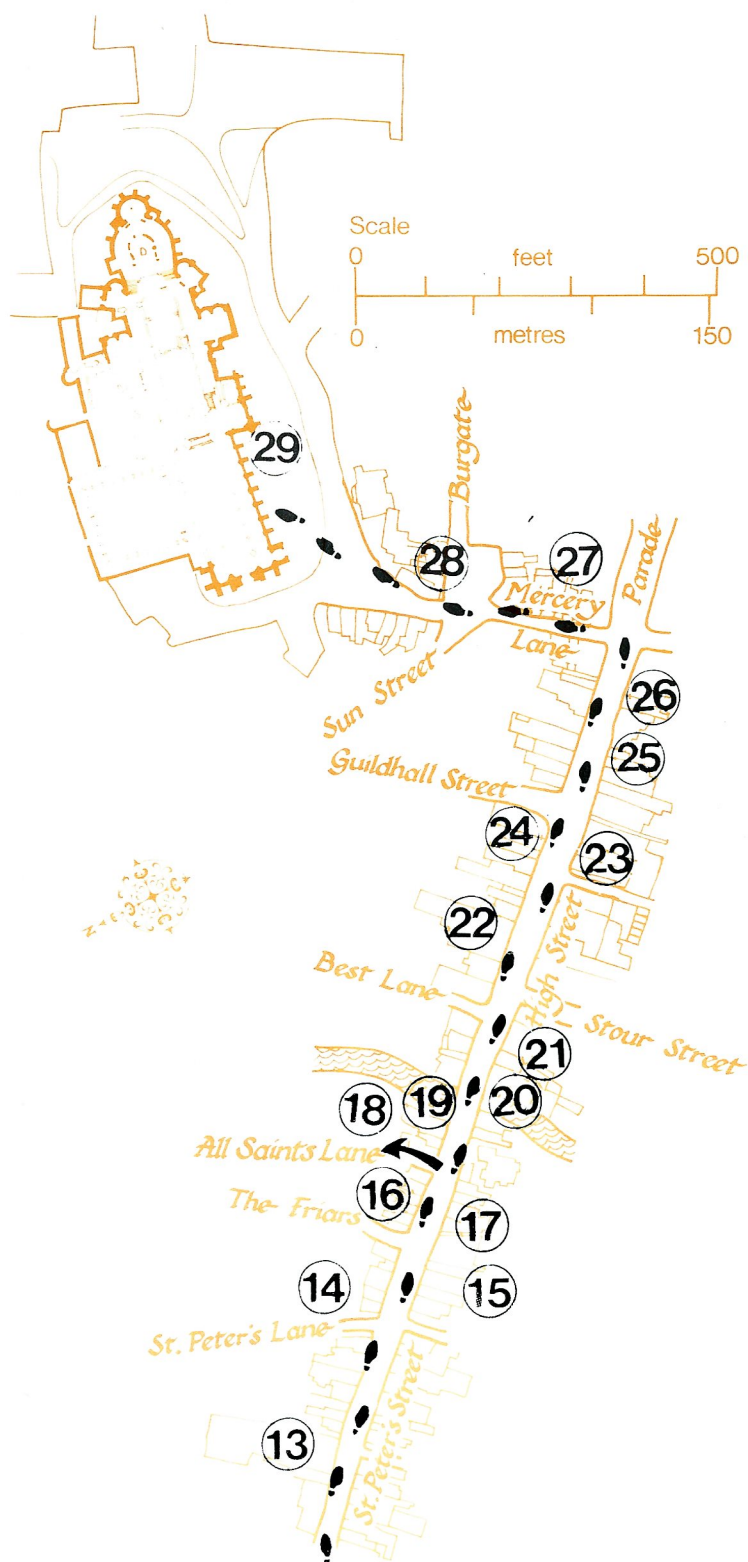
17. Cogan House

Opposite The Friars is Cogan House (no. 53/53a), one of the finest examples of a stone and timber-framed house in Canterbury. The house is older than it appears and dates from c. 1160. By 1520 it had been considerably modified; of interest inside is the renaissance panelling and carved plaster ceilings. Timber-framed gables dating from c. 1590 are behind the 19th century parapet of the facade.



16. Dominican Priory Gate





We hope that you have enjoyed your modern day pilgrimage to the Cathedral. If you would like to comment on the trail please write to Canterbury Urban Studies Centre

2. Working with school children by providing teaching resources and promoting projects.
3. Looking to the future of Canterbury – there is a great need for more contact between town planners and the public. The public must be well informed if public participation in planning is to be effective. The centre aims to provide an impartial link between the experts and the public by putting planning facts and alternative proposals forward for open discussion. In this way the centre provides links between the council, the School of Architecture, amenity societies and the public at large. We hope to extend this side of our work in the future.

21. The Post Office

The Post Office, opposite the entrance to Best Lane, was built in 1906-7 and has Art Nouveau characteristics in the gable.



20. Eastbridge Hospital

On the other side of the bridge and spanning the river is St. Thomas's Hospital, or the Eastbridge Hospital, founded c. 1180 by Edward, Son of Odbold, to give lodging to poor pilgrims. Cokyn Hospital was joined to St. Thomas's in 1203. The Hospital was refounded in 1342 by Archbishop John Stratford. After a few years suppression in the 16th century, it was re-established as a "school for twenty boys" by Archbishop Whitgift, and later converted into an almshouse for men and women. Entry is free of charge through a low gothic door on the street. This leads into a vaulted hall, on the left of which is a small 13th century chamber. The chamber is now used as a chapel. Steps lead down from the hall to the undercroft where pilgrims slept in the enclosed bays. During restoration work 18 inches of congealed rushes and dirt were removed from the floor. The chalk vault is carried on slender columns which stand on tree trunks driven into the soft earth. There is a large modern picture in the undercroft of Becket's martyrdom. A small compartment in the south west corner is thought to be the warden's chamber. Part of the refectory, above the undercroft, was pulled down to provide space for residents' cottages. A chimney built against the wall was removed in 1879 to reveal a mural c. 1180 depicting Christ in Glory. A staircase at the north end of the hall leads to the Chapel where the present almsfolk attend a service before receiving their weekly pensions; the pensions are still paid from the original endowments.

Trail continued from overleaf.

The Canterbury Environment Centre runs The Canterbury Centre in a converted twelfth century church (St. Alphege). There you will find exhibitions, information and resources about Canterbury and urban environmental education. Canterbury Environment Centre, The Canterbury Centre, St. Alphege Lane, Canterbury, Kent CT1 2EB. Tel & Fax: (01227) 457009.

Based on an original idea of Tim Walker, Chartered Architect.

Edited by Francis Woodman, John Hayes and Sara Avery.
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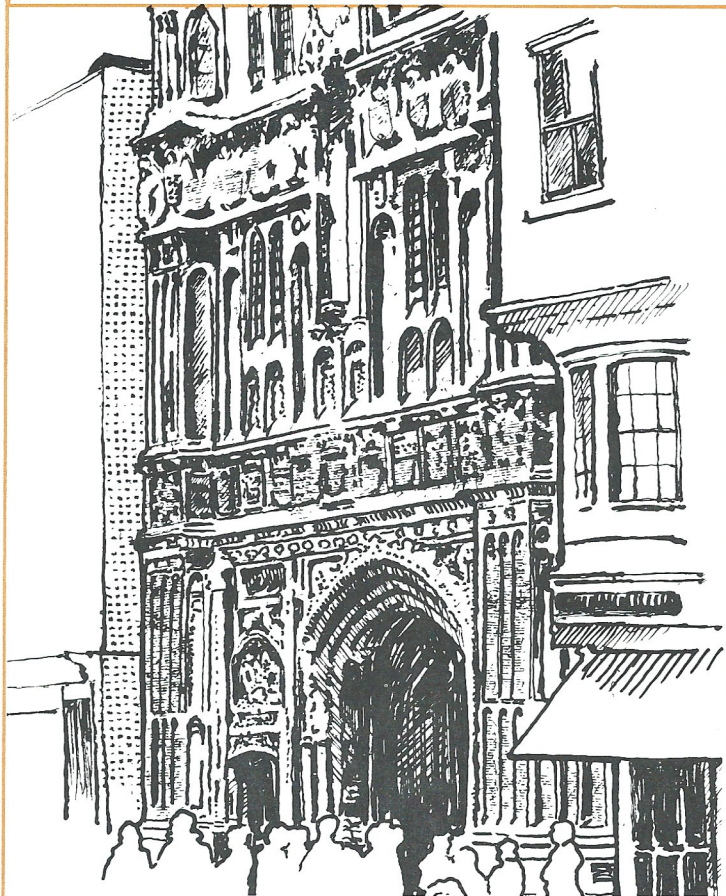
Designed by Roger Gates Limited. Illustration by John Bruce.

27. Mercery Lane

Soon on the left we come to narrow Mercery Lane. The shop on the corner of the lane is part of the "Chequers of the Hope" inn, built by Prior Chillenden in the late 1390s to provide rest and refreshment for medieval pilgrims. The inn is mentioned in the supplement to the "Canterbury Tales" (c. 1400). The building took the form of a courtyard but a serious fire in 1865 destroyed the western block of the south facade. The stone arcades were shops under the inn.

On the opposite corner of Mercery Lane is a 15th century block, now occupied by "Boots", which contains a 13th century well and a medieval cellar on two levels. The carved centaur brackets over the doors date from the 1930s. Solomon the Mercer lived here in the 12th century.

Walk along Mercery Lane, originally called "Le Merceria" and the home of medieval haberdashers and drapers. The lane once contained shops and stalls where pilgrims could buy bottles of healing water drawn from St. Thomas's well near the Cathedral, lead medallions of Becket on horseback, badges and other tokens of their pilgrimage. The overhanging fronts of the shops in the narrow lane still convey the medieval atmosphere and souvenirs are sold to the modern tourist much as they were many centuries ago to pilgrims.



28. Christchurch Gateway

At the far end of Mercery Lane is the small Buttermarket. Christchurch Gateway stands on the north side of the square. This elaborate gateway is an example of late Perpendicular architecture and was built by Prior Goldstone between 1502 and 1519. In the 18th century the two turrets were removed because the former bank on the corner of St. Margaret's Street could not see the Cathedral clock. In 1937-9, the turrets were restored, the stonework re-faced and the emblazons of the heraldic shields renewed at the expense of the Friends of Canterbury Cathedral. A statue of Christ in the central niche was destroyed by Puritan soldiers during the time of Oliver Cromwell. The finely carved oak doors dating from 1662 are shut at 9.00 p.m. every night.

26. The Royal East Kent Yeomanry War Memorial

A small precinct set back from the street on the right marks the site of the old church of St. Mary Bredman. A Victorian replacement of the old church was demolished in 1900. The Royal East Kent Yeomanry War Memorial now stands in the precinct. The external works and entrance pavilion of "Nasons", built in 1960, received a Civic Trust Award in 1963.

25. Queen Elizabeth's Guest Chamber

Queen Elizabeth's Guest Chamber on the right is basically an inn dating from c. 1454. It was partially rebuilt in the 16th century and again in the 17th century when the elaborate stucco decoration was added. The inn was known as "The Crown" which forms the main emblem in the stucco. The present name refers to the monogram "ER" in the fine plaster ceiling of the main first floor room. Tradition has it that Queen Elizabeth I entertained the Duke of Alençon here in 1573. It was about this time that the main salon was remodelled.

24. The Guildhall

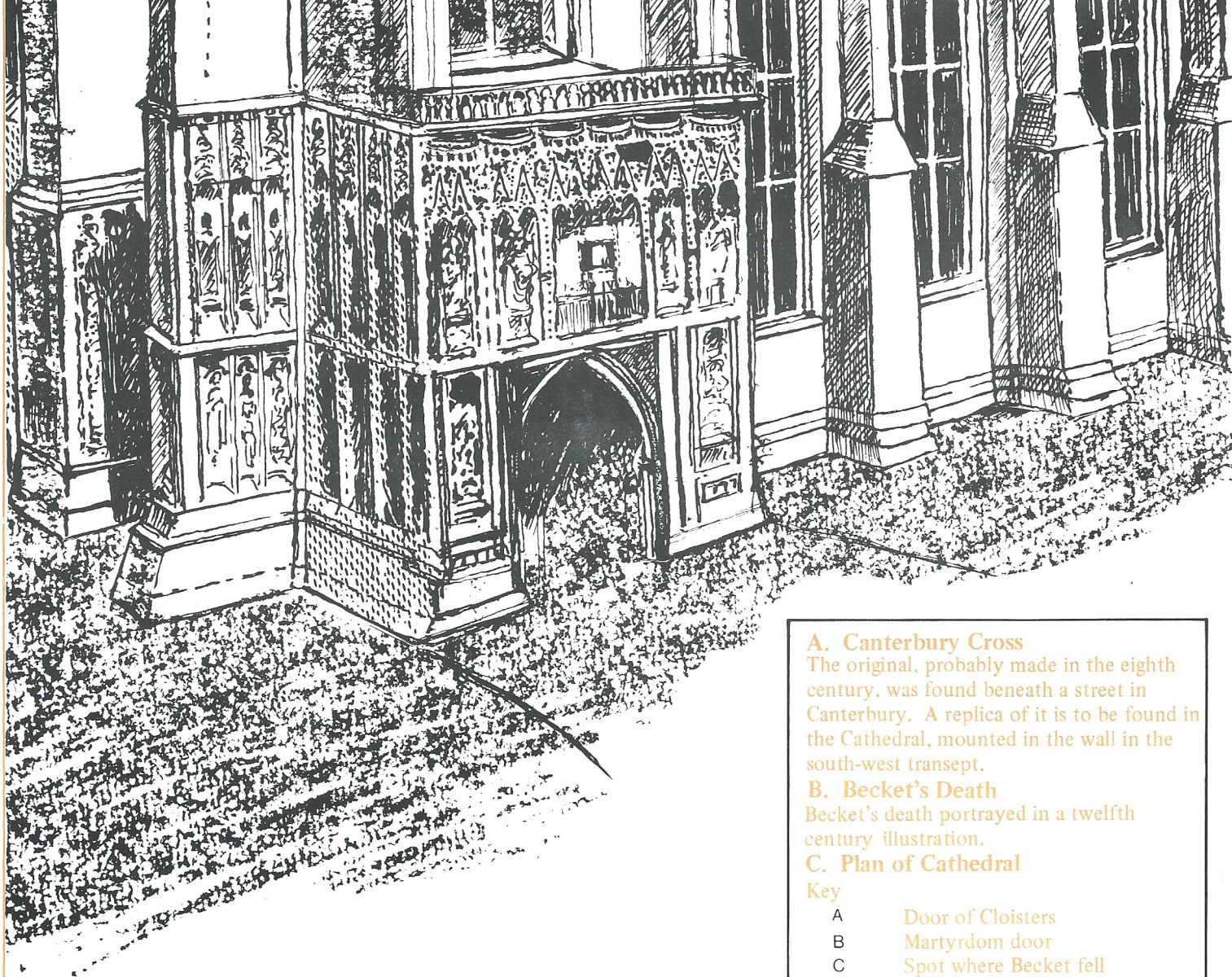
Walk on to the traffic lights at Guildhall Street. The guildhall itself stood on the site of the shoe shop on the corner but, due to neglect, was demolished in 1950-51. The guildhall had been the seat of the City Council since the 12th century. One of the earliest guilds in the country existed in Canterbury in the 9th century.

23. No. 37

No. 37, further along the High Street on the right, has a fine ribbed vaulted crypt built c. 1160-80 forming part of the shop.

22. Beane Institute

Further along the High Street, on the left, is the Royal Museum and Public Library, or Beane Institute, opened in 1899. This half-timbered piece of Victorian architecture is in the medieval style but vastly out of scale. It was built with money left by J. D. Beane, a local citizen who emigrated to Australia and made a fortune as a doctor. The Beane Institute may stand on part of the Roman Forum, traces of which have been found under the yard at the back and under the County Hotel opposite. The museum upstairs is free of charge and is open



A. Canterbury Cross

The original, probably made in the eighth century, was found beneath a street in Canterbury. A replica of it is to be found in the Cathedral, mounted in the wall in the south-west transept.

B. Becket's Death

Becket's death portrayed in a twelfth century illustration.

C. Plan of Cathedral

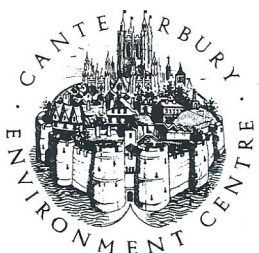
Key

- A Door of Cloisters
- B Martyrdom door
- C Spot where Becket fell
- D Site of Becket's shrine (Trinity Chapel)
- Becket's route
- Knights' route

29. Christchurch Cathedral

The north-west transept of the Cathedral was the scene of Becket's martyrdom in 1170. Becket was canonised in 1173 and his miracle-working tomb in the crypt gave rise to the Canterbury pilgrimages. The Saint's remains lay for fifty years in the eastern end of the crypt but, after a fire which damaged the choir above, they were transferred in 1220 to the new Trinity Chapel. One of the twelve Miracle Windows in the Trinity Chapel illustrates Becket's life and death. In the base of the first window, at the western end of the north aisle, is a traditional portrait of Becket vested

(possibly 12th century). At the top of the fifth window the golden shrine on its pillars is represented. The pilgrimages were already on the decline when, in 1538, Henry VIII destroyed the shrine and took possession of the enormous quantity of gold and jewels with which it was adorned. Only the surrounding pavement of mosaic, worn into grooves by the pilgrims, remains to mark the site of the tomb. So magnificently adorned was the shrine that, in 1512, Erasmus wrote: "gold was the meanest thing to be seen."

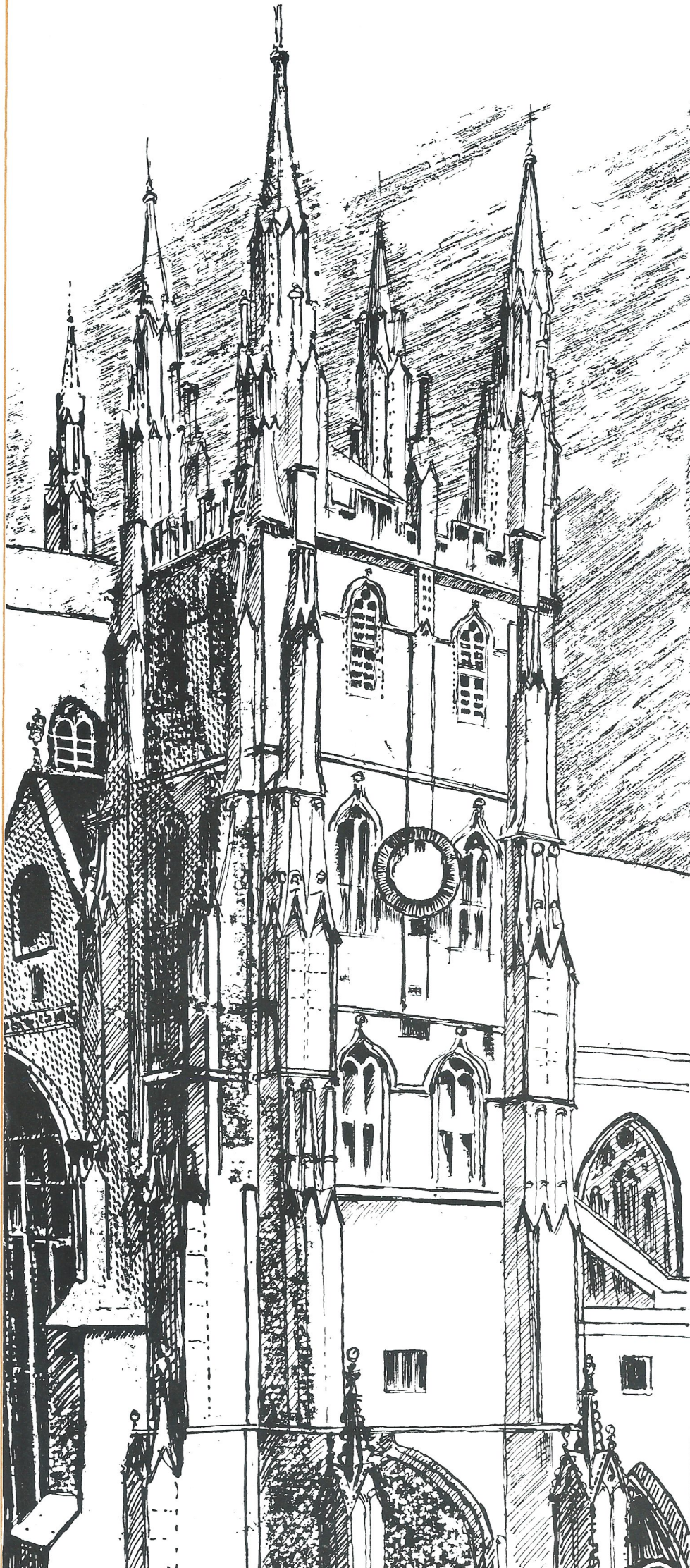


CANTERBURY ENVIRONMENT CENTRE

The Canterbury Environment Centre aims to promote a fuller understanding and enjoyment of the urban scene – its history, its buildings, its people and its life. Since 1975 the centre has been actively engaged in many aspects of environmental education at all levels in and around the city of Canterbury.

Our activities are concerned with three main areas:

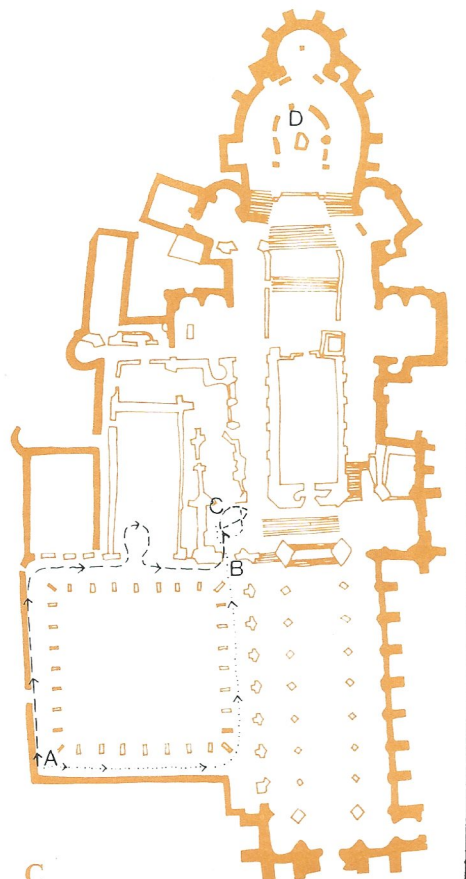
1. Running a full programme of open lectures, courses, forums and other events covering a wide range of topics from 'Archaeology' to 'Alternative energy'.



A.



B.



C.