

**GURPS®**

Fourth Edition

# ***Locations: St. George's Cathedral™***



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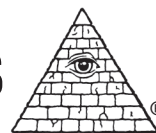
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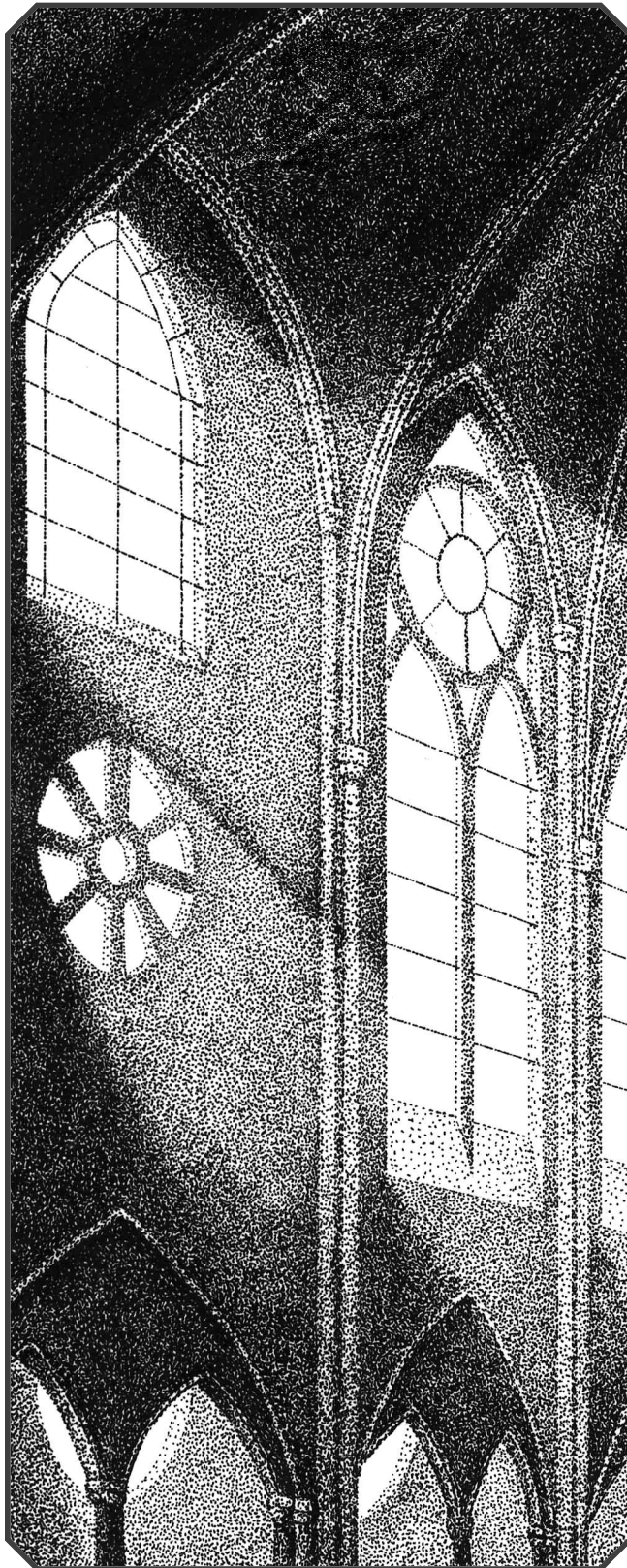
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*Human creation,  
powerful and fecund  
as the divine creation  
of which it seems to  
have stolen the double  
character – variety,  
eternity.*

*– Victor Hugo,  
The Hunchback  
of Notre Dame*

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## About GURPS

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Rules and statistics in this book are specifically for the **GURPS Basic Set, Fourth Edition**. Page references that begin with B refer to that book, not this one.



# INTRODUCTION

A bishop's church. A prayer in stone. A forest of pillars, drawing your eyes and soul upward. Heaven, Hell, the Scriptures frozen into garishly painted statues. The tallest manmade thing ever seen. The pride of the city. A show of power. An extravagant project.

**GURPS Locations: St. George's Cathedral** describes a church that is all of that, and more, to a medieval society.

This supplement describes all parts of the building, its role in the city's life, sketches of the people commonly encountered there, and adventure ideas for various settings. The cathedral can be customized through the *Lenses* (see pp. 25-26), so that it can be used in a fantasy world, in a (somewhat cinematic) historical medieval campaign, or even in modern times.

This building never existed in reality, and some of the items and rooms are fictional. Most of it, however, is inspired by various parts of several historical cathedrals, as listed in the bibliography, and most of the details are factually accurate. No part of the description is mandatory; the GM can always leave something out, especially in a straight, realistic medieval campaign.

## CAMPAIGN USES

St. George's Cathedral fits in with most historical campaigns and fantasy settings, especially **GURPS Banestorm**. In Ytarria, it would be suitable for any Megalan city smaller than the capital. It would be particularly interesting if it happens to be in

Ekhans (**GURPS Banestorm**, p. 97), considering the dragon threat there. Any of the northern provinces may be appropriate, given that dragons notoriously infest the Whitehood Mountains.

A Gothic cathedral may still be around for a modern campaign. Not only would it be priceless for its art and history, but it might also have had a congregation using it as their place of worship for the centuries, making it highly sanctified ground.

*A bishop's church. A prayer in stone.*

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Michele Armellini makes a living out of foreign languages, and he would be more comfortable with quill and parchment than with incense and thurible. He has visited more medieval cathedrals than his wife cares to recall. He has contributed regularly to *Pyramid* magazine and authored or co-authored several e23 products, including **GURPS WWII: Their Finest Hour**, **GURPS WWII: Doomed White Eagle**, and **GURPS WWII: Michael's Army**.

## Glossary

**aisle:** A lower passageway to the sides of the nave.

**ambo** (plural **ambones**): A fixed lectern.

**apse:** The end part of a church, behind the main altar.

**archdeacon:** An ecclesiastic to whom the bishop delegates select duties.

**ashlar:** Accurately cut stone used for masonry.

**aumbry:** A recessed wall cabinet for sacred vessels.

**bailiff:** The representative of the king's authority; the sheriff.

**balustrade:** A low partition, handrail, or parapet made by individual vertical shafts supporting a horizontal element.

**canon:** A priest who is member of the chapter.

**capital:** The top end of a column.

**cathedra:** The bishop's seat in his church, which is called a cathedral because of this.

**chancel:** The area containing the main altar and choir, set apart by an enclosure.

**chapter:** The body of priests attached to the cathedral.

**choir:** The area where the priests carry out the services.

**clestory:** The part of the nave above the aisle roofs, with the largest windows.

**confraternity:** A laymen's association dedicated to a specific religious service.

**deacon:** A member of minor clerical orders.

**dean:** The head of the chapter.

**flying buttress:** A load-bearing partial arch built outside the wall it supports.

**hagiography:** A saint's biography, focusing on his miracles and teachings.

**nave:** The main, highest part of a church, between the aisles.

**order:** A specialized religious organization or a class of vows and, therefore, a degree of clerical investment.

**ossuary:** A room for the burial of bones.

**parvis:** The paved, open area in front of a church.

**prebendary:** A priest entitled to an income from specific assets (such as lands owned by the chapter).

**relic:** Bones or belongings of a saint, usually kept in a valuable container, the reliquary.

**reredos:** A decorated screen behind an altar.

**sexton:** A layman carrying out menial work to maintain the church building; a sacristan.

**thurible:** A censer; a burner for incense.

**tithe:** A tenth of a person's income, given to support the church, the clergy, and their works.

**transept:** The transverse section of the church, crossing the main body of the building at right angles.

**vault:** A ceiling formed by an arched structure.

# CHAPTER ONE

# OVERVIEW

*Jean sat inconspicuously in the shadows, watching the square in front of the great church. The spire seemed impossibly tall, too much for him to crane his neck back enough to view it all. But, he wasn't there to admire the tallest building he'd ever seen – he was there to observe the comings and goings through the mighty gates. The square was bustling with cityfolk, peddlers, priests, and beggars. Two men wearing the bishop's colors looked bored as they strolled from the gate of the bishop's palace to the cathedral's porch.*

*A man ran to the church, and was stopped by the guardsmen. His tunic was bloodstained. A crowd gathered around the man, who was looking for protection. One of the guardsmen rushed inside, and came back with an old priest, followed by women and a burly man, probably the sexton. It occurred to Jean that had anything unusual happened inside, right then, nobody would have paid any attention. A plan began to form in his mind.*

## A MONUMENT TO GOD ... AND MAN

About 150 years ago, the main church of a growing city was destroyed in a fire. It had been a squat, Romanesque building, and the bishop decided he wanted a more fashionable, taller, brighter cathedral. The old church had been dedicated to St. Guy of Cousnay, a modest hermit, but St. George had always been more popular with the local nobility. St. Guy faded into obscurity when the new cathedral was dedicated to St. George.

The bishop made an initial appropriation, and over the decades, the diocese contributed to the construction. The main funding, however, came from the townsfolk. Although their genuine desire to please God played a role, the citizenry also wanted their town to develop. The bishop had temporarily moved to another town, citing the lack of a church large enough, and the townspeople wanted to make sure he wouldn't change the diocese's seat. They knew a cathedral would be good for business.

The first parts to be built, over the older church's crypt, were the apse and choir; they became usable for services a century ago. The work stopped some 40 years ago, with the cathedral nearly completed, because of a dispute between the then Bishop Pierre de Tours and the city. The townsfolk petitioned the Crown to become a free city, removing them from the bishop's own feudal domain. The king was interested – this would boost his own revenues, as market cities were becoming immensely profitable, and it would weaken a feudal lord. Bribery, litigation, intrigue, and violence ensued, and the bishop lost. The metropolis is now a free city. While the bishop still has plenty of feudal domains, those are rural.

A renewed construction drive began. Laymen had an essential role in it, now. A Confraternity for the Fabric was established, and it answered to the cathedral's chapter (see *Who's in Charge*, p. 6). They appointed a famous master builder. However, recurring wars and bad harvests made funding problematic, and the construction was completed two decades ago, with great difficulty.

Then lightning struck. During a stormy night, the spire of the north tower collapsed, damaging that part of the building. Repair work was begun about five years ago, and immediately halted, because of a lack of funds and over a disagreement between the chapter and the confraternity. The latter was dissolved.

### The Eternal Building Yard

The construction of cathedrals lasted decades, sometimes centuries. The building yard was a landscape fixture, with its incomplete walls, lone pillars, and extensive scaffolding. On summer days, it might be teeming with workers. In winter, construction was suspended, and a reduced crew of masons and stone carvers worked in lean-to huts, called lodges.

The tools kept in these huts could serve as improvised or outright weapons, and they may have been worth stealing. However, most masons never left their best equipment around.

It could be an unsafe place to visit. Accidents with those tools and falls from the scaffolding were common hazards. Quicklime, used as building mortar, is also dangerous (see *GURPS Low-Tech*, p. 130). Among the piles of rubble, rioting crowds could find here plenty of stones to throw. It also made a risky setting for chases.

# THE CATHEDRAL AND THE CITY

Bad feelings linger between the citizenry and the bishop, from when he lost them as feudal subjects. Nevertheless, this is a city, and not a backwater town, because it grew as the seat of the diocese. It could be said that the city exists because of its cathedral.

The area around the cathedral is the very core of this city. The city hall is to the west of its tall façade. A well-proportioned civil Gothic building, its main entrance is not on the parvis. The city, indeed, created a new market square, in competition with the parvis, and had the hall “turn its back” on the cathedral, at the time of the conflict with the old bishop.

The grand palace of the bishop is to the north of St. George’s. A sprawling complex, the most recent part is the largest one. The archdeacon lives and schemes here. The palace includes a stout gate, an old circular tower (now part of the guards’ and servants’ quarters), a courtyard, stables, outbuildings, and a walled orchard.

The canons of St. George’s live in a group of buildings very close to the north porch of the church, known as the canons’ houses. Their formal meetings are held in a recently built octagonal chapter house adjoining their homes.

The townhouse belonging to the Viscount de Saint-Jules is just behind the cathedral apse. The best inn in town is just to the south of the parvis, with its own small courtyard and stable. The rest of the neighborhood is made up by typical medieval buildings, crowded together along narrow, winding streets.

## WHO’S IN CHARGE

An assembly of priests, called the cathedral’s chapter, runs St. George’s Cathedral. Their head is the dean, *Father Thibault d’Auvers* (p. 20). The chapter’s eight members are called canons. They have several distinctions and functions, some of which are merely ceremonial, while others are more important than they sound. *Father Aloysius* (p. 20), for instance, is the choirmaster. This actually means he’s second-in-command to Father Thibault. He oversees the cathedral’s daily routine.

A particularly significant appointment is that of treasurer. However, when the old one died years ago, Father Thibault undertook that task himself.

Below the canons are the deacons. They belong to minor orders, but will eventually become priests themselves. Important celebrations muster dozens of altar and choirboys.

The role of laymen in the cathedral has been downsized with the disappearance of the Confraternity of the Fabric, but keeping the building in working order is the sexton’s job. *Renier Sacreste* (p. 21) is that man, and his entire family works at cleaning this massive structure. Additional volunteers are always welcome.

Normally, just two of the bishop’s guardsmen are on duty outside the gates, but the detail numbers eight men. At least a couple more can be quickly summoned from the nearby bishop’s palace.

## THE POWER BROKERS

The cathedral is the focus of a web of rivalries between different Church bodies, religious and lay powers, nobles and commoners.

*Jacob d’Evreux* is an absentee bishop. He spends his time between the capital and Rome; rumor has it that he’ll become a cardinal. Therefore, he has a vicar in town. This would normally be the dean of the cathedral’s chapter. Instead, the bishop appointed an ambitious archdeacon, a clever Venetian schemer, *Monsignor Giovanni Dandolo*. The archdeacon often pushes the limits of his authority, making him unpopular. It’s difficult to appeal against his decisions, because that requires reaching the bishop. Conversely, if he doesn’t want to act, he claims that only d’Evreux can make a given decision.

Additionally, the bishop decided that everything belonging to the diocese, from the smallest chapel to the largest estate, is run by the archdeacon – except St. George’s, the most important church in the whole region. The chapter administers that independently and defers only to the bishop.

This makes the archdeacon’s power not entirely unfettered, which was perhaps the bishop’s intention. However, it’s a source of endless controversies. For instance, the parish priest of Villeneuve, one of the new neighborhoods, is “poaching” in the cathedral’s parish for donations for his new church. The dean can’t discipline him – only the archdeacon can. Since Villeneuve becoming a wealthier parish is in the archdeacon’s interests (because that parish is within his purview, unlike the cathedral), he won’t do anything . . . at least not without getting something in return.

Beyond this internal strife within the Church, there is the city. As a market city, it now pays its taxes directly to the Crown, but rules itself. After the dispute with the bishop’s predecessor, the commoners remain wary of any attempt by the diocese to interfere with their rights. The power-hungry archdeacon is thus unpopular with them. It doesn’t help that the diocese remains the main landlord in town.

The free men of the town elect members of the city council from among the citizenry. Many of the councilors are successful merchants. The city council, in turn, elects a mayor from among its members. The king’s approval is needed, but it’s a formality. The current mayor is *Armand Leblanc*, a shrewd master merchant known for valuing profit above all else.

The cathedral’s dean, unlike the archdeacon, holds some sway over several councilors. Partly due to the members’ respect for the cathedral and the personal charisma of the current dean, it is also because of long-lasting amicable relations of the chapter with some of the guilds (such as the masons, the candlemakers, and the jewelers). In turn, local families sometimes try to make the dean more attentive to their interests, through generous donations to the cathedral.

Noblemen still have privileges within the city and in the cathedral itself (they have their own chapel), which they fiercely defend. The most important one among them, the stubborn *Viscount de Saint-Jules*, leads them. While the nobles’ role in the city is vestigial, what feeds the proud cityfolk comes from their fields, and what supports the flourishing market moves across their feudal domains (including the diocese’s). Nobody wants to kill the hen laying the golden eggs, but should the noblemen form a common front among themselves, with the archdeacon, they could make life more difficult for the city and the cathedral.

For example, some of the best lands to the east belong to the cathedral chapter. (All the canons are prebendaries.)

The dean lets each priest deal with the income from those lands as he wishes, which means some of the chapter's serfs are luckier than others. However, between the city and those lands is the river, and the viscount has a feudal right to exact tolls on the ford and the ferry. Thus, any toll war would directly affect St. George's. The viscount opposes any attempt by the city to build its own bridge, which hasn't made him more popular. The city council is currently trying to recruit the cathedral's chapter for their campaign in favor of a bridge.

The king has a representative in town, the bailiff. He collects taxes and carries out administrative tasks. Additionally, he presides over the higher court of justice. He has access to the Nobles' Chapel, too. The current bailiff, *Guillaume de la Motte*, is an unknown newcomer from a minor family.

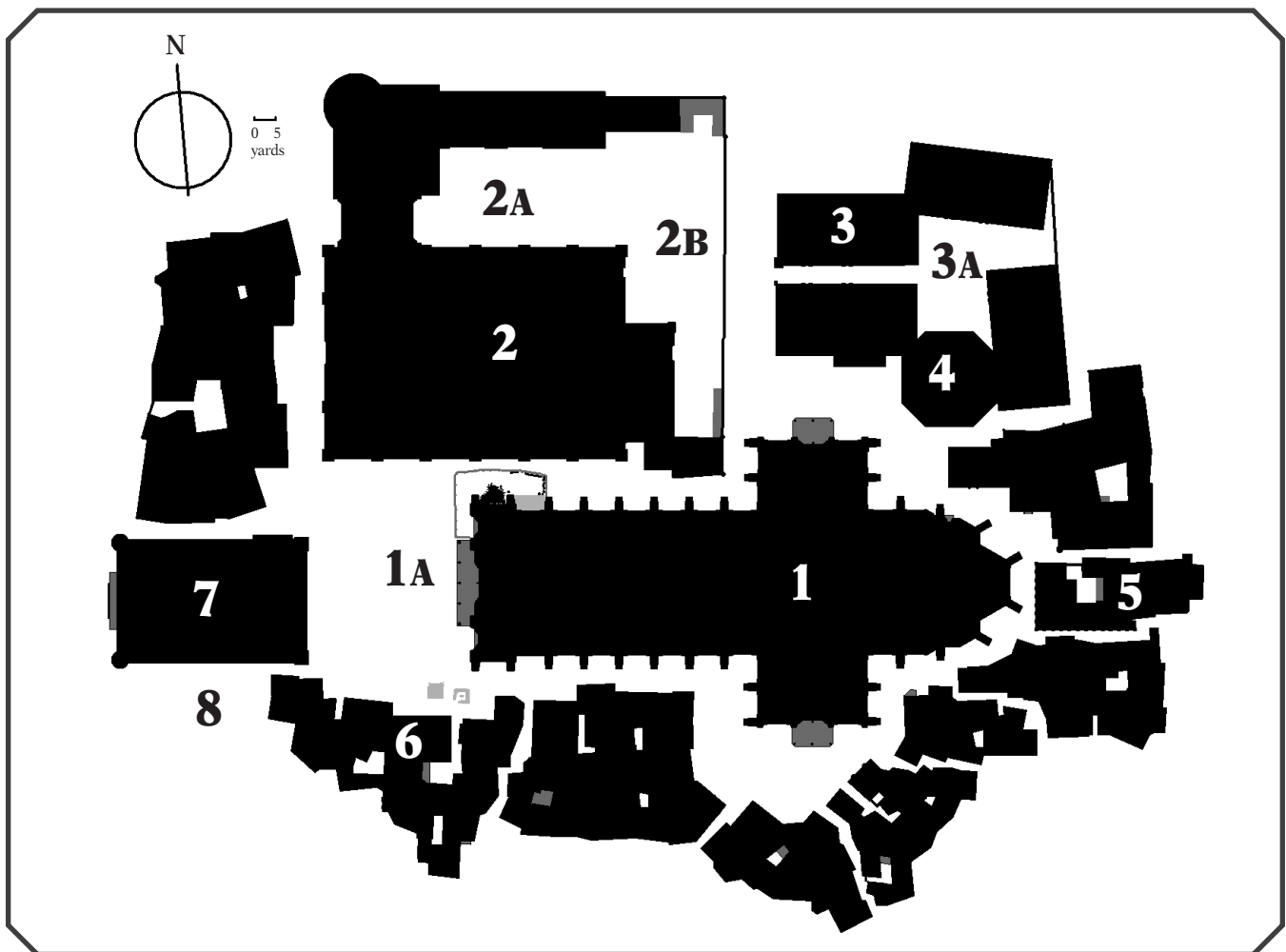
## THE SHOWCASE

The city's balance of power is made visible in the cathedral itself, which has become a showcase of wealth, standing, and

influence. Nobles have their own chapel (see p. 10), and a ruined nobleman loses his rights to attend mass there. The city council is currently exerting pressure for the mayor to be granted access. Likewise, being buried inside the cathedral is a sought-after honor, reserved for clergy and, occasionally, for wealthy noblemen.

When a successful banker or guild makes a lavish donation, they do not want the money to disappear inconspicuously in the cathedral's coffers. Instead, the offer comes in the form of valuable altar services or noticeable artworks, so that everyone can admire them – and the donor's success.

The damaged tower now tarnishes the impressive exterior of St. George's. Since the cathedral's administration is separate from the diocese's, the archdeacon is adamant that the works are not under his responsibility. The dean, meanwhile, seems to lack the energy for serious fundraising from the city. Worse, having disbanded the Confraternity for the Fabric, he has made laymen less eager to get involved.



## MAP OF THE CATHEDRAL ENVIRONS

### Key

- 1. St. George's Cathedral
- 1a. Parvis

- 2. Bishop's Palace
- 2a. Courtyard
- 2b. Orchard

- 3. Canon's Houses
- 3a. Kitchen Garden
- 4. Chapter House

- 5. Viscount's Townhouse
- 6. Town Inn
- 7. City Hall
- 8. Market Square



# CHAPTER TWO

# THE BUILDING

*"We won't be disturbed here," huffed Father Aloysius, ushering the bailiff into the winter choir room. He didn't want the conversation to be overheard, and you never knew in the open spaces of the nave or choir. The visitor stopped just inside, transfixed by an ancient bas-relief he had never seen. "Saint George and the*

*dragon, naturally," he commented, "But how strange. The dragon isn't dying, and the saint's face seems frightened!"*

*"Well, it's an old, crude piece – that's why we moved it here. Now, as to that pressing concern," replied the priest.*

*The bailiff averted his gaze from the artwork. "Yes. The witches. Tell me about them."*

## GROUND FLOOR

Most of this area is open to anybody. Being a Gothic cathedral, it is exceptionally bright thanks to its huge windows. For a map of the ground floor, see p. 15.

### THE PARVIS AND PORCHES

The parvis, in front of the façade, belongs to the chapter. A couple of vendors are here daily; more booths are added on market days. All pay rent to the chapter. The parvis is also where edifying "miracle" plays and other entertainment are staged (see *Ludus Draconis*, p. 22). The archdeacon would like the cathedral to pay for the bishop's guards keeping the peace here. However, the guards would then take orders from the dean, which Monsignor Dandolo doesn't want.

All along the walls, the protruding buttresses offer shelter from wind – as well as ambush positions for cutthroats. Gargoyles on the sides of the building spit rainwater down at a distance from the cathedral's walls. On rainy days, anybody walking into a spot some three yards out of each buttress base will be drenched. In winter, the north alley's ground is often frosted over (treat as bad footing, see p. B387).

The main porch features a crowd of statues representing saints, virgins, and prophets welcoming the faithful to the house of God. The bishops used to mete out justice here when

they were the town's feudal lords. Both the bailiff's court and the city's magistrates request to hold hearings here if they expect a large attendance.

The southern side and porch are well-liked by the citizenry. It's a relatively open area, warm on sunny days. Beggars sleeping under the porch are unofficially tolerated (prostitutes sometimes work there, too, but they're chased out if found). The imagery at the south gate represents God, angels, and saints welcoming souls in heaven.

To the north of the cathedral is a gloomy alley. The north gate's scary theme is Hell: reptilian figures inflicting torments on their victims, including kings, knights, and clergy.

A fence, made of 7'-tall rotting planks (DR 1, HP 10), surrounds the base of the north tower. Standard locks (p. 9) close the fence and the wooden lodge. The building yard (p. 5) looks abandoned; the lodge is empty. An effort had been started to sort out reusable stones and to clear the gate, but rubble lies in piles scattered throughout the area.

### THE NAVE AND AISLES

The nave vaults are among the tallest in the world, reaching 36 yards in height. The nave is 16 yards wide. Each aisle is half that height and width. From the main gate to the apse's wall, the church is 120 yards long. Everybody feels insignificant when entering this enormous space for the first time; the effect is deliberate. The vertical lines, the clustered pillars, and the pointed arches all draw the eyes toward the vaults and, hopefully, the thoughts toward heaven. The cathedral is so large that it's half-empty on ordinary Sundays. The impression of spaciousness in this area is enhanced both by the immense stained-glass windows and by the nave's emptiness. It teems with visitors during important festivities.

However, the populace is used to this place, and hushed respect isn't the norm. During mass – a long, largely incomprehensible rite – people chat, attend to business, and move about freely. Snack peddlers and entertainers trickle in (though the priests disapprove). The lower nave, where the commoners are packed, is where pickpockets work and fleas change host.

### The Healer

During the day, the south porch is the workplace of Ermenjart L'Erbiere, the herbalist. This old woman offers natural remedies, but she is careful to point out that while the plants help, what really save lives are the prayers she says with the patient's family. Working within the Church's teachings has saved her, so far, from allegations of witchcraft.

L'Erbiere might be just an herbal healer, or that might be a cunning front. She might be willing to prepare other kinds of concoctions: "love" potions, contraception and abortion drugs, or poisons.



Close to every door are stone stoups (DR 24, HP 32), fixtures in the walls or floor containing holy water. In certain settings, this water is an actual weapon against evil beings; carrying it away might raise eyebrows. More prosaically, people dip their fingers in before making the sign of the cross. This would be a devilish device to use for spreading infectious agents.

Most people attend mass standing, although a long stone bench once lined each aisle wall. These have been reduced by the ongoing introduction of side altars. The elderly use the few remaining benches. People sitting elsewhere may bring something from home: folding chairs carried by a servant, a rug, or a bunch of straw (for pews, see *Today*, p. 26).

In the lower nave, the paving stones are laid out to form a labyrinth. People say that walking down its snaking paths to its center an inordinate number of times equates to a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Sinners sometimes traverse the route on their knees as penance. A devout old man, Alain, has practiced for so long that he can walk this path unerringly, with his eyes shut. They say that while he does that, he can be asked about God's will on a given subject, and he'll give the right answer. The canons have forbidden this practice, but it is just possible that this is a form of Meditation trance (see p. B207).

In the second bay is the baptismal font, resembling an oversized bathtub. It's set 3' into the floor, with a low stone curb.

## THE CHANCEL, CHOIR, AND APSE

The part of the building beyond the transept is three steps higher. Not only is it over the crypt, it is also the most sacred part of the church. Somebody standing here will be visible even when the nave is crowded.

The chancel is set apart by a 3'-tall wooden balustrade. A priest must invite a layman if the latter wants to enter this area. The balustrade is made by individual shafts (each having DR 4, HP 23), so it's not a hiding place. However, two ambones are in its corners. These include a platform and a solid front (DR 3, HP 33); a standing reader's upper body can be seen, but a crouching man can hide here.

The choir area is where the priests carry out their long rites, sometime sitting in carved stalls (individual seats) placed on two long daises. Behind them, the choir enclosure is a solid 8'-tall wooden partition (DR 4, HP 38). The outer side is sculpted and painted with scenes from the life of Christ, because that area, accessible to laymen, is used for processions. Another lectern is in the choir area, for the choir director; although cumbersome (65 lbs., DR 3, HP 32), it can be moved.

The high altar is at the end of the choir area. An impressive reredos, 10' tall (DR 5, HP 40), tops it. The sides are thick with gilded statues: a crucifixion group in the center, St. George killing the dragon on the right, St. Guy in prayer on the left.

## Breaking and Entering

When the church is closed (see *A Time for Prayer*, p. 24), all the gates are bolted from inside, thus requiring brute force to get past them (see below). Grates and windowpanes protect the small crypt windows, which open at ground level. All the windowpanes are elaborate stained glass. They can be disassembled by prying open the lead comes that keep the glass pieces together, but it's tiresome, delicate work.

For adventurers disdaining subtler means, the architectural elements themselves can be breached. In the table below, "wall" refers to the *ground-level* part of it; higher parts are thinner. Some elements are thicker than strictly needed; the master builders wanted to play it safe. The main external walls (the aisle sides) feature a sandwich design – two ashlar walls filled with concrete. This makes it easier to carve out recesses, and to add a modern heating system (see *Today*, p. 26).

Item	Description	DR	HP
Crypt gate and grates	Iron	12	23
Internal doors	Wood	2	29
Internal walls	1' stone	156	94
Main external walls	4' stone and concrete	624	149
Main gates	Iron-bound wood	30	50
Pillars	6' stone	936	171
Roof	1/8" lead	4	34
Roof beams	6" wood	6	26
Vaults	8" stone	104	86
Vestry door	Iron-bound wood	15	40
Tower walls	8' stone	1,248	188
Windowpanes	Glass and lead	1	5

The HP figure is for a 10-square-foot section. All stone and wood DR values should be treated as ablative or semi-ablative against most attacks; see p. B559 for more details. This doesn't apply to the iron gates and to the roof's lead.

The building's overall HT is 13. However, its HT is 11 for the south tower, and 10 for the damaged north one. If the intention is not to enter the cathedral but rather to raze it down with a massive attack not targeting any particular area of it, the average DR is 624 and HP is 7,790.

The final alternative to get in is by climbing. Decorative motifs help, so Climbing rolls are at -2 (instead of -3). The lowest windowsills are five yards above the ground. The façade balcony is 18 yards high. The first clerestory window on the north side has lost its stained glass in the spire's collapse. Reaching it requires climbing the aisle's wall (some 17 yards), then up the aisle's roof (+3 to Climbing rolls). The windowsill is a few feet above the gallery's arches, with no glass to smash through.

For more about unauthorized access, see *GURPS Low-Tech* (pp. 122 and 126).

### Locks

The vestry has the only outer door with a lock (-2 to Lockpicking); both the dean and the sexton have a key. Other doors have standard locks that are generally easy to pick, giving +4 to Lockpicking; exceptions are mentioned in the descriptions of various parts of the building.

A stone throne (the bishop's cathedra) and the dean's smaller seat flanks the altar. They weigh about half a ton (DR 55, HP 65) each and are decorated by simple carvings. In a medieval campaign, they wouldn't be worth stealing, but see *Artworks* (below) for their value in a modern setting. If the archdeacon chooses to celebrate the mass in the cathedral, he takes precedence over the dean and even sits in the bishop's cathedra.

The apse, behind this altar, is dominated by 5'-tall sarcophagus of the former bishop, Pierre de Tours. He had decided he wouldn't be buried in the crypt. Rumor has it that he was entombed here in his full ceremonial vestments. If so, the raw-material value of the gold embroidery and semiprecious stones might reach \$1,500 (with a lot of work by a jeweler to recycle it). The sculpted marble slab top weighs two tons (DR 90, HP 175 for the whole sarcophagus).

Against the back of the high-altar reredos, and thus facing the apse, there is a statue of Jesus as the Good Shepherd – or that's what the priests claim. It's a life-size Roman sculpture, uncannily well-preserved and realistic. The subject – a beautiful young shepherd playing a pan flute – hints at the namesake older deity. It is rumored to be an ancient donation by the last pagan chieftain in the region, upon his conversion to Christianity. Strangely, it's the one unpainted sculpture in the church, its white marble pristine. It weighs half a ton, and it's 5'7" including the pedestal (DR 60, HP 85, but it wouldn't take much damage to deface it); its market value would be negotiable.

## THE TRANSEPT

The transept crosses the main building body; it adds space and gives the church the shape of a cross. A late addition, its central part isn't as wide as the nave, which makes it too tall for its width. It's 64 yards from gate to gate.

### Artworks

Hardly any surface in the building isn't sculpted, frescoed, or graced with statues or patterns. In addition to the main works mentioned in the descriptions, all the side altars are crowned by paintings or by carved, painted figures. These minor artworks aren't exciting because of their value. Contemporary men, who aren't considered different from any accomplished craftsman, created them. Nor is the difference between copies and the original important. If a nobleman wants the picture hanging over St. Roch's altar, he can have the same artist make it again, for an affordable price.

A few pieces have value to the local population for other reasons. For instance, the statue of the Virgin is said to be miraculous. Consider those with local mystical significance as relics (see *Relics and Treasure*, p. 12).

In modern campaigns (see *Modern Ideas*, pp. 24-25), a medieval masterpiece is worth a fortune. Unfortunately, a fire destroyed many priceless artworks in 1823. The pieces described in the text survive, but not one is by a famous master. They have historical value, just like the minor statues. Thus, their value on the stolen-art market can be whatever the GM feels is appropriate.

A simple theft leaving nothing behind would be bad enough. It would be worse if some expert suddenly claimed that the painting of St. Stephen's martyrdom is a fake. Did somebody swap the original with a worthless copy? Is the expert trustworthy?

The stairs descending into the crypt are here. They have a 4'-tall ornate stone parapet (DR 156, HP 94). Someone going down these steps is faced with demoniac sculptures on the inside of the parapet. Legend has it that these demons serve to warn those descending that only the pure of heart can use this stairway without tripping. This tale might be meant to discourage access to the crypt, or in a magical world, there might be a sophisticated enchantment. Reportedly, the ill-famed Bishop Pierre fell down these stairs once, and avoided the crypt from then on.

The southwestern corner of the transept is St. Stephen's "chapel" – actually a side altar. This is entrusted to the masons' guild (see *Everybody Goes to Church*, p. 21). It is well-known (roll Area Knowledge at +1 or Streetwise at +2) that the altar contains a strongbox with the recently collected guild dues – some \$400 in a mass of tiny copper coins. While counting on the saint's protection, the guild also hid the strongbox in a concealed slot. Finding it requires a Quick Contest of Observation or Perception vs. Traps, against the guild's Masonry-18. Opening it requires a Lockpicking roll at +4, or a sledgehammer (DR 20, HP 45).

Winding stairs at the central corners of the transept lead up to the gallery. Their doors are barred with standard locks (p. 9), but as a lazy deacon (see *Vincent the Deacon*, p. 20) has discovered, the lock of the northern one doesn't work well.

## THE CHAPELS

A local noblewoman, the Marquise de Malebois, died heirless some 70 years ago. She left a bequest for the cathedral's building, on the condition that it would include a chapel for the noblewomen. The area is now known as the Nobles' Chapel, although it is dedicated to St. Martin (another generous horseman of noble birth, like St. George). Woe unto the commoner or ruined nobleman who dares trespass! A 4'-tall metal railing (DR 6, HP 15) sets it aside. Its walls are lined by carved wooden stalls (DR 4, HP 23). Each seat is emblazoned with a noble family's coat of arms. Minor nobility stand, and they have their escutcheons on the walls.

One of those seats has a false bottom. It can be used as a dead-drop delivery system (see *Everybody Goes to Church*, p. 21), or to hide a small weapon (in advance, or after having used it). Only a handful of noblemen know about it; the canons don't. Renier the sexton was never told about it, but he might have found the device on his own while polishing the seats.

The noblemen prefer to attend mass from here, although they see almost nothing. They also can have masses celebrated in the chapel itself. Recently, the Viscount de Saint-Jules mentioned he might appoint a chaplain. Such a position, if adequately funded, would be enviable for a priest.

The other chapel is dedicated to the Virgin Mary. Its popularity with the citizenry is evidenced by the warm glow of candles lit at the altar's foot. Traditionally, people kneel along the chapel's southern wall, as far away as possible from the altar to show their humility. An exquisite, life-size statue of the Virgin tops this chapel's altar.

## THE VESTRY AND WINTER CHOIR

The vestry is the room where the priests and choirboys prepare for mass, and hang out to chat. There are several locked chests (220 lbs., DR 2, HP 40) containing vestments. A sturdier chest (300 lbs., DR 3, HP 50) has an above-average lock, giving no modifier to Lockpicking rolls; it contains the more valuable items. A Smell roll reveals it stores the incense supply and a thurible (\$300 taken together, 22 lbs.). It also holds the cathedral's books (see *The Scriptures*, below), beeswax candles (\$100, 12 lbs.), the best vestments (some 60 lbs., and worth around \$100) and other ritual paraphernalia.

The aumbry has wooden doors (DR 2, HP 25) and a standard lock (p. 9). It contains the everyday communion service (\$250, 4 lbs.). Demon-worshippers, especially if quacks, might be interested in the consecrated bread. (In modern times, the reserved elements might be housed elsewhere, depending on the faith tradition of those currently managing the cathedral.)

Behind an old tapestry in the southwestern corner, a movable section of the wall acts as a concealed door. Searchers must win a Quick Contest of Vision, Observation, or Per-based Traps against Architecture-18 to locate it, then succeed at an IQ-based Traps roll to unlatch it. Pushing it open requires only ST 10 normally, but if the mechanism was neglected for decades, it may have become harder; those doing so will need a

combined Basic Lift (see p. B17) of 35 or more (e.g., one man with ST 14 or two with ST 10). Once open, it leads to a dark, steep stairway to the underground (see *The Secret Room*, p. 12).

Services attended only by the priests take place in a smaller choir room, especially in winter. Father Aloysius uses it as a sort of office. Its most remarkable feature is the bas-relief described in the story on p. 8. Large braziers (\$90, 5 lbs., DR 4, HP 14) are both here and in the vestry.

### The Scriptures

The most used book in the cathedral is a breviary. It serves for the liturgy of the hours (see *A Time for Prayer*, p. 24), thus it's often left on the choir lectern. Most of the other books are kept in the strongest chest in the vestry: a beautifully illuminated Bible, and three other books used during mass. During the rite, one is on the high altar, another is on the choir lectern, and the third is on one of the ambones. Additionally, one special book is kept with the relics in the crypt (see *Relics and Treasure*, p. 12).

Taken together, these volumes are some \$4,000, if sold legitimately. The Bible alone is worth \$1,500 to a monastery or bishop, who will however ask questions. It's bulky (22 lbs., -4 to Holdout).

The books' pages can be scraped and reused (see **GURPS Low-Tech**, p. 46). This may have already happened, and modern technology or magic might reveal more than prayers in the breviary; maybe something that's the *opposite* of holy petitions.

## THE CRYPT

This area is poorly lighted (-2 to Vision rolls) at its eastern end, close to the small windows; the farther in, the darker. It is normally closed, and only the dean, Father Aloysius, and the sexton have a key to the lock of the iron gate at the end of the stairs (all locks here are -2 to Lockpicking rolls). Only the dean holds all other keys to the crypt's locks. An early mass is celebrated here one Sunday a month, always by the dean himself.

For a map of the crypt, see p. 16.

*Cathedrals,  
Luxury liners laden with souls,  
Holding to the East their hulls of stone.*  
— W.H. Auden

## THE OLD CHURCH

The main area isn't entirely below ground level, because it was adapted out of the Early Christian church. It is a dank, empty space, broken up by massive columns, supporting low barrel vaults. The walls were frescoed, and the surviving images represent simple Christian themes. An ancient sculpture adorns

one of the capitals. It represents a man in a strange hat and a sort of serpent-man, *shaking hands*.

The altar is St. Guy's ancient sarcophagus (roughly as thick as the bishop's; see *The Chancel, Choir, and Apse*, pp. 9-10). He was considered a protector from dropsy, and the sick once prayed while touching the altar. Behind the altar is an aumbry containing several relics (its locked wrought-iron doors are DR 50, HP 58). On special occasions, this is opened so that the faithful can see the reliquaries (see *Relics and Treasure*, p. 12).

Closer examination, and a roll against Archaeology at +2, reveals the baptismal font was a Roman well. Indeed, a small opening in the floor was used to drain the water after baptisms. The faint sound of moving liquid can be heard (Hearing roll at -2). Widening the hole (DR 104, HP 86 for a man-size hole) gives access to an underground stream that reaches the river (a perilous journey!). With half that effort, a bucket, and rope, drinkable water can be drawn (that is, drinkable by medieval standards).

To the right of the altar is a secondary room, also protected by a locked iron gate. This is the bishops' burial place. Their niches are walled over (DR 24, HP 70) and contain nothing but bones and tatters. However, a large section of the floor can be moved (Quick Contest of Vision, Observation, or Per-based Traps against Architecture-15 to locate it). As most of the priests and the sexton know, this is the official cathedral treasure (see *Relics and Treasure*, p. 12).



Examining the northern wall, and making a successful Masonry roll, reveals a hollow space beyond it – the secret room (see below). This wall is DR 104, HP 90.

## THE SECRET ROOM

Without destroying the wall in the old church, this room can only be reached through the secret door (see *The Vestry and Winter Choir*, p. 11) and its stairway. The air is musty. The floor is uneven; this area is an enlarged cave. The walls look very rough; an Observation roll reveals they have been thoroughly scraped, as if to remove imagery.

Against the eastern wall is an altar, topped by a granite slab (DR 72, HP 56). This top can be easily pushed into the wall (after winning a Quick Contest of Observation or Per-based Traps against Masonry-12), revealing a small chamber. The dean hoards the missing part of the treasure here. He's not trying to embezzle it; he just fears the archdeacon might find a way to lay his hands on the chapter's money. An iron strongbox holds some \$6,000 in debased silver ducats (12 lbs.). The strongbox isn't locked, but opening it carelessly (failing a Per-based Traps roll) means springing a hidden blade (1d-2 cutting damage to the hand). This blade is dirty, and a wound requires an immediate roll against HT. On a failure, the wound is infected, see p. B444 for treatment. Surgery can also be attempted to solve the problem, but it is an undiagnosed condition (see *GURPS Low-Tech*, p. 147).

Additionally, a reliquary is inside; it's an ornate copper box (\$170), containing ashes and a scroll. Knowledge of Latin is needed to understand that these are the remains of one venerated Brother Marcel. Additional study, requiring successful rolls against Research or History, discloses that it's a forbidden relic! Marcel was a heretic leader, burned at the stake about 50 years ago. Somebody gathered his remains against the Church's injunctions. The dean probably knows this; otherwise, it would be with the other relics. Was he, or maybe his predecessor, a member of that cult? A Theology roll ascertains that Marcel's ideas are still considered

dangerous today. Indeed, if his creed is still alive, this trove might be worth something.

The backside of this hollow altar is the original cave's wall, not scraped clean here. Ancient engravings represent deer hunted by men and by a winged dragon.

In a decorated niche is a broken lance, its wood rotting. Rolling against Observation at -2 or Armoury reveals the handle is a hollow container; inside is an older, blackened wood fragment and a scroll. This is mostly unreadable, but the words "Sancti Georgii," "Dracones," "Pvгна" can be made out ("Saint George's," "dragons," and "combat"). Even in a medieval setting where magic doesn't exist, a faithful knight might have Higher Purpose and believe this is really part of the saint's weapon. If so, he might gain Fearlessness (or a similar advantage), with gadget limitations, when wielding a lance that incorporates this fragment. In other settings, this might be a magic item – only because it's broken, it's no longer enchanted. Or is it?

If the dean has not put this powerful relic with the others, he may have reason to believe that it's a fake. Moreover, something did break the lance.

## THE OSSUARY

A low door (DR 15, HP 40) at the west end of the crypt leads into the decay-smelling ossuary. This corridor is 6' tall, lined by niches. Most openings gather the bones of several bodies, piled together, primarily the remains of priests.

At the end of the corridor is a tombstone (270 lbs., DR 26, HP 30). Below the tombstone lies a mass burial pit with the remains from the previous church's graveyard. The marker's upper face is etched with a cross. The other side features a superstitious (or magic?) symbol meant to warn the living – or block the unliving.

The first niche to the right hides a trapdoor that has not been used in decades. It can only be found by moving around skulls, bones, and debris. From here, a tunnel reaches the cellar of the bishop's palace. A paranoid bishop had it built, but its existence is now a forgotten secret.

## Relics and Treasure

Relics are worth venerating, and many believe that God may provide healing miracles through them. Churches owning important relics may make a profit from them thanks to the pilgrims' offers. Forgeries, frauds, and thefts are common. The economic interest is increased by the tradition of conserving them in reliquaries. These are usually gilded metal boxes, studded with semiprecious stones.

St. George's cathedral is the burial place of St. Guy of Cousnay (see *A Monument to God . . . and Man*, p. 5), but it's been decades since his last miracle. The crypt aumbry (see *The Old Church*, pp. 11-12) contains seven reliquaries, the most important one preserving a bone of St. Paul the Apostle. The raw material value of the containers amounts to some \$1,000, while the value of a stolen relic is highly negotiable.

In the crypt's aumbry, hidden behind the reliquaries, is a small book. It's a barely readable Latin collection of hagiographies, beginning with a boring account of St. Guy's life.

However, in the middle is an older text about St. George. The GM may use this booklet to convey hidden lore about dragons and dragon pursuers (see *St. George's Hunters*, p. 25). Such information might be coveted by many.

The cathedral's treasure (see *The Old Church*, pp. 11-12) contains several communion service sets, most of them silver-plated, and worth about \$800 but difficult to sell. It also holds other jewelry (\$550) and a disappointing amount of debased silver ducats (\$1,250). The overall weight is 25 lbs. Finally, an infuriating accounting book lies among the objects; it just records revenues and expenditures, with no attempt at balancing. It would take a day, knowledge of Latin, and successful rolls against Research and Accounting to conclude that much of the cathedral's income is in kind, from the land owned by the chapter. The canons live off that, but don't make money out of it. Even so, a hefty amount of cash from donations and tithes seems to be absent. (See *The Secret Room*, above, for details on the missing money.)



# THE UPPER LEVELS

These areas are not normally open. The sexton has his own keys, and Father Aloysius has been given the dean's. The winding staircases are dark, with small slits giving -3 to Vision rolls. The galleries have no windows save at the transept ends, but receive light from their arches opening on the nave. The aisle garrets are almost completely dark (-8). The nave attic and the south tower below the belfry level are at -2. The belfry is bright.

## THE GALLERY

see map on p. 17

The gallery was once considered a place of honor. Noblemen, and especially noble women, would attend mass from here. Nowadays, this is out of fashion. Therefore, the dean has decided this area is not worth maintaining and cleaning. Normally, it's closed, but the nuns still occasionally use it. Though they normally pray in their own chapel in the nunnery, two miles south of the city, they come to the cathedral and climb to the gallery on important festivities.

The gallery offers, through its small arches, a splendid view down onto the nave, the transept, and the chancel. The parapets are 4'6" tall.

In the north section, boards, logs, ropes, and similar material are stockpiled; these are supposed to be used for the repair works of the first clerestory window (see *Breaking and Entering*, p. 9), above the gallery. A lazy deacon (see *Vincent the Deacon*, p. 20) has created a cozy hiding hole for himself. Well-hidden behind a pile of boards is a hay-stuffed sack, an old blanket, a capped jug with some diluted wine, and a stale loaf. A person could hide here and survive for a couple of days, though Vincent would eventually find him. Furthermore, discovery of this obviously unauthorized "crib" would provide leverage over the deacon.

## THE FAÇADE BALCONY

see map on p. 17

At the gallery level, small doors open onto a balcony. A stone balustrade 4'6" tall lines it (each shaft is DR 78, HP 45). Somebody falling from one of the balcony's ends would hit the parvis (p. 8), 18 yards below. From the central part, it's something less than seven yards to the porch's sloped roof.

At the center of the balustrade is a recent statue of St. George, standing over a dragon's head. Decades ago, smaller statues were on this balcony; old women describe them as "demons." They were removed and supposedly destroyed after one of them fell just as a count was passing, killing him (but see *The Garrets*, below).

## THE GARRETS

see map on p. 17

The galleries are narrower than the underlying aisles, because of the roofs' pitch. This is evident if studying the building; rolls against Architecture or Masonry, both at +3, might be required if in a hurry.

The access to the garrets isn't through proper doors. Wooden panels, painted like the surrounding walls (Vision roll to notice them), hide openings. Tools and a roll against Carpentry are required to remove them, or brute force to break them (DR 1, HP 15).

Moving inside the dusty garrets isn't easy. The roof slopes down steeply, and a visitor has to step over horizontal wooden beams and negotiate diagonal ones, which support the aisle roof.

Just inside one of the garrets are three statues of winged, reptilian beings that were removed from the balcony (see *The Façade Balcony*, above). Nervous people might need a Fright Check, but they are just stone statues – unless animated.

## THE TOWERS

see maps on pp. 18-19

Each tower has its own staircase and can be accessed by the gallery. From the gallery level, the spiral staircase reaches a landing. From that point, a wooden staircase leads to the belfry. The stairs are sturdy (DR 6, HP 42 for each one-square-yard section), but the banisters were built cheaply (DR 1, HP 14). In the north tower, the staircase was taken down in the collapse, and rubble fills this landing. However, wooden stumps and holes in the wall remain; someone could make a Climbing attempt without penalty. The broken end of this tower is some 53 yards from the ground. It's heavily damaged and open to the rain. The last 10 yards inflict -3 to Climbing rolls, because the stones are loose and may be wet. A climber might dislodge one of them, which would be hazardous to anybody below, and noisy.

Down at ground level, the access to the north tower is boarded; Gautier the stone carver has the key to the standard lock (p. 9) on this door. This rickety enclosure is DR 1, HP 10. The tools inside include a pick, crowbars, and a bucket. Careful inspection and a roll against Architecture at -3 will show that regardless of damage high above, a worse problem lies down below. The foundations are failing, either because of subsiding ground or cheap construction. Maybe the lightning damaged the tower only because it was already weakened.

## THE BELFRY

see map on p. 19

The surviving belfry is in the south tower. Its lower level is where the bell-ringers operate the seven bells from; it takes eleven strong men, wearing earplugs. At the center of this wooden floor (DR 12, HP 54) there is a hole, large enough for a man to squeeze through; it's 30 yards to the landing. It can be closed with a trapdoor, but normally it's open, so that the sexton can ring the smallest bell from the landing, by pulling on its rope (which can support one man's weight).

The upper belfry level is where the bells are hung. It's accessed by a ladder, and there is only a walkway all around, so that nothing interferes with the ropes.

Anyone in the upper belfry when all the bells are ringing must roll against HT-3 or suffer severe pain (p. B428) for minutes equal to the margin of failure. Earplugs give +3 to this roll and reduce the effects of a failed roll to moderate pain.

Remaining here for more than a minute requires another HT roll to avoid being Hard of Hearing for a day, and a critical failure makes the disadvantage permanent.

A trapdoor is in the ceiling, to reach the roof (below) for maintenance. The opening can be reached via a ladder.

## THE ATTIC

see map on p. 19

When climbing the wooden staircase to the belfry, a small door can be found halfway up. This leads to the nave's attic. This area was known as "the forest" to the builders, because it's crowded with horizontal, diagonal, and vertical beams supporting the roof rafters. All wooden parts are tarred. This protects them from water and bugs, but makes them doubly vulnerable to fire (they qualify as flammable; see p. B433). Somebody hating this building could exploit this weakness, even before explosives. A fire would take a long time to develop, but it could be sped up by openings in the roof cover, fanning the flames. Once the whole "forest" was ablaze, the heat would weaken the underlying vaults, and sections of these huge beams would start falling on them. The nave and choir would eventually be bombarded with burning beams and stones from the collapsing vaults.

The bottom of the attic isn't a flat floor, which would be wasted weight. Instead, it is the upper side of the nave's vaults. The highest parts of these are along the central axis of the nave and on the perpendicular lines across it. The diagonal lines define funnel-like traps, four yards deep, down to the pillars. Falling inside means slipping down a slope; with a successful DX roll, it's possible to cling to the masonry before reaching the bottom. Otherwise, the fall inflicts 1d crushing damage. Getting out from the funnel requires a Climbing roll at +3.

Because of this uneven bottom, workmen move along wooden passageways (DR 2, HP 29), without banisters, to carry out repairs. Two ladders go up a few feet to trapdoors to the roof.

## THE ROOF

The roof base is surrounded by a walkway and a 3'-tall stone parapet (DR 104, HP 86), adorned with pinnacles. Troughs drain rainwater into the flying buttresses and down to the impressive gargoyles at the height of the aisles' roofs (see *The Parvis and Porches*, p. 8).

Just outside one of the trapdoors accessible from the attic (above) are metal rungs going up to the roof ridge; this has a walkway built in. Moving around the roof in any other area requires a Climbing roll at +2 on a dry day. The bonus is wiped out if the lead is damp, while rain gives -1 to attempts.

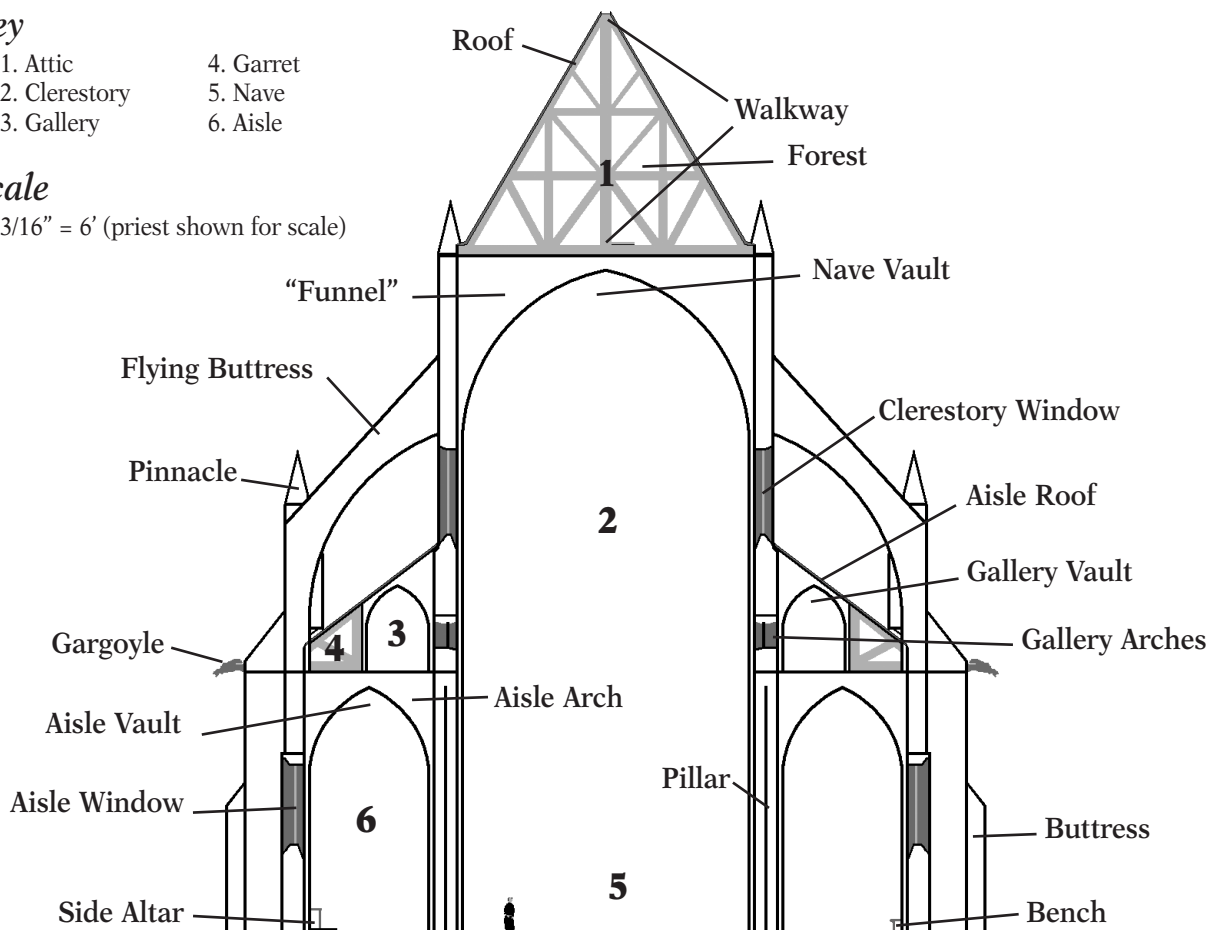
## FRONT CROSS-SECTION OF THE CATHEDRAL

### Key

- |               |           |
|---------------|-----------|
| 1. Attic      | 4. Garret |
| 2. Clerestory | 5. Nave   |
| 3. Gallery    | 6. Aisle  |

### Scale

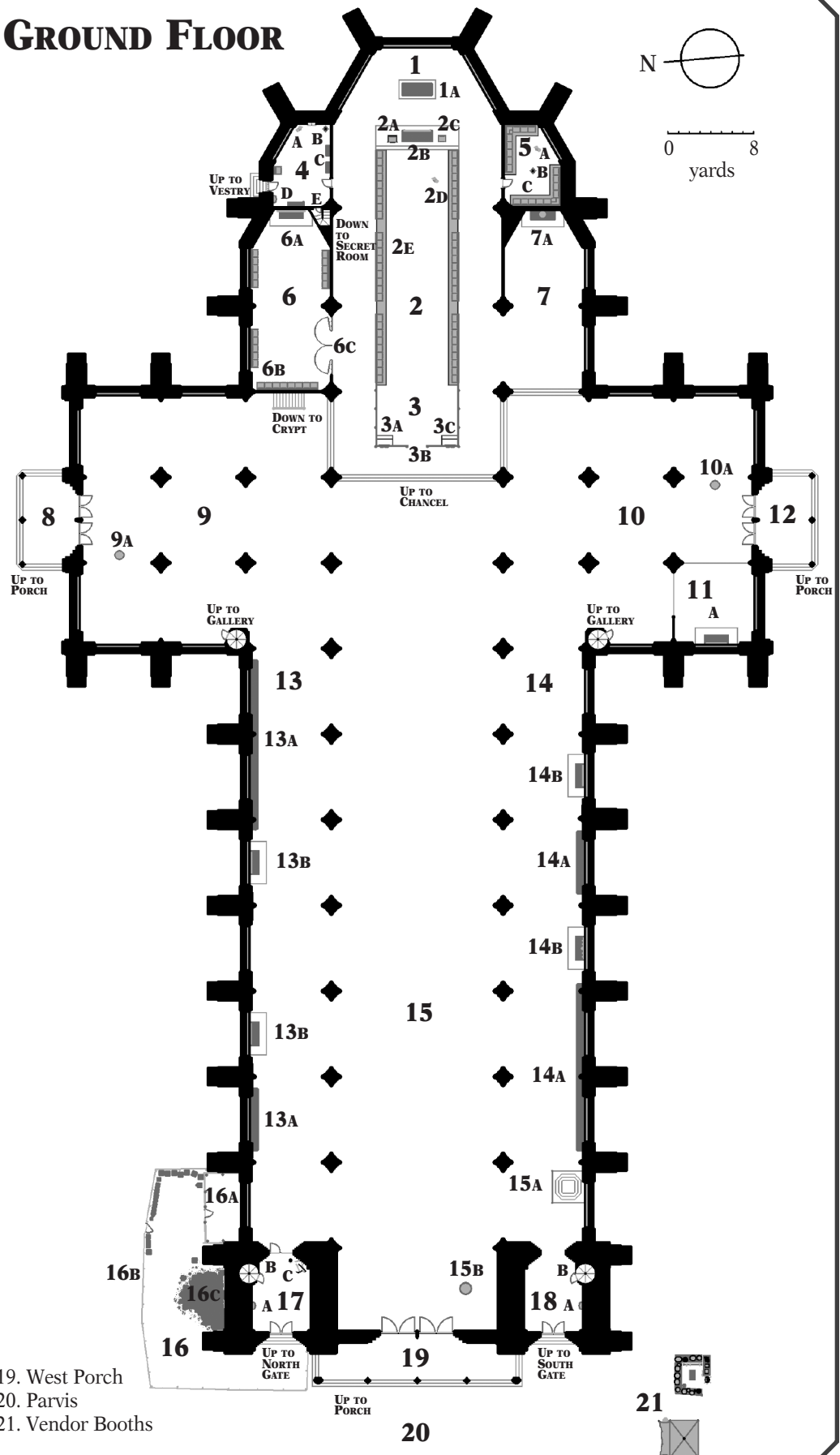
$3/16" = 6'$  (priest shown for scale)



# MAP OF THE GROUND FLOOR

## Key

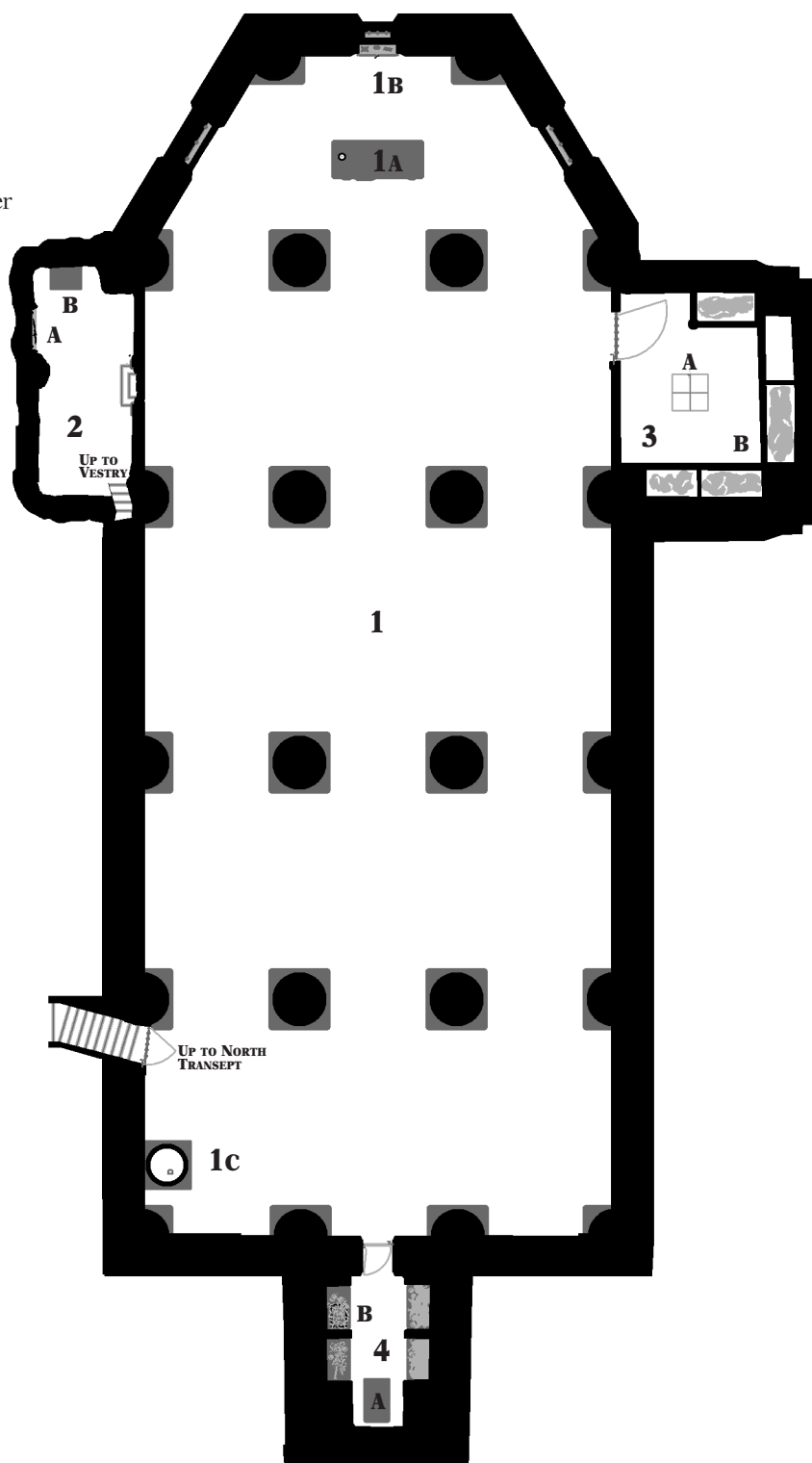
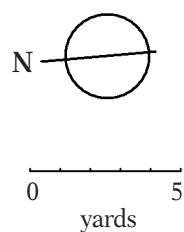
1. Apse
  - 1a. Sarcophagus
2. Choir
  - 2a. Bishop's Cathedra
  - 2b. High Altar
  - 2c. Dean's Chair
  - 2d. Lectern
  - 2e. Stalls
3. Chancel
  - 3a. Ambo
  - 3b. Balustrade
  - 3c. Ambo
4. Vestry
  - 4a. Aumbry
  - 4b. Brazier
  - 4c. Chests
  - 4d. Chest
  - 4e. Secret Door
5. Winter Choir
  - 5a. Lectern
  - 5b. Brazier
  - 5c. Stalls
6. Nobles' Chapel
  - 6a. Altar
  - 6b. Stalls
  - 6c. Railing
7. Virgin's Chapel
  - 7a. Altar
8. North Porch
9. North Transept
  - 9a. Stoup
10. South Transept
  - 10a. Stoup
11. St. Stephen's Chapel
  - 11a. Altar
12. South Porch
13. North Aisle
  - 13a. Bench
  - 13b. Side Altar
14. South Aisle
  - 14a. Bench
  - 14b. Side Altar
15. Nave
  - 15a. Baptismal Font
  - 15b. Stoup
16. Building Yard
  - 16a. Lodge
  - 16b. Fence
  - 16c. Rubble
17. North Tower
  - 17a. Stoup
  - 17b. Up to Tower
  - 17c. Tools
18. South Tower
  - 18a. Stoup
  - 18b. Up to Tower
19. West Porch
20. Parvis
21. Vendor Booths



# MAP OF THE CRYPT

## Key

1. Old Church
  - 1a. Altar
  - 1b. Relic Aumbry
  - 1c. Baptismal Font
2. Secret Room
  - 2a. Niche
  - 2b. Altar
3. Bishops' Burial Chamber
  - 3a. Movable Stones
  - 3b. Niches
4. Ossuary
  - 4a. Tombstone
  - 4b. Trapdoor

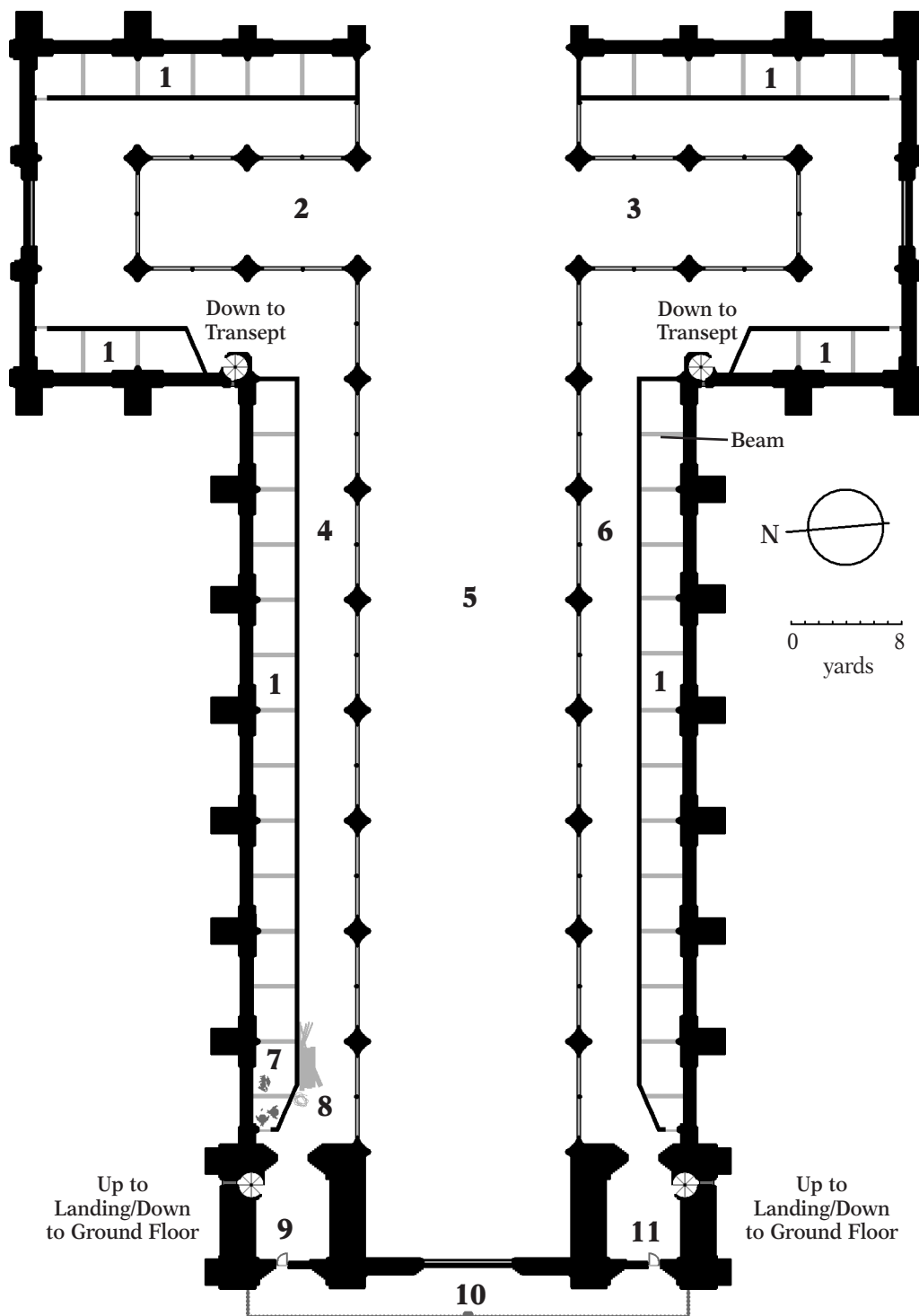




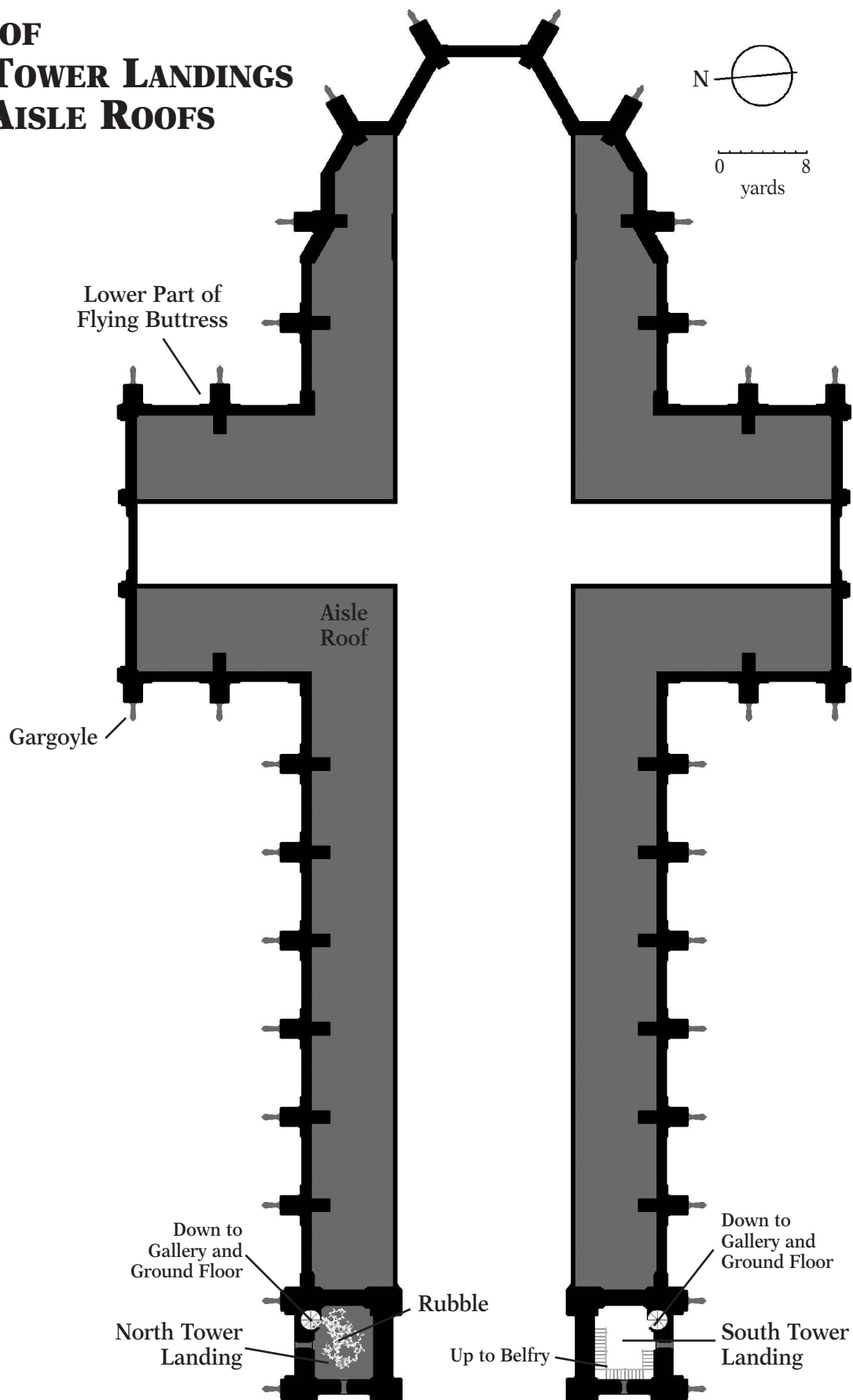
# MAP OF THE GALLERY, THE FAÇADE BALCONY, AND THE GARRETS

## Key

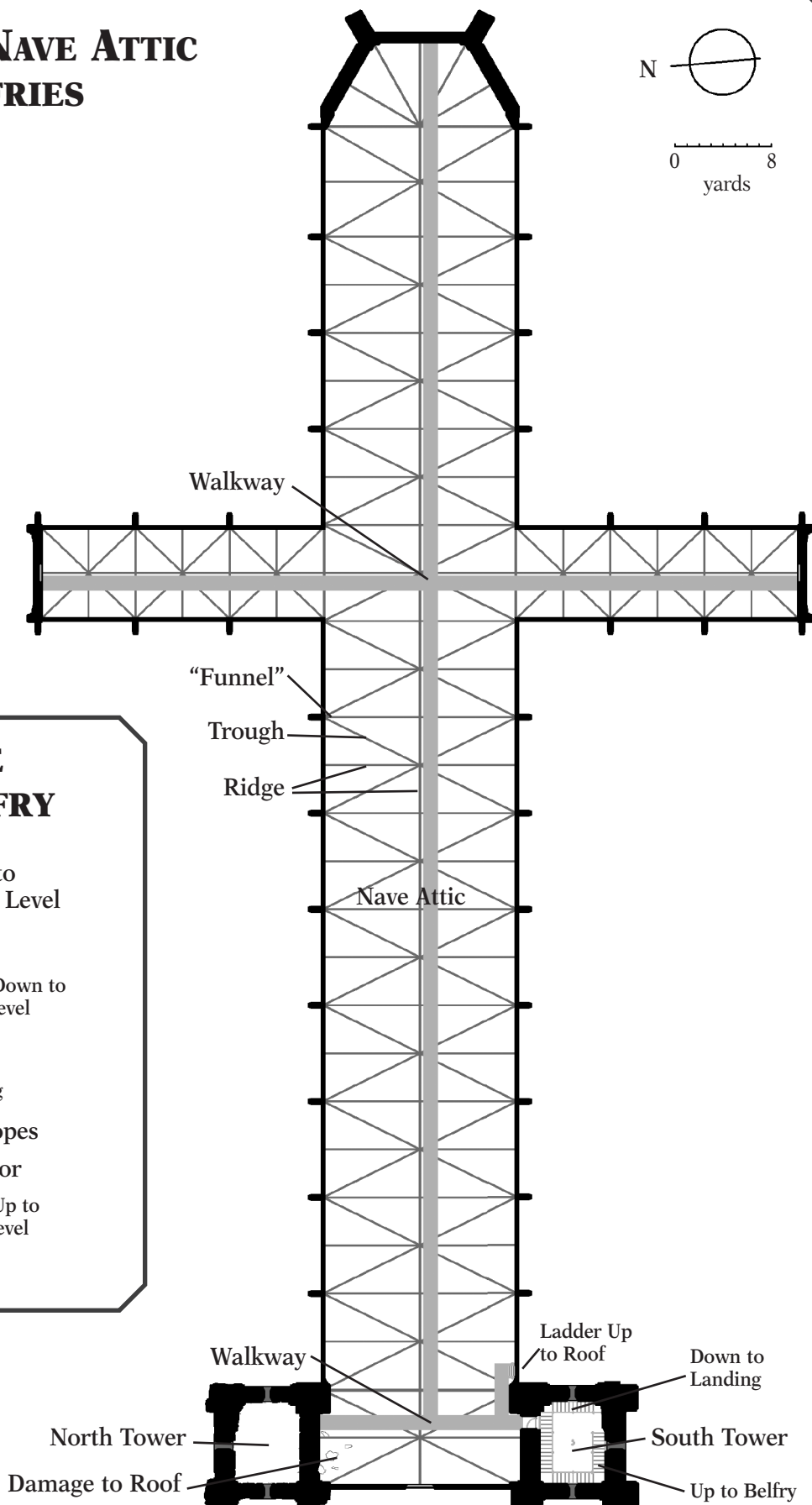
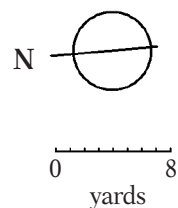
- |                           |                  |                            |
|---------------------------|------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Garret                 | 4. North Gallery | 8. Boards, Logs, and Ropes |
| 2. North Transept (below) | 5. Nave (below)  | 9. North Tower             |
| 3. South Transept (below) | 6. South Gallery | 10. Balcony                |
|                           | 7. Statues       | 11. South Tower            |



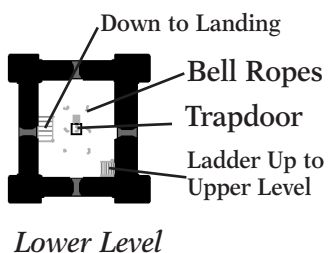
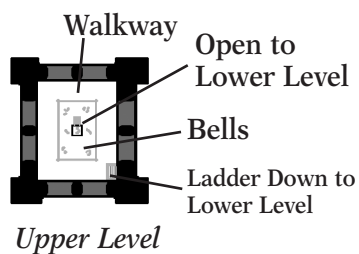
# MAP OF THE TOWER LANDINGS AND AISLE ROOFS



# MAP OF THE NAVE ATTIC AND THE BELFRIES



## MAP OF THE SOUTH BELFRY



# CHAPTER THREE

## NOTABLE PEOPLE

*The dean limped hurriedly toward the noise coming from behind the corner. "Gautier! What are you doing?" The stone carver turned away from the wall. "I was worried about this new crack, Father. But, can you hear the difference?" He resumed tapping with the butt of his mallet, "Here! It sounds hollow. As if..."*

*"Stop this! Immediately! And don't concern yourself with this wall. Never again!"*

This section introduces a few of the more interesting people commonly encountered in the cathedral. Even if it's understaffed now, it's a big place, requiring a lot of manpower.

### FATHER THIBAUT D'AUVERS, THE DEAN

The dean is a limping old man, using a walking stick. He is the head of the chapter. While certainly interested in the salvation of souls, he believes that the good of the church will only be achieved by not wasting its resources. He's always against any increase in expenses, be they for repairing the building itself, for the poor, or for lavish ceremonies. Now that he's the treasurer as well as the dean, nobody knows exactly where the cathedral's savings end up.

The dean is not a bad judge of men, but lip service to thriftiness and Christian dogma can win him over, at least temporarily. Nowadays, Thibault is not involved in the day-to-day management of the cathedral, and he spends hours in lonely prayer in the crypt. On occasion, he's fallen asleep there.

### The Preacher

Brother Geremie Roux is a monk from the nearest monastery. Last year, the dean invited him to preach in the cathedral for Lent. He was already known as an exceptional preacher, but he earned a reputation as a firebrand because of those Lenten sermons. He ranted against the worldly, corrupt Church; the rich; and the powerful – a great success with the populace.

The dean and Father Julien would like to invite him again, defying the archdeacon, who loathed those preachings. However, giving this man a bully pulpit means playing with fire. Last year, Brother Geremie's vague but ominous prophecies came to nothing. Should some disaster happen after one of those, there could be rioting in the streets.

### FATHER ALOYSIUS

A middle-aged, righteous, officious priest, Father Aloysius is the cathedral's real overseer, celebrating most services. He's slowly taking away responsibilities from the dean. Aloysius has thrown his lot in with the bishop's archdeacon, and he's Monsignor Dandolo's eyes in the building. The dean can't live forever, and the other priest who's his senior is a simpleton. Although driven by ambition, Aloysius sincerely believes he's doing God's will. He is surprisingly lenient as a confessor. He prefers hanging around in the chancel; the nave's the place for laymen, and he dislikes the crypt.

### FATHER JULIEN

Father Aloysius says that if Father Julien were to decide, beggars would sleep in the cathedral in winter, and the coffers would be empty. Julien is a young, earnest priest, who is indeed the soul of the cathedral's charity; the dean never gives him enough. His awkward figure is commonly seen down by the gates, talking with parishioners and giving alms. It's easier to meet him in the parish alleys than in the church. He's the one in touch with the citizenry. Exactly because he's so charitable, he regularly deals with the homeless; therefore, he's far from gullible.

### VINCENT THE DEACON

This sour, spindly teenager is here only because his impoverished noble family can't afford to turn him into a knight. Vincent resents it; he hates the Church and lords his position over the altar boys. As the latest addition to the cathedral's chapter, he doesn't know a lot. Not being an ordained priest yet, he's entrusted with mundane chores, which he tries to dodge by hiding in the gallery. If the cathedral burned down, he wouldn't give a damn, save that he's fond of the depictions of St. George.

### LUC THE CHOIRBOY

Luc is the best singer in the choir, and the gifts he receives for singing are a significant contribution to his family's income. He spends much of his free time in the winter choir room. Luc appears as naughty as any boy, but it's a pretense, to avoid being mocked by his peers. Actually, he has a vein of orthodoxy, and he might become a stern priest. The dean has noticed this, and that's why, unbeknown to many, Luc has his ear.



Luc is turning 13. He knows he's going to lose his heavenly voice, the music, and the gifts. Becoming a priest would be his next best option, but he'll need a sponsor.

## RENIER SACRESTE

Renier's father was the first sexton of St. George's, and their family name refers to their occupation. Renier followed his father's footsteps. He knows the building like the back of his hand, including the secret chamber. Little happens here that he's not aware of. He's a strong, pragmatic man who loves the cathedral in a no-nonsense way – mending the roof comes before posh celebrations.

As the sacristan, he defers to the priests but without being servile. He knows most churchgoers. He's on good terms with the bishop's guards, and he calls upon them when smelling serious trouble. However, he deals on his own with drunkards and rowdy youngsters. He carries his heavy keys on an iron ring.

## JEHANNE

Jehanne is an old, pious widow who seems never to miss a service and prays frequently at other times. She's nearly a fixture of the Virgin's Chapel, and when she kneels there in her black clothing, her presence can easily be missed. She insists on confessing every day; her main fault is being a gossip busybody.

## GAUTIER THE STONE CARVER

It breaks Gautier's heart to see the cathedral in disrepair. Yet, the dean hasn't hired other workers aside from him and his apprentice, who carry out minor repairs. Gautier has been working here for years, but now he's mostly concerned with preventing further damage in the tower, although he's aware he's no master builder. He's typically found in the tower area.

A coarse, broad-shouldered commoner, Gautier believes that if Aloysius were to run things, he'd manage to raise the money that the building's repairs need. He always carries a mallet and chisel, though he's no fighter.

## HERVÉ THE BISHOP'S GUARDSMAN

Hervé Guiclan is the leader of the detail of the cathedral. He's not above exacting "fines," especially from hawkers, harlots, and foreigners stumbling into his turf, but he's softer than he sounds. He has not fought in years, and he's quick to identify men he doesn't want to argue with. Hervé is in love with Perrette Benison (below), who has rebuffed him.

Hervé takes orders from the archdeacon, not the dean, and the guardsmen step in the church only rarely. They lazily stroll around the building or the parvis. He and his subordinates normally carry batons and knives. When expecting a riot, they don padded gambesons made of cloth armor and switch to shortwords.

## Everybody Goes to Church

In the Middle Ages, not going to mass brings about a bad Reputation, and eventually the attention of the Church, unless the person is wealthy enough to have a private family chapel. Therefore, the cathedral is where recluses can be met, and sheltered damsels can be eyed (though approaching them is another story; they'll be accompanied by relatives, or a chap-eron and a maid). Most of the strangers and visiting dignitaries who happen to be in town will go to mass here. The cathedral and the parvis are good places to address hard-to-reach personalities, too; a nobleman would look bad if he ignored a plea from a woman kneeling in front of him.

People who shouldn't be seen together can exchange a few words when meeting at the cathedral gates. Those who would be at each other's throat anywhere else may choose the cathedral as neutral ground, where violence is off limits (or should be; the ruthless have the advantage of surprise). Tokens or messages can be left in prearranged "dead drop" locations within this large building.

While most of the city guilds meet in their halls, a tavern, or the city hall, some of them gather in St. George's cathedral. They make donations and take care of their patron saint's altar. For instance, the masons meet near St. Stephen's Altar (p. 10).

## PERRETTE BENISON

This young, stout vendor manages her ailing father's stall, which specializes in snack food. Notwithstanding her age and sex, thanks to her wit and will, she's the leader of the few ped-dlers authorized to keep their stalls on the parvis. She drives hard bargains with the dean, but she gets along well with Father Julien. She's willing to sell information or assist with meetings for a fee, if it doesn't harm her source of income: the cathedral.

## MONSIGNOR GIOVANNI DANDOLO, THE ARCHDEACON

A plump, clever Venetian schemer, the bishop's right-hand man resents not having actual jurisdiction in the cathedral (see *The Power Brokers*, pp. 6-7). He mainly comes to the cathedral in order to represent the bishop during important celebrations. When he needs to discuss with the dean one of the controver-sies arising because of the byzantine administrative arrange-ment of the diocese, he annoys Father Thibault by summoning him to the bishop's palace.

Dandolo does not seem to have weaknesses – at least, not now. But who knows if there aren't skeletons in some long-for-gotten closet, back in Venice?

## GODEFROY, VISCOUNT DE SAINT-JULES

The most powerful of this region's noblemen, the viscount is famously pig-headed. He readily takes offense at the subtlest slight by upstart commoners. He lives in a countryside manor complete with a chapel, but he also owns a townhouse not far from the cathedral. When he's in the city, he makes a point of vis-iting the Nobles' Chapel to verify that the nobility's privileges are not challenged. A man of action, he doesn't think much of priests and religion, unless they serve to support the established order.

# CHAPTER FOUR

# ADVENTURES

*"This can't be serious!" sputtered the dean, putting down the parchment.*

*The archdeacon's clerk sighed. "There's the seal, Father."*

*"A synod! The bishop's away! How can he summon an assembly of the diocesan clergy? Here in the cathedral! Disrupting the liturgies. And think of the expense!"*

*The clerk frowned. "Yes. But don't you rather wonder what the bishop wants a synod for?"*

Many activities take place in and around the cathedral. They can turn profitable, exciting, bizarre, or violent.

## MEDIEVAL AND FANTASY IDEAS

Any adventure in the Middle Ages should not underestimate the power of the Church. Committing crimes, such as theft or violence, in the cathedral is a sacrilege. The civil powers will support the Church by prosecuting such crimes with particular harshness; excommunication (see p. B155) is likely. Additionally, parishioners are expected to attend mass (see p. 21) and tithe regularly!

### rites and celebrations

On important festivities, the masses can be splendid, long-drawn affairs. Exceptional events may turn into celebrations that last for days – for instance, when the crown prince marries the daughter of a local, powerful nobleman. These rites can become the opportunity for many to strike gold. Church dignitaries try to outshine their rivals through precedence, noblemen coming from everywhere, and local social climbers show off. The pickpockets have a field day. Meanwhile, the parvis is where “miracle” plays and other entertainment are staged. All those efforts may interfere with each other, mostly within this one building. This is a perfect backdrop for a **GURPS Social Engineering** adventure.

### in times of turmoil

It's the end of the siege – one of those times when the citizens flock to the church for protection. The building becomes an emergency shelter. Hopefully, the sacking (“havoc”) will only last a day or two, then the conquerors will re-establish order. Holding the cathedral's gates against the plunderers for that short time may save the people inside from robbery, rape, and death. Most of the attackers are drunk and they might be diverted toward easier targets, but the cathedral's renown for its reliquaries is a drawback now.

If the threat is a pestilence, crowded places are a bad idea, but people will gather here anyway, for funerals if nothing else.

St. George's being one of the strongest buildings in the city, floods or earthquakes can turn it into a shelter. With its stone walls and metal roofing, it might be one of the few buildings to survive a citywide fire. Even so, wooden beams support the roof. These are safe from wind-carried embers, but not from arson (see *The Roof*, p. 14).

Whatever the disaster, the refugees must be organized, food and water stored and rationed, and the wounded or ill tended to. Leaders emerge (and clash), as do naysayers, and maybe enemies.

### Ludus Draconis

On January 13, at dusk, the “Play of the Dragon” takes place on the parvis. Squires and young noblemen, toting wooden swords, stage a mock fight against street performers, especially fire-eaters. These are dressed up as scaly, green dragons. Unlike similar events elsewhere, the staged combat doesn't end with the beasts' defeat; the onlookers start throwing snowballs (or mud) at *both* parties, until a canon gives a token to the fire-eaters, who disappear to the north.

The lower the status of the throwers, the more they seem to target the “knights.” Even if this is a mock fight, bruises and burns are common.

Years ago, the bishop considered forbidding this, officially because of the disorderliness of it all; the dean advised against it. See also *Here Be Dragons*, p. 26.

### Wealth Calls Thieves

The treasures found in the cathedral (see *Relics and Treasure*, p. 12) can attract thieves. However, this month nothing less than a bone of St. Avitus stops here, on its way to the capital, and it's said to be encased in a golden, gem-studded miniature temple. Church officials, nobles, and knights, who all are concerned with its security, escort it. However, the local clergy insist that Christians have to be allowed to pray before it. At night, it will be secured in the crypt, or so they say.

Adventurers may be thieves, or additional, possibly “unconventional” security. They could be envoys of the parish that originally owned this relic, which was taken from them as war booty.

## God's Creatures

Part of the sexton's job is to chase stray dogs out of the church. However, it is perfectly normal for the wealthy and powerful to bring in small pets (including falcons); if they are well behaved, nobody will complain.

Riding into the church is forbidden, not so much for the animal but because it would be a display of arrogance. Nonetheless, it's worth noting that the main gates are tall enough to do that. An unusual mounted-combat scene could easily take place in the building, but hooves at high speed don't do well with stone floors (the GM may exact a penalty). Watch out for the pillars when turning around!

The aisles' garrets are home to bats, and the nave's attic and the open areas of the towers to pigeons. Drop-pings can give -1 to Climbing or DX rolls, can be a problem for Mysophobic persons (see p. B149), and can actually be a source of disease (see p. B442). If looking for recent tracks, they give +2 to Tracking. Neither pigeons nor bats are a direct threat to humans, unless somebody can control them. There can be 1d+1 swarms per location at any given time.

Rats might appear, if summoned, in the underground parts of the building (up to 3d swarms per summoning).

As strangers in town, they might want to recruit local talents and buy themselves an insider.

## POLITICS, RELIGION, MAGIC

The delicate balance in the struggles centered on the cathedral (see *The Power Brokers*, pp. 6-7) ends when just one new factor is added: Father Thibault somehow came into possession of a magical item, a Truthsayer (see p. B245) coronet. Now, every time a trial or a controversy occurs between powerful people, one party can challenge the other to undergo a "lie-detector test." Nobody is forced to accept, but not accepting is tantamount to a confession. Moreover, the cathedral's chapter charges a hefty sum for every use.

Many wish the magical item would disappear. Some would like the thing to be outlawed as "black magic," which would endanger the dean himself. An enchanter claims he can devise workarounds.

Some say it's a fraud. However, since the coronet's effectiveness can be easily checked, what's the purpose of these rumors about it being fake? Of course, if it disappeared, then it couldn't be verified any more, and the rumors might cast a shadow on previous trials.

Such a device might "work" in a nonmagical world, too. In this case, the coronet is believed to be a powerful relic that can bring woe unto anybody who lies while wearing it.

### *The Truth of a Matter*

The city council is infamous for embezzlement. Eventually, somebody will challenge a councilor to wear the Truthsayer coronet. Maybe the allegations come from the cathedral's priests themselves!

## SAINTHOOD

A paralytic woman now walks, and she says one of the canons healed her. She doesn't say which one, for some reason. (Doesn't she want to? Can't she? Doesn't she know?) Some claim he's the popular Father Julien, which he vehemently denies. Despite protestations, cripples wait for him every day, and many call him a saint. Offers are on the rise, and the masses are

crowded. If asked about the miracle worker, Father Aloysius shrugs, and hints Julien was away on that day. The dean says St. George is to be thanked, not a priest. The archdeacon has shown an annoying interest in the issue. Other parish priests have begun complaining, and the civil authorities are concerned about the crowds: Last Sunday, a girl was trampled to death outside the cathedral. Some awakened force may be at work in the building, but it's a mixed blessing.

What if it's all a fraud? Or just an unexplainable, yet natural event? If magic works, it could have been a magical healing disguised as a miracle, a deception that's anathema to the Church.

## MARTYRDOM

Masked rascals killed one of the canons, Father Florent, before the main altar. It's stuff for martyrdom tales, and his bloodied vestments are now exposed in the cathedral (and they might contain clues). He was the youngest and meekest canon in the cathedral, an unlikely target. Father Aloysius is promoting the victim's status as a martyr, and claiming that heretics murdered him – which might spark off a witch-hunt.

Keen observers might have noticed that Florent resembled Julien. The younger priest is growing very outspoken in criticizing corrupt authorities for "taking advantage of the widow and the fatherless."

Maybe Florent was the intended target. He was from a noble family, so maybe this was just revenge. He was also known to be friends with disreputable youths. Had he heard too much, perhaps in confession? Do those young men dabble with pre-Christian secrets, maybe hidden in the cathedral itself?

## SANCTUARY

A young minstrel, Gilles Vaudin, barely made it to the cathedral's gates, with the retainers of the Viscount de Saint-Jules on his heels. He supposedly had raped the viscount's wife and killed her maid. The bishop's guardsmen had to scuffle with his pursuers to grant the minstrel his right – sanctuary in the Church's embrace.

A week later, the viscount's men besiege St. George's cathedral; they may not get in to slaughter Gilles, but he won't get out. Nor does the viscount allow, as usual, the fugitive to move to a monastery, or to the bishop's palace. Recently, he has ordered a blockade of food supplies.

For once, the archdeacon and the dean agree – they both want the Church’s prerogatives confirmed. Monsignor Dandolo, however, isn’t anxious to help the cathedral in its predicament (the minstrel sleeps in the vestry!), while Father Thibault wouldn’t mind if the fugitive slipped away. The king’s bailiff wants a regular civil trial, a loathsome idea for the viscount. The nobleman, meanwhile, is entertaining the idea of treachery; he’s considering pretending to guarantee safe passage to a monastery, then strike.

The city’s commoners are happy to see the arrogant viscount stalemated. Moreover, according to rumors, the young man is innocent (but if so, what really happened, and who killed the maid?). Some councilors would like those rumors to be confirmed.

## STONE PREDATORS

On nights of the full moon, no one travels the city’s streets, lest his body is found at dawn – on a roof. Rumor suggests that it’s the cathedral’s gargoyles: They come alive, and hungry.

Indeed, the latest victim was found with a broken blade in his hand. When Gautier checked the sculptures, he found one of them chipped.

Maybe it’s a serial killer, who chooses his victims at random (or does he? Isn’t there something linking them all?) and who likes to put the blame on those old statues. Might he be a werewolf? Or maybe somebody can use magic to give life to sculptures. What if they had been alive once, then they were turned into stone, and now they can break free, if only once a month?

## THE BISHOP’S HOME!

After staying away for so long, he’ll be here for Christmas. Things will change, in the city and in the cathedral. Everyone is polishing the feathers in their caps, and moving the skeletons from the closet to the ossuary. Father Thibault seems worried about the bookkeeping. Hervé has cut down on graft. Father Aloysius is working on a plea for extraordinary funding, so that the fallen spire can be repaired, and he’s looking for support. However, the archdeacon is the most troubled.

## A Time for Prayer

In medieval times, the chapter of the cathedral follows the liturgy of the hours, every day. The rites include psalm singing, scripture reading, and prayers. Those that occur in the cathedral take place as follows.

*Matins:* Visitors not familiar with medieval Christian traditions will be surprised when at 3:00 a.m. the vestry’s outer door is opened, and the sleepy, candle-holding priests reach the choir (or the winter choir) for the first of the days services.

*Lauds:* At dawn, the sexton opens the secondary gates; the cathedral remains open until Vespers. Choirboys and some laypersons also attend this morning rite.

*Other Daily Services:* At 6:00 a.m. (Prime), 9:00 a.m. (Tierce), noon (Sext), and 3:00 p.m. (Nones), the Chapter gathers again.

*Vespers:* At 6:00 p.m. or dusk, another service attended by parishioners is celebrated. After Vespers, the sexton closes the cathedral.

Chapter discipline has grown lax, and several canons seek dispensations or simply skip some services, especially Matins.

### Main Holy Days

In the Middle Ages, dozens of holy days were celebrated. The most important ones to this cathedral are Easter (the first Sunday after the full moon following the spring equinox), the Feast of St. George (April 23), Pentecost (seven weeks after Easter), Christmas (December 25), and All Hallows (November 1). On the eve of Easter and Christmas, important services are held at night. See *Ludus Draconis* (p. 22) for a peculiar tradition.

## MODERN IDEAS

The Church’s direct power has waned, but not its influence. Public bodies, such as the Department for Cultural Heritage, are, or should be, interested in the cathedral as a monument, but funding is more difficult than ever. The building remains the venue for many social activities. The personnel has been downsized, especially the priests. See also *Today* (p. 26).

## PUBLIC EVENTS

The cathedral is mostly empty on ordinary masses. Aloysius wants to foster the building’s prominence in the city’s life as a venue for lay events: concerts and conferences. A famous orchestra will play this evening, and the church is in chaos.

The Stradivarius violin, worth a fortune, needs to be kept safe in the vestry. The orchestra’s manager is quarrelling with Aloysius about logistics. The soloist complains about the temperature. Thibault has second thoughts about it all. Worse, a cold snap is expected, and Julien might ruin everything by admitting homeless people tonight!

## AN X MARKS THE SPOT

St. George’s is nearly an empty shell. Artworks have been stolen or moved to museums; shabby copies remain. The parishioners are few and old, and the diocese can’t afford the repairs.



They're considering a sale of the building. However, tales describe a church treasure that was buried long ago, as well as a secret chamber. The sexton's father, before dying, provided a tantalizing clue.

This is a classic treasure hunt, from the dusty records in the vestry, to clues chiseled in the belfry's stones, ending with crowbars – against the wishes of the dean and therefore in secret. Maybe the treasure isn't buried, but hidden under the roof. Several groups may be competing: professional treasure hunters hired by the archdeacon, parishioners wanting to save their church, and outright thieves.

Why is the dean so opposed? Does he fear that digging in the crypt might be dangerous?

*One piece of artwork shows  
a man and a serpent-man,  
shaking hands.*

## ST. GEORGE'S HUNTERS

An order of knightly hunters kept the threat of monsters in check through the centuries. Now, many of their secrets have been lost, and the worst is yet to come. This church was one of the order's strongholds, and its imagery contain a series of clues to the solution – rebuilding St. George's lance, the only weapon against ultimate evil. A piece of that is in the cathedral in the secret room, but the rest may be spread across Europe. The protagonists are outsiders who learn of the impending apocalypse and want to pick that tradition up, since the order is now defunct.

Or so they think. If they are wrong, some powerful secret players are likely to see them as clumsy trespassers.

For the opposite view, maybe the monsters would be happy to just mind their own business, were it not for these fanatic zealots. Those zealots are gathering again, right here, to start a new crusade. The monsters won't tolerate it this time, and the hunters might become the hunted.

## NEGOTIATIONS

Certain supernatural beings cannot violate hallowed ground by committing violence there. This makes an anciently consecrated church the ideal place for dangerous negotiations. Other entities might be unable to enter such a place, so the meeting might take place at the gates, with the weaker party inside. (Then the problem becomes how to leave without being ambushed in the vicinity.)

A devilish ploy could be to gain control of the clergy and have the building deconsecrated (see *Repurposed*, p. 26), in secret, before the meeting.

## CORRUPTION

The cathedral *isn't* consecrated. It has always been a demon-worshippers' den hiding in the most unlikely place. Doing evil is so much funnier when the good are your unwitting tools! Unskilled spectators to ceremonial magic, if opposed to the casting, can ruin it (see p. B238); but who says they have been told the truth about the casting's purpose? The coven has an outer layer of misguided youths. They think they're doing something cool, secretly meeting for chanting, inhaling substances, and fraternizing, down in the crypt at night. Actually, they are helping the cultists to transform important citizens into mindless puppets, and this is just the beginning.

## BLACK IS BACK

The archaeologists who opened the ossuary knew it contained the remains of victims of the Black Death. What they didn't anticipate is that the old enemy, *Yersinia pestis*, could be dormant down there. Worse, nobody expected this strain would be resistant to antibiotics.

The plague is spreading fast, and citizens living near the cathedral are already dying. (Anyone still alive is desperate enough to be a danger to himself and others.) A team of scientists, archaeologists, and soldiers, clad in biohazard suits, is on a mission to look again into that bone pit. They must find biological material belonging to people who died at that time, but not of the plague. The faint hope is to find natural immunity, and to develop a vaccine from it, before civilization collapses.

# LENSES

The cathedral has been around for centuries, undergoing many transformations. It may change significantly in nonhistorical game worlds.

## A MUNDANE BUILDING

In the Middle Ages, the faith is strong, the Church is powerful, and everybody may try to make use of this building for their own earthly purposes. If there are secrets, they are worldly.

## WHEN MAGIC WORKS

Even in settings where some Church orders accept Magery (as in the *GURPS Banestorm* setting), this cathedral's chapter is very conservative, and none of its priests have such questionable

powers. Nonetheless, they rely on a few magical items. Father Aloysius uses a Magelock key to secure the doors, when he doesn't forget to. The saints' relics, and maybe the bishops' bodies, are safeguarded against necromantic desecration. The crypt is Scrywalled – which raises the question of what would anybody want to hide there, and whether the priests know about it.

The bishop is more flexible. One of the priests in the archdeacon's service knows a few basic spells. Hervé the Guardsman was hired in the first place because he's resistant to magic.

If clerical magic works separately, then maybe this place has a high sanctity level for Christian holy casters. If it features high sanctity for *some other god*, then that's a warning that something is greatly amiss. For more about sanctity and the effect a consecrated building may have on magic, see *GURPS Thaumatology* (p. 126).

## A PLACE OF POWER

In some settings, only ceremonial magic works, or it's the most potent. On these worlds, the cathedral is a place of power, where such magic works best. In fact, the site was picked because it had been a pagan temple, which in turn had been constructed on a barbaric place of worship.

This power can be neutral, usable for whatever purposes. The crypt might be an intersection of "ley lines," a source of untapped cosmic strength.

Alternatively, this is a bad place (and perceived as such by those who can). Mana may be death-aspected, at least in the ossuary. Under a veneer of conventional Christianity, something evil lurks. It might be dormant – for now. The GM could emphasize the atmosphere to have it in tune with the actual effects. For instance, the Hell imagery in the artworks is unsettling, and unexplainable chilling drafts blow out of terribly dark corners. The eccentricities of the notable people may be played up to the verge of derangement. Their descriptions might not tell the whole story. Aloysius is remarkably disagreeable, yet he might be the one potential ally. Julien might be always away because he instinctively avoids the building. A seemingly secondary person such as the sexton might be a secret leader. As to Thibault, why does he spend so much time in the crypt? Is he *fighting* something? Or, worse, *yielding* to it?

### Maps for Players

The maps on pp. 27-29 were specifically designed for adventures that need to keep secret certain parts of the cathedral. The maps on pp. 7, 14, 18, and 19 do not need modification for use.

## HERE BE DRAGONS

The knight-vs.-dragon theme might just be a peculiar local tradition. It might be a symbolic device representing social strife. Maybe there's something worse. A folklore remembrance of a time when other beings walked this region? A demon-worshipping cult? Transdimensional entities? Actual high-fantasy dragons and their minions? Reptile men? Aliens?

## TODAY

A modern campaign may have the cathedral as a mundane building or not, but in both cases, technology has come. Electric lighting takes a stab at pushing darkness to the remotest corners, but the cathedral's system is notoriously unreliable. Electric alarms are on the outer doors, and proximity detectors were set around important artworks. (For these electronic security measures, see *GURPS High-Tech*, p. 206). The city has set up security cameras trained on the porches, to prevent vandalism.

The heating system is a recent addition. The underground boiler room is accessed only from the outside through a man-hole (DR 25, HP 40, -5 to Lockpicking). The boiler is temperamental. The church is dotted with air vents (DR 1, HP 5), but nothing bigger than a cat could go through these openings, and the piping is inside the walls.

Sturdy, high-backed pews were introduced in the 18th century. Each is five yards long (250 lbs., DR 2, HP 52). Given their

placement, it's likely that anybody taking cover will benefit from the DR of several of them, in case of a shootout. Flimsy folding chairs (10 lbs., DR 1, HP 9) are in the aisles. The main altar (160 lbs., DR 1, HP 45) is a questionable modern wooden artwork, placed in the chancel, three yards to the east of the ambones. Wooden structures were added inside the commonly used gates, to serve as double doors (DR 1, HP 40). A modern harmonium was put in the chancel, to the right (30 lbs., DR 1, HP 12). A baroque organ loft had been built, but it fell down in a fire in 1823.

In the vestry, the walls have been lined with wooden cabinets (bolted in place, DR 1, HP 40 each), replacing the chests. They are filled with vestments, hymnals, and other supplies, all very combustible. There is a fire extinguisher.

The two confessionals in the aisles are classic, if obvious, hiding places. They are delicately carved (320 lbs., DR 1, HP 54). The nearest restrooms, available to the congregation, are in another building altogether, the community center in the bishop's palace.

## DESPOILED

After a war or revolution, the cathedral is still here, but in bad shape. Anything that could be carried away is no longer around. This may include even the bulkiest artworks; sacred symbols may have been defaced. Even the remains of entombed bishops may have been dragged out and mutilated, just out of spite.

Furniture was used as firewood, possibly on the spot. Depending on the battle, the structure may have suffered additional damage: The stones may be pockmarked by gunfire, and most of the windowpanes may be gone.

If there were rumors about treasures, the floors have been damaged, but that doesn't mean anything was found. The GM must decide whether the secret room remains a secret, and what the priests have hidden in there before the occupation. Likewise, the priests may have had advanced warning of the attack, permitting them to hide artwork in plain sight. Add-on daubery may cover priceless paintings, and ugly plaster statues may have been cast over marble sculptures.

*Where Christ erecteth his church,  
the divell in the same church-yarde will  
have his chappell.*

*– Archbishop Richard Bancroft*

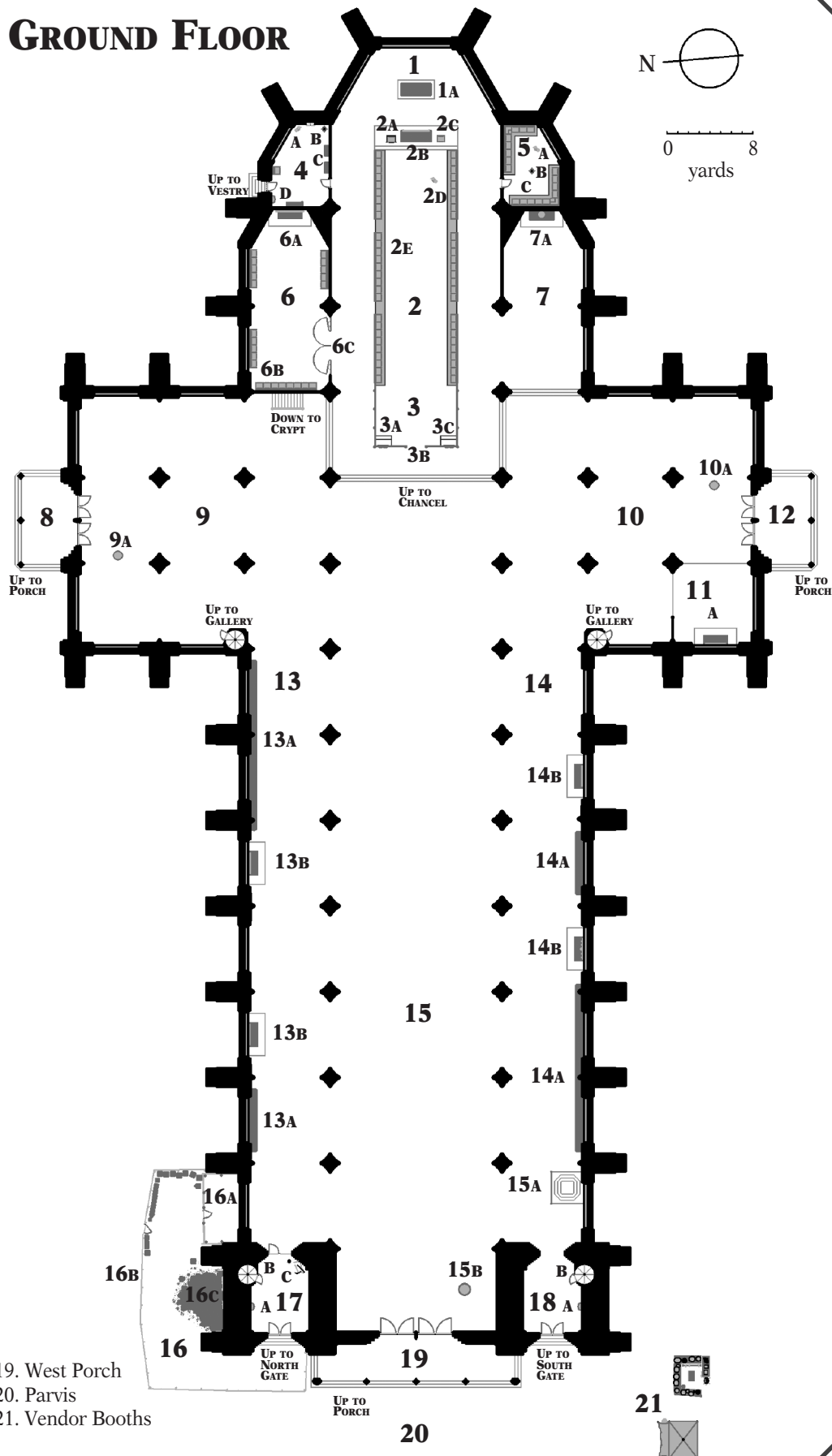
## REPURPOSED

The cathedral has been deconsecrated; it is no longer a hallowed place of worship. Probably, it doesn't belong to the Church any more. A benevolent new owner may have taken into account its history and value, turning it into a museum, library, or conference center. Others may want to debase it and what it stood for, and turn it into a barracks, stable, granary, warehouse, prison, or asylum. Artworks, treasures, church furniture, and records are no longer here – but do the new owners know about the secret room?

# MAP OF THE GROUND FLOOR

## Key

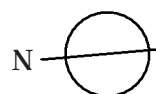
1. Apse
  - 1a. Sarcophagus
2. Choir
  - 2a. Bishop's Cathedra
  - 2b. High Altar
  - 2c. Dean's Chair
  - 2d. Lectern
  - 2e. Stalls
3. Chancel
  - 3a. Ambo
  - 3b. Balustrade
  - 3c. Ambo
4. Vestry
  - 4a. Aumbry
  - 4b. Brazier
  - 4c. Chests
  - 4d. Chest
5. Winter Choir
  - 5a. Lectern
  - 5b. Brazier
  - 5c. Stalls
6. Nobles' Chapel
  - 6a. Altar
  - 6b. Stalls
  - 6c. Railing
7. Virgin's Chapel
  - 7a. Altar
8. North Porch
9. North Transept
  - 9a. Stoup
10. South Transept
  - 10a. Stoup
11. St. Stephen's Chapel
  - 11a. Altar
12. South Porch
13. North Aisle
  - 13a. Bench
  - 13b. Side Altar
14. South Aisle
  - 14a. Bench
  - 14b. Side Altar
15. Nave
  - 15a. Baptismal Font
  - 15b. Stoup
16. Building Yard
  - 16a. Lodge
  - 16b. Fence
  - 16c. Rubble
17. North Tower
  - 17a. Stoup
  - 17b. Up to Tower
  - 17c. Tools
18. South Tower
  - 18a. Stoup
  - 18b. Up to Tower
19. West Porch
20. Parvis
21. Vendor Booths



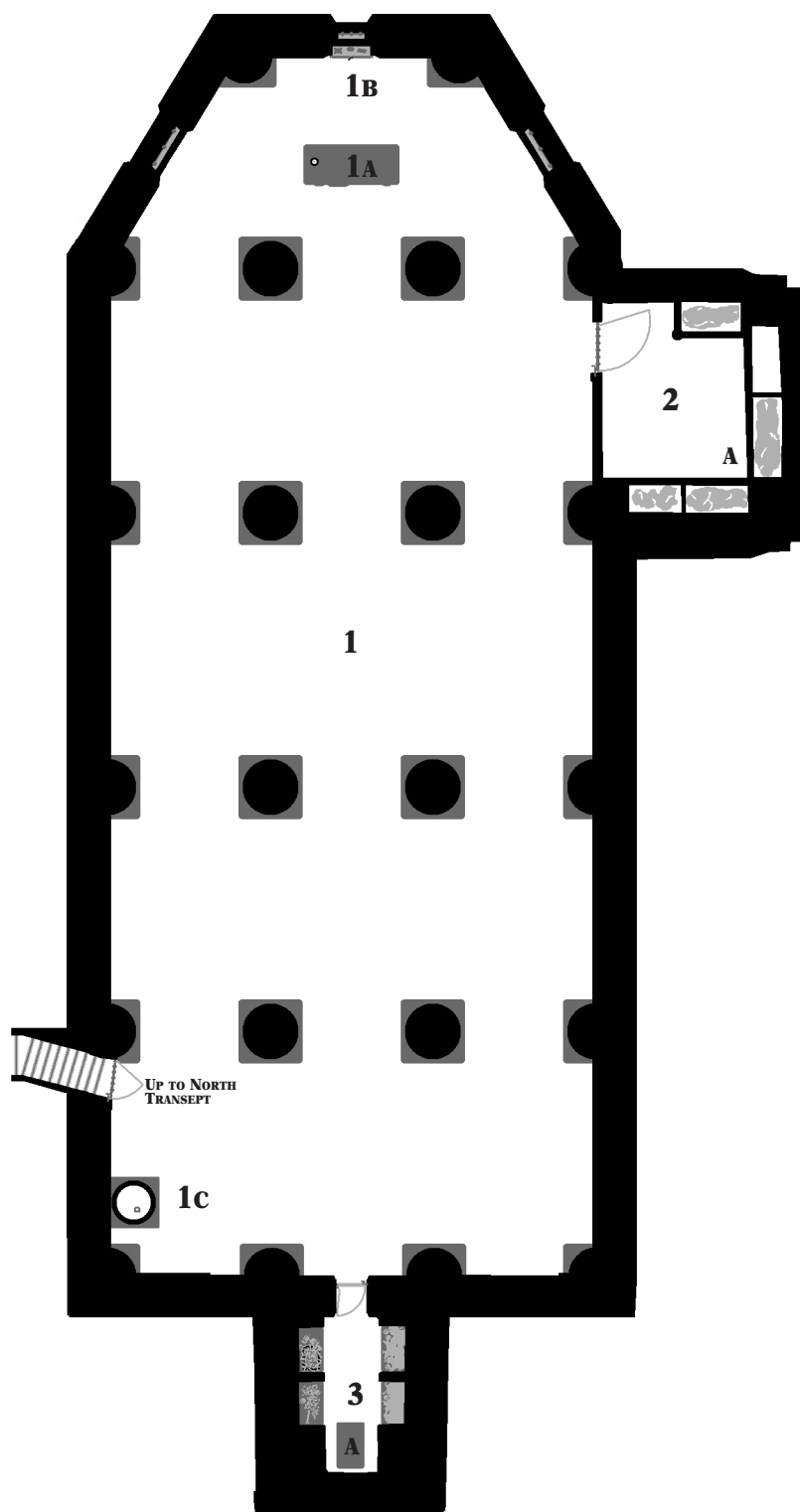
# MAP OF THE CRYPT

## Key

1. Old Church
  - 1a. Altar
  - 1b. Relic Aumbry
  - 1c. Baptismal Font
2. Bishops' Burial Chamber
  - 2a. Niches
3. Ossuary
  - 3a. Tombstone



0 5  
yards





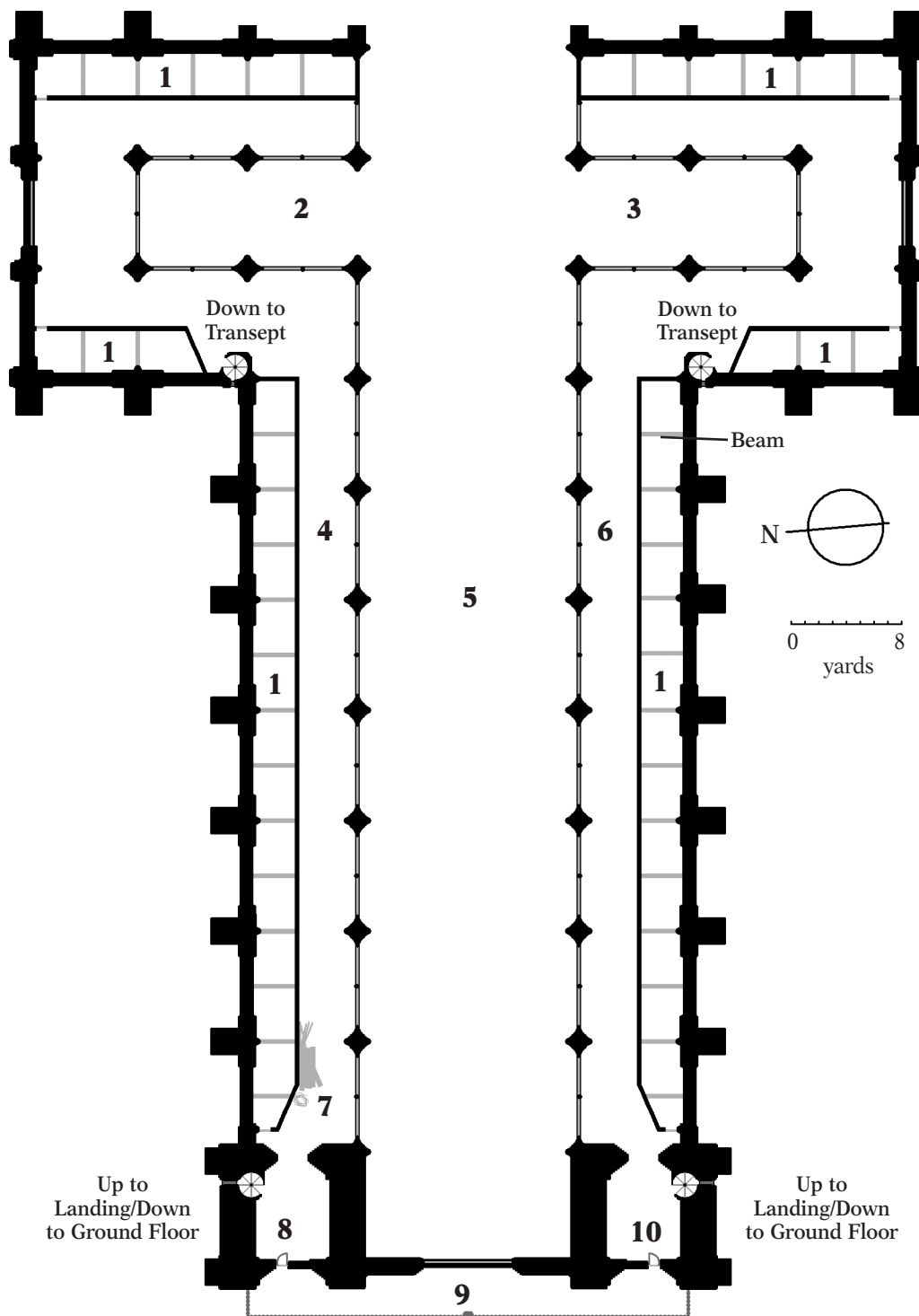
# MAP OF THE GALLERY, THE FAÇADE BALCONY, AND THE GARRETS

## Key

- 1. Garret
- 2. North Transept (below)
- 3. South Transept (below)

- 4. North Gallery
- 5. Nave (below)
- 6. South Gallery
- 7. Boards, Logs, and Ropes

- 8. North Tower
- 9. Balcony
- 10. South Tower



# APPENDIX

# INSPIRATIONAL RESOURCES

Books about the Church in the Middle Ages could easily fill several libraries, with large sections dedicated to Gothic cathedrals. The selection of non-fiction books will be enough to introduce the way of thinking of the people who designed, built, paid for, maintained, and used these monuments. The fictional works were chosen for flavor and visual impact. Finally, the best way to get to know a building remains to step in. The fictional church of St. George is a composition of ideas drawn from architectural parts that do exist in the real world, in the cathedrals listed on p. 31.

## NONFICTION BOOKS

Bony, Jean. *French Gothic Architecture of the 12th and 13th Centuries* (University of California Press, 1983). Specifically about Gothic construction.

Duby, Georges (Eleanor Levieux and Barbara Thompson, translators). *The Age of the Cathedrals. Art and Society, 980-1420* (University of Chicago Press, 1981). If you can only buy one book, this is the one.

Gies, Frances and Gies, Joseph. *Life in a Medieval City* (HarperCollins, 1981). The daily life in Troyes. Compelling and succinct.

Gimpel, Jean (Teresa Waugh, translator). *The Cathedral Builders* (Grove, 1983). Focusing on architects, builders, masons, and their craftsmanship and methods.

Le Goff, Jacques (Arthur Goldhammer, translator). *The Medieval Imagination* (University of Chicago Press, 1988). For the life of the mind of the medieval man (and woman), including church symbolism.

Macaulay, David. *Cathedral: The Story of Its Construction* (Houghton Mifflin, 1973). Because it's for kids, it has simple language, clear drawings, and curious details.

Marchi, Cesare. *Grandi peccatori, grandi cattedrali* (Rizzoli, 1987). Society, religion, and colorful anecdotes about 15 great cathedrals and the great sinners that built them.

Pirenne, Henri. *Economic and Social History of Medieval Europe* (Mariner Books, 1956). The classic summary of the rebirth of cities and commerce.

Prache, Anne. *Cathedrals of Europe* (Cornell University Press, 2000). If a picture is worth a thousand words, how much are a thousand photos? A lot, so borrow this from your library.

Southern, Richard William. *Western Society and the Church in the Middle Ages* (Penguin, 1990). A good one-stop resource for the interaction between the Church as a worldly body and the rest of the world in the Middle Ages.

## FICTION BOOKS

Cornwell, Bernard. *Harlequin* (HarperCollins, 2000; also titled *The Archer's Tale*), *Vagabond* (HarperCollins, 2002), and *Heretic* (HarperCollins, 2003). The trilogy dwells on medieval warfare (and overstates the case for the longbow). It's priceless for the medieval mindset, and there's a holy quest, too.

Crichton, Michael. *Timeline* (Knopf, 1999). Highly cinematic treatment based on solid knowledge; action scene in a chapel attic.

Eco, Umberto (William Weaver, translator). *The Name of the Rose* (Harvest Books, 1994). Outside the church is a monastery, not a city. The church comes with unsettling artworks, power struggles, and a secret passage.

Eliot, T.S. *Murder in the Cathedral* (Mariner Books, 1964). A short play about the conflict between temporal and spiritual power; also useful for the behavior of clergy in the face of sacrilegious violence.

Falcones, Ildefonso (Nick Caistor, translator). *Cathedral of the Sea* (Dutton, 2008). The building of a cathedral is linked with the rise of a new city-dwelling social class, and with melodrama.



Follett, Ken. *The Pillars of the Earth* (Morrow, 1989). Human motives, social change, political strife, economy, nature, art, and technology all interact with the works for the cathedral.

Follett, Ken. *World Without End* (Dutton, 2007). Two centuries later, the church is surrounded by a city, and by a tangle of rivalries and intrigue.

Hugo, Victor (Walter J. Cobb, translator). *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* (Signet Classics, 2010). A recent edition of the classic description of unusual action in all corners of a cathedral. The theme of sanctuary is mentioned as well.

Peters, Ellis (a.k.a. Pargeter, Edith). *A Morbid Taste for Bones* (MacMillan, 1977). This is the first in a series of 20 books. Although the central character, Brother Cadfael, perhaps thinks too much like us, all facets of the Middle Ages are explored in these monastery-based “medieval whodunnits.”

## FILMOGRAPHY

*Batman* (Tim Burton, 1989). Final confrontation in a neo-Gothic belfry where bells and gargoyles are manmade hazards.

*Highlander* (Russell Mulcahy, 1986). In this movie, very special characters may enter a consecrated building, but not commit violence in it.

*In Bruges* (Martin McDonagh, 2008). A modern murder in a church.

*Kingdom of Heaven* (Ridley Scott, 2005). Religion, power, responsibility, leadership, honor, and mass combat, in a medieval package.

*Omen, The* (Richard Donner, 1976). Grisly scenes in several churches.

*Van Helsing* (Stephen Sommers, 2004). Destructive combat scenes in Notre Dame de Paris.

## Television

*Cadfael* (Sebastian Graham-Jones, 1994-1998). Thirteen of this medieval sleuth's mysteries.

*Pillars of the Earth, The* (Sergio Mimica-Gezzan, 2010). Mostly what you find in Ken Follett's books, but the visual impact helps.



## SITEGRAPHY

*Mapping Gothic France* (Stephen Murray and Andrew Tallon), [mappinggothicfrance.org](http://mappinggothicfrance.org). This project, established by Vassar College and Columbia University, is priceless not just for the history of French Gothic cathedrals, but also for the 360° panorama views it offers. You can get the feeling of really being there.

## Actual Sites

These locations were used as inspiration during the design of St. George's Cathedral.

*Basilica Patriarcale di Santa Maria Assunta*, Aquileia, Italy. For the crypt.

*Cathedral of Saint Mary* (formerly *Cathedral Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary*), Salisbury, England. For the bell tower and roof areas.

*Cathédrale Notre-Dame de Chartres*, Chartres, France. For the porches, sculptures, windows, and nave floor maze.

*Cathédrale Notre-Dame de Paris*, Paris, France. For the facade balcony and the choir area.

*Domkirche Sankt Stephan*, Vienna, Austria. For the secondary areas.

*Iglesia Catedral de la Asunción de Nuestra Señora*, Valencia, Spain. For the transept.

*Kathedrale Sankt Peter*, Regensburg, Germany. For the apse and winter choir.

*But it seemed as though each Christian community was aiming to surpass all the others in the splendour of construction. It was as if the whole world were shaking itself free, shrugging off the past and cladding itself everywhere in a white mantle of churches.*

*– Rodulfus Glaber, monk and chronicler*

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