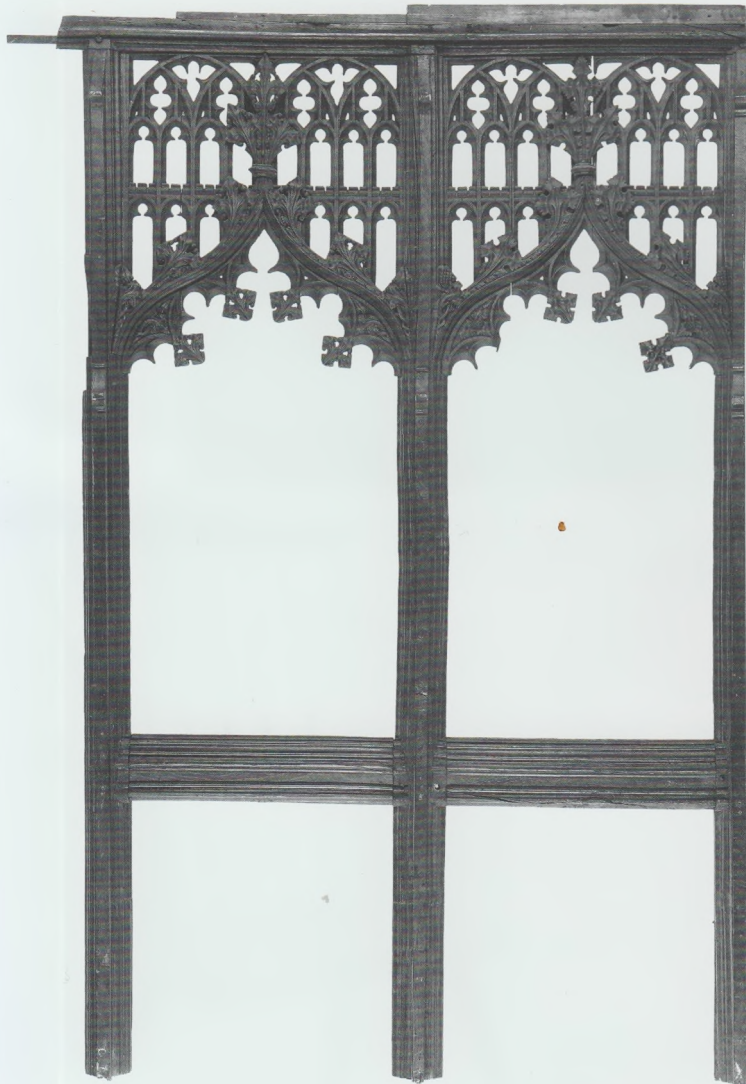
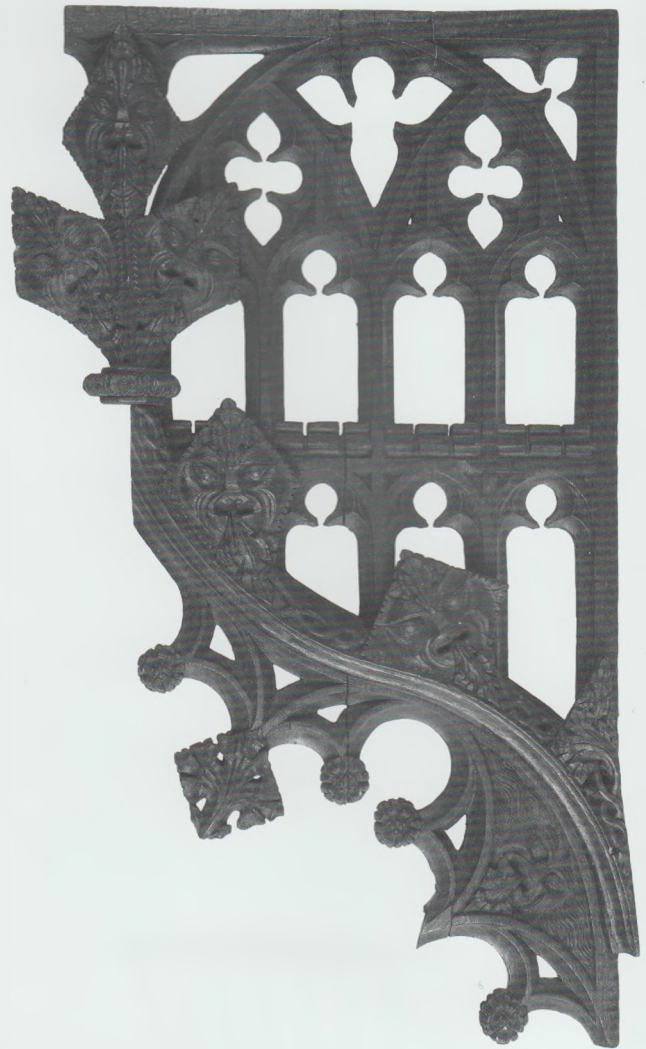


A Gothic Oak Screen, c. 1430–1445, in the Burrell Collection, Glasgow Museums

It is hoped that readers can help with identifying a possible origin for a screen which, although now much restored, is said to have come from a church in East Anglia. The screen is composed of seven bays of which the lower parts of the end two are panelled on both sides. The three centre ones are open except for the carved crocketed ogival arches and open work Gothic tracery above, which extend across the entire screen. Bench seats are fitted on each side on two



Gothic oak screen, detail of two bays showing lower panels removed. Glasgow Museums, The Burrell Collection (14.3). ©CSG CIC Glasgow Museums Collection, The Burrell Collection



Detail showing section with carved Green Man masks. ©CSG CIC Glasgow Museums Collection, The Burrell Collection

bays. The screen is coated in a thick finish with traces of polychrome pigment.

There appear to be several different styles of carving in the crocketed arches. It seems that some at least have been added, perhaps in the late 19th or early 20th century when the screen came onto the market.

The earliest known record is in Murray Adams-Acton's *Domestic architecture and old furniture*, published in 1929. In a section defending the introduction of old features into modern renovation, Adams-Acton cited the successful installation of the screen into Denton Hall, Yorkshire, built by John Carr about 1770. A photograph shows the new billiard room which was among recent alterations for the owner, Arthur James Hill (1876–1935), who purchased the

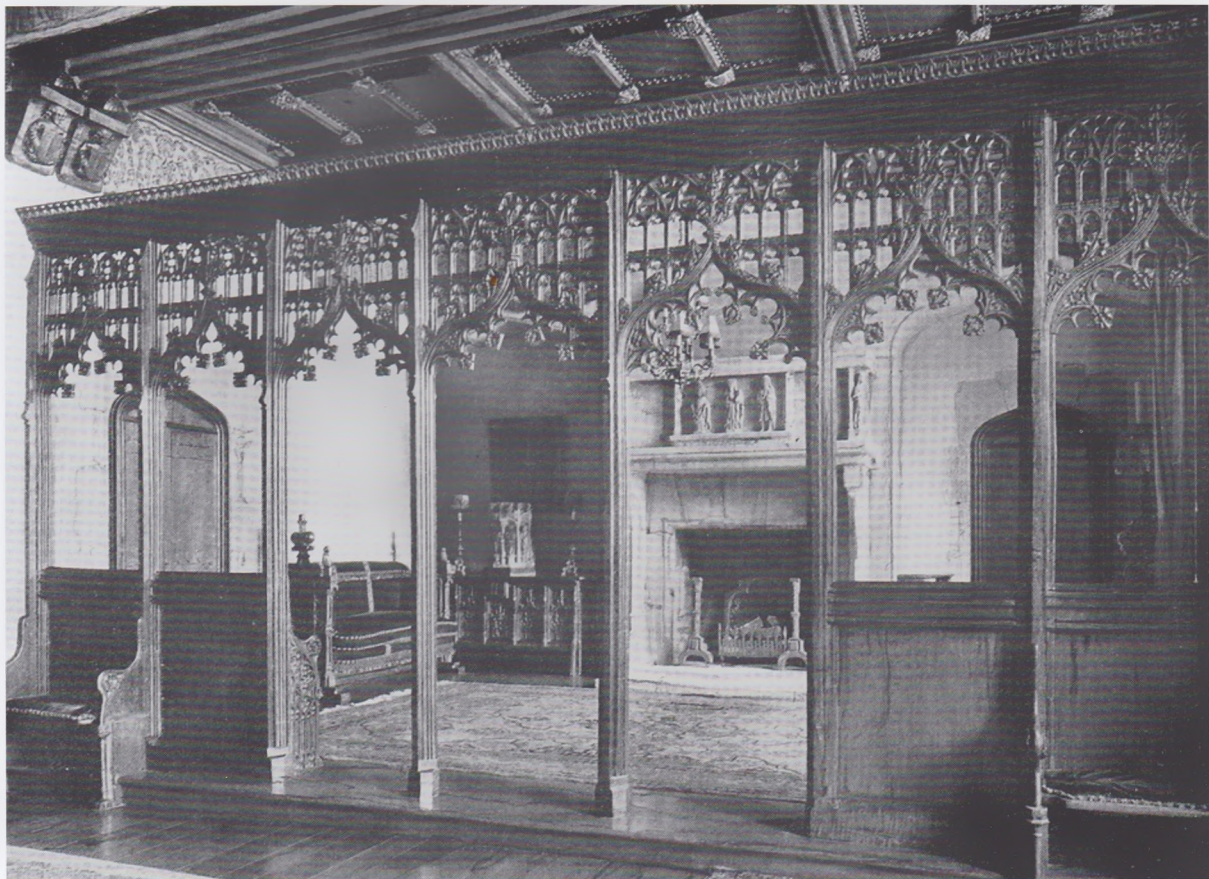
property in 1925. He was the eldest son of Sir James Hill, 1st Bt. (1849–1936), a textile magnate and Liberal MP for Bradford Central, and Alice Knight. Arthur became a partner in the company, Sir James Hill & Sons Limited, and a director of Salt's Mill, Saltaire, Bradford.

Christopher Hussey described the extensive refurbishment of Denton Hall in the late 1920s in *Country Life*, 4 November 1939, including the conversion of three rooms at the back of the house, the Evidence Closet, Library and Bedroom, into a large billiard room. White Allom & Co., London decorators and antique dealers, were commissioned to furnish and decorate the room, installing woodwork, including linenfold panelling, choir stalls and the screen, all described as 15th century. Adams-Acton, who was employed by the firm, worked on the project and in 1928 went into partnership with Frank Surgey, establishing Acton Surgey Ltd.

By July 1936 the screen was in London, photographed in Acton Surgey's showroom and featured in an advertisement in *The Connoisseur*. The American newspaper magnate William Randolph Hearst (1863–1951) purchased

it for his Welsh property, St Donat's Castle, Glamorgan, bought in 1925. Sir Charles Allom was appointed as the architect for the renovation and incorporation of historic architectural elements and Adams-Acton seems to have been one of the sources for early oak furniture and panelling. After Hearst's death, seven of these items were acquired from Hearst's National Magazine Company by Adams-Acton for Sir William Burrell (1861–1958). The screen was bought for £600 which, according to Adams-Acton, was £1000 less than Hearst had paid. It was delivered to Glasgow Museums on 21 November 1952 and went on temporary display as part of the newly acquired Burrell Collection in the central hall of Glasgow Art Galleries and Museum, Kelvingrove. In 1975, it was shown in the Arts Council exhibition, *Treasures from the Burrell Collection*, at the Hayward Gallery, London. The screen was part of the installation but was not referred to in the catalogue. The extent of its restoration may have been the reason for this.

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The billiard room at Denton Hall, from Murray Adams-Acton, *Domestic architecture and old furniture*, London: Geoffrey Bles, 1929, Fig. 177