

# Who Built St Leonard's Church, Flamstead?

A glimpse of the people who built a parish  
church



# Learning objective

Learn about the roles of the people who were involved in building St Leonard's Church

# What do you know about life after 1066?

Write down 5 things  
you know about what  
everyday life was like  
in England after the  
Norman Conquest

# 1100 AD, 34 years after the Norman Conquest

People's religious beliefs have changed the landscape, and Christian religion plays a central role in everyday life.

The desire to go on a pilgrimage means that churches, chapels and shrines\* are being built for people to visit.

**Key term:** A shrine\* is a place dedicated to a saint.

The need to do good works leads rich Christians to set up alms\* houses for the old and hospitals for the poor and sick.

**Key term:** alms\* are charitable gifts to poor people, including money, food, or a place to rest.

To ensure support from the local priest, places used for Christian worship are extended and improved, resulting in a building boom of local parish churches.

# Around 1120, building work began on St Leonard's Parish Church, Flamstead

Let's find out about the main people  
involved in its construction....

# The Landowner



I am Ralph de Tony,  
and I am Lord of the  
Manor of Flamstead.

My father, also called Ralph de Tony, was given the manor as a reward for his bravery in battle and his long service to King William.

Although there is a small, thatched wattle and daub structure used for Christian worship in the middle of the hamlet, I shall raise a stone-built church on my land to demonstrate my wealth and power and my faithfulness to God.

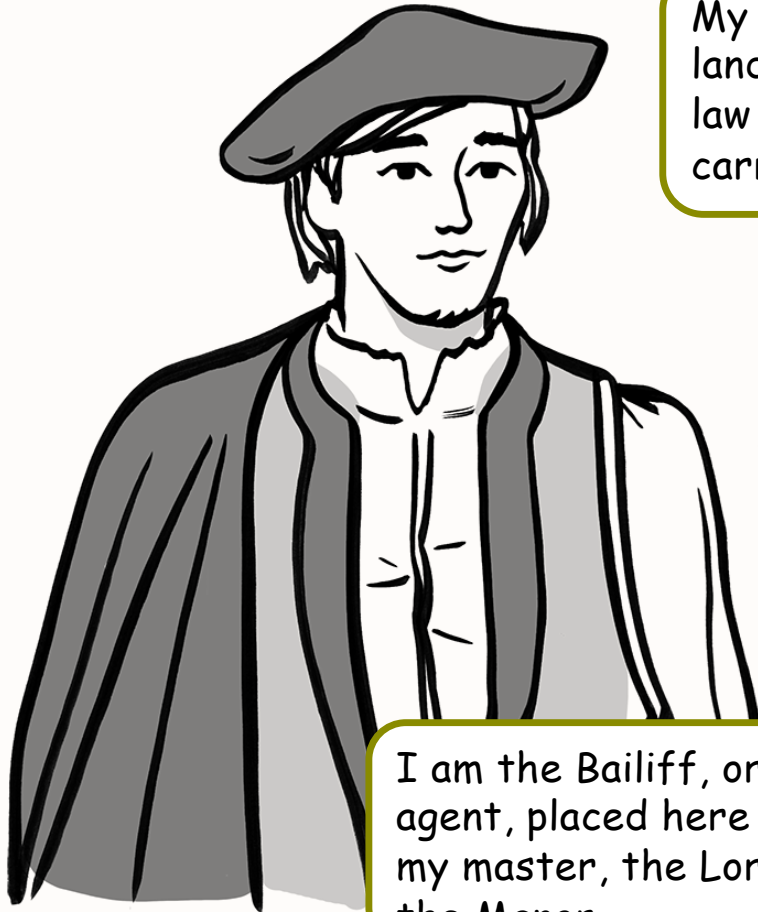


Because I am very busy with my lands and my service to the King, I shall place my most trusted friend there to act as my agent and look after my interests...



(Lord of the Manor - landowner)

# The Bailiff

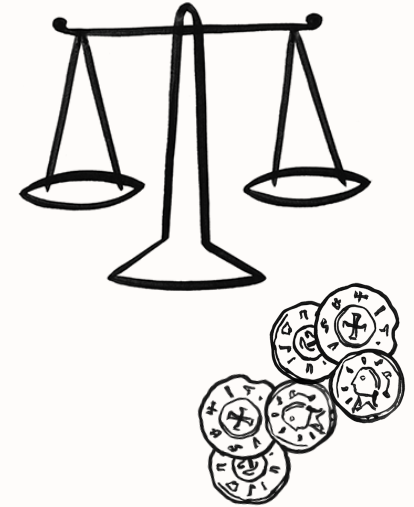


My job is to manage my master's land, collect rents and taxes, keep law and order, dispense justice, and carry out his wishes.

I shall witness the raising of the new church and employ the best people to carry out the work. It will be my job to oversee the site and to keep within the budgets set by my master.

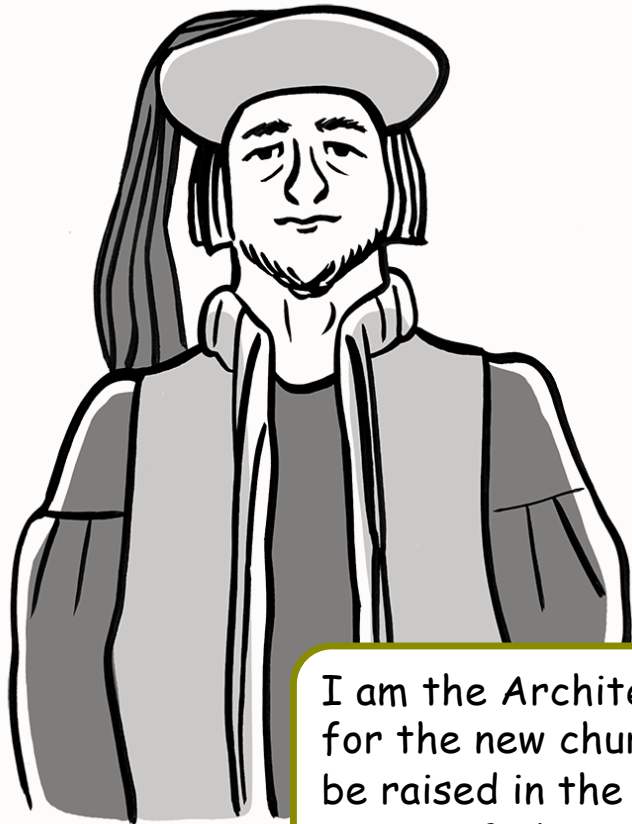
I am the Bailiff, or land agent, placed here by my master, the Lord of the Manor.

I shall have to make regular reports to my master as the works progress. I must make sure that this task is successful and is finished on time.



(The Bailiff)

# The Architect



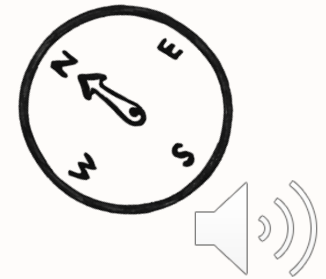
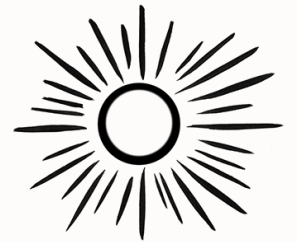
I have been engaged by the Lord of the Manor's agent and will lay out and plan the new stone-built church.

My design will make sure that the sun rising in the east will flood the Church with light at the altar end, which is the most important and spiritual area of the building.

At the west end of the Church will be a place for rents to be collected, business to be transacted, and local law to be enforced.

I am the Architect for the new church to be raised in the Manor of Flamstead.

In times of trouble the stone structure will provide a strong, sturdy and safe refuge for the villagers to shelter in, as well as for celebrating their faith regularly, every day.



(The Architect)



# The Master Mason



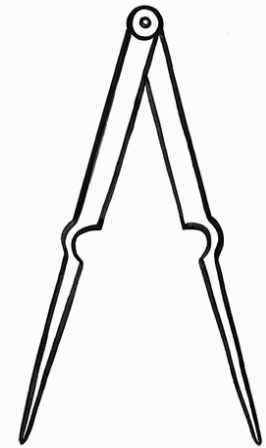
I have agreed with the Architect the best materials for the job and will set my mind to sourcing the best craftsmen needed to help raise the new church.

Some will come from the local area, but other skilled artisans will come from further afield and will have worked on similar structures.

My lodge (a large, open sided hut) will be on the edge of the church grounds so I can keep a keen eye on what is happening, and so I am readily available to help with all aspects of the building works.

I am the Master Mason and am in the service of the Bailiff of Flamstead, the agent for the Lord of the Manor.

I have great experience in stone masonry and interpreting the plans set before me by the Architect.



Complex angles for the structure, both internally and externally, will be plotted by me on the tracing floor, using tools not unfamiliar to people of the next millennium.



(The Master Mason)

# The Stone Mason



My most experienced colleagues will work on the finer aspects of cutting, or dressing, the stone blocks and their placement in the structure.

The less accomplished masons and their apprentices will concentrate on splitting the raw materials into rough blocks and making them smooth and ready for me to shape.

I am the Chief Stone Mason and in charge all the stonework for the new church.

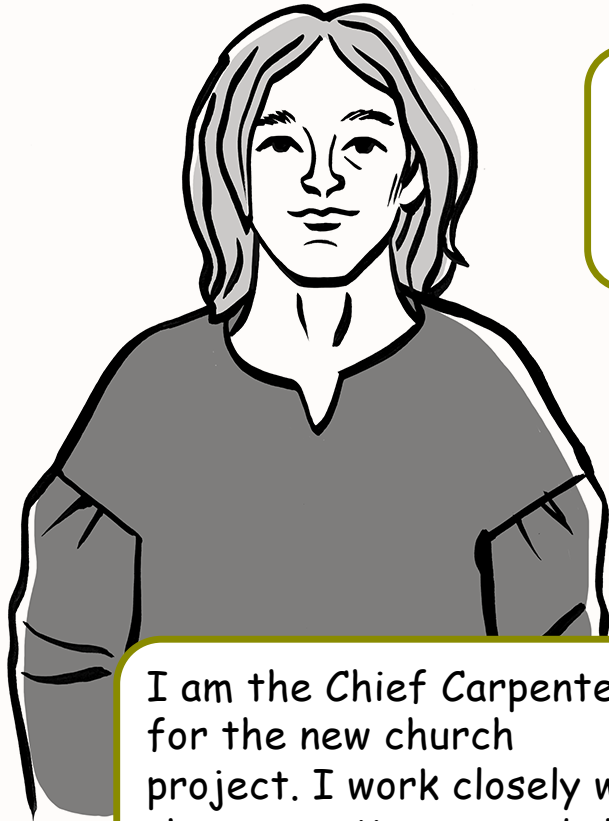
I will take great pride in using my skills to carve the stone into intricate designs for a building raised to the Glory of God.



(The Stone Mason)



# The Carpenter



My job is to shape vast wooden beams for the roof, and to carve the small dowels, or pegs, that hold together all the structures made of wood.

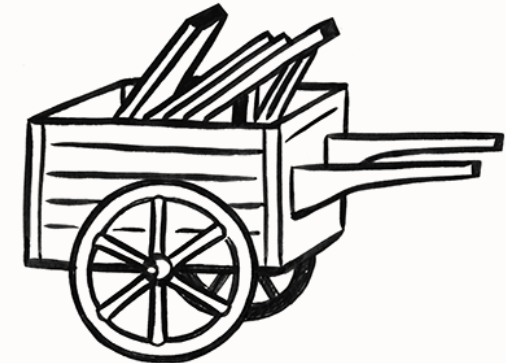
It will also be my job to make frames for the windows and arches and keep the carts and pulleys in good order so that heavy building materials can be moved around the site easily.

I am the Chief Carpenter for the new church project. I work closely with the Stone Masons and the Blacksmith.

My apprentices will split the logs that the woodmen send to the site, strip the bark from them, and fashion them into rough beams or planks ready for more experienced hands to do the finer work or even carving.



(The Carpenter)



# The Blacksmith



I am the Blacksmith. My wife and I run the forge for the church site.

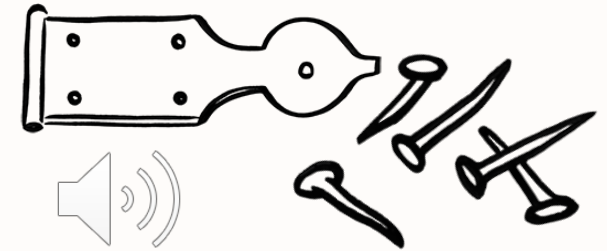
Any part of the building that needs metalwork, I or my wife make.

We use our skills to make the hinges and furniture for all the doors and a small number of nails.

My colleague, the Carpenter, uses wooden dowels or close-fitting joints to hold his work together and so only needs a small number of my nails.

My wife helps me to keep the furnace well stocked and at the correct temperature for working the metal.

She helps me make some smaller items and re-shape the blunt chisels that the Stone Masons constantly need.



(The Blacksmith)



# The Priest



The Lord of the Manor, Ralph de Tony, is known to my bishop, as is his agent, and I am here to bring the word of God and his good news to the burgeoning community in the Manor of Flamstead.



(The Priest)

My bishop is much pleased that this more permanent building is being constructed and has assured the Lord of the Manor that this most generous gift will, no doubt, be looked on with favour when he eventually enters the Eternal Kingdom.

I am a monk sent from the great Abbey of St Alban the Martyr.

I will offer prayer and praise to the Lord for all his goodness and help the villagers to live a pure and righteous life.

# Your turn!

1. What other people and jobs do you think were important in helping and supporting these main people?
2. In a group, divide the following roles between you: the Landowner, the Bailiff, the Architect, the Master Mason, the Stone Mason, the Carpenter, the Blacksmith, the Priest.
3. Write a paragraph each on the people needed to help and support your main person, and why you feel they were important too.
4. How much can you remember?
  - Try our [quiz](#) [link to quiz](#)