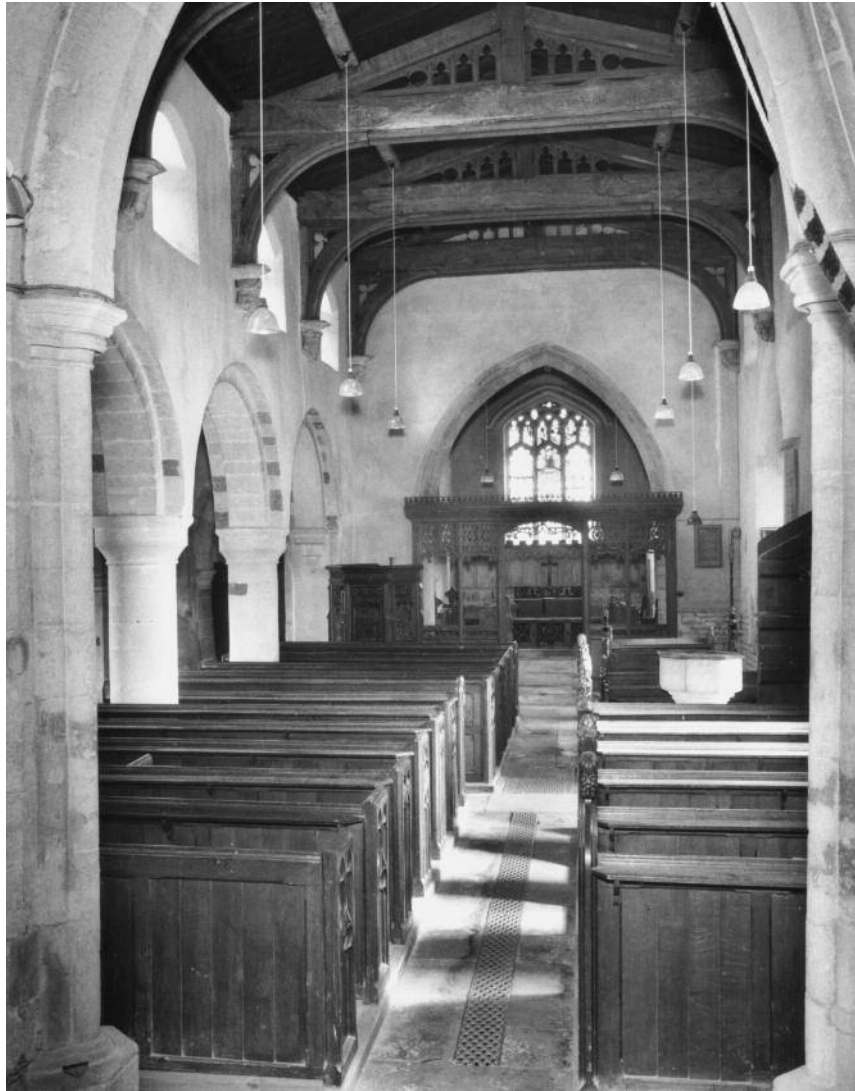




# ST ANDREW'S CHURCH

CRANFORD  
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE



THE CHURCHES CONSERVATION TRUST

LONDON

*Registered Charity No. 258612*

PRICE: £1.50





THE CHURCHES CONSERVATION  
TRUST WELCOMES YOU TO  
ST ANDREW'S CHURCH  
CRANFORD, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

*Many years ago Christians built and set apart this place for prayer. They made their church beautiful with their skill and craftsmanship. Here they have met for worship, for children to be baptised, for couples to be married and for the dead to be brought for burial. If you have time, enjoy the history, the peace and the holiness here. Please use the prayer card and, if you like it, you are welcome to take a folded copy with you.*

*Although services are no longer regularly held here, this church remains consecrated; inspiring, teaching and ministering through its beauty and atmosphere. It is one of more than 300 churches throughout England cared for by The Churches Conservation Trust. The Trust was created in 1969 and was, until 1994, known as the Redundant Churches Fund. Its object is to ensure that all these churches are kept in repair and cared for, in the interests of the Church and Nation, for present and future generations.*

*Please help us to care for this church. There is a box for donations or, if you prefer to send a gift, it will be gratefully received at the Trust's headquarters at 1 West Smithfield, London EC1A 9EE (Tel: 020 7213 0660). For further information about the Trust visit our website [www.visitchurches.org.uk](http://www.visitchurches.org.uk)*

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## ST ANDREW'S CHURCH

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### CRANFORD, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

by CHRISTOPHER DALTON

Although only about four miles (6.4 km) from the busy town of Kettering, the twin villages of Cranford ('cranes' ford) St John and Cranford St Andrew lie in entirely rural surroundings, on either side of a tributary of the River Nene. Cranford St John is on the old main road eastwards to Cambridge, now mercifully superseded by the A14. Cranford St Andrew is north-west of St John, on the road to Grafton Underwood.

Both churches – St John the Baptist and St Andrew – clearly date from the time of King Henry II (1154–89), when St Hugh of Avalon was Bishop of Lincoln (and therefore Cranford), and they stand scarcely a quarter of a mile (0.4 km) apart. The actual buildings predate the records of rectors, which go back to 1218 at St John's and 1240 at St Andrew's. It was not until 1841 that the two churches were united under one rector; however, they still kept their separate churchwardens and church councils until 1954 when St Andrew's became officially a chapel-of-ease to St John's.

For many centuries the Robinson family have been the principal landowners in Cranford. They are the descendants of Sir John Robinson, Bart, whose title was bestowed upon him by King Charles II after he had promoted the king's restoration in 1660. The Robinsons still live in part of the Hall, a large 18th-century house looking out over parkland and standing immediately east of St Andrew's church.



Church and Hall from the south-west

(CHRISTOPHER DALTON)



*The 13th–14th century tower from the west*

(CHRISTOPHER DALTON)

Both villages are stone-built and have a number of houses dating back to the 17th century or earlier, including Dairy Farm with its notable circular dovecote just west of St Andrew's. There were formerly quarries nearby and part of the old Kettering–Cambridge railway line was retained, long after it had been closed to passengers, to transport iron ore to the steelworks at Corby. Farming is now the main local industry. Incidentally, neither these Cranfords nor the one in Middlesex were the model for Mrs Gaskell's novels: she actually based them on Knutsford in Cheshire.

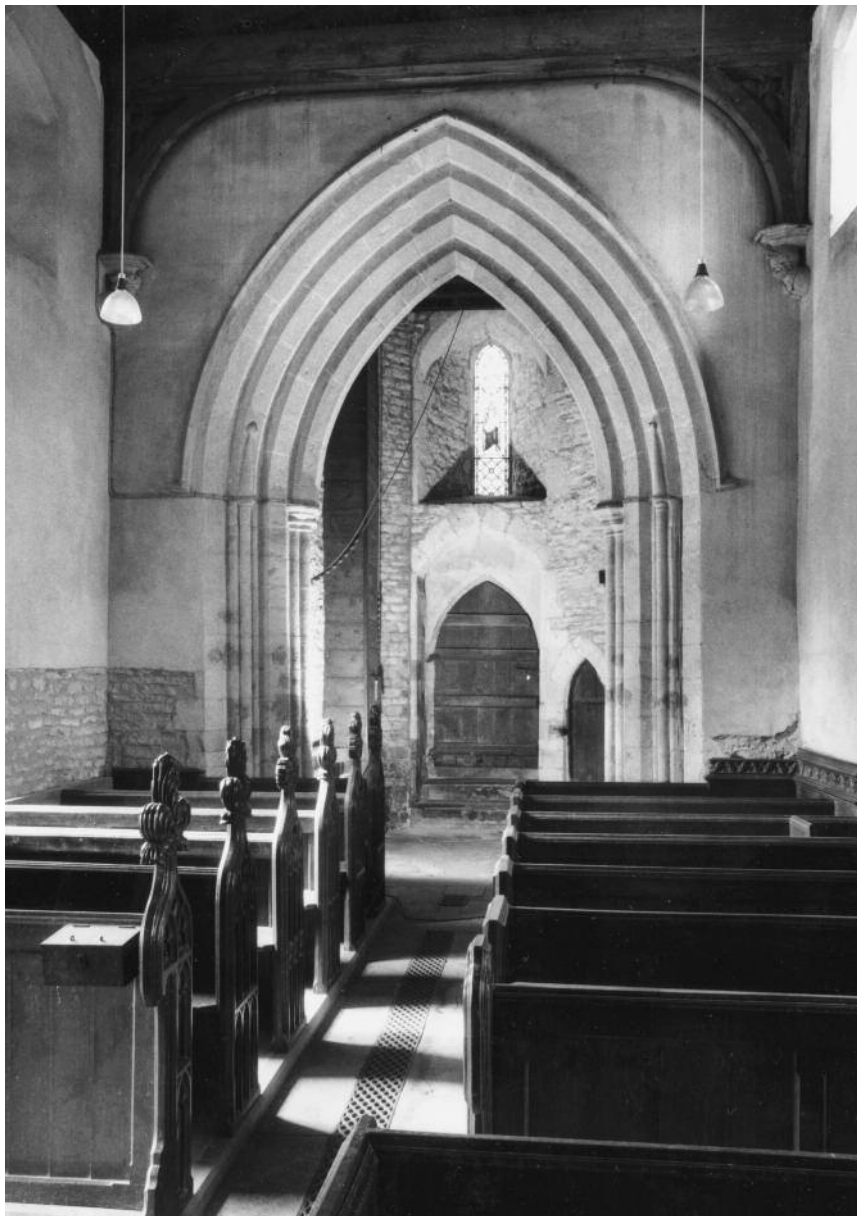
St Andrew's church stands on the north side of the river, on a gentle south-facing slope and to the east of its village, approached across parkland either by footpath or by means of the drive to Cranford Hall. It is a moderately large structure, built principally of local limestone, and consists of tower, nave with south porch, north aisle and transept, and chancel with north and south chapels. This church has had a long history of gradual enlargement, rebuilding and remodelling, and the north arcade is now the only significant survival from the 12th-century building.

Much reconstruction took place in the late 13th century, including the building of the present tower and north chapel. The nave clerestory and the south porch both date from the 14th century, and the south chapel was added and several new windows were inserted in the 15th. This chapel later became the burial place of the Robinson family and was altered in 1674. The final addition to the structure of the church was in 1847, when the Revd Sir George Stamp Robinson caused the north transept to be built to serve as a family pew.

By the 1960s St Andrew's church was in need of extensive repairs and over the succeeding decades much was done, some of it by voluntary labour under the guidance of Peter Brittenshaw, architect and local resident. Eventually, however, it became clear that the maintenance of two substantial churches was beyond the resources of the local community and on 1 December 1996 St Andrew's passed into the care of The Churches Conservation Trust. The architect Mr Tim Ratcliffe was appointed by the Trust to continue the repair work carried out by the parish, the major outstanding job being the reconstruction of the decayed north aisle roof.

## EXTERIOR

The late-13th-century **tower** has a handsome but much-eroded yellow sandstone west doorway from that time. A line of corbels marks the original top of the tower, before it was heightened in the 14th century and given battlements. The belfry windows – and indeed the belfry itself – are



*The late-13th-century tower arch*

(CHRISTOPHER DALTON)

unexpectedly low down, and relate to the original height of the tower. What was added above the belfry was a tall room, the purpose of which is not obvious: it was clearly intended to be lived in, for it was provided with tiny windows at the top and a fireplace, together with an unexplained long recess in one corner.

The nave now has a straight parapet and low-pitched roof; the line of the original, steeply-pitched, roof shows on the east face of the tower. A striking feature is the clerestory, of four trefoil-shaped windows in spherical triangles, on either side. These, like the lower windows, date from the 14th century. Of the latter, the south-east window has fine ogee tracery and both have corbels with carved heads.

The porch is 14th century also. On the east jamb of the archway is an ancient scratch dial.

The south (Robinson) chapel, with a straight parapet like the nave, is of 15th-century origin. It was remodelled in 1674, the date being inscribed above the pretty, ogee-arched, doorway. This has a Victorian door with fine hinges. The 15th-century east window survived the remodelling.

The chancel overlooks the garden of Cranford Hall and is embattled like the tower. It has a fine 15th-century Perpendicular east window of three lights with tracery.

The north chapel was a late 13th century addition to the church but its present east and north windows are again 15th century.

The north transept was added as late as 1847 but care was taken that it should blend with the rest of the church. It was provided with a bell-cote for a small bell but this has remained empty.

The north aisle now has one 14th- and one 15th-century window, both of them attractive and unspoilt.

## INTERIOR

The nave is divided from the north aisle by a straightforward late Norman arcade of three bays, with rounded columns and arches. More impressive is the late-13th-century arch of four orders which opens into the tower. The 15th-century font, with a plain octagonal bowl and a stem carved with tall windows, has an attractive 17th-century carved wooden lid. In the south-east corner of the nave is a piscina, indicating the presence of an altar here in mediaeval times. The fine roof has old tie-beams and purlins but otherwise has been much restored. Its wall-posts are supported by ten striking mediaeval stone corbels, carved to represent bishops and kings.



*The 15th-century font*  
(CHRISTOPHER DALTON)

The oak pews are mid-19th century with traceried ends; those on the south side of the nave and in the north transept have carved poppyheads. In front of the chancel arch is an oak screen, intricately carved and dating from 1893. The stone stair which led to the loft over its mediaeval predecessor still exists. The 19th-century pulpit incorporates three important carved panels of 16th-century Renaissance date, depicting Christ washing his disciples' Feet, the Last Supper and the Betrayal.

In the three-light south-east window is some exceptionally fine Victorian stained glass, portraying the Raising of Lazarus. Possibly made by Lavers & Barraud, it commemorates Rosa Orger, the wife of a former rector, who died in 1864. The clerestory windows on the south side contain beautifully-designed glass depicting flowers of religious significance – lilies, poppies, passion flowers and sunflowers. St Andrew is portrayed in mid-19th century glass in the west lancet window in the tower.



*The Betrayal – 16th-century carved Renaissance panel from the pulpit*  
(CHRISTOPHER DALTON)

The north aisle roof is dated 1660 but has been extensively repaired subsequently, including recently when it was in danger of collapse. Now fixed to the north wall are two sets of brasses:

1. John Fossebrock, who died in 1418, and Maud his wife who was nurse to the infant King Henry VI.
2. John Fosbroke, who died in 1602, and his two successive wives. Between them they had 24 children, who produced no less than 70 grandchildren.



The Fosbroke brasses  
(CHRISTOPHER DALTON)

Carved poppyhead in the  
north transept  
(CHRISTOPHER DALTON)

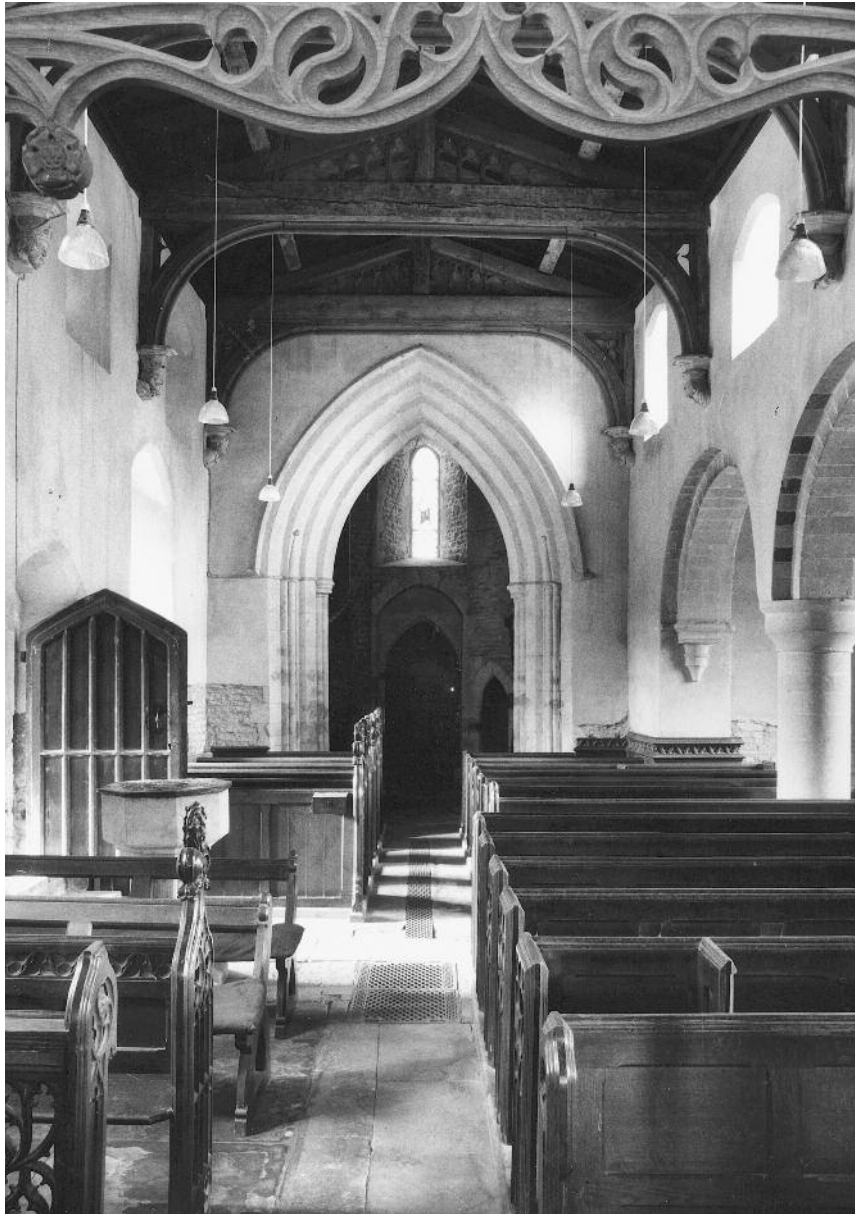


The north transept was added in 1847 to provide a family pew for the Robinsons, and has its own outside door. One of the poppyheads is carved with the heads of two fierce dogs, with oak leaves and acorns between them.

The chancel has a simple 18th-century roof. The stone panelling round the sanctuary and the attractive communion rails are mid-19th century. The oak choir stalls are later and belong with the screen. On the north wall is a monument by Denman of Regent Street, London, to Sir George Robinson, Bart, who died in 1815 and his wife Dorothea.

The three-light east window contains an impressive collection, made by the Robinson family, of assorted old stained and painted glass. Much of this dates from the 16th and 17th centuries and was imported from the Netherlands and probably also from Germany. In the left-hand light may be seen

- (1) St Christopher, St Adrian [sic] and St Sebastian
- (2) The Angel leaving Tobias and Tobit (from the story in the Apocrypha)



*The nave looking west to the tower*

(CHRISTOPHER DALTON)

*St Catherine – detail from the  
Flemish glass in the east window  
(KATE WEAVER)*



(3) A soldier holding a spear

(4) St Catherine and the Emperor Maxentius (who killed her).

The middle light contains 15th-century English glass at the top, including foliage and a kneeling figure. Lower down are Netherlandish roundels depicting

(1) The Holy Sacrament

(2) The Crucifixion

(3) The Baptism of Christ.

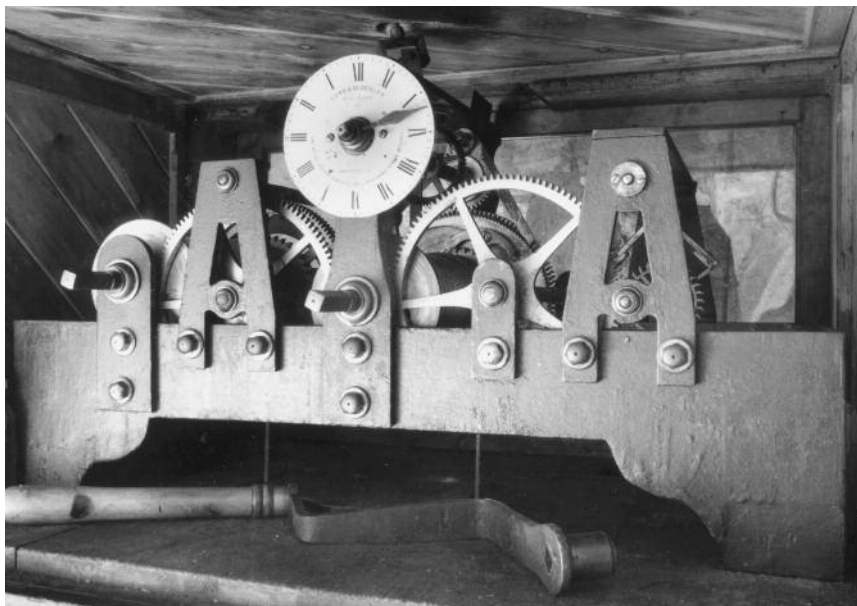
In the right-hand light are depictions of

(1) The Triumph of Fame

(2) St Michael triumphing over the Devil

(3) St John the Baptist holding the Lamb.

The **north chapel** contains the late 19th century organ, with two manuals and pedals, by J Trustam & Son of Bedford. Here is another piscina, again with a trefoiled ogee arch; its bowl was knocked off when the wall was plastered over after the Reformation. Here also is a memorial to a former rector, the Revd John Hargreaves, who died in 1761.



*The Victorian clock movement*

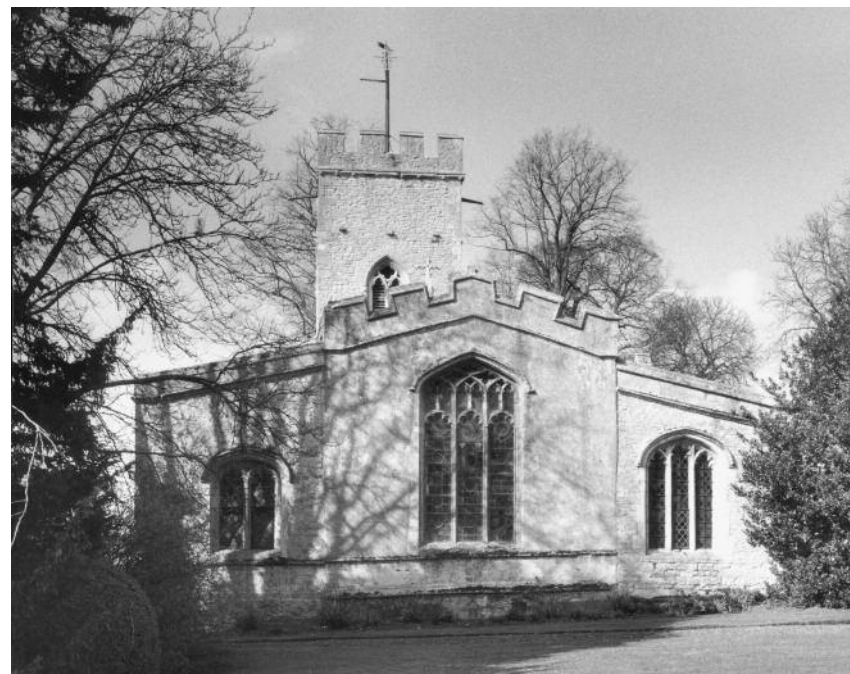
(CHRISTOPHER DALTON)

The **south (Robinson) chapel** has a diapered Victorian roof and various family monuments. The most notable visually are to

- (1) Bernard Walcot, who died in 1671, and his second wife Elizabeth. This monument is on the south wall and has two panels with a coat of arms above, under a broken pediment, and garlands and a cherub beneath.
- (2) William Robinson, who died in 1678. This is on the west wall and is a stylish Classical monument of white marble, attributed to James Hardy. It has a broken pediment framing a bust, and is flanked by twisted columns with Corinthian capitals.
- (3) George Robinson, who died in 1753; he was a son of Sir James Robinson, Bart.

Many other Robinsons are commemorated by floor slabs.

In the belfry are four **bells**, sadly no longer ringable and with a damaged tenor. They hang in an early 17th century frame. Two bells date from 1624 and were cast by William Haulsey of St Ives; the others were recast by Norris of Stamford in 1683 and Eayre of Kettering in 1718. The **clock**, with a fine Victorian movement by Lund & Blockley, is still in working order.



*St Andrew's from the east*

(CHRISTOPHER DALTON)

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The present writer gladly acknowledges the work of the writers of previous guides to St Andrew's church, of the late Donald Findlay who wrote a report on the church in 1994 for the Council for the Care of Churches, and of Dr William Cole who wrote notes on the glass in the east window for the *Corpus Vitrearum*.

*Front cover: North side of the church* (CHRISTOPHER DALTON).

*Back cover: Interior looking east from the tower* (CHRISTOPHER DALTON).

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