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King's College is a registered charity, and the generosity of donors around the world supports our teaching, research and buildings, as well as the activities of our Chapel and Choir.

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Lavatories

There are no public lavatories in the College. The nearest are at Grand Arcade.

Photography

You may take photographs of the College grounds, but we ask you not to use flash photography inside the Chapel. Views of the interior may be bought from the King's College Visitor Centre.

Welcome to
King's
College

History of the College and Chapel

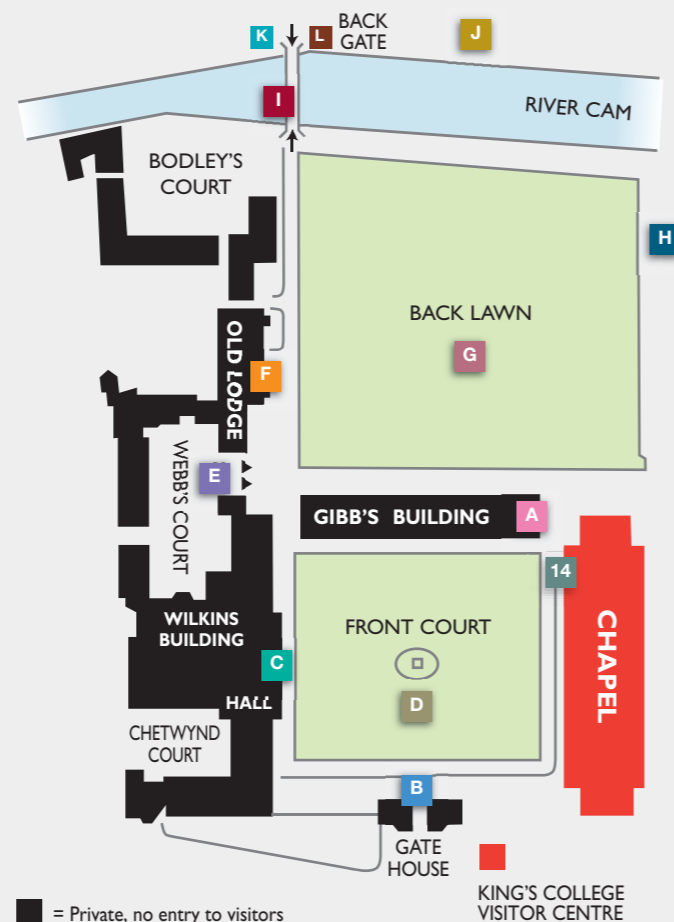
The College
and its Grounds

During the Easter Term (mid-April to mid-June), which is the examination period in Cambridge, the College grounds are closed to visitors, but the Chapel remains open.

Leave the Chapel by the **South Porch 14** (March to September). You are now in the Front Court. On your right is the **Gibbs Building A**, begun in 1724 and completed in 1729, and named after its architect. The building's restrained classical façade of Portland stone provides a brilliant foil to the flamboyant late Gothic of the Chapel. Its rooms are mostly used for teaching, study and administration.

Opposite the Gibbs Building you can see the delicate tracery of the **Gatehouse and the Screen B**, designed in the neo-Gothic fashion of the 1820s by William Wilkins (who also designed the National Gallery in London). The construction of the Gatehouse and the Screen involved the controversial demolition of half of the buildings in King's Parade, but they are now a much-admired landmark at the heart of the town.

Opposite you will see the **Dining Hall C**, part of the south range of the Front Court, all of which was designed by Wilkins. The Dining Hall is used by the College Community, as well as providing a splendid setting for formal dinners. It remains an important focus for the College community.



Look across the **Front Court at the Fountain D** surmounted by the Statue of Henry VI, the 'boy king', above the symbolic figures of Religion and Learning.

Turn right from the Chapel. To the left you will see the **Library E** and the **Old Provost's Lodge F** (both designed by Wilkins), and in front of you the **Back Lawn G**, which extends down towards the river, with **Clare College H** on the right hand side. **The Bridge I** affords picturesque views of the River Cam, passing through Clare College to the north, and Queens' College to the south. On the west side of the Bridge lies **Scholars' Piece J** a glimpse of countryside in the heart of Cambridge.

If you wish, you may leave the College by proceeding along the curved path, designed in the spirit of early nineteenth century romanticism by the evangelical churchman, Charles Simeon. Pass the famous poet Xu Zhimo memorial stone and the Chinese Garden built in his memory **K** on your way through to the **Back Gate L**.

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Welcome to King's College,
a community whose fellows have, for over
550 years, sworn on admission to promote
the College as a place of education, religion,
learning and research.

The College is a centre of education where students and staff live and work throughout the year. Please respect those areas marked private. We also request visitors not to picnic, leave litter, or walk on the grass. Note that Senior Members of the College and their guests are allowed to walk on the grass. Please keep noise to a minimum; no radios or music are permitted.

The young King Henry VI laid the foundation stone of 'The King's College of Our Lady and Saint Nicholas in Cambridge' on Passion Sunday, 1441. King's was one of his two 'royal and religious' foundations, the other being Eton College. Both colleges were to admit a maximum of 70 scholars drawn from poor backgrounds, the boys from Eton being guaranteed automatic and exclusive entry into King's. Henry went to great

lengths to ensure that his College, and in particular its Chapel, would be without equal in magnificence in either Oxford or Cambridge.

Henry drew up detailed instructions for the building of a 'Great Court', but only the Chapel was ever finished, and even that took nearly a century. After Henry's murder in the Tower of London in 1471 the completion of the Chapel was made possible through the

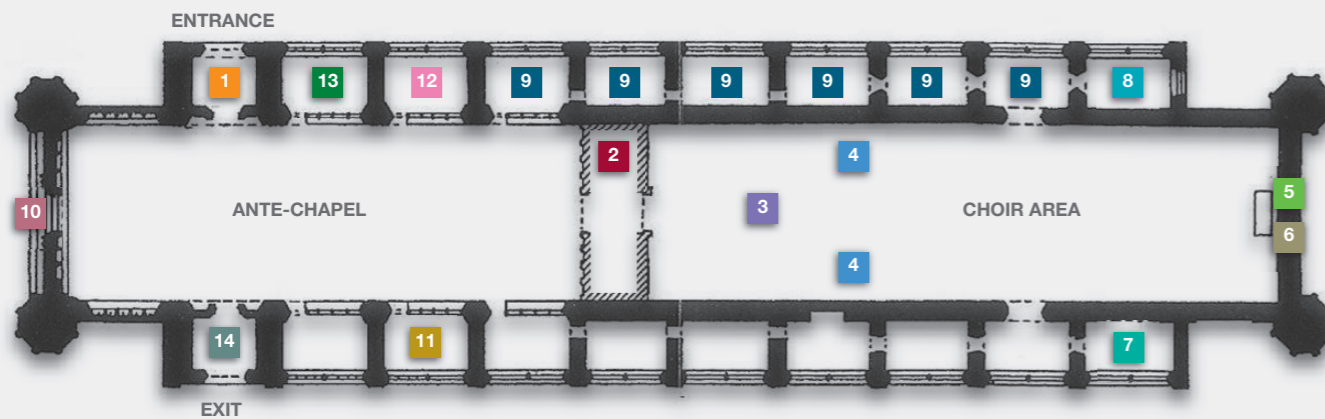
patronage of subsequent kings, most conspicuously Richard III, of Shakespearean notoriety, and Henry VII. Despite its apparent unity of style from the outside, the Chapel is the product of three separate periods of construction, as is evidenced by the changes in the external stone colouring (from white magnesian limestone to buff-coloured oolitic limestone) which were the result of interruptions to the building work during the Wars

of the Roses (1455-1485). Internally the contrasts are even greater.

The simplicity of the decoration in the Choir which Henry VI had expressly desired was not followed through in the Ante-chapel, with its plethora of Tudor devices – portcullises, Tudor roses and the like. The Tudors had, after all, just won a long civil war. Other changes to the original design are

not obvious. For example John Wastell, the master mason responsible for finishing the stonework of the building, discarded the plans for a conventional lierne vault, and replaced it with the breath-taking fan vault – the largest vault of its kind in the world.

The lay-out and adornment of the Chapel



The Chapel is 88metres (289 feet) long, 12metres (40 feet) in span between the piers, and the vault is 24metres (80 feet) high. The fan vaulting, the undoubted glory of the building, was completed in three years between 1512 and 1515. After this the glaziers could get on with the task of installing the 26 sets of stained glass windows, which took around another 30 years.

Starting from the **North Porch 1** visitors immediately sense the sublime spaciousness of the Chapel, with its fan-vaulted ceiling. The heraldic carvings are the armorial devices of the House of Tudor. Briefly the emblems are: the Portcullis, badge of the Beaufort family (Lady Margaret Beaufort, Foundress of Christ's College and St John's College, Cambridge, was the mother of Henry VII); the Greyhound is

another emblem of Lady Margaret Beaufort; the Tudor Rose, incorporating the red rose of the House of Lancaster and the white rose of the House of York, emphatically symbolises the Tudors' links with both Royal Houses (Henry VII having married Elizabeth of York); the Fleur de Lys reminds us that, from the reign of Edward III onwards, the English monarch was also monarch of France (this claim was only reluctantly dropped by George III); the Coat of Arms is the Royal Arms of England; the Dragon of Cadwallader (Wales) represents the Tudor family of Henry VII's father.

The dark oak Screen 2 which houses the organ was a gift of Henry VIII, and bears his initials and those of Anne Boleyn, his queen. This dates it between 1533, when Henry married Anne, and 1536, when he had her executed.

Henry also commissioned the magnificent stained glass windows on the north, south and east sides of the Chapel (upper windows –Old Testament, lower –New Testament).

Proceed now through the portals under the **Organ Screen 2** into the Choir. You will encounter the **brass Lectern 3**, surmounted by a small statue of Henry VI, a gift of Robert Hacumblen, Provost 1509-28. On each side are **Stalls 4**, of varying degrees of grandeur, from the plain to the highly ornate. **The Great East Window 5**, depicting the passion and crucifixion of Christ, was the last to be completed. On the Sanctuary Altar, beneath the Great East Window, stands another spectacular gift to the College, **'the Adoration of the Magi' 6**, painted by Rubens in 1634 for the Convent of the White Nuns at Louvain in Belgium, generously donated to the College by A.E.Allnatt in 1961, for the installation of which the East End of the Chapel was re-ordered and the floor level lowered.

Turn now to your right and enter the **Chapel of All Souls 7**, which was converted in the 1920s into a memorial chapel for the members of the College and of the Choir School and College staff who fell in the wars of 1914 and 1939. Note the poet Rupert Brooke's name, second from the top of the memorial. He was a Fellow of the College. The name on the pillar to the left as you enter is that of a Kingsman who fought on the other side.

From here proceed to the **St Edward's Chapel 8**, where you may feel that a period of private prayer or contemplation is appropriate. On the altar is a *Madonna in the Rosary* by the Westphalian painter Gert van Lon done between 1512 and 1520.

On leaving this Chapel, enter the **Chapel Exhibition 9**, housed in various side chapels. The accompanying signs are self-explanatory.

The exit from the Exhibition leads you back into the Ante-chapel. **The West Window 10**, facing you as you leave, was the only window not to be

completed in the 16th century. The current window was installed in the late 19th century. You may also wish to visit the **Tomb Chapel 11** with its fascinating collection of memorials and the **Founders Chapel 12** with a large *Deposition of Christ* by Girolamo Siciolante de Sermoneta painted circa 1568 and 73 and a splendid Antwerp triptych of the *Adoration of the Magi* by the Master of the Von Groote Adoration (circa 1520) given by P. K. Pal and his family to the college in 2010. Finally, visit the **Whichcote Chapel 13** which has interesting stained glass and a painting by Carlo Maratta and his workshop from the beginning of the eighteenth century. This chapel is used for baptism for members of the college.

If you want more information than is possible in this short leaflet, you will find greater depth of analysis in the booklet, King's College Chapel, Cambridge, on sale in the King's College Visitor Centre along with a wide array of other guide books and CD recordings of the Choir. The Visitor Centre is located opposite the College on King's Parade.

VISIT CONTINUES ▶

Chapel Services

During the academic year (approximately early October to early December; mid-January to mid-March; mid-April to mid-June; late June to mid-July), you are welcome to attend choral services in the Chapel. These are held at 17.30 Monday to Saturday, and at 10.30 and 15.30 on Sundays. For more detailed information, consult the Chapel List, just inside the Gatehouse B.

Wheelchair Access

If you require assistance, please ask a member of staff.