

Martin Renshaw CCT talk 'Ghostly sounds and shades of light' 26th Nov 2020 Q & As

There have been an incredible number of really interesting questions posed on Facebook about this lecture. Each answer was given via Vicki Harding's Facebook page, with Martin Renshaw providing the answers. We thought others would find quite a number or these of interest to them too, so have put them all together here.

Incidentally, 'Ghostly' in medieval times meant 'religious', so 'Ghostly sounds' included bells and all sounds heard within a church in this context.

[Mary Emery](#) 1:10:01

When you refer to the 'veil' was that a sort of curtain - made of cloth?

Also [Daphne George](#) 1:06:03

What was the veil made of?

And [Daphne George](#) 1:02:54

Very interesting, I had not heard of the altar veil being used. I associated this with ancient Jewish custom in the temple. The use of the 1st gospel of St John at the end of Mass is sometimes used in Ordinariate Masses.

A: Yes, it was a painted cloth curtain, fixed at the top of a veil beam which spanned the sanctuary, so that its bottom edge could be lowered by ropes running over pulleys. You can see it in the stained glass we showed on the slide titled 'Elevation' at **33:32**, and also see that the beam in the stained glass is just like the stump of the beam still in Clare church in Suffolk shown two slides previously at **32:17**. The chancel floor at Clare was raised quite considerably by the Victorians who remodelled the sanctuary as if for a post-Tridentine altar. (They assumed the 'High' altar meant it was high up whereas it actually meant it was the 'main' altar.) Consequently, the veil beam appears lower than it would originally have been. In a small to medium sized church like Clare the veil beam had to be high enough to allow the clerks to process under it but be low enough for people in the church to see the host elevated above it by the officiating priest. The people in the church would not have seen or heard the central part of the mass called the canon. This is still the practice of the Orthodox churches, which reflected the practice at the Temple in Jerusalem, where only the priests were allowed into the 'Holy of Holies'. Post-Tridentine [from about 1560 onwards, but taking time to permeate the whole of NW Europe] practice in the Roman church abolished rood screens and veils and set the High altar at the top of several steps, and moved out the singers and other choristas and the organ to another place in the church, such as a 'transept' or a west gallery (or 'choro' in Iberian churches), as can still be seen today. This explains why French cathedrals for instance have organs usually at the west end of their naves, and it was only in the C19 that English organ makers reintroduced organs into the chancels of large churches on the continent from the 1940s onwards.

[Mary Emery](#) 1:13:53

Ah, Martin, that's so interesting; thank you. I didn't "see" what I was looking at in the stained glass, if you follow what I mean, but I did wonder at the peculiar height of the beam stump in Clare Church. Now, knowing that the good old Victorians had been fiddling, it makes sense.

A: I've checked our measurements now. The current height of that beam is 5 foot 6 inches, but there are two Victorian steps which would have made the height about 6 foot 3 inches originally. This of course was too high for a priest to stretch his arms up and to see the host over it, but further east there were usually two steps in the medieval sanctuary in front of the altar. This would raise the priest so you could see the host when he extended his arms and priests could still walk under the veil beam itself when processing. The sight lines work out!

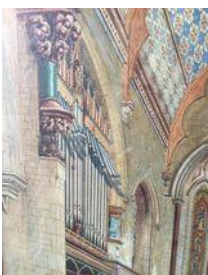
[Sue Graham](#) 0:00 Reply to [Carole Tyrrell](#)

yes, I'd never heard of a stobbes before!

A: The singular is a stobbe. Stobbes are mentioned in some church wardens' accounts though as usual there are various spellings.

[Sue Graham](#) 0:00

thank you Martin! I loved your talk- it was fascinating and so lovely to hear you sing too. May I be very cheeky and ask if you might recognise where this organ is? I have a painting of it but I have no idea where it is!



A: Hi Sue. I'm afraid I don't, but if you send me a copy of the picture so I can blow it up larger and maybe see more of the context, I'll look into it further. renshaw.martin@wanadoo.fr

[Chris Michaelides](#) 1:05:06

Just thought - is Morrow another term for "morning"...

A: It's the same word as in 'tomorrow' – probably meaning, in this case, the mass of the new day.

[Chris Michaelides](#) 0:00

Thank you - so, a Morrow Mass is the first Mass of the day. Do you know if it was/is a recognised practice to have a particular altar (perhaps one dedicated to a particular Saint) regularly used for Morrow Masses?

A: It was usually one of the altars up against the west side of the rood screen. We have seen small low windows (low to pick up the rising sun, but also to get light through to the area below the westwards coving of the rood loft) both on the north and the south side. For instance, in Pluckley in Kent (not far from Ashford, near the old A20) there is evidence of a low window on the north side (now blocked up), but at Egerton 2 miles away - which was a chapel of Pluckley, though a much bigger building! - the equivalent but larger window is still there on the south side. So, clearly there was no fixed side, and it is certainly possible that the altar was dedicated to a particular saint as well. Another altar in that position (on the west side of the rood screen) was sometimes called a Jesus altar. My impression is that the Jesus altar was not used as a morrow mass altar: it had other uses, supported by guilds or fraternities and was used by them and at particular festivals, as far as I can tell.

[Chris Michaelides](#) 1:00:12

Thanks for such an interesting insight into the daily life of the medieval church. You mentioned a Morrow Mass Altar - is this a special Mass and if so can you explain the Morrow Mass please.

A: It is a special short said mass, by request for travellers very early in the morning, at day break. They would deliberately look at the fresco of St Christopher, patron saint of travellers, as they left the church for extra comfort.

[Kevin Drury](#) 58:29

As an organist originating from a small North Norfolk village this was most interesting. Thank you.

And [Kevin Drury](#) 1:04:20

My brother used to pump for me - until electrified. The organ not my brother.

A: I wonder where in north Norfolk you come from? because we have done a lot of work in that part of the world.

[Kevin Drury](#) 4:47

Hi Martin. Aylmerton, although living in Sale now and not certain if our NY visit to Norfolk will take place. Off to play the organ now for our broadcast.

A: We went to Aylmerton in July 2013 and saw it has signs of a NE building though it's difficult to know if it was a double storey one with organ bellows above as in the church in our talk. The chancel has been re-roofed with several courses of modern bricks at the top which support the modern roof plate, and the east gable of the church (now called the 'nave') shows evidence of an old chancel roof line that is scarcely higher than now. We can't be sure the roof was high enough for an organ on a north chancel gallery above the north door, and modern render to the north chancel wall means we can't tell if there was a wind trunk hole going through it in C16. Wall reading radar might find something - we'll add it to the list of potential candidates! – when we have time to pursue this.

There seem to be the remains of a window on the north west wall of the chancel. It is clearly differently constructed from the one on the south side whose tracery etc and surrounding flintwork, however, look suspiciously C19 to us. The ruined north chapel is interesting, as are the remains of the rood stairway turret. It's not impossible, due to its siting, that it could have been used as access to an upper bellows room too, but not of course if there was a window in the NW of the chancel, unless it was already blocked up.

The organ looks interesting, with a lovely case. NPOR says it was made in 1865 by Mark Noble, and I see the electric blower to replace your brother was installed in 1972 by Boggis of Diss. Celluloid for key covers is OK, though old ivory blanks from unwanted keyboards or new ones made from cow bone are good too. Do you know the Noble organ in one of the Elmham churches? We saw and played that: a very good instrument, though sounding a little suspiciously more like Clifford Hyatt's excellent voicing perhaps than Mark Noble's!

Good to see you are teaching people at Sale. Keep up the good work!

[Louise Clarke](#) 1:10:17

Please let us know when this work is published

A: Keep an eye on soundsmedieval.org for news of these. The next one will probably be during 2021. ABC is available now, in its second edition – see our soundsmedieval.org website for details.

[Helen Smith](#) 1:09:18

Is a high mass different from an ordinary one?

A: High mass means the 'main mass' – like a High Street is the main street, not the highest one. This is always sung 'with note', meaning using musical notes; the definition of a 'ceremony' in medieval times was that it was a sung service or office. The morrow mass is a said 'low' mass, a chantry mass however is always chanted/sung at a side or chantry altar, hence the name. A chancel is where you sing, being spelt chaunsell in C16 documents. All these masses were said or sung according to one of the English rites i.e. those of Hereford, York, Salisbury or St Paul's. Roman catholic masses nowadays, whether in English or Latin, follow the post-Tridentine (counter reformation) rites which are not the same in several ways.

[Debbie Pedersen](#) 48:49

This is lovely! So interesting about positioning of the windows to let in the winter light. Must have been stunning for the common folk and well heeled alike. Will this be available later?

A: The PowerPoint and the text are on our website soundsmedieval.org now. You may also like to look at our talk **Lucus non lucendum: Windows in chancels to 1399 (June 2017)** in the 'Library'.

[Rhiannon Rees](#) 50:59

Another question for Martin. Who made the organ their as in Hammersmith?

A: We're not quite sure what your question is asking. We do know the names of some organ makers at the time and that there were organ making workshops in the major towns and also ports, for instance. We didn't set the church in any specific place. There was a family of organ makers in Norwich called Arnold, but I didn't give master Arnold a first name because it's not clear if Arnold is a first name or surname; they are called 'father' and 'master' in documents.

[Liz Palliser](#) 57:49

An organ would be very expensive. Did many parish churches at this time have them?

A: Organs were not usually the most expensive things in churches. These were usually 'suits' of highly embroidered vestments, each suit being a set of one of the seasonal colours for 3 priests. Their copes were also expensive, but the hand-written and illuminated manuscripts of gospels and anthems were among the most expensive items in the church's treasury, along with the gold chalices and crucifixes. For comparison, a vicar's annual wage was around £6, and an organ could cost anything from £5 upwards for the smallest moveable ones to about £9 for a 'standing' organ with an ornate case placed on a high loft or gallery. All Hallows Barking by the Tower, one of 105 London City churches, had a new organ at this time – early C16 – that cost the modern purchasing-power equivalent of around half a million pounds. England was a very rich trading nation at this time, with Norfolk as its most prosperous county, and people were happy to spend large amounts of money on ornaments and furnishings for their churches. A rood screen and its figures etc could take up to 4 years to make and colour and the accounts for screens in Stratton in Cornwall, show that it cost the entire income of the parishioners' side of the church for 3 years, a colossal amount.

It is difficult to estimate very precisely how many churches had organs, but my impression is that up to half of all the approx. 12,000 churches and chapels were so richly furnished in every other way that an organ would be a normal item in their inventory. Mid C16 inventories show that town churches often had more than one organ. Some evidence of their existence can be found in the actual fabric of churches and other evidence is written in accounts, but organs seem usually to have been placed for purely musical reasons in the chancels, so their capital cost does not figure in the churchwardens' accounts. Payments for organ players at festivals often do figure though, and it seems that the people through their churchwardens were happy to take on the burden of maintaining organs as well. It was the rector's duty to furnish their chancels and that would include supplying the organs in most instances, but the accounts of rectors are pretty rare unless they are Oxbridge colleges which have preserved their medieval accounts. Monasteries often also possessed multiple instruments in their various chapels and in the quire, as did cathedrals and the larger collegiate churches.

[Rhiannon Rees](#) 29:36

Is there a correct order for lighting candles not thought of that

A: The basic thing is that the gospel light is never unaccompanied by the epistle light. There is a deep symbolism there, it seems.

[Pam Powell](#) 1:10:45

you set your 'day' in the 16th century, was it similar in 14th and 15th centuries?

A: Ceremony was more or less the same, and furnishings, vestments etc were possibly less lavish earlier, and the music would also have been simpler in style. By the start of the C16, it begins to be difficult to see where all the 'stock' was kept, and sacristies and their lofts and the lofts in porches and upper floors in church towers must all have been used for storage. All this wealth was stolen by the Edwardian state in the 1540s.

[Brenda Cox](#) 54:21

What would happen if the priest was taken ill or was called away?

A: Someone would have called the priest from the next village. An assistant priest like Thomas was therefore a good help. Town churches would have had many priests at this period – especially towns like Boston and other ports that were wealthier through trade, for example.

[Mary Emery](#) 54:06

I would never have thought about that the placing of windows and Lady Chapels, but of course I can now see that they were designed to take advantage of as much natural light as possible before electric lighting was the norm.

A: Once the daily ceremonies were no longer performed from the 1540s onwards, the whole rationale of the lighting of buildings became forgotten. Then, Victorian 'restorers' put dark colours in the windows making churches very gloomy, including the chancels where singers need the light the most!

[Phil Gollin](#) 1:05:37

Who used the choir stalls, and when?

A: Lots of people! – depending on the status of the church. In a village church they would be full only at High Festivals, but in a town church with a large staff of clerks of all ages they would have had much more use every day, as they would in cathedrals and collegiate churches. They would accommodate not only singers, but also acolytes, candle bearers, incense bearers, holy water carriers, those who carry crosses or rang bells etc. The generic term for all these was 'coristas', i.e. those who worked in the quire. Not every one was obliged to attend all the 8 offices every day, but they would be expected to be there for Matins/Lauds, High Mass and Vespers at least.

[Rachel Marie](#) 54:05

Thank you so much, this is a fascinating lecture. It puts churches and their architecture into a whole new light, I love the consideration of different experiences in daily life at a church. Was this fairly typical in late medieval churches in Britain? ... And could you recommend any sources for information about daily services and activity within parish churches?

A: What I described was fairly typical of the smaller rural churches in England. My sources are basically books about the life of the clergy of the period, plus a knowledge of the ceremonies and their music, and the inventories and some references in the accounts of the wardens of the church when they sometimes pay the fees of clerks, singers and organ players for instance. A book by Nicholas Orme about the general use of the churches by their parishioners called *Churchgoing in Medieval England* is due to be published next year by Yale UP, and I'm sure that this will be very interesting.

[Cliff Godwin](#) 1:00:44

Thank you for such a beautifully presented talk. So fascinating and informative that I will have to watch again and copy your illustrations. Again thank you so much.

A: The PowerPoint slides are now available on www.soundsmedieval.org fairly soon, and it will be possible for you to use these, with acknowledgement, but please remember that these are not plans of a specific church but a sort of composite of some of the most common features to be found in churches.

[Clare Lees](#) 1:11:51

The organist/master of the choristers at Southwell Cathedral is still known as Rector Chorai (sorry for incorrect spelling)

A: You nearly had it right – it's Rector Chori (I know Paul Hale who has just retired from that job at Southwell, and my father was ordained there) – and it's great to see this sort of link to our past musical history, but unlike nowadays when this person is the overall director of music, in C15 the rector chori would be the person who made sure everything was right in the choir, (including supervising not only the people who sang, played the organ and rang the bells, but also the acolytes, holy water carriers, taperers, in fact everybody who did something there). In a small-to-medium sized church that we described there wouldn't be someone actually called 'Rector Chori' but someone would do that job – to make sure that those 'serving' by supporting the offices did everything well. So between them, Harry the Sexton and Will the priest would have ensured it all went smoothly. In a cathedral the Precentor was the person in charge of the music. His seat would be the first one on the north side of the return stalls – the stalls with their backs to the rood screen, 'returned' from the majority of

the stalls which face each other and are set along the north and south walls – from where he could keep an eye and ear on everything and everyone.

[Jennifer Thompson](#) 30:40

Stanford in the Vale is now in Oxfordshire!

A: Yes, now! – but not then. But then (as now) both counties were in the same diocese – of far-away Lincoln. Only after the break with Rome was the present three-county diocese of Oxford created, with the temporary college chapel of Wolsey's Cardinal College as its cathedral. This is now known as Christ Church, or *Aedes Christi*, the house of Christ; the new chapel, designed by Wolsey on the scale of the one at the King's College in Cambridge, for which the foundations and the wooden roof were built, was never advanced any further because of his 'fall'. A well-known architectural historian described this as the greatest building ever 'lost' ever to Oxford. Please excuse this riff, but that's my undergrad college, as it happens.

[Helen Westmancoat](#) 32:47

This is taking me back to the Latin Mass of my youth

A: For the whole year of the anniversary of St Dominic in 2017, at St Dominic's Priory church, Haverstock Hill, NW London, I sang at a monthly Dominican medieval mass which was practically identical to the Sarum Rite of medieval times, (which was abolished in 1549 with the introduction of the Book of Common Prayer) and more or less reinstated under Queen Mary and Cardinal Pole. This was a fascinating experience and helped me hugely to understand why churches were designed as they were. The Latin mass you would know would be the post-Tridentine mass of the Counter-Reformation, different from the Sarum Rite for which English churches were arranged, furnished and lit.

[Turk Myers](#) 1:03

Hello from Highland, Illinois. USA

[Turk Myers](#) 3:20

We love going to England and going to the old churches and cathedrals.

A: We hope it is not too long before you are able to enjoy doing this again, and will now look at them with new eyes. You may find some of our lectures on soundsmedieval.org website of interest.

[Andrew Nickeas](#) 48:11

who was pumping the organ during pipe and keyboard tuning? Does the organ tuner have an apprentice? A guild of Organ Makers?

A: Harry's son was the bellows pumper or lifter, and did it during the tuning work. Arnold's workshop would certainly have had apprentices, and until the 1530s there was a Company of Organ Makers in the City of London. Elsewhere organ makers would have been, if elected, aldermen of various religious guilds. As time went on, religious guilds and trade guilds tended to separate out, though with much the same personnel, so when religious guilds were abolished in the 1545-7 along with alms houses and chantries, most guilds were able to step sideways into being purely trade organisations, often keeping the lands and buildings with which they had been endowed or purchased themselves which paid for their functioning and charitable works, including paying for burial rites and graves.

[Andrew Nickeas](#) 54:03

There is not much mention of the world outside apart from that reference "turbulent times" how much awareness of the rest of the world affected the village?

A: The links to the world outside are three in my piece: 1. The three people who took their produce to market would have heard the latest news there. In 1520 the latest religious news might well have been that a German friar had recently taken a stand against papal indulgences. 2. Thomas would have arrived from the friary in the nearest larger town with such news too, as well as much other information (political as well as ecclesiastical) through the monastic 'internet', and 3. it's likely that Alyson as a literate woman with a well-connected family would have received news through her relatives. You may therefore have understood that I have left myself room for a sequel here! And the times that would be coming in the next 15 years would make the turbulence of the C15 and its various small-scale civil wars seem pretty small beer. In fact, the worst self-inflicted wounds a country had ever given itself (until our own times) were just round the corner in 1520.

[Andrew Nickeas](#) 1:11:14

Was there an aumbry, and was it also used for unused communion wine and holy water /oil?

A: No, the pyx which hung in front of the altar contained a box with a consecrated host which was a round thin wafer of unleavened bread baked in an oven using moulding irons (like large die held in pincers), kept there so it could be taken in an emergency to such as a death bed without needing consecration. The sacrament was given

then only in this one 'kind', so it wasn't necessary to 'reserve' (in the modern expression) a chalice and wine as well. The anointing oils would have been renewed and blessed at the local cathedral once a year by the bishop and kept in a safe, a locked stobbe in the sacristy. There are some stobbes which have hidden corners and these might have been for such precious items. Some modern aumbries are in fact re-used stobbes, which may have been cupboards/lockers for music and other books as well as ornaments and utensils.

[Fiona Macfarlane](#) 1:07:50

Ale not beer because no hops?

A: Yes, and one of the flavourings of ales was the fruit of the tree we now call the wild service tree, but then was known as the 'chequer tree', from the chequered (grid) appearance of its bark. Pubs called 'The Chequers' probably take their name from this flavouring rather than the two best-known games that use a grid pattern (chequers or draughts and chess) even though these are (or were) played in a pub.

And [Harriet Connides](#) 1:07:02

Hurray for the church ale!

A: Yes, these were valuable for good cheer at feasts, often shared with adjoining parishes, and at plays and other entertainments, all of which contributed to church funds, sometimes to a considerable extent.

[Susan Dunn Morua](#) 1:00:49

In addition to all the offices in the church, did the priest also have to visit parishioners, or was that left to lay people?

A: Yes, certainly this was one of his 'canonical' jobs, called the 'cure of souls', with which he was charged particularly when inducted to a church and endowed with all the benefits (money, oblations or offerings, fees, tithes and garden or glebe lands) of his position. Hence his haste to get to Mistress Smyth's death bed.

[Ann Teoh](#) 1:00:52

Is there any difference between the Anglican and Catholic churches in terms of church designs?

A: Yes, the major difference can be seen between a medieval church is that this has a complete, large (often double-cube) chancel and a new Victorian one which has only a relatively stubby one. A rail journey southwards on the Great Eastern line will show you the difference between Doncaster parish church (rebuilt after a fire in the mid-C19) and either Newark or Grantham parish churches further south. A post-Tridentine church doesn't need a long chancel either because it doesn't have its choir or organ etc in it (see above). So poor AWN Pugin was caught between the C of E's having buildings their rumps of liturgies didn't need and the Roman church who didn't know either what to do with Pugin's designs with long chancels which were – to their minds – 'obscured' by rood screens which the Roman church had removed post the Council of Trent. The Roman church had anyway mostly moved to the style of the majority of churches in Rome now (there is hardly a gothic arch to be seen there), and though I haven't space here to explain this further, just consider the difference between the C19 Roman Brompton 'Oratory' in London and a medieval town church for the change in Roman practice. Also between the same medieval church and an early C19 C of E one, with galleries and a central pulpit and hardly a chancel at all, to see what the difference between the Catholic Roman church demanded of its buildings in the pre-Reformation period and the actual requirements of the C of E Books of Common Prayer from its second iteration in 1552 were until the Tractarian changes in the mid-C19 that (allegedly) re-medievalised what had become essentially Calvinist C of E churches for nearly 300 years.

[Kevin Drury](#) 59:54

I was always told the Gospel Side candle should never burn alone

A: Yes, that's what I understand to be the case, and what I was taught as a boy server when a chorister at St Paul's cathedral.

[Liz Tucker](#) 55:38

would it have been more difficult to see if there were stained glass windows?

A: No, the glass in later medieval churches (from about 1300 onwards) was markedly less dark than previously, partly because the windows were much larger because more light was required inside a church when by that time not everything was being sung by heart. (As it was to continue to be in most monasteries, with a very restricted repertoire of 'amateur' monk singers.) As music generally in 'secular' (non-monastic) churches became more complex and sophisticated once the clergy were usually themselves well-trained musicians and even more when professional choirs became more common as people generally became more musically (and in other ways) literate, the music itself demanded a peak of proficiency not re-attained until quite recently. Glazing with clear glass also became less expensive, the function of windows became primarily to let in light. We now see churches as reverse images, with stories in windows and white walls, but the main impression of a medieval church chancel would have been a well-lit space with large windows. and the people in their own

church area would have put most of their didactic effort into mural paintings, which they paid for. This doesn't mean that certain windows wouldn't have been 'storied' or lightly decorated, or with e.g. depictions of donors, angel musicians etc., but the colour tones would generally have been yellow and white with only touches of other deeper colours, as you can see in well-preserved later medieval glass windows - as in several churches in York, for example. The late-medieval windows at Fairford or King's College chapel are not typical of the period as far as most parish churches are concerned.

[Kate Yeates](#) 49:39

if the parson lives in the parsonage who lives in the church house?

A: The church house was the place for the church (i.e. the peoples') activities. Some church wardens' accounts mention that parts of it were hired out to live in, to provide income and perhaps security, but it was not primarily a dwelling house but a place for meetings and baking and brewing. In the winter the church would be less appealing and anyway was being pewed towards the end of the C15 onwards. Lodging wayfarers and others needing a place for the night was part of the priest's duties, and that's why Will had a second, guest bedroom for Thomas but needed to find him housing on a permanent basis.

And [Gail Antonia Thornton](#) 44:06

What was the church house, please?

A: See below, please. Most church houses were built from the middle of the C15 onwards and then abandoned for lack of use from the later C16 onwards. I'm not aware of any national survey of them, but there will be a lecture about them in the CCT series next Spring, I understand, and I'm looking forward very much to learning more about them.

[Rhiannon Rees](#) 47:36

Question for Martin is there a correct order in lighting all the candles as in normal times as an Altar Server I often do them so interested to know the order please.

A: I hope my answer [given in the Q&A at the end of the talk and touched on above] was clear and useful.

[Gail Antonia Thornton](#) 43:19

This is beautifully detailed and full of humanity. What are the sources for this level of detail, for example the work of an organ maker (looking for mouse droppings!) and of the priest, beyond the daily offices?

A: I am an organ maker and have quite often had to teach organ players how to rub out mouse droppings between keys in rural churches. I expect you know John Betjeman's poem about Church Mice who come in from the fields to eat the harvest festival produce and live in or near the organ, and 'under the cover of its notes Eat half-way through a sheaf of oats'? (I quote from memory.) See above for the duties of priests, which will also include requiem funerals (as hinted at in my talk), christenings and the 'churcing' (bringing back to church) of women in thanksgiving for a safe labour and birth, these latter two taken mostly in English. (In fact the early BCP Churchings were practically identical with the late medieval one.) Junior priests like Thomas also taught the basics of reading, and Latin and music, and even specifically taught organ playing too, just as they had been taught themselves that way.

[Anna Wright](#) 30:52

How common was it for there to be women churchwardens?

A: Actually though there were some, there weren't many. I put this in just to provoke the question! The wardens of the church (that part the church the parishioners built, furnished and organised, west of the chancel arch or screen) were elected 'by the consent of the whole parish' annually, usually, and had to give them both verbal and monetary accounts of their work every year.

[Naomi Michaels](#) 21:16

Hi, Martin, how do you know the tunes to chant from so long ago?

A: There is a massive repertoire of chants to cope with all the daily and varied demands of the offices and services. The tiny fragments I sang were typical of these, including part of the Compline hymn, but what I called the 'love-song to Our Lady' dates from the C13 and was preserved in just one MS from the monastery of Llantonny Secunda near Gloucester. It is really not strictly an 'official' office hymn, but sits on the ill-defined border between religion and courtly love, and should probably be sung with two voices, i.e. with a second voice or instrument which sings or plays another but matching melody (the music for both is on the soundsmedieval.org web-site). It is very easy to remember and in the right acoustic is hauntingly beautiful. It was in the large repertoire of the Canterbury Clerkes, an a capella trio with which I sang for about 26 years, and that's why I know it, not from singing it in Canterbury cathedral!