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# THE OCTAGON CHAPEL, NORWICH

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On 23 November 1757, during a visit to Norwich, John Wesley recorded in his journal

I was shown Dr Taylor's new meeting-house, perhaps the most elegant one in Europe. It is eight-square, built of the finest brick, with sixteen sash-windows below, as many above, and eight skylights in the dome, which, indeed, are purely ornamental. The inside is finished in the highest taste, and is as clean as any nobleman's saloon. The communion-table is fine mahogany; the very latches of the pew-doors are polished brass.<sup>1</sup>

Despite this well known episode, which was to have significant ramifications for Methodist architecture, and the ample hints concerning the designing and construction of the Octagon Chapel in Colegate offered in the pioneer studies published in 1848 by J. and E. Taylor and in the 1920s by the Norwich historian, Stanley Wearing, surprisingly little has been said about the architecture of this remarkable building, which has survived intact (Fig. 1).<sup>2</sup> Yet much is known about it from three manuscripts now in the Norfolk Record Office: *An Account of Monies expended in building the New Chappel belonging to the Presbyterian Congregation of Norwich* (FC 13/11), *Minutes for Building* (FC 13/1) and *Some Account of the origin and progress of the Congregation of protestant Dissenters commonly called Presbyterian assembling at the Octagon Chapel in the City of Norwich. 1796* by John Taylor Jr. (FC 13/80). The last includes nine sheets of designs by the competing architects, published in the present article for the first time.

The project was initiated by the minister, the

Revd John Taylor (1694–1761), a distinguished Classical scholar best known as the author of *The Hebrew Concordance* (1754–57) and writings on original sin. As the son of a Lancaster timber merchant, he would have had a special appreciation of the building crafts and almost certainly made contributions towards the design.<sup>3</sup> At the inaugural meeting on 17 October 1753 of the building committee, of which Taylor was a member, various builders were delegated individual responsibilities prior to a request for designs, in a reversal of normal professional procedure. Thomas Ivory (1709–79), a leading Norwich carpenter described as ‘a publick spirited Man with great activity of Mind and resolution, and great knowledge in his business as a Master builder’, who owned timber yards in Bishopsgate ‘Importing from ... the Northern Countries ... large Quantities of Deals, Timber, Iron, etc. into this Country’,<sup>4</sup> was assigned to ‘make the Doors Door cases Windows Roof Joists, pillars & Columns of Timber’,<sup>5</sup> Christopher Lee, who had advertised in *The Norwich Gazette* on 30 July 1737 as a designer of ‘Temples, Churches, Hermitages, Grottoes, Caves, Theatres, and other ornamental Buildings of Delight’,<sup>6</sup> was to make ‘pews & Seats and floor of the Area and pulpit’.<sup>7</sup> Thomas Rawlins (c.1727–89), a stone carver specializing in multi-coloured marble wall monuments and also practising as an architect,<sup>8</sup> was to ‘do the Stone Mason’s work’, and probably in a bid to win favour subscribed £10 towards the building fund.<sup>9</sup>

On 17 October 1753 Robert Brettingham (1696–1768), who was also a member of the building



Fig. 1. The Octagon Chapel, Colegate, Norwich, Norfolk, view from the south. *Terry Friedman.*

committee, subscribed £30 ‘towards carrying on this work’,<sup>10</sup> having advertised a few months earlier in the local press that he was

leaving off his business as Mason [and] intends to act in the character of an Architect, in drawing plans and elevations, giving estimates, or putting out work, or measuring up any sort of building, for any Gentleman in the Country.<sup>11</sup>

On 24 October he was appointed ‘Architect & Surveyor of the new building and [offered] 3£. p Cent according to his proposal’.<sup>12</sup> On the 31st demolition of the old meeting house began, with ‘all the Iron’ carried away, and John Sparrow, the glazier, removing ‘all the Glass’, which Brettingham measured. It was decided that if Sparrow was ‘not willing to give so much for it as Mr Ivory, then Mr Ivory to have it’.<sup>13</sup> The committee ordered Brettingham on 7 November to ‘produce within a

fortnight two different Designs of Plans & Elevations to be laid before all the Subscribers ... at a general meeting’. A ‘plan & Elevation’ were delivered on the 27th, ‘to which he is desired to add a plan of the pews, & of the Ground floor, & also of the Galleries & as particular Estimate as he can of the Expence of the new building’. The following day, with Rawlins in attendance, the committee decided to ‘adjust [the] Plans’ and submit them to subscribers, and finally on the 30th Brettingham ‘laid his Plans’ for the committee’s inspection.<sup>14</sup> He was paid £10 10s ‘for my time In attending the Gentlemen of the Committee in giving My advice for Building a New Chapple’, and a further £44 10s for unspecified work.<sup>15</sup> For reasons now unclear he played no further part in the operations and his designs are not identifiable among the Record Office drawings.

By 3 December 1753 the committee began

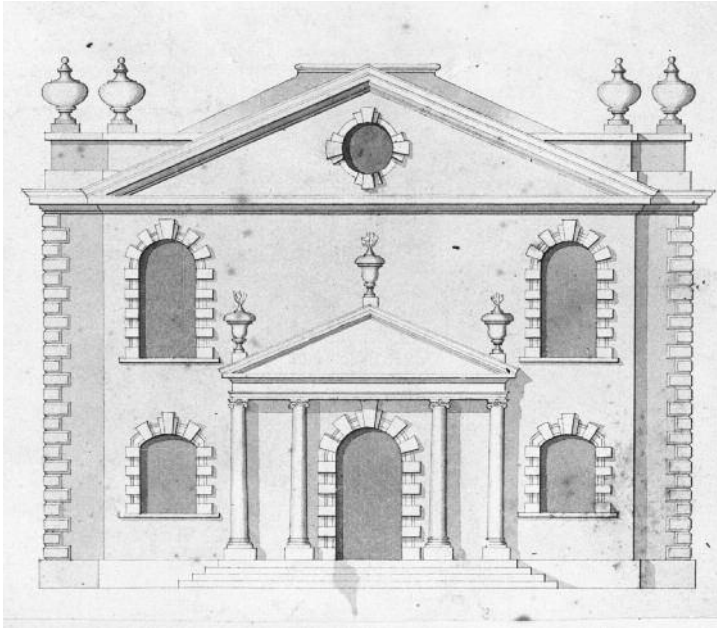


Fig. 2. Unidentified architect, proposed south elevation for The Octagon Chapel, Norwich, submitted December 1753 (?), pen and ink and wash. *Norfolk Record Office, FC 13/80, no. 9.*

exploring alternative solutions by giving ‘Directions for plans & Elevations’ for a rectangular building measuring 83 by 58 feet with 11 foot wide galleries. Four days later it received ‘a Plan & Elevation for South [entrance] & West fronts from Mr Lee’, together with ‘An Anonymous plan & Elevation’, followed on the 10th by ‘a plan & section of the Roof from Mr Ivory who is to bring an elevation of the South Front on Fryday next’, and on the 12th by a ‘plan wth. Elevation and Section from Mr Ivory also a Plan wth. an Elevation from Mr Rawlins [and] a Plan wth. Elevation from Mr Lee’ for the committee’s ‘Consideration’.<sup>16</sup>

Of the two surviving rectangular designs in the Record Office, neither of which is signed, only one (Fig. 2), for an imposing entrance front, can with any probability be associated with this phase of the proceedings. It amalgamates features from two London churches by James Gibbs, both illustrated in

*A Book of Architecture* (1728, 2nd edition 1739): the west front of the Oxford Chapel, St Marylebone (Fig. 3) and the east end of St Martin-in-the-Fields (Fig. 4). From the former came the corner quoins, tetrastyle temple portico, Ionic rather than Doric, and pedimented gable end, though without the steeple, which was forbidden on nonconformist meeting-houses; from the latter came the advancing centrepiece, vigorous block rustic, or Gibbs-surround, windows and door (apparently marking the first appearance in Norwich of this popular motif), and paired vases crowning the parapet ends, though without giant order pilasters or string-courses. The circular block rustic window in the upper pediment, not found in Gibbs’s *oeuvre*, probably derived from Plate LIV in Barry Langley’s *The City and Country Builder’s and Workman’s Treasury of Designs* (1st edition 1740).<sup>17</sup> The identity of the architect of the drawing illustrated by Fig. 2 is

Fig. 3. James Gibbs, 'The West Front',  
Oxford Chapel, St Marylebone, London,  
1721-24 (from James Gibbs, *A Book of  
Architecture*, 1728, pl. 25, detail).

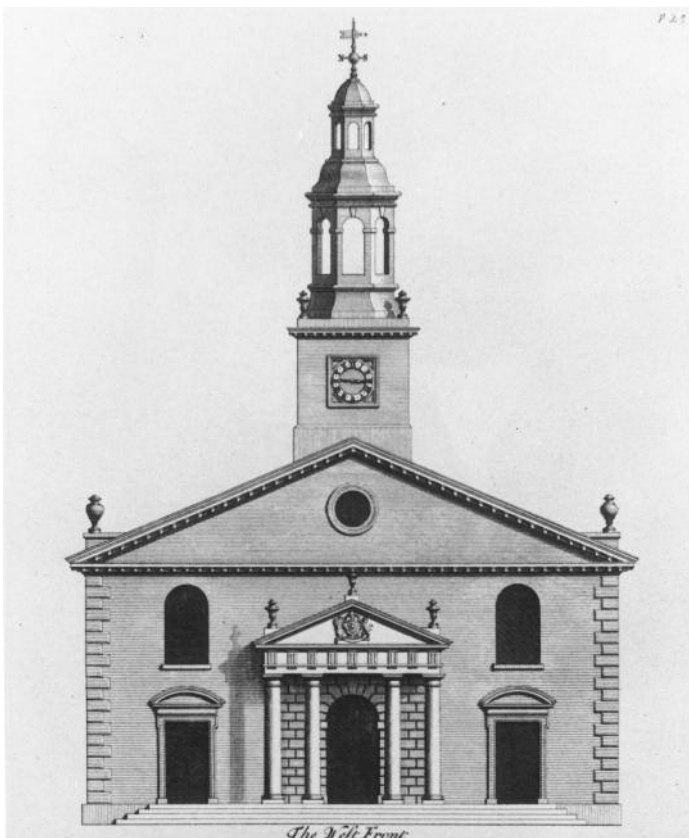


Fig. 4. James Gibbs, 'The East End',  
St Martin-in-the-Fields, London,  
1721-27 (from James Gibbs, *A Book of  
Architecture*, 1728, pl. 4, detail).

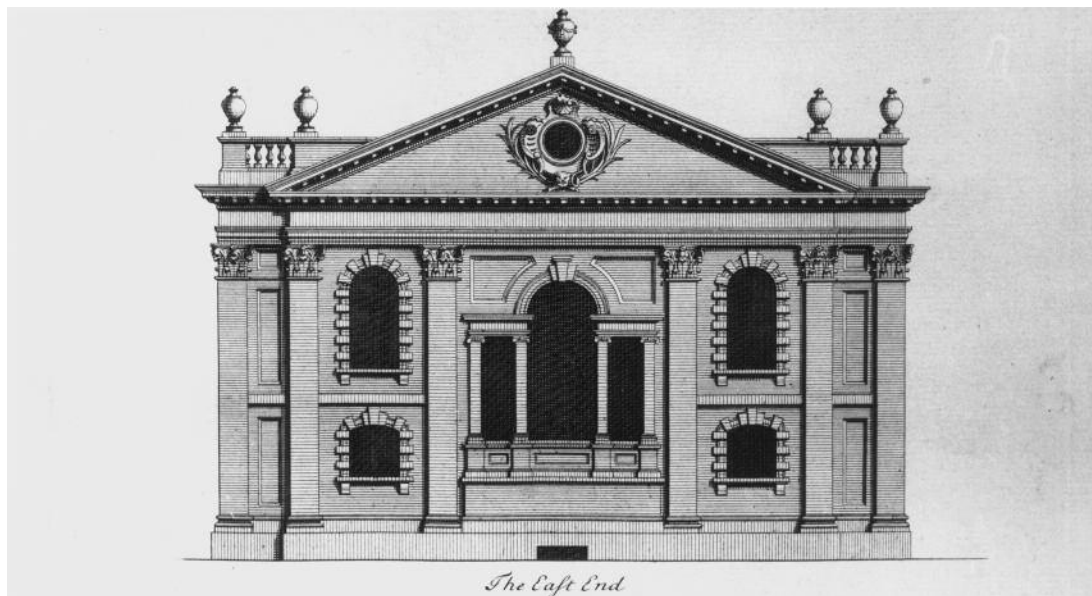






Fig. 5. Bartholomeus Frans Drijfhout and Pieter Post, Oostkerk, Middelburg, Zeeland, Holland, 1647–67 (from M. D. Ozinga, *De Protestantsche Kerkenbouw in Nederland*, 1929, pl. 35).

conjectural. Though Ivory was to employ Gibbs-surrounds at the Theatre Royal, Norwich (1757, demolished 1825),<sup>18</sup> the use of shadowing and the three-dimensionality of the corner quoins in Fig. 2 is more sophisticated than the flat, linear rendering evident in Fig. 19, the most likely of the Octagon drawings attributable to him. Rawlins's vocabulary, judging from the evidence of the Octagon design published in 1768 (Fig. 17), belongs to a decisively Burlingtonian Palladianism. Perhaps the most likely candidate is the London trained Lee, but unfortunately no other work by him is documented. In any case, no such fashionably metropolitan ecclesiastical building had been proposed for Norwich since the erection sixty years earlier of the Old Meeting House (1693), further along Colegate.<sup>19</sup>

Nevertheless, the committee was not satisfied and on 21 December 1753 ordered Lee 'to proceed on drawing an Octangular Plan ... wth. an Elevation, Section of Roof and Estimate', presumably in response to 'Mr Ivory [having] produc'd a Model of a Roof for an Octangular Plan [for] Inspection' at the same meeting (untraced).<sup>20</sup> Since Ivory was also a timber merchant this may have been a three-dimensional object. The decision to switch to an octagonal form, whether Ivory's or the committee's, marked a radical departure from earlier Norwich Nonconformist houses of worship, all of which were conventional rectangles, including the Methodist Tabernacle in Bishopsgate (1751–53, demolished 1953), built 'after the design of the Ingenious Architect, Mr I - ry'.<sup>21</sup>

What sudden attraction this esoteric form had for the committee remains something of a mystery. By no means the earliest example of its use in British church design, it was then still a rarity,<sup>22</sup> though common enough in Holland.<sup>23</sup> The Norwich congregation, as we shall see later, had contact with Holland at the time it was building the new chapel and, moreover, a local, early expression of Protestant Congregationalism had sprung from contact with the influential 'Separatist' minister, Robert Browne, who in 1581 took refuge with his Norwich followers at Middelburg in Zeeland.<sup>24</sup> There, between 1647 and 1667 the Dutch Reform church erected the Oostkerk (Fig. 5), a large, impressively detailed, brick and stone octagon crowned by a huge dome and cupola.<sup>25</sup>

Apart from the practical consideration of the shape better suiting the confined and irregular site at Norwich (Fig. 6), octangularity has certain aesthetic and liturgical advantages over the rectangle. Externally, any three of the octaves are always at once in view, giving an expansive breadth to the building (Fig. 7). Internally, it reveals the minister in his pulpit democratically to the whole congregation seated in the body and galleries, and it harbours no dark corners (Fig. 27). But its chief benefit is acoustical.

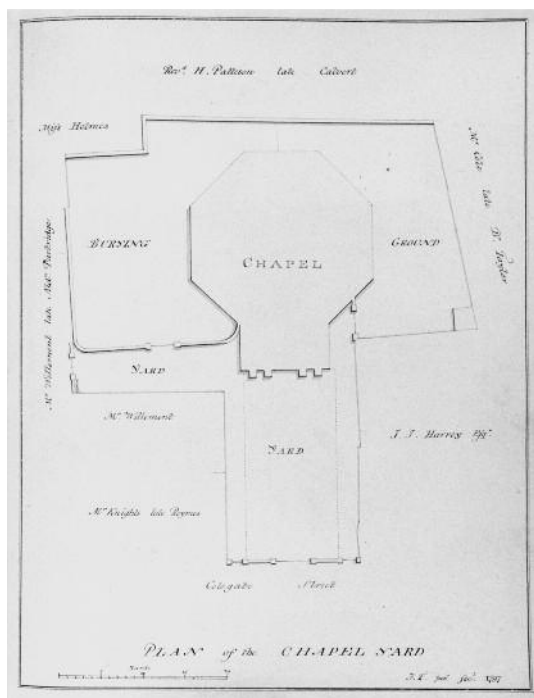


Fig. 6. John Taylor Jr., 'Plan of the Chapel Yard', 1797, pen and ink. *Norfolk Record Office*, FC 13/80, following fol. 66.

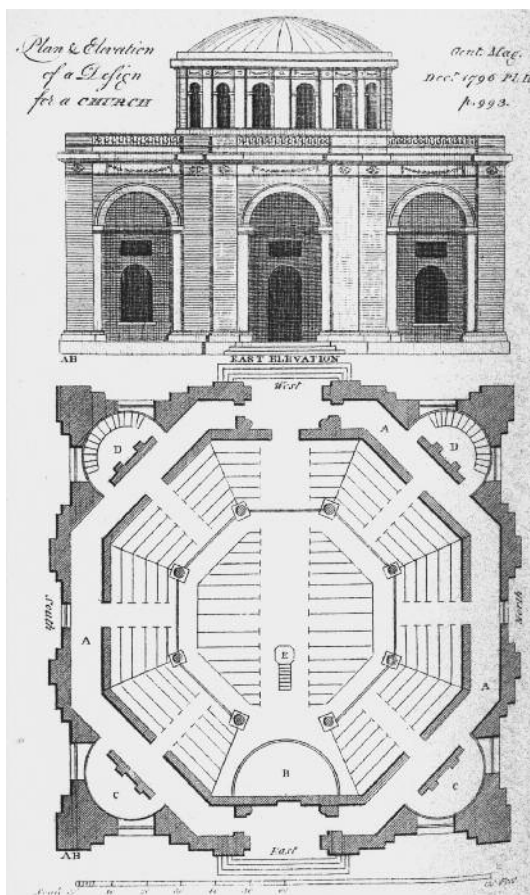


Fig. 7. Blakeney, 'Plan and Elevation of a Design for a CHURCH' (from *The Gentleman's Magazine*, December 1796, 993).

Clearly inspired by the Octagon Chapel, *The Gentleman's Magazine* in 1796 published a 'Convenient & elegant Design' for an internally octagonal church designed by an obscure Norwich architect named Blakeney (Fig. 8), notable for the eight-sided

passage quite round it, which communicates with every part, and gives every person an opportunity of entering at that part of the church nearest to their pew without disturbing the congregation by passing through the other parts; [while the] double wall will prevent the congregations being disturbed by carriages, which is often disagreeable in large towns [and the pulpit so positioned that] if the manner in which sound expands is considered [brings] as many within the compass of the preacher's voice.<sup>26</sup>



Fig. 8. The Octagon Chapel, Norwich, from the west. *Terry Friedman*.

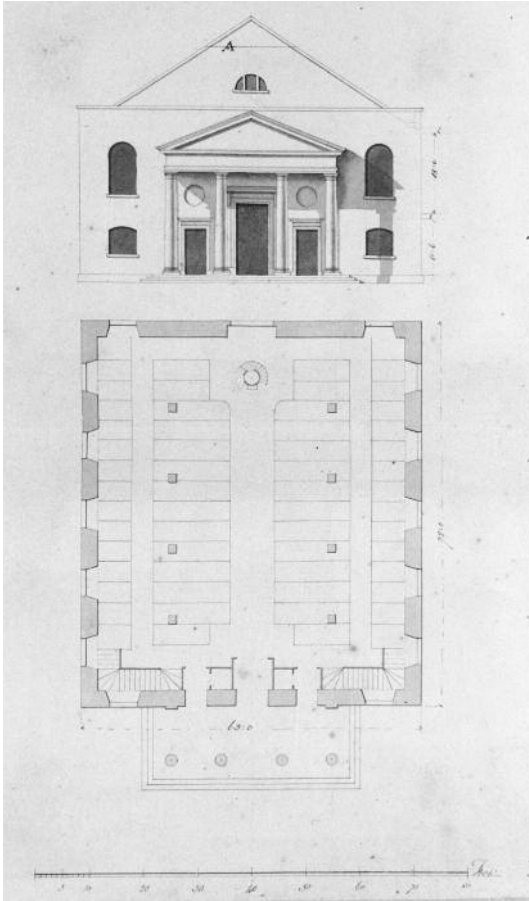


Fig. 9. Robert Morris, proposed ground plan and south elevation of the 'Parallelogram' design for The Octagon, Norwich, submitted 7 January 1754, pen and ink and wash. *Norfolk Record Office, FC 13/80, no. 4.*

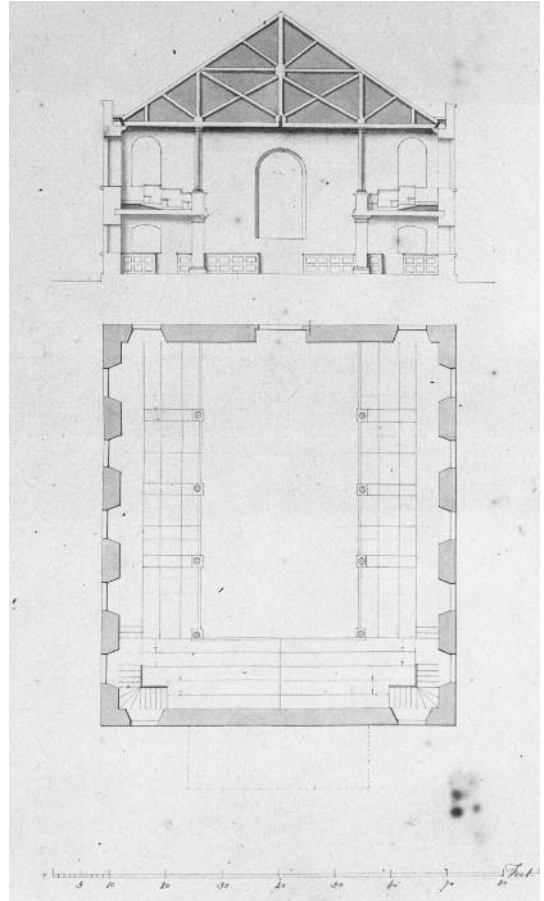


Fig. 10. Robert Morris, proposed gallery plan and section of the 'Parallelogram' design for The Octagon Chapel, Norwich, submitted 7 January 1754, pen and ink and wash. *Norfolk Record Office, FC 13/80, no. 5.*

On 29 December 1753 Lee acquainted the committee that 'he expected some Drawings from Mr Robt. Morris of London, with his Remarks upon the Octagone Plan; & that he deferr'd finishing his own Plans till he receiv'd the Same'. On 7 January 1754 the committee 'Received 2 Plans & Elevation of a Parallelogram, & 2 Plans & Elevation of an Octagon with sections of the Roof from Mr Morris of London, for which he charged 8 Guineas'.<sup>27</sup> Morris (1703-54), a joiner by training and a relative of the

Burlingtonian architect, Roger Morris (1695-1749), was an influential author of architectural publications advocating a neo-Palladian system of rational simplicity. In *An Essay In Defence of Ancient Architecture* (1728) he wrote that

no Science but Architecture is, or has been permitted to contain the sacred Deity, for which we are furnish'd with the noblest Buildings that have adorn'd the several Countries of the World: It is this which has set Men at work on Temples and publick Places of Worship<sup>28</sup>



and in *The Art of Architecture, a Poem. In Imitation of Horace's Art of Poetry* (1742) he pressed readers to

Keep the great Arts of Greece and Rome in View;  
From thence your Fabrick form, your Genius flow

while specifying just where their allegiance should lay.

GIBBS may be said, most Times in Dress to please,  
And few can decorate with greater Ease:  
But JONES more justly knew the Eye to charm,  
To please the Judgement, and the Fancy warm<sup>29</sup>

In *Rural Architecture; consisting of Regular Designs of Plans and Elevations for Buildings in the Country. in which The Purity and Simplicity of the Art of Designing are variously exemplified* (1750), he favoured 'Plainness and Utility to Gaiety and Ornament' and warned that 'if you will be lavish in Ornament, your Structure will look rather like a Fop, with a Superfluity of gaudy Tinsel, than a real Decoration'.<sup>30</sup>

These ideas are epitomized in the 'Parallelogram' design for Norwich (Figs. 9–10), which has a five by five bay body measuring 72 by 63 feet, differently proportioned from the 83 by 58 feet specified by the committee on 3 December 1753. The tetrastyle temple portico rises through both storeys, with the apex of its pediment just touching the main cornice. Blind *yeux-de-boeuf* above the side doors and a diminutive Diocletian window in the gable, which lights the internal roof structure, are hallmarks of previous designs published in *Rural Architecture* and *The Architectural Remembrancer* (1751) (Fig. 11).<sup>31</sup> Only the hidden base of the gable ends strikes an awkward, provincial note (Fig. 9). The interior follows a straightforward Wrenian gallery pattern of columns on piers. The timber roof is a steeper version of Nicholas Hawksmoor's St Alphege, Greenwich, which measures 60 feet wide, as recorded in the *Treasury of Designs* (Fig. 12).

In 1750 Morris had published a seminal design for 'an octangular *Temple* or *Church*' (Fig. 13) measuring 60 feet in diameter and internally 45 feet high, with arches 10 feet in diameter and 20 feet high,

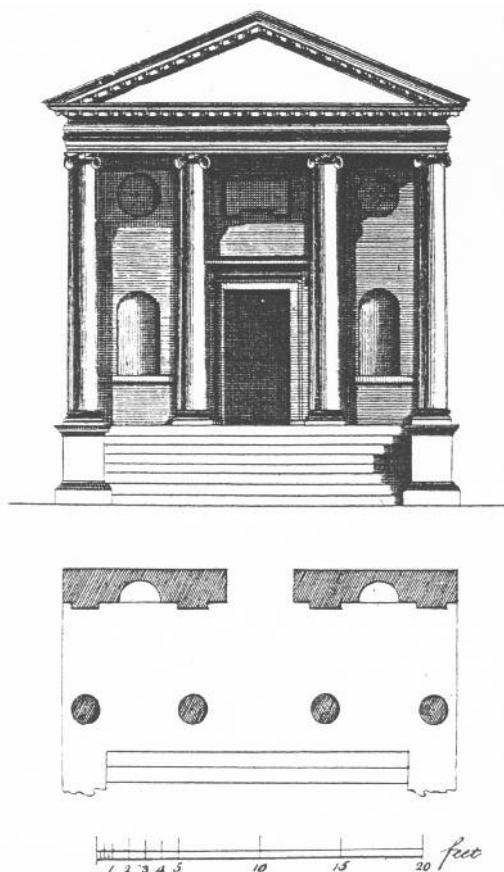


Fig. 11. Robert Morris, 'A Portico of the Ionic Order open on the Sides' (from R. Morris, *The Architectural Remembrancer*, 1751, pl. 2).

and 6 foot wide outer aisles. Thirteen windows provided 'sufficient Light' and galleries were excluded. The eight-sided dome rested on a Pantheon-like stepped drum. The scheme had been criticized, he tells us, on grounds

that the inner Part should have been a Circle ... and the Roof spherical, that the Sound striking in the Angles, will render it confused, and reverberate from a Roof Octangular in the Plan, very unintelligible to the Audience; but as the Angles are small, and nearly approaching to a Circle, I think the Objection of little Weight.<sup>32</sup>

THE OCTAGON CHAPEL, NORWICH

Plate 14

SECTIONS of Truss'd Roofs with Remarks

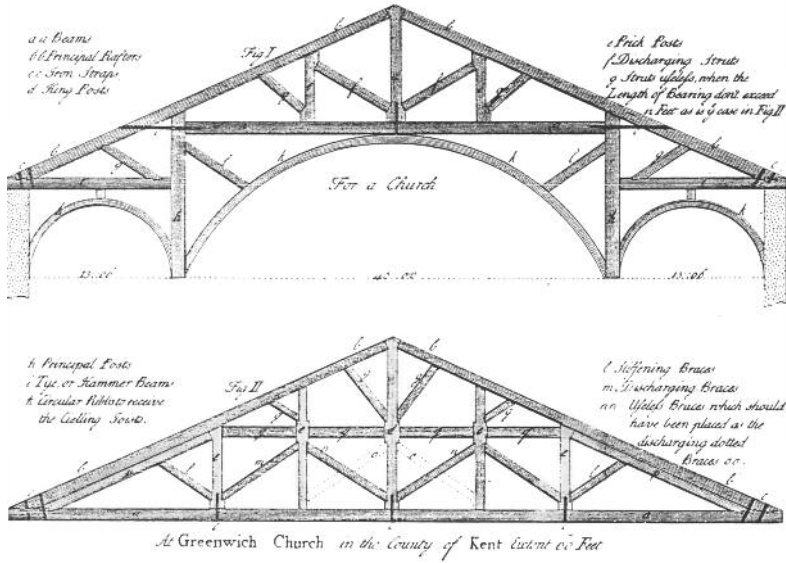


Fig. 12. Batty Langley, 'Section of Truss'd Roofs ... For a Church [and] At Greenwich Church', 'Published November the 16th. 1741' (from B. Langley, *The City and Country Builder's and Workman's Treasury of Designs*, 1750, Addenda, pl. 14, detail).

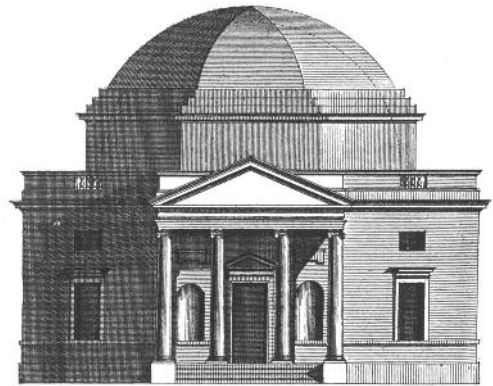
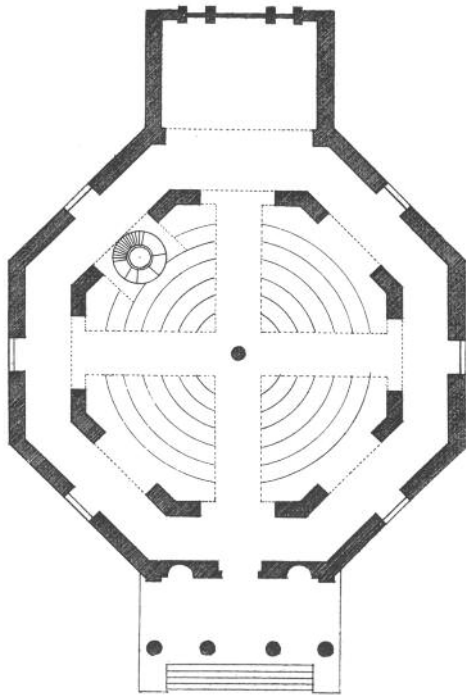


Fig. 13. Robert Morris, plan and elevations of 'an octangular Temple or Chapel' (from R. Morris, *Rural Architecture*, 1750, pls. 31-32).

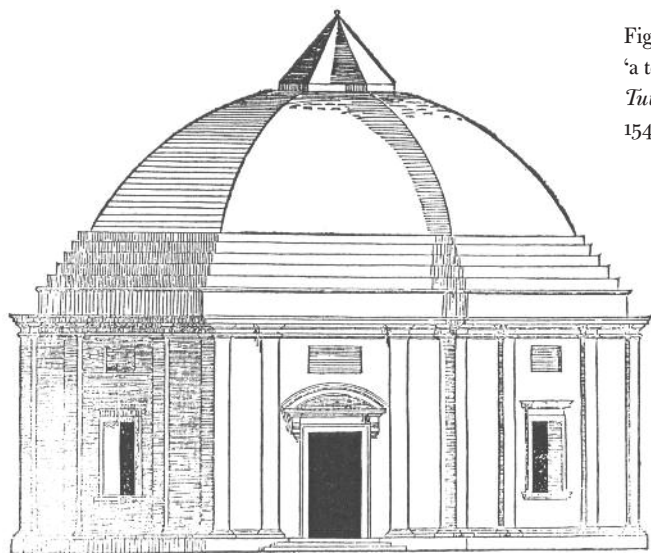


Fig. 14. Sebastiano Serlio, elevation of 'a temple which is octagonal' (from S. Serlio, *Tutte L'Opere D'Architettura et Prospetiva*, 1547, Book V, p. 15).

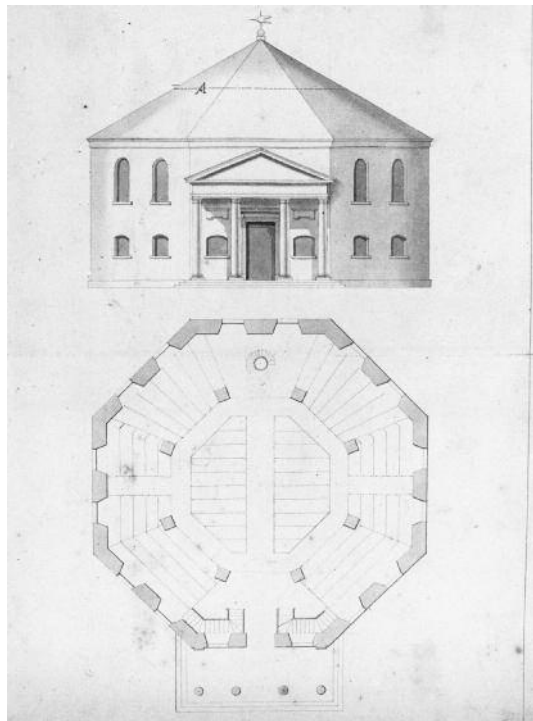


Fig. 15. Robert Morris, proposed ground plan and south-west, south and south-east elevations of the 'Octagone' design for The Octagon Chapel, Norwich, submitted 7 January 1754, pen and ink and wash. *Norfolk Record Office, FC 13/80, no. 1.*

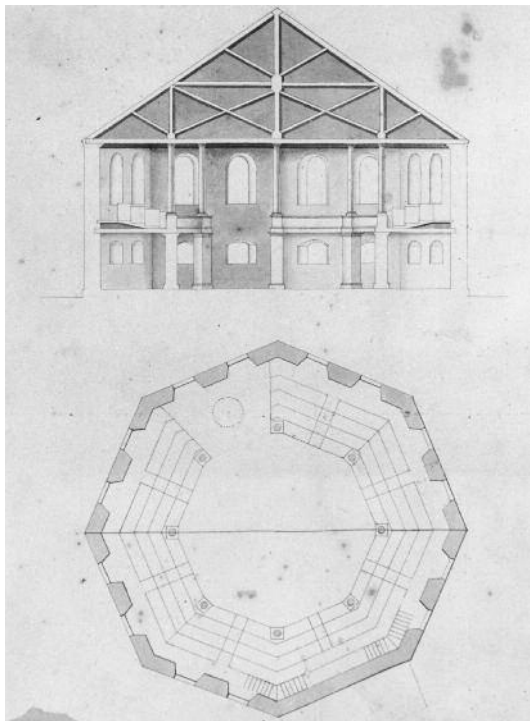


Fig. 16. Robert Morris, proposed gallery plan and section of the 'Octagone' design for the Octagon Chapel, Norwich, submitted 7 January 1754, pen and ink and wash, *Norfolk Record Office, FC 13/80, no. 3.*

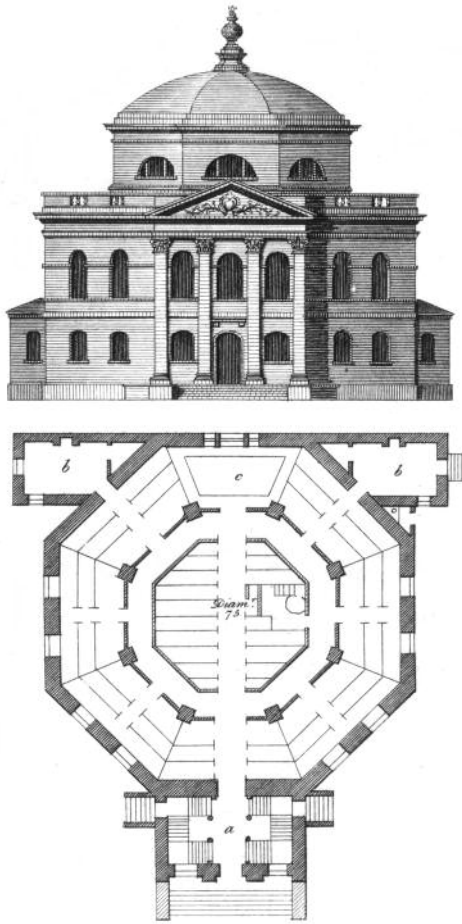


Fig. 17. Thomas Rawlins, 'Design of an Octangular Church or Chapel ... for a Dissenting Congregation in Norwich', submitted 29 December 1753 (from T. Rawlins, *Familiar Architecture*, 1768, pl. XLIV). RIBA Library, London.

Morris's likely model is a design in Book V of Sebastiano Serlio's *Tutte L'Opere D'Architettura et Prospetiva* (1747) (Fig. 14), where the 'octagonal shape' is commended as 'very commodious for buildings, particularly temples' and notes that 'As far as the light ... is concerned, the windows would be sufficient'. Those in the cardinal chapels are Serlian, which Morris introduced in his chancel.<sup>33</sup> The

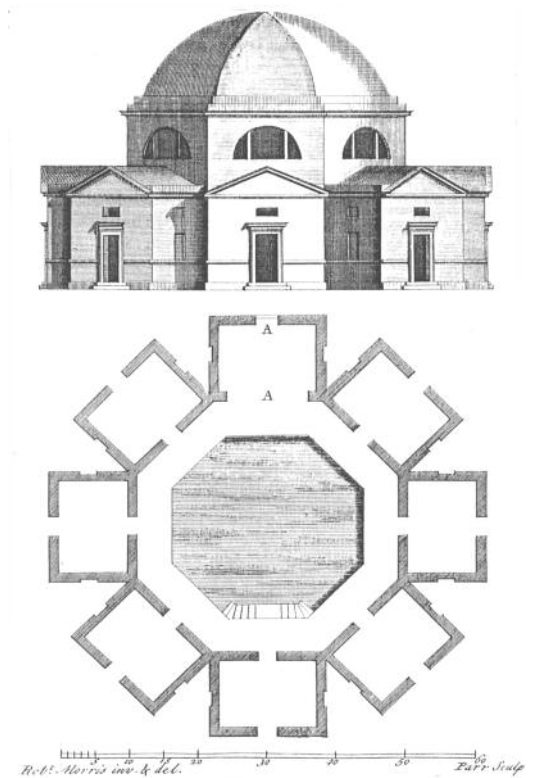


Fig. 18. Robert Morris, plan and elevation of an octagonal building (from R. Morris, *Rural Architecture*, 1750, pl. 47).

*Rural Architecture* scheme, appearing in a publication which attracted 171 subscribers, the majority being members of the building trades, must have acted as the catalyst for Morris's invitation to participate in the Norwich competition.

His 'Octagon' design (Figs. 15–16) repeated the austere Palladian vocabulary of the 'Parallelogram', as well as the portico pediment rising to the main



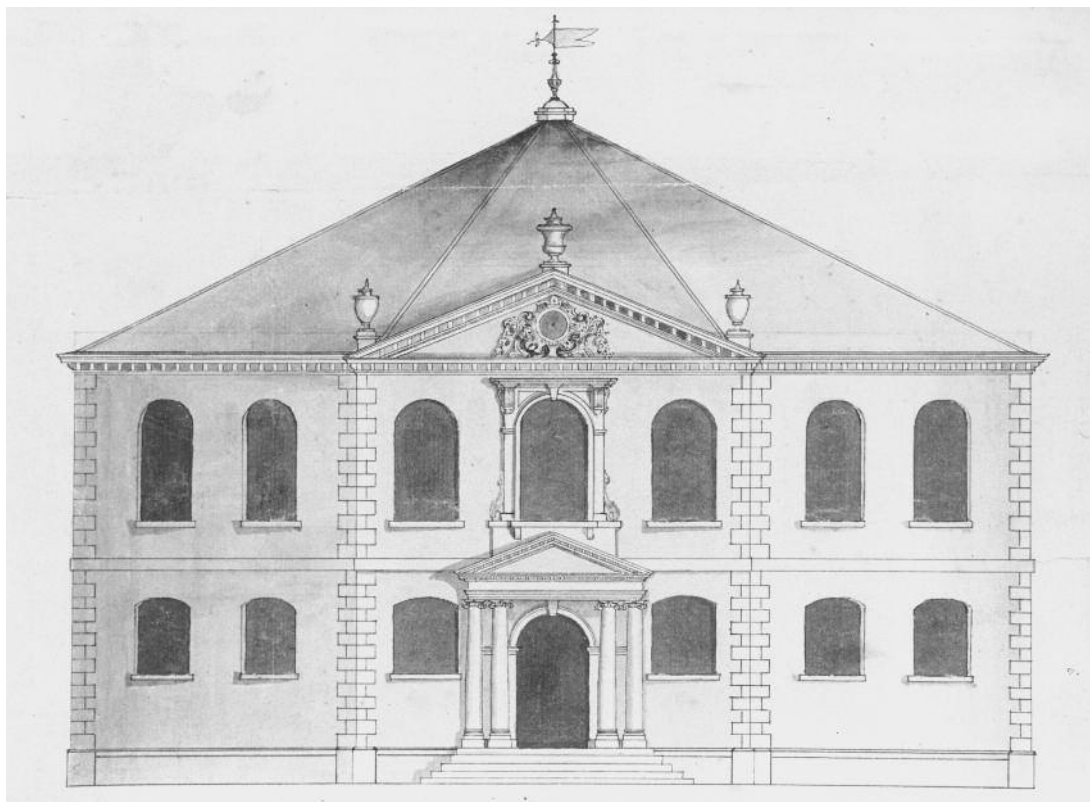


Fig. 19. Thomas Ivory (attributed), proposed south-west, south and south-east elevations for The Octagon, Norwich, perhaps submitted 20 February 1754, pen and ink and wash. *Norfolk Record Office, FC 13/80, no. 7.*

cornice, the internal system of columns on piers, the roof structure, now 70 feet wide, and the distinctive circular pulpit, which also appears in Fig. 13. The change in form, however, displaced the pair of gallery staircases from the rectangular corners to the bays on either side of the entrance, which now accommodated windows surmounted by apron-like panels, as in Fig. 13. The internal, galleried space is lit by twenty-eight windows. Unfortunately, there is no trace of Morris's 'Remarks upon the Octagone Plan' promised by Lee on 29 December 1753. Morris was paid £8 8s 0d on 11 March 1754 for 'Plans & Sections'<sup>34</sup> and, having indelibly imprinted on the project the ideal of plain geometry, was not heard of

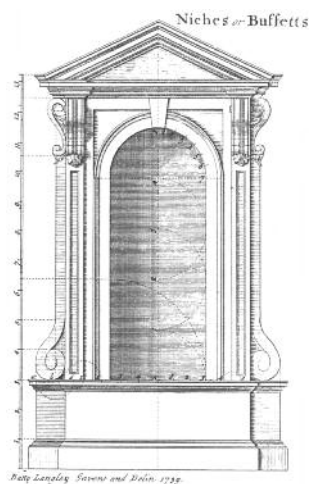


Fig. 20. Batty Langley, 'Niches or Buffetts' (from B. Langley, *The City and Country Builder's and Workman's Treasury of Designs*, 1750, pl. LVII, detail).

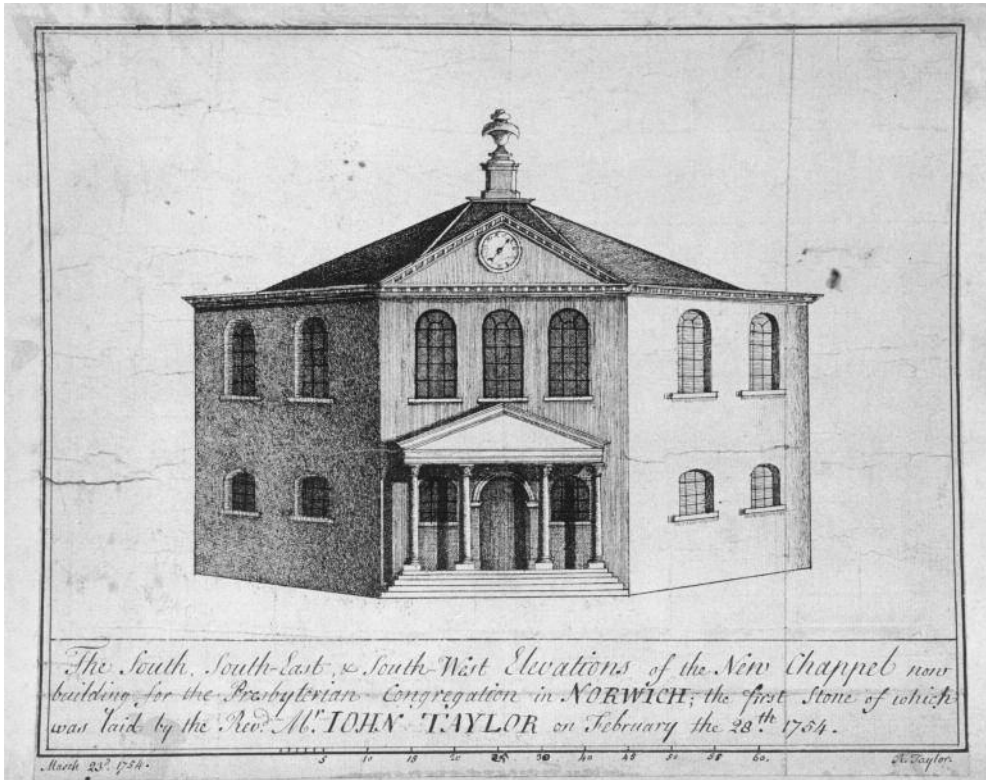


Fig. 21. Richard Taylor, 'The South, South-East, & South-West Elevations' of The Octagon Chapel, Norwich, 1754, pen and ink. *Norfolk Record Office, FC 13/80, No. 8.*

again in Norwich. He died on 12 November the same year.

Meanwhile, on 29 December 1753 'Mr Rawlins exhibited a new Front Elevation for the Octagon Plan' and on 14 January 'produced a new Elevation for the octogon Plan'.<sup>35</sup> The first of these was later published by Rawlins in *Familiar Architecture* (1768) (Fig. 17), describing it as 'a Design of an Octangular Church or Chapel' of 75 feet internal diameter with (marked a) 'Two Stair-Cases leading to the Galleries, which are supported with the eight Columns that support the octagon Doom' rising 55 feet high, with rectangular vestries (b) projecting from the rear of the building, a communion space (c)

opposite the entrance, with 'no Gallery over it'. He added that

This Design was drawn in ... 1753, for a Dissenting Congregation in Norwich, but was thought too expensive, and was therefore reduced to 60 ft. within, having a very plain Outside. It is a very advantageous Structure for Hearing, notwithstanding the Objections made to the Figure by Mr *Morriss*, in his Work entitled *Select Architecture*. There may indeed be some Reason to object against his Sketch, wherein the Arches are to be supported with large angular Jambs forming an Isle or Passage round them, which may cause a confused Reverberation of the Voice interrupted by the Piers: But this will not be the case where Columns are introduced.<sup>36</sup>

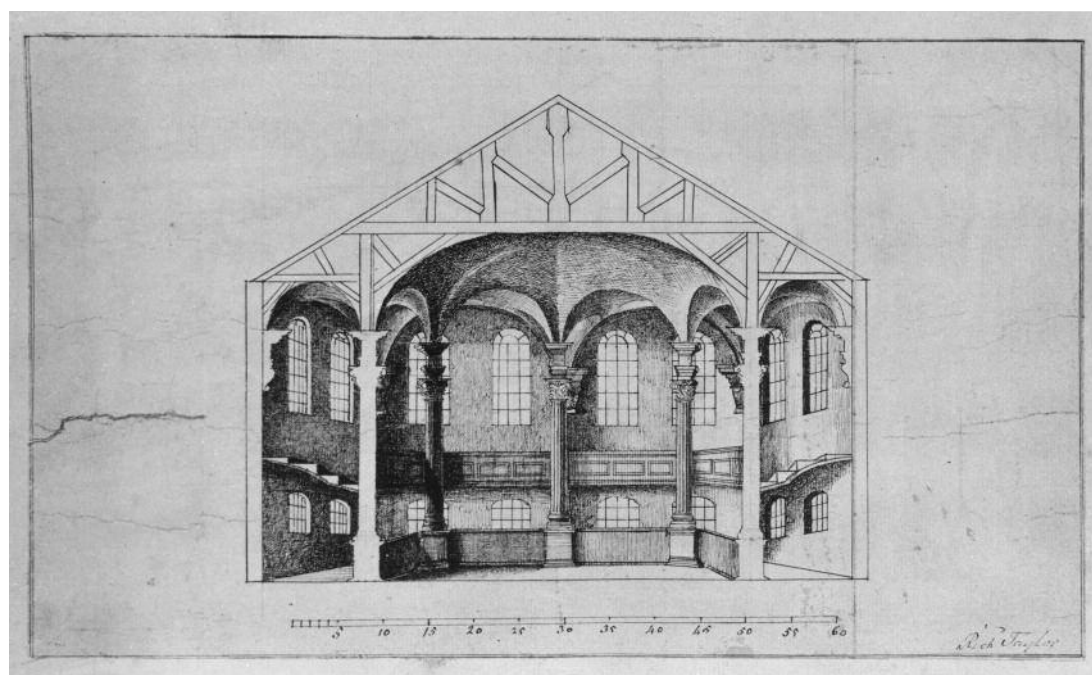


Fig. 22. Richard Taylor, section of The Octagon Chapel, Norwich, pen and ink.  
*Norfolk Record Office, FC 13/80, no. 6.*

Rawlins's dome on a Diocletian-windowed drum was based on Plate 47 in Morris's *Rural Architecture* (Fig. 18), an extraordinary design which on 'first Intentions' was to have been for 'a cold Bath' but 'as there are to many Conjectures and Opinions about its Utility' Morris submitted 'to better Judges, to assign a Use ... most agreeable to their Sentiments'. He

consulted a very grave Jewish Rabbin, who informs me very little is wanting to make it a compleat Synagogue ... An honest plain-meaning *Devise* commends it, and wishes me to send a Copy of it, (by him), to *Constantinople*, as a Model for a Mosque ... [while] One zealous for the Propagation of his own Tenets, informs me, it is extremely well suited for a Chapel, and its Confessionals [and] A Puritan of modern Growth entreats me not to make any Alteration in it, for it is the best he could ever wish to see executed to perform their Devotions in.<sup>37</sup>

In other words, a universal church.

In the meantime, on 29 December 1753, 'Mr Ivory brot his Model of the octogone Roof for further Inspection, & had orders to finish the Walls, Portico, & all the Outside in 3 Weeks'. On 7 January Lee was instructed to bring 'an estimate of the whole of an Octagon Plan', which he delivered on the 21st, when he 'had Orders to Call upon Mr Ivory and Examin the Quantity of his Wainscott'.<sup>38</sup> On 1 February Lee examined Ivory's model, which on the 6th was referred 'to the whole Congregation for their approbation', and finally, on the 20th Ivory 'Exhibited to the Company' (the commissioners 'appointed to receive Plans, Elevations &c and to treat wth. Workmen for Erecting a new meeting house') 'an Octogon Moddle wch. was approved and orderd to be put in Execution Immediately'.<sup>39</sup>

This proposal is most likely represented by an

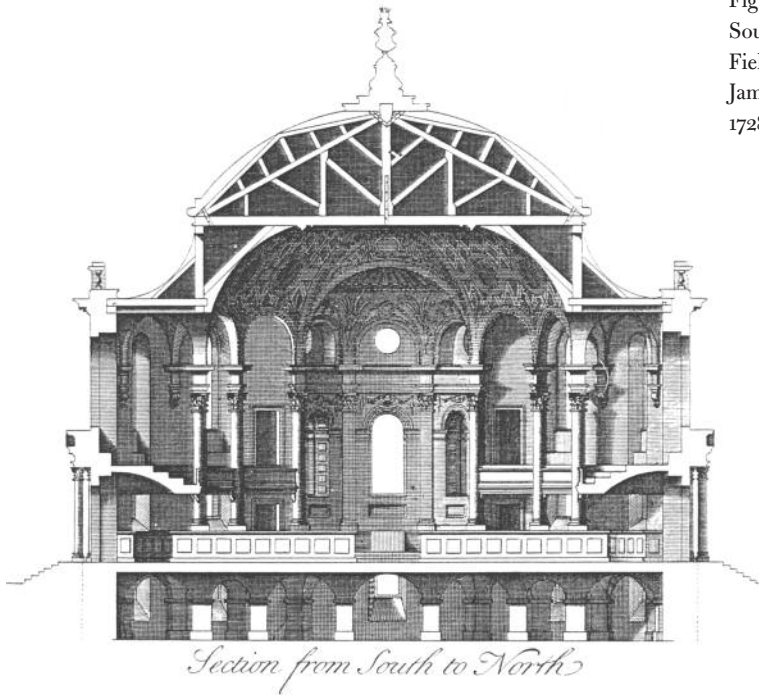


Fig. 23. James Gibbs, 'Section from South to North' of the St Martin-in-the-Fields 'Round Church', London (from James Gibbs, *A Book of Architecture*, 1728, pl. 11, detail).

unsigned south elevation drawing (Fig. 19), which developed and enriched Morris's basic octagon (Fig. 15) in a characteristically carpenter's idiom – Morris would have called it 'gaudy Tinsel' – by adopting a Gibbsian rather than a Burlingtonian Palladian treatment. Each of the eight sides is framed by corner quoins. The tetrastyle temple portico, raised on a taller perron, is reduced to single storey, with the columns paired and separated by a wider central intercolumniation, in the manner of the Oxford Chapel (Fig. 3), and concentrated in the narrow space between the windows lighting the gallery staircases. Directly above the portico is a fancy window closely based on Langley's 'grand Design' for a niche, with its pediment removed, published in the *Treasury of Designs* (Fig. 20).<sup>40</sup> Furthermore, the full width pediment with corner vases of the Oxford Chapel is also preserved above the main cornice, here with a flamboyantly framed *oeil-de-boeuf* recalling the east end of St Martin-in-the-Fields (Fig. 4).

On Friday, 21 February 1754, the day after Ivory's design was approved, the committee gave orders 'to Clear the ground that the Trenches might be begun on Monday next', with Ivory instructed 'to do the Roof, the Window frames Doors, Doorcases Stairs the Joists of and flooring the Gallerys & Collums, also the Gates in yard, and finish the Vestibule', while Lee was 'to do all the Seating . . . Gallerys as below, the Front of the Gallerys the two Vestrys, Pulpitt, Desk, The Floor and the Joysts in the Vestry and under the Seats below'.<sup>41</sup> The first stone was laid by Revd Taylor on 25 February.<sup>42</sup> Three weeks later, on 23 March, his son, Richard (died 1762), a manufacturer trading in Colegate,<sup>43</sup> drew views of the exterior and interior of the Chapel 'now building' (Figs. 21–22), which show three important modifications to Ivory's approved design. The corner quoins have vanished, the portico on its perron extends across the full width of the three middle bays, with the columns no longer paired but



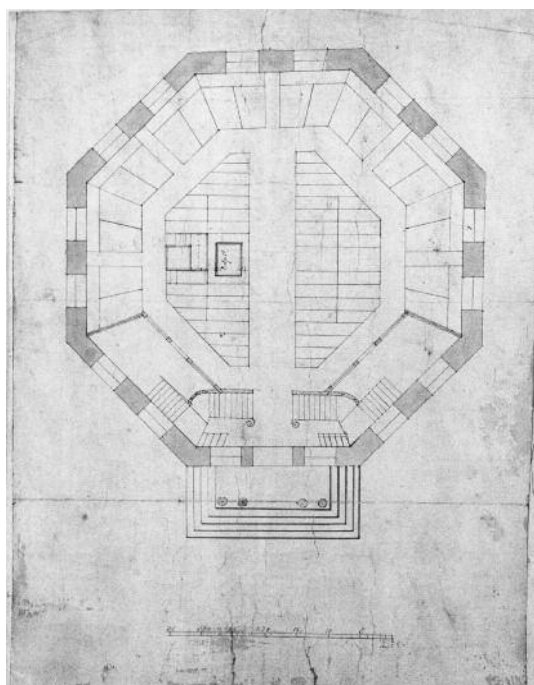


Fig. 24. Christopher Lee (attributed), ground floor plan of The Octagon Chapel, Norwich, showing seating and pulpit, perhaps submitted June 1754. *Norfolk Record Office, FC 13/80, no. 2.*

still retaining a wider middle intercolumniation, and the central window has been stripped of its elaborate frame, bringing the building further into line with Morris's recommendations. However, the upper pediment remains and the octagonal roof is crowned by a vase on pedestal, an embellishment taken from Gibbs (Fig. 23), perhaps by way of Rawlins (Fig. 17). The combined perspective and section drawing reveals, for the first time, Ivory's intended interior (Fig. 22). The central vault springs from eight giant-order, fluted Corinthian columns with dossier entablatures, a treatment obviously inspired by Gibbs's rejected 'Round Church' design for St Martin-in-the-Fields (Fig. 23). However, for the timber roof construction Ivory preferred Langley's solution (Fig. 12, upper).

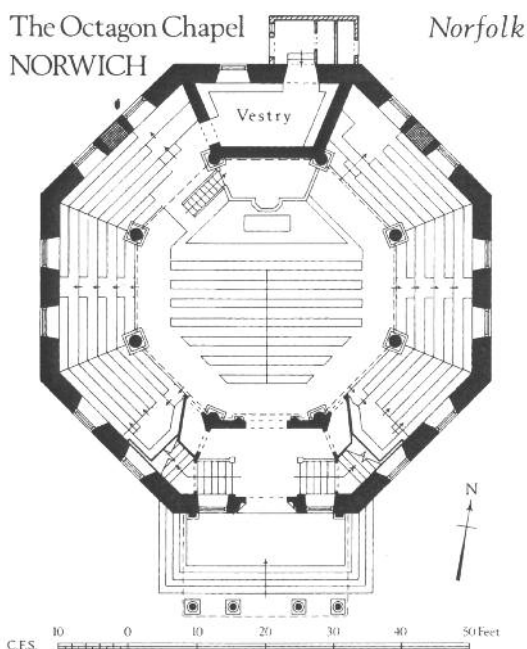


Fig. 25. The Octagon Chapel, Norwich, plan drawn by C. F. Stell (from *An Inventory of Nonconformist Chapels and Meeting-Houses in Eastern England*, 2002, 260). *English Heritage. Crown Copyright.*

Construction now moved apace. Contracts with the principal craftsmen were settled on 22 April 1754, with payments on 16 May including £60 to Rawlins for stonework on account, £200 to Ivory for 'Work already done & Timber wrought or provided by him' and promised part payments to him and Lee of £50 'when the Building shall be raised up to the first Windows', £50 when the 'Arches of the second Course of Windows are finishd', and £50 when the 'walls are raisd and fit for the Roof'. On 28 May Robert De Carle and Nathaniel Dowsing, Ivory, Lee and Rawlins each signed 'Articles & Schedules', none of which have survived. On 14 June the committee considered 'the manner of Seating' and instructed Lee 'to draw a Plan agreeable to the design for their Approbation'. This is probably Fig. 24,

THE OCTAGON CHAPEL, NORWICH



Fig. 26. The Octagon Chapel, Norwich, south-west, south and south-east elevations, coloured stipple engraving by James Sillett, 1828. *Author's collection.*

Fig. 27. The Octagon Chapel, Norwich, view of interior towards the east, lithograph by F. Schenck, in J. and E. Taylor, *History of the Octagon Chapel, Norwich*, 1848. *Norfolk Record Office, FC 13/81.*



showing an arrangement similar to that carried out.<sup>44</sup> The portico is shown with paired columns awkwardly placed in front of the windows flanking the entrance. In a final adjustment the portico was deepened so that the columns extend over the front steps to rise from taller pedestals resting directly on the ground, creating an odd sort of *porte-cochère* (Fig. 25).

On 29 July the bricklayers were reported 'having finished the Walls of the Chapple' and it was decided to cover the roof with 'Common blue Pan Tyles'.<sup>45</sup> The decision to abandon the crowning pediment, which had been a constant feature of Ivory's, as well as Rawlins's designs, in favour of Morris's uninterrupted roofline is unlikely to date later than this time, when, also, Ivory must have introduced the delightful *oeil-de-boeuf* windows in the roof (Fig. 26). Wesley mistakenly thought that these were 'purely ornamental' but, in fact, they serve to illuminate the internal timber structure, with daylight streaming from there through eight corresponding *oculi* in the domical ceiling (Fig. 27), a practical application of the decorative embellishments in the St Martin Round Church design (Fig. 23). The plasterwork was executed by William Wilkins (c.1720–83), father of the architect of the same name.<sup>46</sup> The 'Timber inspectors' report of 9 August 1754 found the materials

in general ... very good & proper for the use, except the Beams which are framed from pillar to pillar on each side the Octagon, which have rather too much sap, but are to be made very strong & secure by an addition of Iron work, which Mr Ivory doe agree to be at the expence of; likewise (we agree to) the manner of fixing the iron straps and bolts (as they) are sketched upon the Model.<sup>47</sup>

Ivory's timber construction, where the tie-beams, principal rafters and struts spin 365 degrees from a central King-post, is an impressive technical achievement.

On 6 December Richard Ward received £9 9s for 'Copper Covering to the Top of the ... Roof' and

John Trappett £29 2s for 'Leading ye cirulr [circular] Windows and Hipps'.<sup>48</sup> The work of other craftsmen is listed in the Appendix. The building costs totalled £5,254 10s 2½d.<sup>49</sup> The Revd Taylor preached the first sermon in the completed chapel on 12 May 1756.<sup>50</sup>

An account written in 1796 by Richard Taylor's son, John, reveals that the

wainscoting thro'-out the whole building, was stained according to a receipt (in my possession) procured by my father from an [unidentified] Artist in Holland ... which may be retained in its beauty, by being now and then rubbed with small Dutch brushes or scrubs made for that purpose.<sup>51</sup>

He also tells us that the position of the pulpit on the north wall, dictated by his grandfather, Revd Taylor, was

not an advantageous one but it could have been placed no where else, without having still a part of the Congregation in its rear or losing the upper & lower Pews of one Octave. In order to prevent noise as much as possible, the steps ... were made of solid Oak timber. None of the pews were lined, for this being generally done according to the fancy of the present occupier, gives a motley hue to an edifice, in which a certain uniformity ought to prevail; neither were any hat-pins allowed to be put up, which have so bad an effect either in ye front of the galleries or in the Walls.<sup>52</sup>

On the subject of the 'disfigurement' of the columns by galleries, an aesthetic issue endemic since Batty Langley's famous attack on St Martin-in-the-Fields in *The Grub-street Journal* in 1734,

As the ancients deemed it an absurdity to introduce two heights of rooms, within the height of one order ... so I think 'tis as absurd to place the galleries in a church to cut against the shafts of columns ... this destroys the beauty of the columns, by hindering them from being seen clear throughout their entire height,<sup>53</sup>

Taylor was of opinion that 'as the Galleries were not to be dispens'd with' beauty in this instance was sacrificed to utility'.<sup>54</sup>

Taylor was the first commentator to place the

achievement of the Octagon Chapel within the context of eighteenth-century church architecture.

The Roof is allow'd by judges to be admirable in its contrivance; its weight is thrown partly upon the Walls of the Building, and partly upon eight elegant fluted columns of the corinthian order, which were marbled by an eminent artist from London.<sup>55</sup> The ox-eye windows, one in each Octave of the roof, throw the Light over the Dome in the most advantageous manner. The Dome itself supported by eight arches ... and ornamented in the center, at the top, by a boldly projecting flower, gives an elevation and dignity to the Building, far superior in effect, to that of the lately erected Chapel at Liverpool, the ceiling of which is a wide extended Plane.<sup>56</sup>

Wesley ended his enthusiastic 1757 journal entry, which opened this article, by asking 'How can it be thought that the old, coarse gospel should find admission here,' at the Norwich Chapel?<sup>57</sup> This was a recognition of its special place at the beginning of an important new trend in Nonconformist design. He officially recommended the octagon to his followers as 'best for the voice, and on many accounts more commodious than any other', at the Methodist Conference in 1770,<sup>58</sup> though he had already embraced the form in his Yorkshire chapel at Rotherham (1761) – preaching there in the same year he declared that it was a 'Pity our houses, where the ground will admit of it, should be built in any other form'<sup>59</sup> – at Yarm (1763–64), Bradford (1766) and most famously at Heptonstall (1764).<sup>60</sup> These were followed by the Independent Chapel, Colchester (1763–67, demolished c.1862), designed by Robert Godfrey, a near copy of Norwich,<sup>61</sup> the Octagon Chapel, Liverpool (1763, demolished), by Joseph Finney, 'planned and finished with a degree of taste and elegance seldom to be met with in structures of this kind',<sup>62</sup> the sixteen-sided, 85 foot diameter Surrey Chapel in Southwark (1783, destroyed 1940), by William Thomas (Fig. 28), capable of holding 5,000, which Benjamin Henry Latrobe praised as a 'remarkably good speaking room',<sup>63</sup> and the Countess of Huntingdon's

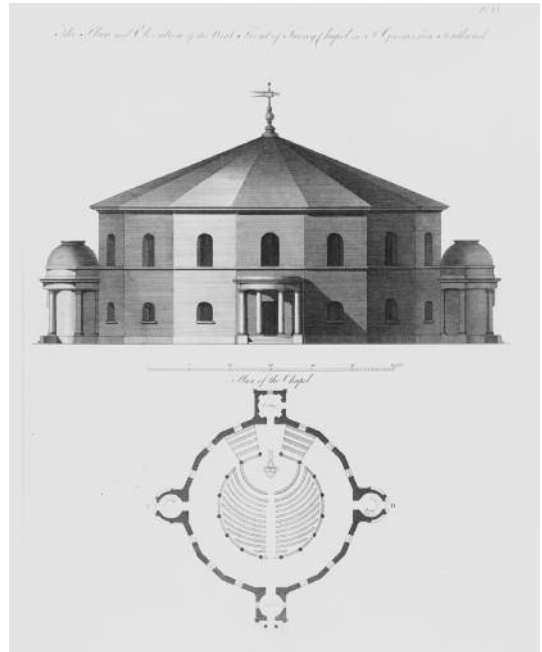


Fig. 28. William Thomas, preliminary design for The Surrey Chapel, Southwark, London, 1783 (from W. Thomas, *Original Designs in Architecture*, 1783, pl. XX). RIBA Library, London.

Connexion Zion Chapel, Leeds (1793–1801, demolished, architect unknown).<sup>64</sup>

The form was also popular with Anglican congregations: St Martin, Stony Middleton in Derbyshire (1758–59), designed by James Booth,<sup>65</sup> the Octagon Chapel, Bath (1767, demolished), by Timothy Lightoler,<sup>66</sup> Kelso parish church, Roxburghshire (1771–73), by James Nisbet,<sup>67</sup> St Mary, Birmingham (1773–74, demolished 1925), by Joseph Pickford, which the local press considered 'admirably well adapted for Hearing, and the whole Building is executed in a masterly Manner, Witness that surprizing Roof which is the Wonder of the Age',<sup>68</sup> Shrewsbury Hospital Chapel, Sheffield (1775, demolished 1825), by Thomas Atkinson, proclaimed by Wesley as 'none like it in the three kingdoms; nor, I suppose, in the world',<sup>69</sup> and



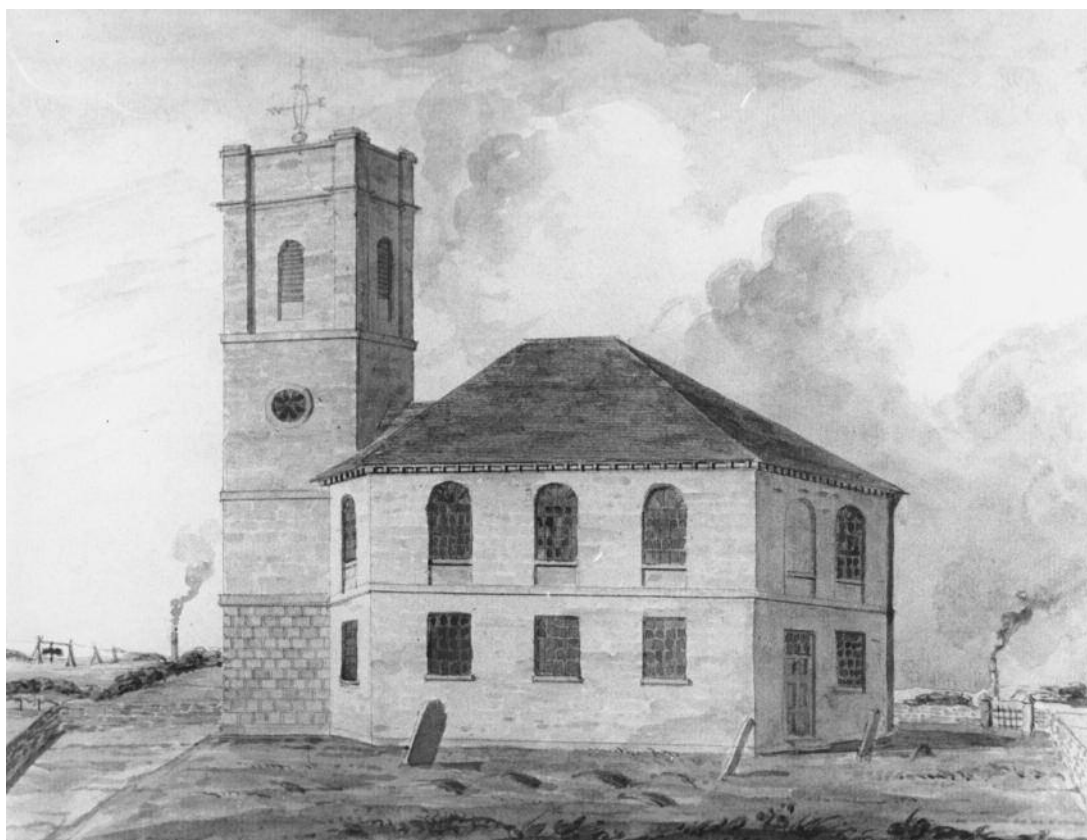


Fig. 29. The Revd Edward Williams, view of St Leonard, Malinslee, Shropshire, 1804–05, watercolour 2 October 1823. *Shropshire Records and Research Unit*, 6001/372, fol. 105.

St Michael, Madeley in Shropshire (1793–97), by Thomas Telford, which proved so successful that a twin church was erected in the adjacent parish of Malinslee in 1804–05 (Fig. 29).<sup>70</sup>

In 1756, soon after the completion of the Norwich Octagon, a local Quaker admonished the Revd Taylor:

I cant conceive ... why thou and thy friends have been at so great an expense in procuring the noblest place of the kind for thee and those in thy way to speak in ... a place good enough ... might have been finished for £1500. What account, then, will ye give to your final Judge for the additional thousands sunk and wasted?<sup>71</sup>

Evidently he had missed the point.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful to Norfolk Record Office, Essex Record Office, Shropshire Records and Research Unit, British Architectural Library, and others for permission to publish manuscripts and graphic material in their possession, and to Dr Derek Linstrum for comments on the text and invaluable fieldwork.

## APPENDIX

**Recorded payments, with craftsmen's signatures, 1754–57 (not mentioned elsewhere in this article).**

Richard Barnett, smith in Holborn, London, 19 May 1757, £21 10s 0d for 'Iron Capping to the Great Gate' [NRO, FC 13/11 no. 27]; Paul Colombine, upholsterer, 25 March 1757, £18 3s 8d [*Ibid.*, no. 18]; Robert De Carle and Nathaniel Dowsing (or Dowson), bricklayers, 28 February 1757, £190 9s and £504 8s 9d 'in full for work done' [*Ibid.*, nos. 10 and 24]; John Ellis, blacksmith, 19 September 1754, £50 [*Ibid.*, FC 13/1] and 25 March 1757, £91 13s 'in full for Ironwork' [*Ibid.*, no. 22]; Thomas Hawkes, 6 August 1757, £92 10s 'in full for Surveying, & measuring up the New chappel' [*Ibid.*, no. 7]; Thomas Ivory, 16 March 1754 – 4 October 1755, £1,586 17s or £1,256 18s [*Ibid.*, FC 13/1] and 28 February 1757, £1,276 for 'Carpenter's Work' [*Ibid.*, no. 20]; Christopher Lee, 1 January 1754 – 10 September 1756, £1,270 8s [*Ibid.*, FC 13/1], 28 February 1757, £15 10s 'Slating the Portico' and 28 February 1757, £1,284 5s 'receiv'd at Sundry Times ... in full for work done' [*Ibid.*, nos. 9, 11]; he was declared bankrupt in July 1754 [Wearing (1926), *op. cit.*, 21]; John Leman, 1 March 1757, £1 13s 4d 'Iron Capping to the 3 small Gates belonging to the New Chappel' [*Ibid.*, no. 21]; William Lock, gardener, 28 March 1757, £7 17s 11d 'levelling the Chappel Yard' [*Ibid.*, no. 19]; Thomas Miller, paviour, 28 February 1757, £33 0s 6d 'in full' [*Ibid.*, no. 15]; Thomas Rawlins, mason, 16 May 1754 – 17 September 1756, £298 5s [*Ibid.*, FC 13/1], 28 February 1757, £386 16s 'in full' [*Ibid.*, no. 8]; John Rogers, 10 May 1755, £31 17s 6d 'in Birmingham for Locks, Joints & Buttons &c.' [*Ibid.*, no. 5, and FC 13/1]; Thomas Smith, 28 February 1757, £31 10s 'a Dial' [*Ibid.*, no. 17]; John Sparrow, 28 February 1757, £237 3s 5¼d 'in full [for] Glass & Lead' [*Ibid.*, no. 14]; Francis Whistler, 25 March 1757, £14 19s 'in full for Painting work' [*Ibid.*, no. 23]; William Wilkins Sr., plasterer, 21 December 1754 – 29 June 1756, £213 7s [*Ibid.*, FC 13/1], 7 March 1757, £144 7s 'in full' [*Ibid.*, no. 12].

## NOTES

- 1 N. Curnock (ed.), *The Journal of the Revd John Wesley, A.M.*, London, IV, 1938, 244. In fact there are seventeen windows at gallery level.
- 2 The published literature includes J. and E. Taylor, *History of the Octagon Chapel, Norwich*, 1848; Stanley John Wearing, 'A Review of the Minute Books concerning the Erection of the Octagon Chapel, Norwich', *Norfolk Archaeology*, 21, 1923, and *Georgian Norwich Its Builders*, Norwich, 1926, 6–9, 20–24, 43 and 53; C. Stell, *An Inventory of Nonconformist Chapels and Meeting-Houses in Eastern England*, Swindon, 2002, 260–62; *The Octagon Unitarian Chapel Norwich*, Norwich, 2000; J. R. Burton, *The Church over the Water*, no date; National Monuments Record ('red boxes' and Building File BF106981) holds an extensive collection of photographs.
- 3 L. Stephen and S. Lee, *The Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford, XIX, 1967–68, 439–40. At 'a Meeting of Protestant Dissenters in Norwich ... 3rd. of Octr. 1753 to consider of a Subscription to Rebuild a Meeting House for the Congregation under the Ministry of the Revd Mr Taylor & the Revd Mr Bowin', Taylor contributed £60 to the Fund [Norwich Record Office (hereafter NRO), FC 13/1]. NRO, FC 13/80, opposite fol. 44, is an engraved portrait of Taylor. His monument in the Octagon Chapel is signed 'J. Bacon junr., London' [Stell, *op. cit.*, 260]; G. T. Eddy, *Dr Taylor of Norwich Warley's Arch-heretic*, Peterborough 2003.
- 4 Howard Colvin, *A Biographical Dictionary of British Architects 1600–1840*, New Haven and London, 1995, 530.
- 5 NRO, FC 13/1, unpaginated.
- 6 Colvin, *op. cit.*, 605.
- 7 NRO, FC13/1.
- 8 Colvin, *op. cit.*, 793. Two monuments by him are in the Octagon Chapel [Stell, *op. cit.*, 260]. Rupert Gunnis, *Dictionary of British Sculptors 1660–1851*, London, 1968, 315.
- 9 NRO, FC 13/1; 3 October 1753; the subscription raised £2,447 18s. Also employed on 17 October were Robert De Carle and Nathaniel Dowsing (bricklayers), John Trappett (plumber), John Sparrow (glazier and painter).
- 10 NRO, FC 13/1.
- 11 *The Norwich Mercury*, 4 August 1753, quoted in Wearing (1926), *op. cit.*, 9. Robert and his brother, Matthew, the executant architect at Holkham Hall,

- were the sons of Launcelot Brettingham, a Norwich mason or bricklayer [Colvin, *op. cit.*, 154–59].
- 12 NRO, FC 13/1. A 24 October memorandum (under 28 November 1753) refers to ‘employing Mr Brettingham as Architect & Surveyor of the New Building be left to the Direction of the Select Committee’.
- 13 Ivory also offered the timber and woodwork, but ‘if Mr Lee declines it then Mr Peter Chamberlin to value in his Stead’. On 27 November Lee was ordered to ‘take all the wood-work . . . with the Glass as appraised by him Mr Tho: Ivory having declined’. On 12 December 1753 brick, tiling and pavement from the old meeting were ordered to be sold to De Carle and Dowsing and £66 discounted out of their work. ‘Account of Materials from ye old Meeting House & Sold to Sundry’ included ‘Windows, Rood Joysts &c’ £139 4s to Lee, ‘Bricks tiles & Pavement’ £91 to De Carle and Dowsing, ‘Balks & Joysts’ £9 13s to Ivory, totalling £337 11s [NRO FC 13/1]. For the earlier building see *The Octagon Unitarian Chapel Norwich*, Norwich, 2000, 5; NRO, FC 13/80, fol. 27, ‘A Plan of the Meeting-house, built in 1687. J.T. del’.
- 14 NRO, FC 13/1; it then enquired if Brettingham ‘has ordered any bricks at Mush old kiln or elsewhere the Committee will take them’.
- 15 On 27 January 1755 and between then and 6 September 1755 [NRO, FC 13/11 item 25 and 13/1, respectively].
- 16 NRO, FC 13/1.
- 17 Pls. XL–XLI feature round- and segmental-headed Gibbs-surround windows with the wider block resting on the sill, like those in Fig. 2.
- 18 Described in *The Norwich Mercury*, 28 January 1758, as ‘a grand and magnificent theatre allowed to be the most perfect and complete structure of its kind in the kingdom’ [A. M. Cotman and F. W. Hawcroft, *Old Norwich A Collection of Paintings, Prints and Drawings of an Ancient City*, Norwich, 1961, 130, pl. 12]; Wearing (1926), *op. cit.*, 28.
- 19 Stell, *op. cit.*, 256–59.
- 20 NRO, FC 13/1.
- 21 *The Norwich Mercury*, 30 November 1751, 3. This was opened on 14 April 1753 by George Whitfield [Wearing (1926), *op. cit.*, 16–18, illus.]. See also the Friends’ Meeting Houses in Goat Lane (1679, rebuilt 1926) and Gildencroft (1694–99, destroyed 1942), and the Old Meeting House, off Colegate (1693) [Stell, *op. cit.*, 256–62].
- 22 See the Anglican churches of St James, Moulton Chapel, Lincolnshire (1722) by William Sands [Colvin, *op. cit.*, 847–48], Ayot St Peter, Hertfordshire (1751, demolished 1862, architect unknown) [John Brushe, ‘Two Wayward Georgian Churches’, *Country Life*, 3 November 1977, 1302–03, figs. 3–4] and Hartwell, Buckinghamshire (1753–55) [Terry Friedman, ‘Henry Keene and St Mary, Hartwell’, in Michael Hall (ed.), *Gothic Architecture & its Meaning 1550–1830*, Reading, 2002, 134–56].
- 23 W. Kuyper, *Dutch Classicist Architecture A Survey of Dutch Architecture, Gardens and Anglo-Dutch Architectural Relations from 1625 to 1700*, Delft, 1980, 19–24.
- 24 NRO, FC 13/80, fol. 8; Jeroen R. H. Moormann, *A History of The Church in England*, London, 1980, 247; G. Rupp, *Religion in England 1688–1791*, Oxford, 1986, 119.
- 25 The Oostkerk is recorded in several 17th century engravings [Kuyper, *op. cit.*, 21–23, 46, 195, 206, 211, 220–21, pls. 49–53]; M. D. Ozinga, *De Protestantsche Kerkenbouw in Nederland*, Paris and Amsterdam, 1929, 83–88, 168–73 and pls. 34–36.
- 26 December 1796, 993, a letter dated 24 June.
- 27 NRO, FC/13/1. See note 34.
- 28 Page 2. Colvin, *op. cit.*, 664–65; Eileen Harris and Nicholas Savage, *British Architectural Books and Writers 1556–1785*, Cambridge, 1990, 317–24.
- 29 Pages 10 and 14.
- 30 Preface. Purity is defined as ‘free from being corrupted, Exactness, and unmixedness’, Simplicity as ‘Plainness, and without Disguise’. ‘A Plain regular front, without Dress of Ornament, if justly proportion’d, will better satisfy the Taste of the Judicious, and more immediately strike the Eye, than all the gay Dress and Decoration of an ill-proportion’d Design’ [R. Morris, *Lectures On Architecture*, London, 1734, quoted in S. P. Parissien, *The Careers of Roger and Robert Morris, Architects*, PhD, Oxford, 1989, Bodleian Library, MS. D.Phil. c.8460–1, 235].
- 31 *Rural Architecture*, pls. 14–15 and 23; *Architectural Remembrancer*, pl. 30.
- 32 Page 5, pls. 31–32. See the closely related design for a 49 foot diameter ‘Mausoleum’ in Morris, *The Architectural Remembrancer*, London, 1751, xii, pl. 24.
- 33 Vaughan Hart and Peter Hicks, *Sebastiano Serlio on Architecture*, I, New Haven and London, 1996, 408–10 and 470.

- 34 NRO, FC 13/11, no. 1., also recorded in FC 13/1, 14 January 1754, 8 guineas 'for the Plans, & sections drawn & Sent'.
- 35 NRO, FC 13/1.
- 36 Pages 29–30. *Rural Architecture* was retitled *Select Architecture* in the 1755 edition [Harris and Savage, *op. cit.*, 324; for Rawlins's misreading of Morris's text see 385].
- 37 Pages 7–8; other contenders were 'an excellent private Dissecting-Room', an 'Auction-Room' and 'a beautiful and compleat ... Library'.
- 38 NRO, FC 13/1, also recording on 7 January 1754 a contract with De Carle and Dowsing for '200 thousand Bricks' and a request that 'each Workman produce an estimate of their own Work'; on 14 January Lee received £32 4s 8d 'in discharge of his Bill for [undesigned] work done at the French Church &c.'; on 21 January Rawlins was ordered to bring an estimate of 'stone cutters work'; on 28 January Lee reported that Ivory 'had not a sufficient Quantity nor was the Quality good Enough'.
- 39 NRO, FC 13/1.
- 40 Pages 19–20. For a possible comparison of draughtsmanship see drawings attributed to Thomas Ivory in John Maddison, 'Architectural drawings at Blickling Hall', *Architectural History*, 34, 1991, 75–120, figs. 3–7.
- 41 NRO, FC 13/1.
- 42 NRO, FC 13/11.
- 43 Stephen and Lee, *op. cit.*, 440 and 444. Richard contributed £40 to the 1753 building subscription [NRO, FC 13/1].
- 44 NRO, FC 13/1. On 20 March Lee was 'employ'd to make the Pales or Palisadoes for inclosing the Meeting Ground at the North' [FC 13/1].
- 45 NRO, FC 13/1. On 21 February 1755 Thomas Cappum was paid £48 2s 10d for 7,800 tiles [FC 13/1; FC 13/11 no. 4].
- 46 Colvin, *op. cit.*, 1053. See Appendix.
- 47 NRO, FC 13/80, fol. 76, the report is signed by John Bennett, Thomas Benning, Peter Chamberlin and John Fiske. The existing timberwork [Swindon, National Monuments Record, BB69/5523; *The Octagon Unitarian Chapel Norwich*, Norwich, 2000, 14] corresponds to the structure recorded by Richard Taylor in 1754 (Fig. 22).
- 48 NRO, FC 13/11, nos. 3 and 26.
- 49 Accounts examined and approved 30 December 1757 [NRO, FC 13/11].
- 50 NRO, FC 13/11. 'On Wednesday last the new Chapel in St George's of Colegate ... was opened in a decent and solemn Manner' [*The Norwich Mercury*, 15 May 1756, 2]. 'A Sermon preached at the opening of the New (Octagon) Chapel at Norwich' [FC 13/80, fols. 44–88], from Haggai 2: 8–9 [fol. 82]. On 30 March 1783 £100 was set aside for 'purchasing and hanging on of Iron Gates, in the Front of the Building' from Messrs. Ransome & Co., Founders, and also 'for whitening and doing other necessary Repairs to the Chapel'; on 22 May 1784 Ransome received £33 18s for casting and hanging the gates and 'repairing the Scrolls'; on 11 August 1784 C. Capon & Son £18 8s 6d for 'painting the inside, cleaning Pillars, gilding the Ball & spiral Iron, & painting Portico'; on 5 July 1784 William Wilkins Sr. £15 15s 'for plaisterers Work executed by contract' [NRO, FC 13/13].
- 51 NRO, FC 13/80, fol. 77. John Taylor (1750–1826) was a deacon of the Octagon Chapel and co-author, with his son, Edward, of *History of the Octagon Chapel, Norwich*, 1848 [Stephen and Lee, *op. cit.*, 444]. John is commemorated by a wall tablet there [Stell, *op. cit.*, 260].
- 52 NRO, FC 13/80, fols. 77–78. Furthermore, in order to prevent the foundations settling and cracking 'very large quantities of timber were buried in the foundation or worked into the walls as bonds' and the Portland stone block cornice was covered with lead to prevent water damage; moreover, on 17 February 1758 the vestry resolved to protect the Portland stone paving by forbidding interment of corpses inside the Chapel, and also to provide additional doors in the north-end and north-west octaves, which 'occasioned a draught of air [and] were shortly after closed up' [fols. 78–79]. The present pulpit is dated 1889.
- 53 No. 249, 3 October 1734, 1–2, Langley preferring as 'much more natural' Wren's column on pier system at St Andrew Holborn and St Clement Danes.
- 54 NRO, FC 13/90, fol. 77.
- 55 Willoughby Lowle was paid £34 4s 0d on 12 March 1757 'in full for painting the Colums' [NRO, FC 13/11, no. 13].
- 56 NRO, FC 13/80, fols. 76–77. Presumably the Unitarian Chapel, Paradise Street, Liverpool (1790–91, demolished), by John Walmsley [Colvin, *op. cit.*, 1019–20], described 'as neat and elegant a composition as any in the town, plain but pleasing, and has dignity with simplicity' [J. Wallace, *A General and Descriptive History of the Ancient and*



- Present State of the Town of Liverpool*, Liverpool, c.1794, 152], but criticised for its 'elegant simplicity ... not so well preserved ... *within*. The inlaid work round the galleries, in the manner of cabinet work [has] a taudriness and levity not the best adapted to a place of serious devotion' [W. Moss, *The Liverpool Guide*, Liverpool, 1794, 92]. Illustrated in T. Troughton, *The History of Liverpool*, Liverpool, 1810, 386.
- 57 Note 1.
- 58 *Minutes of the Methodist Conference, from the First, Held in London, by the Late Rev. John Wesley, A.M., in the Year 1774*, I, 1862, 612.
- 59 Curnock, *op. cit.*, 474.
- 60 C. Stell, *An Inventory of Nonconformist Chapels and Meeting-Houses in the North of England*, London, 1994, 225, 238, 272–73, and 304; only Yarm and Heptonstall survive.
- 61 Stell (2002), *op. cit.*, 51–52. 'Robt. Godfry' received £1 1s on 1 August 1765 for a 'Plan & estimate' [Colchester, Essex Record Office, D/NC52/5/2]. In 1764 Thomas Ivory designed and built The Theatre in Colchester [Colvin, *op. cit.*, 531].
- 62 W. Enfield, *An Essay Towards the History of Liverpool*, Warrington, 1774, 47; Troughton, *op. cit.*, 381, illus.; Colvin, *op. cit.*, 363.
- 63 John C. Van Horne and Lee W. Formwalt, (eds.), *The Correspondence and Miscellaneous Papers of Benjamin Latrobe*, I, New Haven and London, 1984, 406, in 1803.
- 64 Terry Friedman, *Church Architecture in Leeds 1700–1799*, The Thoresby Society, Second Series, VII, Leeds, 1997, 157–63, figs. 55–77.
- 65 *The Gentleman's Magazine*, July 1803, 621; J. Leonard, *Derbyshire Parish Churches From the eighth to the eighteenth centuries*, Derby, 1993, 96–97, fig. 163.
- 66 Walter Ison, *The Georgian Buildings of Bath from 1700 to 1830*, Bath, 1980, 54–56.
- 67 Royal Commission for Ancient Monuments in Scotland, *Roxburghshire*, Edinburgh, I, 1956, 246–47, fig. 304, pl. 22.
- 68 *Aris's Birmingham Gazette*, XXXIII, No. 1710, 29 August 1774, 3; Edward Saunders, *Joseph Pickford of Derby A Georgian Architect*, Stroud, 1993, 118–23.
- 69 N. Curnock (ed.), *The Journal of the Rev. John Wesley, A.M.*, London, VI, 1931, 330–31, 15 August 1781; J. Hunter, *Hallamshire: The History and Topography of the Parish of Sheffield in the County of York*, 1819, 179, illus.
- 70 Terry Friedman, 'The Golden Age of Church Architecture in Shropshire', *Shropshire History and Archaeology*, LXXI, 1996, 104–09, pls. 24–25 and 27.
- 71 Quoted in Wearing (1923), *op. cit.*, 372.