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THE CRYPT

OF

CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL.

THE Crypt of Canterbury Cathedral, which exceeds all others in size, being about 290 feet long, equally excels every other in beauty and historic interest. In antiquity, it is surpassed by portions of the Cathedral Crypts at Winchester, Worcester, Gloucester, and Rochester; but the first of these was not commenced until A.D. 1079, and Prior Ernulf's Crypt, at Canterbury, was completed within a quarter of a century after that date.*

Earlier crypts had existed at all these Cathedrals, but the diminutive spans of their vaults rendered them useless, when greater skill in architecture permitted such bolder plans as those used in the crypt at Canterbury.

It was not all built at the same period. The great crypt, which extends, throughout a length of 190 feet, beneath the choir, its transepts and its eastern towers, was erected by Prior Ernulf, under the auspices of Archbishop Anselm, between A.D. 1096 and 1100.† It was about fourteen and a half feet

* Professor Willis, and Mr. King, in his *Handbook of the Western Cathedrals*, give the dates of the four apsidal crypts as:—Winchester circa 1079; Worcester, 1084; Gloucester, 1089; Canterbury, 1096.

† Ernulf, a Monk of St. Lucian in Beauvais, had been at Bec a pupil of Lanfranc. When Lanfranc came to the See of Canterbury, Ernulf joined the monastery of Christ Church, here. Whether he assisted in that rapid re-erection of the Cathedral which Lanfranc achieved in seven years, 1070-77, we do not know; but it is quite possible. If so, he would undoubtedly regret that Lanfranc's Choir

high, and eighty-five feet wide ; but at the transepts its total width is about 158 feet.

Eastward, to support Trinity Chapel and the Corona, an additional crypt, of unusual loftiness, was built, in the course of three years, 1179 to 1181, when the choir was under restoration, after the great fire of 1174.

was so short. Professor Willis supposes that it had only two piers, on each side (*Architectural History of Canterbury Cathedral*, page 67). When Archbishop Anselm made Ernulf Prior of Christ Church, in A.D. 1096, he at once set to work to remedy this defect of Lanfranc's Church. The long nave, and central tower, Ernulf left untouched, but the choir he pulled down, to rebuild it on a far bolder, nobler, scale. "*Cantiæ dejectam priorem partem Ecclesiæ, quam Lanfrancus ædificaverat, adeo splendide erexit, ut nihil tale possit in Anglia videri,*" says William of Malmesbury (*De Gestis Pont.*, p. 234). As Ernulf was transferred to [Peter]Burgh, as Abbot, in 1107, and as he had then so far completed the Canterbury Choir, that the beauties of its windows, pavement, and painted roof, were extolled ; we may be sure that he had completed the crypt by or before the year 1100. His successor, Conrad, added magnificent decoration to the choir, which Ernulf had not quite finished. Subsequently, Ernulf was appointed Bishop of Rochester in the year 1114, when Ralph of Escures was promoted from that see to the Archiepiscopal throne. In the same year, says Matthew Paris (i., 141), the whole church at Canterbury was dedicated. No doubt the consecrations, of a new Archbishop, and of Ernulf himself, the designer and builder of the crypt and choir, would have caused this to be a very appropriate period for the dedication. But Matthew Paris is the sole authority for the statement. He says "*A.D. 1114 Radulfus episcopus Roffensis eligitur ad archiepiscopatum Cantuariensem, sexto Kalendas Maii. Eodem quoque tempore tempestates multæ personuerunt ; cometa quoque apparuit mense Maii ; dedicatur ecclesia Cantuariensis.*"

When Archbishop William of Corbeuil was appointed to the Primacy in 1123, Ernulf, bishop of Rochester, was one of the bishops who officiated at his consecration. Seven years later, in 1130, there was a grand and imposing ceremony of dedication, of the new choir, at Canterbury. Whether Matthew Paris is correct respecting a previous dedication, in 1114, we have no means of ascertaining.

This eastern portion of the crypt has pointed arches ; it is rather more than one hundred feet long, nearly sixty-six feet wide, and twenty-two feet high. William the Englishman was its architect, and he introduced upon its piers and columns the round abacus, which does not appear in the choir above, but which afterwards became a distinctive feature of Early English columns. Eight of the piers are massive (6 ft. 8 in. wide), and in plan are formed each of two clustered circular shafts. The two central columns are simple slender circular shafts, 1 foot in diameter, with moulded caps and bases. The merits of Ernulf's Crypt, and the boldness of its design, cannot be duly appreciated until we realize the timid nature of the designs of earlier crypts, and the cumbrous multiplicity of columns which their narrow spans rendered necessary.

EXISTING CRYPTS, BUILT BEFORE A.D. 1100.

At Repton, beneath the chancel of the church, there is a crypt which is considered to be the oldest in England. It is ascribed to the eighth or ninth century ; whether rightly or not I cannot say ; but the nature of its construction certainly supports its claim to be the oldest crypt now existing, in this country. The area of its floor is but twenty feet, by eighteen and a half, and its height is nine feet and a half. Yet, so extremely narrow is the span of each vaulting arch, that within this small area there are four isolated vaulting columns, and eight fluted projecting responds or wall piers. The clear space between each pair of vaulting columns is, in one direction four feet nine inches, and in the other three feet eight inches.* These columns taper from base

* To the Rev. Wm. Williams, vicar of Repton, I am much

to capital, and are scantily wreathed, spirally, with round mouldings, small and large alternately; they are five feet and a half high. The vaulting ribs are square in section, and there are no diagonal groins.

“St. Wilfrid’s needle,” a crypt beneath the central tower of Ripon Cathedral, is merely a vaulted chamber eleven feet and a quarter long, seven feet and three-quarters wide, and nine feet four inches high. It has no isolated column. Of the same, or similarly small, dimensions is the ancient crypt at Hexham Church, beneath the site of the nave.* Under the choir of Bedale Church, there is a crypt which contains fragments of carved stones, believed by some persons to be Saxon.† Another early crypt is to be found beneath the church of Lastingham in the West Riding of Yorkshire. Its nave has four isolated shafts, in a space twenty-two feet square. Its apsidal portion, thirteen feet wide, adds twenty feet to its length. Probably, however, small as they are, none of these crypts have any such claim to Saxon origin as the Repton crypt, with its narrow vaulting-spans.

The less-known, rectangular, crypt at Wing, in Buckinghamshire, may perhaps claim to be earlier than Repton. It has no isolated shafts, in a space roughly eighteen feet square; but walls and solid piers divide it. The central alley, six feet wide and thirteen feet long, is entirely surrounded by an aisle, four feet wide, into which it opens by three arches, one on the east, one on the north, and one on the south.

indebted for courteously furnishing me with measurements of this crypt, and also with admirable drawings of its interior. Mr. J. C. Cox, in his *Hist. of Derbyshire Churches*, gives a small etching of this crypt. He states that its area is nearly 17 feet square; and suggests that it was built in the 10th century.

* *Archæological Journal*, ii. 239; iii. 163. † *Ibid.*, iii. 258-9.

Of Gundulf's crypt at Rochester, only two bays remain.* There are two massive isolated shafts in a small space twenty-two feet six inches and three-quarters long, by twenty-seven feet and one inch wide. The total width of the central space and aisles together is sixty-one feet three inches. Each shaft is circular, of one stone, having rough, convex, cushion caps (not cut by vertical planes), with their lower corners chamfered. The rude groins, without ribs, are built of tufa and plastered; they are ten feet six inches and a half high. Gundulf was Bishop of Rochester from 1077 to 1107.

The Worcester crypt, being entire, is a far better example of early construction than such a small crypt as that at Repton, or such a fragment as that of Gundulf at Rochester.

From a table of the Styles and Dimensions of the various parts of Worcester Cathedral, printed under the auspices of the Worcestershire Architectural Society, we learn that this crypt, under the Cathedral choir and vestries, is seventy feet long, ninety-seven feet broad and ten feet high. As the Worcester choir

* Mr. Jas. Thos. Irvine has favoured me with the following measurements:—

"BISHOP GUNDULF'S CRYPT, ROCHESTER CATHEDRAL.

"*Central space of three Alleys.*

"Length of *portion left*, from East to West, 22 ft. 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ in.; whole breadth between walls, N. to S., 27 ft. 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ in.; two isolated shafts remain, and two are enclosed in later work; clear space between shafts, N. and S., 7 ft. 10 in.; clear space between shafts, E. and W., 10 ft. 8 in.; thickness of walls, 6 ft. 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ in.

"*Aisles*.—Clear space, N. to S., 10 ft. 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ in.; clear space between pilasters, 9 ft. 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. Whole width of crypt in the clear, from aisle wall to aisle wall, 61 ft. 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. Shafts 14 inches in diameter, above the base; but only 12, below the cap; plinth 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches deep; shaft, with base and cap, 5 ft. $\frac{1}{2}$ in. high; abacus 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches."

and its aisles are but seventy-four feet wide, we infer that the additional twenty-three feet, of the crypt's width, must underlie the vestries. This southern adjunct of the crypt, beneath the vestries, is divided into two alleys, by a row of four columns. A solid wall separates it from the south aisle of the actual crypt. The great crypt, seventy-four feet wide, is divided into eight alleys; there being four in the central space, and two in each aisle. Each rank of columns contains ten of them, in the total length of seventy feet, and the shafts are, consequently, more slender than those usually found in cathedral crypts. As there are three such ranks in the central space, which is but thirty feet wide, and one similar rank in each aisle, we count no less than fifty isolated columns, in addition to the solid piers flanking the central space, and responds in the outer walls, to support the vaulting of an area which is but seventy feet long, by seventy-four feet broad. The clear space between each pair of isolated columns is five feet eight inches from north to south, and five feet three inches from east to west.* These very narrow spans, and the general timidity of the design, might well suggest doubts whether this crypt is not of earlier date, in the eleventh century, than 1084. Professor Willis, however, says that the architect of Worcester crypt had certainly seen the crypt at Winchester, and that he has evinced originality and taste of a superior order.†

Such a crypt is like a forest of stone, and its columns form a perplexing labyrinth. When St. Wul-

* For these measurements, and for the Table of Dimensions, I am indebted to the courteous kindness of the Rev. Richard Cattley, a minor canon of Worcester, to whom and to Lord Alwyne Compton, the Dean, my thanks are due for helpful information cordially rendered. † *Archæological Journal*, xx., 91.

stan, in his *Life of St. Swithin*, describes a crypt built by the Saxon St. Athelwold, at Winchester, I believe that the model from which he drew the picture was such a crypt as this at Worcester. His words respecting crypts are as follows:—

“Insuper occultas studuistis et addere cryptas,
Quas sic Dædaleum struxerat ingenium
Quisquis ut ignotus veniens intraverit illas,
Nesciat unde meat quoque pedem referat.”*

These lines have been frequently quoted, or referred to, as proving that the Saxons had large crypts, but they do nothing of the kind. The narrow spans of the early crypts, necessitating the use of a multiplicity of columns within a very small space, were the actual sources of the labyrinthine perplexities experienced by strangers, as described by St. Wulstan. In the crypt at Worcester, Bishop Wulstan held an ecclesiastical Synod in 1092, and we can imagine that the members present were more puzzled by the difficulty of finding their way, amidst its many closely-placed columns, than by any arguments propounded at the Synod.

Serlo, Abbot of Gloucester, began, in 1089, to rebuild his church, which had been burnt down in 1087. The Gloucester crypt, which may thus be dated *circa* A.D. 1089-91, shews a very considerable advance in boldness of design, upon that of Worcester. It is longer, but of about the same width, yet the number of isolated columns in the Gloucester crypt is but twelve (in place of fifty at Worcester), and its aisles are divided from its central space by arcades, each of four arches, on massive piers. This lessening of the labyrinthine character, of the

* *Wolstani Liber de Vita S. Swithuni*, Acta Benedictin., sæculum v., p. 630.

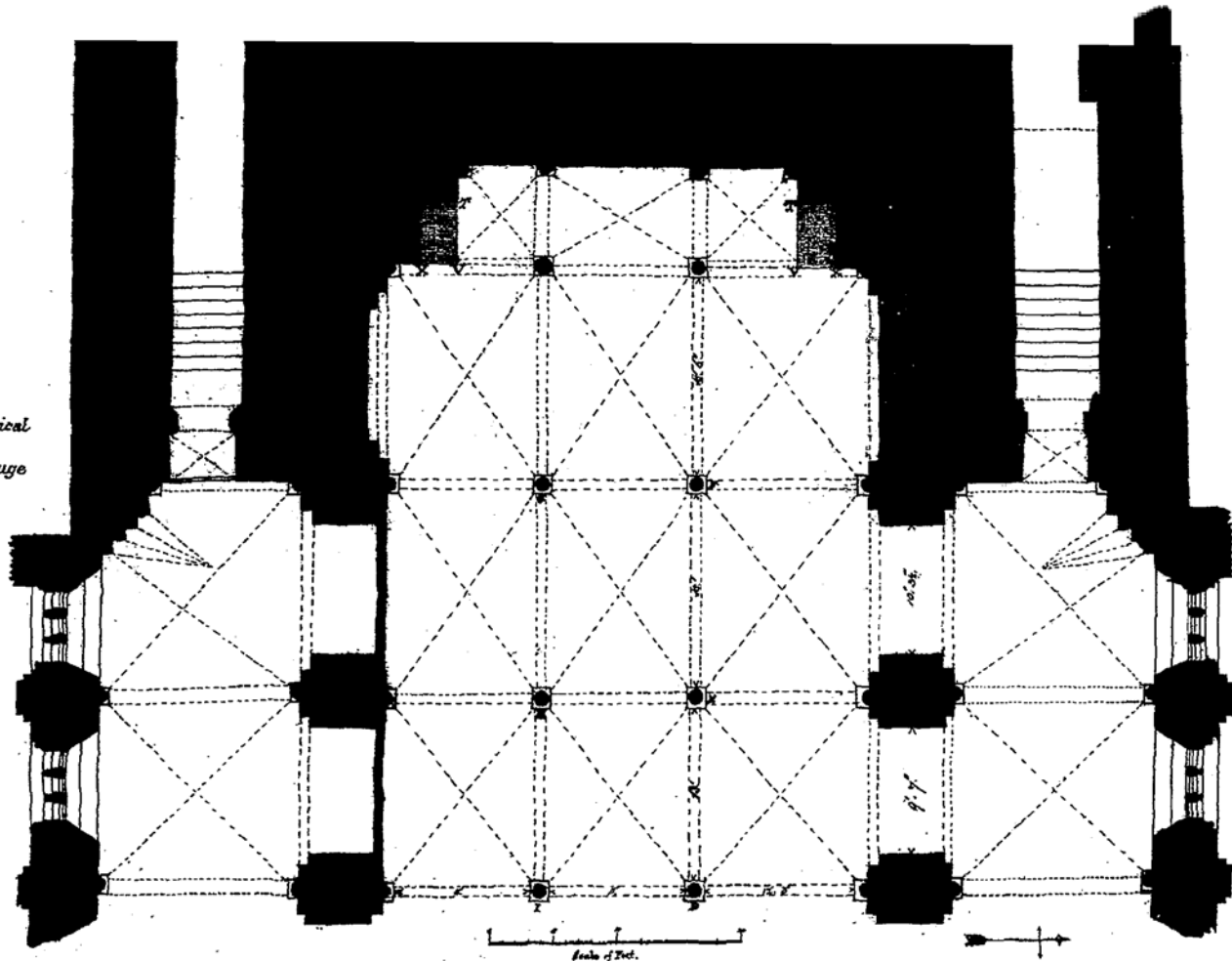
crypt's columns, arises from the bolder design of the Abbot of Gloucester, who adopted wider spans for his vaulting. From Mr. F. S. Waller's plan of this crypt,* we learn that between pairs of vaulting columns (of which there are only two ranks, each containing six columns, in the central space), there is a clear space of ten feet from north to south, and of seven feet from east to west. The vaulting spans in the aisles of the crypt are still wider, and evince great boldness of design, when compared with the spans used at Worcester. In plan, and in number of alleys, the Gloucester crypt was very similar to Ernulf's crypt at Canterbury; but in length, height, width, and spans of vaulting, Ernulf's excels it. Casing, and additional masonry added to the Gloucester crypt at subsequent periods, have given it a patched and uncomely appearance. It has three apsidal chapels.

At Winchester, Bishop Walkelin, as the records state, began to rebuild his church, from the foundation, in A.D. 1079. His crypt, beneath the choir, has two aisles, flanking a central space, thirty-four feet wide, which is divided by a single row of five columns,† It has but four alleys, in a total width of eighty-three feet. The boldness of its plan, and the wide spans of its vaulting, should have prevented any antiquary from supposing that this crypt was built about A.D. 980, by St. Athelwold. It is utterly unlike the crypts described by St. Wulstan. Yet such a mistaken notion was generally received, until very recent times.

* To Dr. Law, the Dean of Gloucester, I am much indebted for his kindness in sending to me a copy of Mr. F. S. Waller's paper upon and plan of the crypt of that Cathedral.

† *Archæological Journal*, xx., 90. There is a later crypt eastward of this; but it is narrower, and has but two alleys, formed by a rank of four columns.

At *T* there is a vertical
joint 5 feet high.
T *V* *X* consists of huge
blocks of stone.



WEST END OF THE CRYPT
CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL

There is a small Norman crypt at Oxford which has frequently been compared with Ernulf's crypt at Canterbury. It supports the chancel of the church of St. Peter in the East, Oxford. This crypt is thirty-six feet long, twenty-one feet broad, nine and a half feet high, and it has two ranks of isolated circular columns, with carved capitals; the clear space between each pair being about six feet. There can be no doubt that this crypt of St. Peter in the East was erected in the eleventh or twelfth century. Its vaults have no such diminutive spans as those at Repton; and they seem to be wider than those of the Worcester crypt.

ERNULF'S CRYPT AT CANTERBURY.

Our brief review of those crypts which claim to be of a date earlier than A.D. 1100, is of twofold service. First, it enables us to understand why Ernulf pulled down the crypt and choir, which had so recently been erected, by Lanfranc, A.D. 1070-1077. Ernulf's masonry encases a few feet, of the west end, of Lanfranc's narrower crypt;* but the narrow spans of its vaults, and the shortness of the choir in proportion to the nave, prevented Ernulf from retaining more of Lanfranc's crypt and choir. Professor Willis illustrates both points, by reference to the dimensions of the choir of Lanfranc's abbey at Caen, and the crypt of Trinity Church at Caen.† From Ernulf's additions (in the choir) to Lanfranc's eastern piers of the central tower,

* On each side of the crypt's central body, 3 feet east of its west wall, a vertical joint (5 feet in height) in the masonry, marks a junction of Ernulf's work with Lanfranc's. The bay of vaulting, above each of these joints, is but $9\frac{1}{4}$ feet high, and only $6\frac{1}{2}$ feet long and wide. Yet the central bay, between them, has the height and width of Ernulf's other vaults, but it is much shorter E. to W.

† *Architectural History of Canterbury Cathedral*, pp. 64-68.

Professor Willis proves that Ernulf made the central alley of his choir eight feet wider than Lanfranc's had been; and that he increased the total width of the choir by thirteen feet, between the extreme walls. He adds, "it will follow that no part of the present crypt can belong to Lanfranc's church, unless, indeed, some of its columns may have been used. But in that case they do not stand in their old positions."* Nevertheless, Lanfranc's tower-piers, and a few feet of his crypt walls, undoubtedly remain within Ernulf's masonry, at the west end of the crypt. Throughout a length of 7 feet 8 inches, eastward from the west wall, the singular thickness of the wall-piers causes the central body of the crypt to be narrower, by $11\frac{1}{2}$ feet, than it is elsewhere. Probably the body of Lanfranc's crypt was thus narrow. The three lowest courses of masonry, in those thick wall-piers, are remarkable for blocks of huge size, widely jointed. The slight use made of the angle shafts, engaged in the west wall, is, like the long vertical joint near each of them, suggestive of patched work. Their large abaci, 16 inches long and 15 inches wide, seem to bear little or no weight.

Secondly, our review of the earlier crypts enables us to understand, and admire, the boldness of Ernulf,† who left between some isolated columns at the west

* *Architectural History of Canterbury Cathedral*, p. 68.

† Mr. G. T. Clark, the great authority upon Norman Castles, has favoured me with the following observations:—

"I think you are perfectly safe in claiming peculiar boldness for the crypt at Canterbury. Strange to say, vaulting, save for narrow mural passages, is almost unknown in Norman Keeps. The only ones that occur to me, with an original vaulted basement, are Mitford in Northumberland, and I think Newcastle; neither of them Early. Norham is vaulted, but the vaulting is not, I think, original; or if so is not early Norman. At Arques, Richmond, and Carlisle, it is also inserted. The Tower of London is quite

end of his crypt, clear spaces of fifteen feet six inches from east to west, and eleven feet and a half from north to south, while he made his vaults fourteen and a half feet high from floor to apex. When we remember how narrow are the vaulting-spans of the earlier crypts, and bear in mind that Ernulf continued his vaulting over a length of 190 feet, and across a width at the transepts of 158 feet, we obtain some idea of the great increase in architectural skill which his crypt evinces.

As Ernulf had roofed in his choir, and painted its roof, before 1107, we may fairly date his crypt at *circa* A.D. 1100. Professor Willis has inserted that date upon his sectional view of the crypt.* Thus, as the later choir with its pointed arches was, in 1176-82, an architectural wonder, utterly unexampled in England; so likewise, in A.D. 1100, had Ernulf's crypt been unique, and a marvel of boldness, in extent, having vaulted aisles 16 feet 4 inches wide.

Mr. John Henry Parker, C.B., has favoured me with the following letter respecting this crypt:—

“I well remember the pleasure I had, in the choir above the crypt, in holding one end of the measuring line of Professor Willis, while another friend held the opposite end; and the great Professor, with Gervase in his hand, pointed out that the straight vertical joints, which we found at regular intervals, in the walls and

an exception; and there it is not a main floor, but a large chamber (the Chapel) that is vaulted. I do not know of any Norman Keep in England quite as old as the Conquest. I have often wondered why the builders of Norman Keeps did not vault the basement. The danger from fire must have been great, and the spans of vaulting need not have been very bold. With the great Roman vaults, at Rome, before them, the Norman architects must surely have been aware that large spans were practicable.”

* *Architectural History of Canterbury Cathedral*, opposite p. 136.

arches of the Choir, agree exactly with the minute description of Gervase, as to the points where the workmen, during the years 1175 to 1184, had left off at each winter, and begun again in each spring. The Professor could thereby put a date on each stone in the choir. He was himself then studying, and bringing to perfection, his system of Architectural history, grounded indeed on the accurate observations of Rickman, as he always acknowledged; but he mounted on the shoulders of Rickman, which enabled him to see much farther than Rickman himself could. Rickman was not a man of much education, and he knew little of history; whereas, the Professor was thoroughly well-informed, and could read with facility the original Records, which are of much importance in this study, and are nowhere more complete than with respect to Canterbury. These general observations do not indeed apply strictly to the crypt, but that is included in them. Willis has shewn us that the original crypt, under the western part of the choir, was built between A.D. 1096 and 1100. The original choir, with its transepts and eastern towers, was not later than Archbishop Anselm, although consecrated in 1130.

“There has been much discussion as to whether England or Normandy was in advance, in the progress of Architecture at that period; the fact is that they were progressing almost simultaneously. One architect got the start in one thing, perhaps an Englishman, and another in another thing, perhaps a Norman. The French antiquaries are quite right in calling this style the *ANGLO-NORMAN* style, and Canterbury is one of the finest examples of it. The French fancied that their Royal Chapel at St. Denis, the burial place of

their Royal Family, was in advance of any other building of its time; but this is a delusion, arising from its real history not being understood. There are things in the crypt, under the choir, at St. Denis, exactly similar to the same at Canterbury. In both, there is a later pier introduced, under the original vault of the crypt, to support a column of the choir above, when that was rebuilt; but the choir at Canterbury was rebuilt at an earlier period than that of St. Denis. The sculpture on the capitals, in both crypts, is also much of the same character, and same period. In both, the capitals were carved long after the crypts were built; and in both they were left unfinished, from some accidental cause. The great abbey church of St. Stephen at Caen, in Normandy, is also of the same period. There also the walls are of the eleventh century, and had originally a wooden roof; and the vault was not put on the choir till the time of Henry II, in both cases.

“I am wandering a little from the crypt at Canterbury, which is my special subject; but the first principle of architectural history is the comparison of the different points one with another. The excellent engravings of details in the crypt at Canterbury, which I am glad to see you have prepared to illustrate the subject, shew clearly, by the very massive abacus of some of the capitals, that the work is of an early period; while the mouldings under them, and the sculpture upon them, shew that a rapid progress was making. The very curious, and grotesque, sculpture upon them is characteristic of the latter half of the twelfth century. Such will be found, not in England and Normandy only, but in other parts of France, and in Italy. The character of the buildings of the twelfth

century is everywhere very distinct. Its chief characteristic is massiveness, as contrasted with that of the thirteenth century, which is lightness. The fine paintings in St. Gabriel's chapel seem to date from about the middle of the twelfth century. The figure of Christ in an aureole, and St. John writing the Apocalypse, and the fine group of sculpture in that chapel, all seem to me of that period. Painting is not my subject, but I remember that those of St. Gabriel's chapel are very fine; perhaps you could get my friend Professor Ruskin to come and lecture upon them, when you would be sure to have an eloquent and interesting discourse.

"It is hardly necessary to say that those portions of the great crypt, which are under Trinity chapel or Becket's shrine, and under the Corona, were built after the great fire of 1174, and belong to the period of Transition, when the Gothic style was being rapidly developed. They are the work of William the Englishman, and considerably in advance of those of his master, William of Sens. It usually happens that the apprentice is in advance of his master; each generation mounts upon the shoulders of its predecessor. I must say a few words about the Cathedral of Sens, from which William, the original architect of the choir of Canterbury, came in 1174. There, as in the other instances I have mentioned, the vaults of the central division are, in date, at least a century after the walls. No architect ventured to throw a vault over a space of twenty feet wide, before the latter half of the twelfth century. At Sens, the vault of the choir is quite late; it is in the flamboyant style of the fifteenth or sixteenth century. Other parts of the choir itself had been tampered with at that time, and

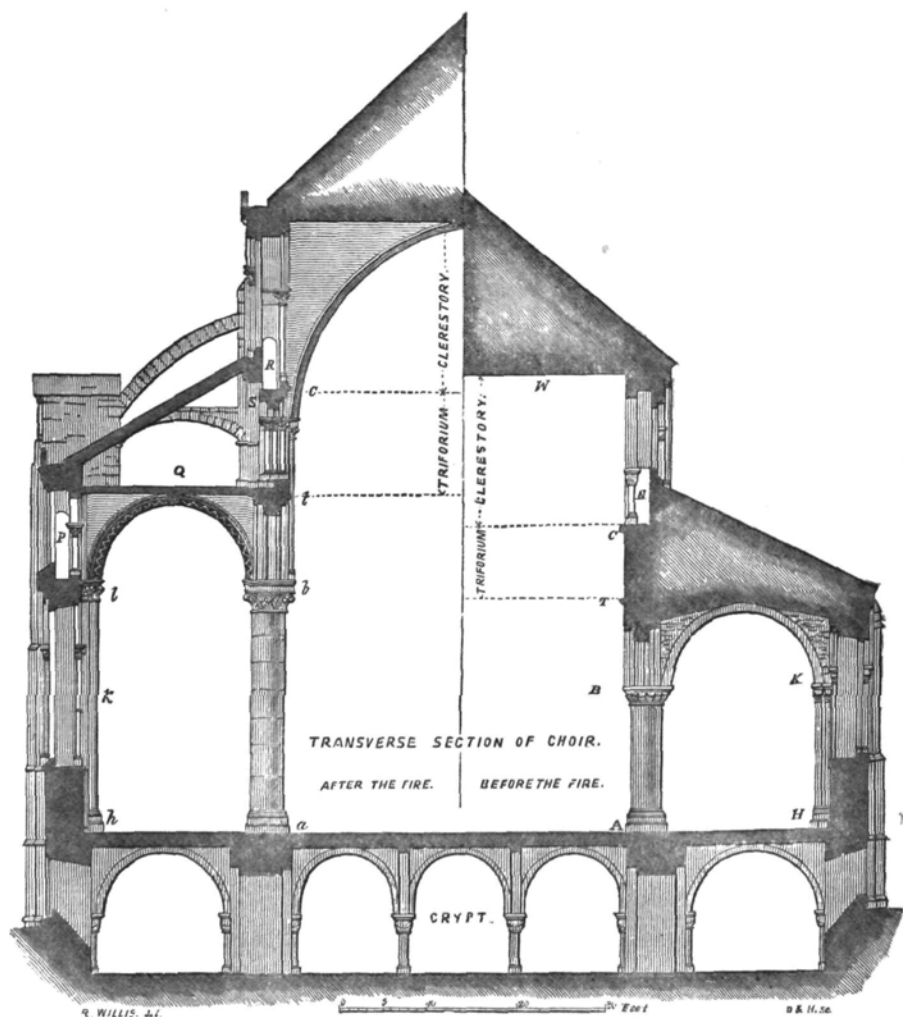
its historical value destroyed ; but the Nave of Sens remains in a very genuine state. There, the same working drawings may have been used, for the arches, columns, and capitals, as those used for the choir at Canterbury, but it is by no means clear that the nave of Sens is earlier than the choir of Canterbury. There was a great fire there also, but at a later time than that at Canterbury, and it is very probable that the nave of Sens was not then built. People are apt to forget that in the Latin of that period the word '*ecclesia*' means the Choir only, and does not include the nave, which was called *the Vestibule*. When we read of a "Church" being consecrated, this means the Choir only ; the Nave was almost always built long afterwards ; sometimes not at all. I know of instances, in France, where the choir, with one of the Western towers, is of the twelfth century, and the nave has not been built. The nave of the magnificent Cathedral of Cologne has been built in my own time ; when I first saw it, there was the glorious choir only (perhaps the finest choir ever built), and part of the West front, with one of the towers for the bells, but no nave. Naves were also often used for secular purposes, as for great assemblies of any kind, and were not considered part of the consecrated building.

"The crypt of St. Peter-in-the-East, in Oxford, about which you inquire, in many respects resembles that of Canterbury, but it is on a much smaller scale. The capitals there have been carved after they were built, and some of them left unfinished, just as at Canterbury. This crypt of St. Peter's is one of the buildings which, half a century ago, used to be called *Saxon* ; but it is now seen not to be earlier than the middle of the twelfth century. It is under the choir

only, not under the nave of St. Peter's; the choir is vaulted, and is of quite late Norman work. One of its vaulting ribs is carved with a chain, because the church was dedicated to St. Peter '*ad vincula*.' There is a church in Rome, of the same dedication, which is also of the twelfth century; probably the one in Oxford was intended for an imitation of that, but it is not earlier than the time of Henry II.

"If I am not wandering too far away, may I venture to mention the splendid cathedral at Pisa, in Italy. Its beautiful west front, shewing a series of elegant arcades with detached *colonettes*, although commonly attributed to the twelfth century, is really of the thirteenth. The church has been lengthened about twenty feet, when the west end and the west front were rebuilt of the old material. An inscription, giving the date of the twelfth century, which was in the old west front, when replaced in the new one, was *turned upside down*; it thus remains, affording a clear proof that it has only been preserved as a matter of history. The extreme lightness of these beautiful arcades, and *colonettes*, makes it important to shew that this west front at Pisa is not really the work of the twelfth century. There are *no exceptions* to the rule that the distinctive features of architecture, in the two centuries, are massiveness for the twelfth, and lightness for the thirteenth century. I have given a complete history of this, with engravings, in the *Archæological Journal* for 1879, to which I wish to refer your readers.

"I will add that the excursions, of our Archæological Societies, afford the best means for the real study of architectural history; everything is thrown open on those occasions, and those who have

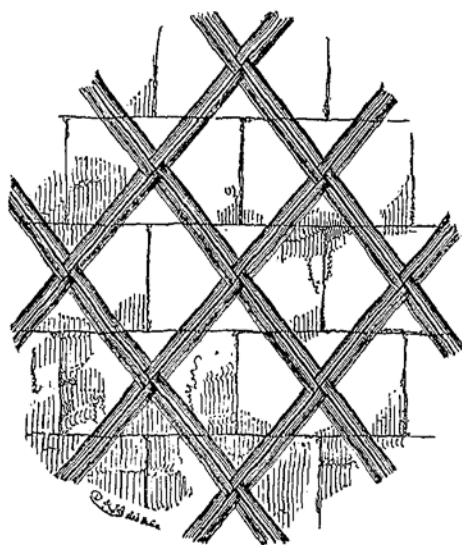


CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL.

PROFESSOR WILLIS'S TRANSVERSE SECTION OF ERNULF'S CRYPT; AND, ABOVE IT, OF ERNULF'S CHOIR, ON THE RIGHT HAND; AND OF THE EXISTING CHOIR, ON THE LEFT.

had experience are always willing to assist beginners; and they learn better from one who knows only little more than themselves, than they can from a learned Professor who is apt to forget that they are as ignorant of his subject as children."

DESCRIPTION OF ERNULF'S CRYPT.



As we approach the entrance to the crypt, from "the Martyrdom" in the north-west transept, we see upon the south wall of the passage a distinctive mark of Ernulf's work. The wall is covered with a carved diaper, of reticulated pattern, the lines of which are peculiarly interwoven, wherever they intersect. This

singular diaper is carved, likewise, upon the front of the ruined chapter house, at Rochester, which Ernulf built after he became bishop of that see. It is not known to occur elsewhere.

When we enter the crypt at its north-west angle, if light abounded we could not now see its entire width, because its south aisle and south-east transept are walled off, to form the French Protestant Church. Counting that aisle as one alley, Ernulf's crypt has, beneath the choir and its aisles, five vaulted alleys covering a width of eighty-five feet. Beneath the eastern transept, where the total width increases to about 158 feet, the crypt is spanned by nine alleys,

two of which on the south, forming the Black Prince's chantry, are enclosed in the portion devoted to the use of the French congregation.

Beyond the transepts, the two eastern bays of the central alley of the crypt are enclosed on three sides by graceful screenwork of stone, to form the chapel of "*Our Lady Undercroft*." Professor Willis observes that here, as at the east ends of the crypts at Winchester and Worcester, radiating vaulting arches are employed.* Five arches spring from each of the two eastern columns.

Beyond the massive eastern piers, runs the Apsidal Ambulatory of Ernulf's crypt. Flanking the Ambulatory are the crypts beneath the chapels of St. Andrew on the north, and St. Anselm on the south, both of them containing apsidal chapels of great beauty.

Eastward of Ernulf's apsidal Ambulatory, stands the later and loftier crypt of William the Englishman.

WEST END OF ERNULF'S CRYPT.

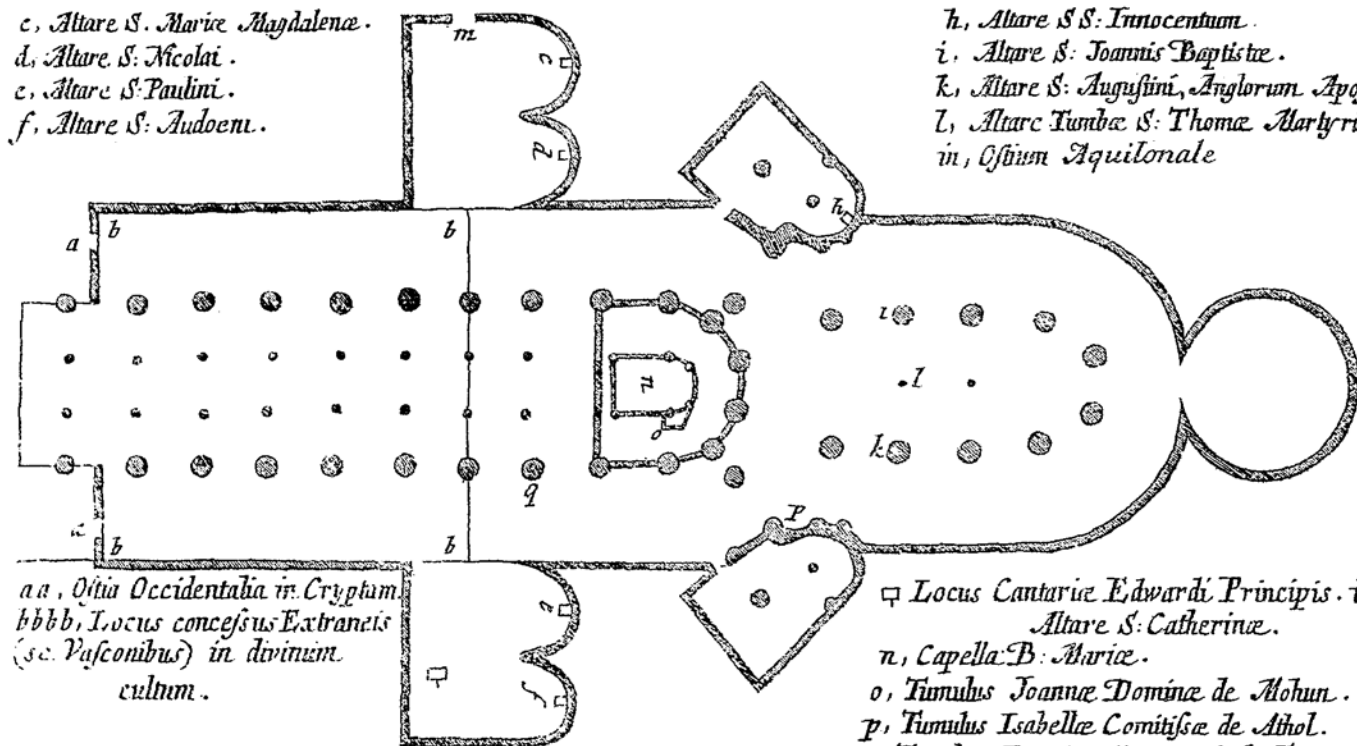
Upon entering the crypt, through a well moulded Norman doorway, we notice the northward recessing of the wall; caused by Ernulf's building being wider than Lanfranc's. On the south, the first and almost the only details our eyes can discern, in the obscurity, are texts of Scripture, in the French language, painted upon the shoulders of the arches, east and west of the great piers of the north aisle, into which we enter. These remind us that seven bays of Ernulf's crypt, forming the entire space west of Archbishop Morton's tomb, were granted for the use of the French Protestants, during the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

Perhaps light from the nearest of the north

* *Archæological Journal*, xx., 90, note 3.

c, Altare S. Marice Magdalene.
 d, Altare S. Nicolai.
 e, Altare S. Paulini.
 f, Altare S. Audoeni.

h, Altare S. Innocentium.
 i, Altare S. Joannis Baptistae.
 k, Altare S. Augustini, Anglorum Apostoli.
 l, Altare Tumbae S. Thomae Martyris.
 m, Osium Aquilonale



aa, Oſſia Occidentalia in Cryptam
 bbbb, Locus conceſſus Extraneis
 (ſc. Vaſconibus) in divinum
 cultum.

□ Locus Cantuarie Edwardi Principis. in qua forſan
 Altare S. Catherinae.
 n, Capella B. Marice.
 o, Tumulus Joannae Dominae de Mohun.
 p, Tumulus Iſabellae Comitiffae de Athol.
 q, Tumulus Joannis Morton Archiepi Cantuarienſis.

VERY ROUGH PLAN OF THE CRYPT (ENGRAVED IN BATTLEY'S ANTIQUITIES OF CANTERBURY)

SHewing SITES OF ALTARS IN A.D. 1174. AND THE AREA DEVOTED TO THE FRENCH PROTESTANTS IN A.D. 1703.

windows (three of which were inserted early in the fifteenth century, each having three cinque-foiled lights, and in its sill a stone bench), may enable us to observe, at the apex of each bay of vaulting, painted representations of a large red rose with white centre, surrounded by a crown of thorns; or a large sun similarly encircled. From one rose issue arms and hands, which point to an encircling motto. Lamps, to illuminate the crypt, formerly hung from rings, which still remain, in the painted apex of each vault in the central alley. Now, without the aid of artificial light, the western part of the crypt is so obscure that our eyes can discern very little of the central portion, when we first enter. Strangers frequently traverse the length of the crypt without gaining any idea of its beauties. They rather acquire a bewildered sense of its intricate extent; and, as the entrance in the north-west corner is entirely hidden from the central alley, by massive piers beside it, the deepest impression made upon many, by a visit to the crypt, is a firm belief that they could never find their way out again, if once left to themselves.

It is perhaps wise not to linger in the obscurity of the west end; but, after noting that the aisle into which we enter underlies the north aisle of the choir, and that the huge piers* on its south side support the choir's north arcade, it may be well to walk at once to the Lady Chapel, at the east end of the central alley. To do so, we cross the second alley of vaulting, which underlies the north stalls of the choir. This alley has on its north side the huge piers on which French texts are painted, and, on its south side, a row of eleven low circular shafts, with square abaci, cushion

* The western pier measures 6 ft. 9 in. N. to S., and 5 ft. 3 in. from E. to W. The width of the north alley is 16 ft. 4 in.

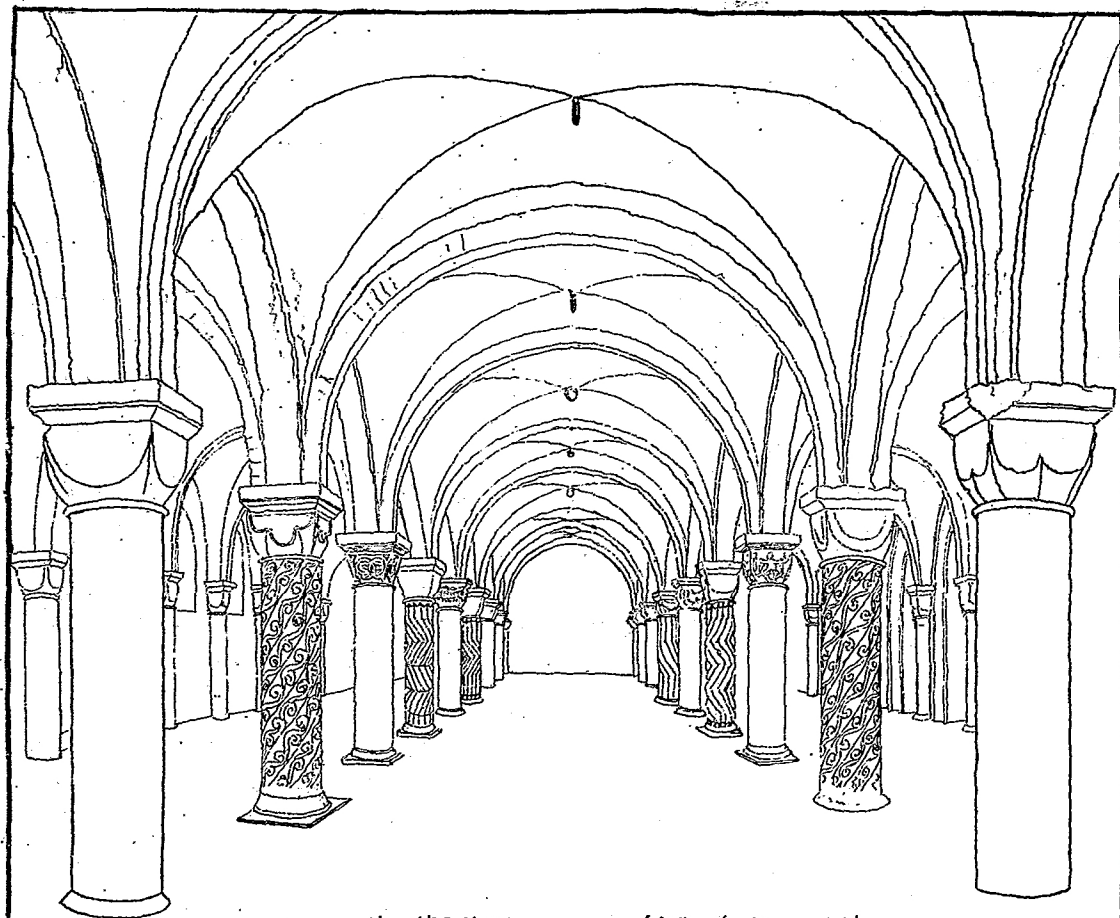
capitals, and bases now imbedded in the soil. Passing, to the right, further south, we enter the central alley of the crypt, which supports the floor of the choir. It is flanked by circular shafts. Pursuing our way to its east end we reach the Lady Chapel, which stood beneath the High Altar of the choir.

When this Lady Chapel is mentioned, we must remember that, although it marks the spot where the chief altar of the crypt stood, it does not mark the extent of space dedicated to "Our Lady," the Virgin. Not this chapel alone, but the whole of Ernulf's crypt, was dedicated to the Virgin Mary.*

CENTRAL ALLEY OF ERNULF'S CRYPT.

We now turn our faces westward, and survey the central alley which we have traversed. Behind us are three pairs of columns, forming the two bays occupied by the Lady Chapel. Before us, as we look westward, are eight pairs of isolated circular shafts, as shewn upon the annexed plate, and a ninth pair "engaged" in the west wall. When passed, pair by pair, they seem to be ornamented in a very irregular, spasmodic, manner, without any attempt at plan or uniformity of design. As seen, however, from the Lady Chapel we can discern the plan of their ornamentation. Each pair, north and south, is similarly (though not identically) enriched with carving; and the ornament is applied, alternately,

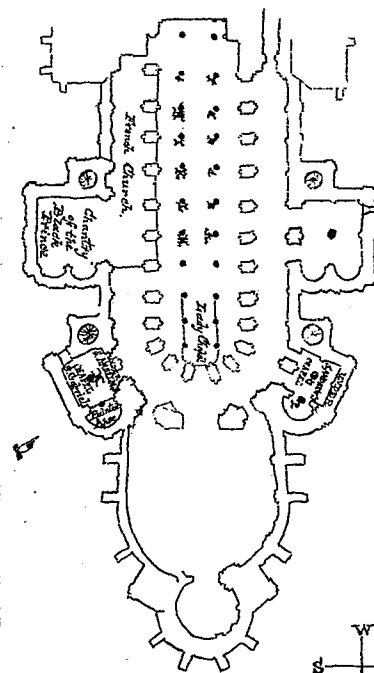
* Sub hoc altari Christi, altare erat in cripta Sanctæ Virginis Mariæ, in cujus honorem tota fuit cripta dedicata. Quæ cripta eisdem fere spatiis et anfractibus per longum et latum dilatata erat inferius, sicut chorus superius (*Opera Historica Gervasii*, ed. W. Stubbs, 1879, p. 13).



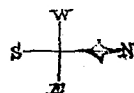
Crypt. looking west
from the Lady Chapel

m l k i h o f e d c b a

Most of the bases of the pillars are hidden in the soil.



Plan of Crypt

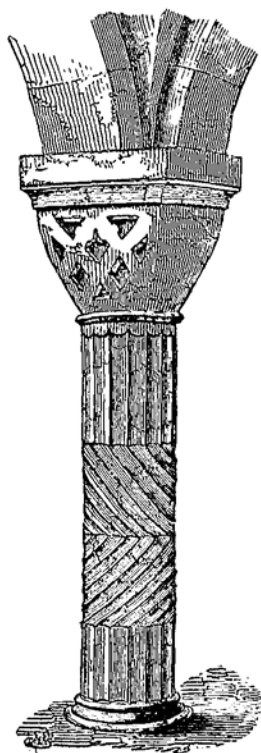


Plan of Crypt beneath the Choir of Lancaster Cathedral.

to the shafts of one pair, and to the capitals of the next. Professor Willis and Mr. Parker have remarked that the carving of these shafts, and capitals, was done many years after their erection; perhaps as late as A.D. 1150-80. Neither of these eminent men noticed the plan of the ornamentation; consequently, they say that the carving was never completed. Had they observed that the ornament was applied alternately to the shafts of one pair of columns, and to the capitals of the next pair, they would have agreed that the plan was completely carried out. The well-known "unfinished capital," shewn in the woodcut, proves this. Its shaft being fluted, the plan required that the cap should be left plain. By inadvertence, one face of



This woodcut shews the square-edged vaulting arches, springing, traversely and longitudinally, from each abacus; to which also descends the groin-edge of each vault, between the vaulting arches.



Shaft *W* (south).

the cap was carved, and a commencement made upon a second face ; but the work was abandoned as soon as it was perceived to be contrary to the general plan of ornamentation. Another feature of the plan seems to be, that the ornament becomes richer as it approaches the east end ; and it is probable that, even in the twelfth century, the three easternmost columns on each side, now enclosed for the Lady Chapel, were more elaborately ornamented than the rest. Four doorways in the sides of this small Lady Chapel, suggest the idea that there was some screen or barrier, which prevented free access from its west end. In accordance with this idea, Erasmus tells us that the Lady Chapel was protected by a double sept, or rail of iron, for fear of thieves. Where these two rails, or screens of iron, were placed, we do not know ; but we observe, as a curious fact, that upon the pair of columns which stand next west-ward, beyond the Lady Chapel, the capitals of which should have been carved, their shafts being left plain, there is no carving whatever. Probably some screens or barriers, for the Lady Chapel, may have always hidden these columns from view.

Upon examining the four pairs of columns which have their shafts carved, we find that those nearest the Lady Chapel (marked **A** and **M** on the plan) are closely wreathed, spirally, with elaborate scroll-like bands of foliage. The pattern occurs on the necking of a shaft, built by William of Sens, in the south-east of this crypt. The next carved shafts (marked **C** and **K**) have six bands of ornament, each band fluted in a direction different from the flutings on the adjacent bands. Further west, the pair marked **E** and **H** have, one of them four, and the other three, such bands of flutings. Still further west, quite in obscurity and

out of sight, is another pair of carved shafts (not lettered on the plan); the southern shaft has three bands of flutings, and the northern shaft is closely wreathed, spirally, with narrow mouldings alternately round and angular.

The fluted type of ornament, which is found not only in this central alley, but also upon columns in the side chapels of this crypt, was probably derived from Roman models. Mr. Parker, C.B., has pointed out that our Norman architecture, and the other Romanesque styles, of which there is an infinite variety, are all imitations of the Roman. He tells us that researches of French Archæologists have discovered, in each province of France, some Roman building still remaining which had been the model of the architectural style of that province, prior to the introduction of the Gothic. "For instance," says Mr. Parker, "in the province of which Vienne was the capital, and originally the seat of the bishopric, the Roman building has *fluted columns*; the bishopric was afterwards transferred to Lyons; and in the Cathedral of Lyons, which is of the thirteenth century, fluted columns were still used."* We shall have presently to notice another imitation of Roman models, in the ornamentation of a column in the Innocents' Chapel, beneath St. Andrew's tower, in this crypt.

When we examine the carved capitals of columns in the central alley of the crypt, we find that many of them are of great merit. They seem to have been the work of a sculptor who gave free vent to an imagination fertile in grotesque designs. The character of the figures, and of their grouping, is similar to that of designs carved on many buildings of the twelfth

* On St. Denis, *Archæological Journal*, xxxvi., 234.

century,* and represented in illuminated manuscripts of that period. The depth of abacus, cap, and necking, is frequently 22 inches.

SUBJECTS CARVED UPON CAPITALS OF COLUMNS.

B (*north*).—The capital of column B, which stands third from the Lady Chapel, on the north side of the central alley, is peculiarly elaborate, and fanciful in its grotesqueness. On its northern face we see a human headed quadruped, which has a wing issuing from the point where each leg joins the body; somewhat like the winged bulls of Nineveh. From this monster's back issues a human bust, with outstretched arms; its head being furnished with horns, and projecting tusks. The right hand of the bust upholds a fish in a horizontal position; the left hand grasps an open pod of seven lentils, pease, or other seed. Possibly the sculptor here represents some exhibition of a juggler's skill; the fish connects it with a design on the eastern face of the same capital, where a fish is held vertically by a juggler, who sits upon the head of another man, and has in his left hand a bowl.

The southern face of this capital (**B**) shews a hideous monster, with human arms and a long, forked tail, which a dog bites. The monster assails the dog with a forked lance, while its other hand grasps its own tail, to wrench it from the dog's mouth.

On the western face of **B** is a scene still more remarkable. A bird-headed monster's tail, which has but few feathers, long and straggling, ends in a horse's head. Upon the back of this monster is a saddle-cloth, with stirrup leathers, and circular stirrups. Astride thereof rides a two-headed monster, which has the human body of a female; its feet are in the stirrups, and it sits facing the horse-headed tail of the bird monster.

Ingenious imaginations may construct a variety of inter-

* Compare the capitals in the crypt of St. Peter's in the East, Oxford, and the Fonts of churches at Newenden, West Haddon, Alphington, Stanton Fitzwarren, and Lenton.





Elevation of west
side of B

inches



Elevation of south
side of B.

scale of inches

pretations for these scenes. Probably, however, they are merely wild grotesque devices of a sculptor's unbridled imagination. His ideas may have been partially influenced by recollections of such passages in Holy Writ as *Revelation* ix. 7-10, 17, 19, where we read of locusts like horses, with faces of men, hair like women, teeth of lions, wings of birds, and scorpion-like tails, with stings; and likewise of horses with heads of lions, and tails terminating in heads. Perhaps the sculptor intended to represent various forms of the war waged, by the powers of evil, against the souls of men.


We observe that, on the north and south, in a line with columns **B** and **L**, later additions to Ernulf's side piers project on their western sides. These were inserted in A.D. 1177, by William of Sens, to support new columns in the choir above. He probably also carved a cap, adjacent to his southern pier, in the French church.

M (north).—The next carved capital, in the north rank, has on its north and south faces two of those grotesque lions, so forcibly, and so frequently, drawn by Norman artists in the twelfth century. Do they represent the devil, as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour? The face of this creature is semi-human; pointed locks of long shaggy hair surround its mouth, cheeks, and shoulders. Its right fore-paw is uplifted, and its tail, after passing between its hind legs, is raised until its forked extremity, having reached the level of the creature's head, hangs downward in two different directions.

This method of treating an animal's tail is a clever expedient, which enables the artist to fill up a vacant space. In effect, he thus causes the tail artistically to balance the head. This expedient is repeatedly used on the carvings in Ernulf's crypt, and it is quite a feature of the grotesque art of the period. It may be observed, in use, upon several Fonts carved in the early part of the twelfth century; and it occurs also upon an ivory reliquary of that period.* A lion, similar to that upon our **M** capital, is carved upon the tympanum of the north doorway of the church of Cormac,

* *Archæological Journal*, iii., 185.

on the rock of Cashel, the date of which is A.D. 1134.* There the lion is being shot by a human-headed quadruped, with a bow and arrow. A string-course or moulding above that tympanum terminates in a horse's head.

On the east and west faces of  is a winged dragon, or serpent, being strangled and trampled under foot by a huge, winged quadruped, of which the head is somewhat bird-like, and on the east face its tail, passing between its hind legs, is erected above its back; but on the west face of the capital the tail is short like a bird's.

J (*north*).—The last of the carved capitals in the north rank has a shallow cable moulding immediately above its sculptured subjects. On each face, we see a man's head, with beard, moustache, and long hair curled at the tips. The mouth is open, the tongue protrudes; and the treatment of the eyebrows and forehead should be noticed. A semi-circular band, studded with beads, is arched over the head; and two scrolls (not unlike the forked tails of this sculptor's animals) spring from the necking, and, after rising to the upper angles of the capital, curl inward to twine their ends around the beaded semicircle. The whole design is graceful and in good taste. At each corner of the base, the band forms a W.

G (*south*).—In the south rank of the central alley, the carved capital opposite to that last named has, above its subjects, a moulding carved with unequal and rectangular beads. The depth of the necking of the shaft is irregular, varying in thickness from two-fifths less than one inch, to two-fifths more than one inch. The scenes carved upon its four faces are very remarkable. They have suffered from decay more than usual, but can be deciphered as follows:—

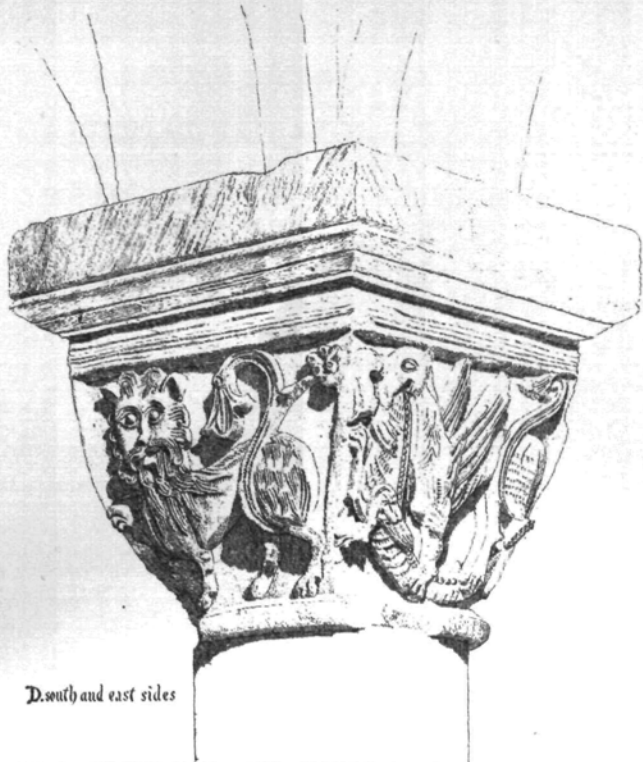
West face.—A man on horseback holding a long spear is galloping forward.

South face.—A nondescript monster, tied by one leg, seems to bend its head, as if to toss or butt at an assailant.

East face.—A galloping horseman, who wears a hood, appears to be charging over the body of a prostrate foe.

North face.—A man with long, beaded, tail erected behind his back, and curled over, struggles with a monster whose

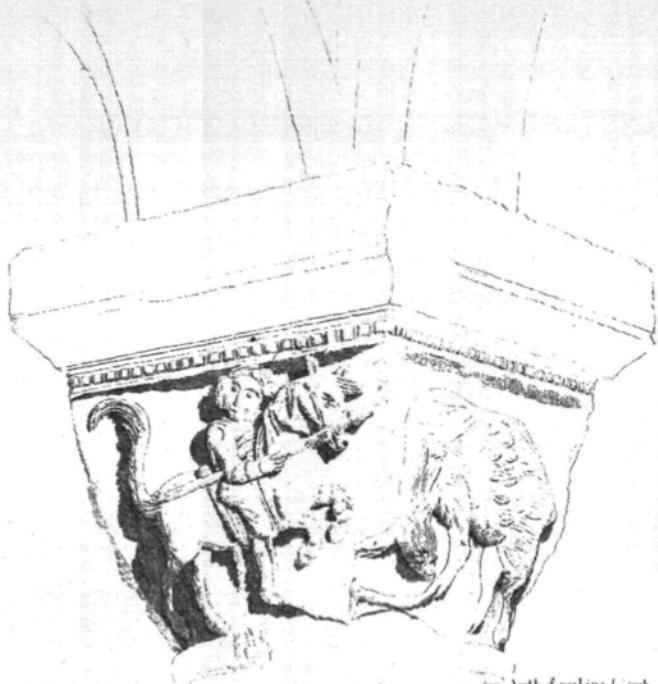
* *Archæological Journal*, iii., 181.



South and east sides



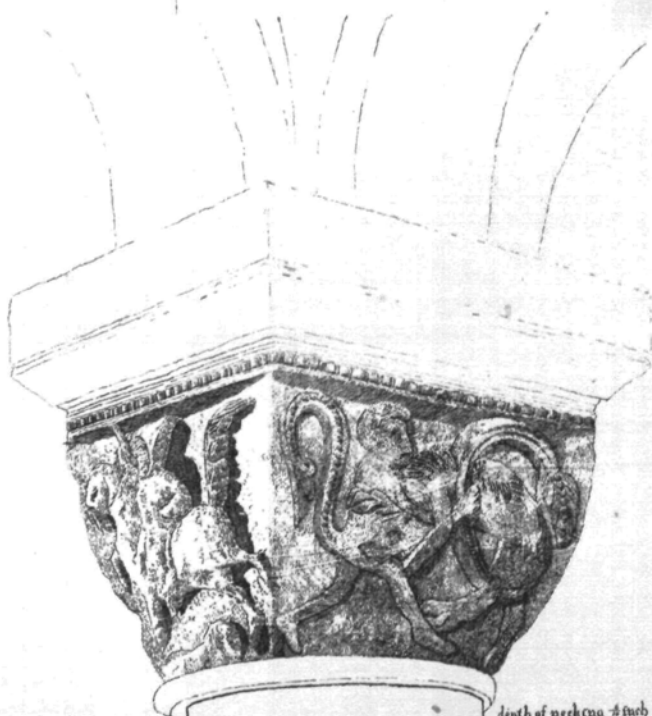
east and north sides



depth of necking 4 inch

depth of necking 1 1/2 inch

West and south sides



1 1/2 inch depth of necking

depth of necking 4 inch

East & north sides

tail, coiled through its hind legs and over its back, rests its huge bulb-like tip near its own root, forming a round O.

H (*south*).—The next pillar eastward having its shaft fluted should have an uncarved cap. It is shewn in a woodcut on a previous page. Accidentally, carving was commenced upon two of the faces, but when the mistake was observed they were left unfinished; and the other faces are untouched. Thus the observance of the plan of ornamentation was respected.

I (*south*).—The pillar next eastward has its cap encircled with two deep frills or ruffles. At each corner, close to the abacus, is an *à crochet* ornament, which, together with one frilled band, is found also on a capital in the French church. The cap of a Roman column from Reculver Church, preserved on a lawn between this Cathedral and the Green Court of the Precincts, is encircled by two deep bands, but they are plain not frilled.

L (*south*).—The last of these carved caps, eastward, has, at each of its four corners, a semi-human head, from the mouth whereof issue two scrolls (one from each corner) which are intertwined, in curved lines, across the adjacent faces of the capital. Similar designs occur on caps at St. Nicholas at Wade in Thanet, in St. Lawrence church, Thanet, and in many other places.

As the carved work of the Lady Chapel is of a much later period than the rest of the crypt, we shall defer its description to a later page.

Gervase, the monk, has recorded the fact that, in the year 1174, there were in this crypt no less than nine altars;* that of "Our Lady" occupying the most

* 1. St. Mary the Virgin (beneath the High Altar); 2. St. Nicholas (S. apse of N. transept); 3. St. Mary Magdalen (N. apse of N. transept); 4. Holy Innocents (beneath St. Andrew's tower); 5. St. John Baptist (N. beneath Trinity chapel); 6. St. Augustine (S. beneath Trinity chapel); 7. St. Audoen (S. apse of S. transept); 8. St. Paulinus (N. apse of S. transept); 9. St. Katherine (centre of S. transept).

honourable position, at the eastern extremity of the central alley.

NORTH TRANSEPT OF THE CRYPT.*

On the north side of the crypt, beneath the choir's north transept, are two apsidal chapels, each consisting of two bays of vaulting, in addition to an apse. The central vaulting shaft, as we see it now, must have been carved and fashioned after the great catastrophe by fire, which occurred in 1174. It is octagonal, and its circular cap bears two rows of very large, boldly carved, leaves, the tips of which curl outward, and project "*à crochet*," like some in the choir above. The circular abacus has round and hollow mouldings. In the southern apse, where stood the altar of St. Nicholas, a round-headed niche, $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet high, remains in the curve of the south wall. In the northern apse, stood the altar of St. Mary Magdalen. South of it was a piscina, which still remains beneath a rectangular niche. The north-west window of three lights has a stone bench at the base of its sill; it was inserted early in the fifteenth century; so likewise was the outer doorway, in the northwest angle of this transept. Over that doorway, on the exterior, are carved the mitre, crozier, and rebus of the Prior under whose auspices it was inserted. A circular staircase, in the north-west angle of this transept, led to the choir transept above.

* This transept has a clear space (excluding the apses) of 33 ft. 9 in. E. to W., and 26 ft. 9 in. N. to S. Professor Willis says it is wider, E. to W., than the abutting severeys of the crypt's aisle. Thus the transepts' east and west walls are set further east and west than the faces of the corresponding crypt-arches, which spring southward from the engaged piers of the transept.

CHAPEL OF THE HOLY INNOCENTS.

Passing eastward, into the ambulatory of Ernulf's crypt, we find on the north, beneath St. Andrew's tower, the beautiful chapel which, in 1174, contained an altar in honour of the Holy Innocents. This small apsidal chapel was an architectural gem.

Its nave of two alleys, each of two bays, has a central vaulting shaft which is admirably carved. The body of the shaft is thickly wreathed, spirally, with mouldings of two forms used alternately. One form of moulding being angular and narrow, while the other is round and broader, a remarkably good effect is produced, of lights and shadows. The capital, retaining its cushion shape, has the semicircular lower edge of each face moulded into the form of a cable, which encloses, on the north face, a winged dragon with curled tail; and on the east, a graceful group of conventional foliage. At the base of the cap, foliage adorns the interstices between the four semicircles of cable moulding. The artistic effect of the whole column is admirable, and gives us a very high opinion of the skill, and taste, of the sculptor who designed it in the twelfth century.

Totally different in character, yet even more beautiful, is the ornamentation of the corresponding column eastward, which divides the entrance to the little apse into two small round arches. I am inclined to call it the most elaborate example of carving in this crypt. The capital is handsomely moulded, with scrolls and foliage; but the beauty of the shaft excels all else. It is completely clothed with an infinite number of small overlapping leaves, which, running downward in a natural manner, from

cap to base, produce a feeling and effect of repose and beauty seldom equalled.

This ornament was, undoubtedly, derived from a Roman model. In the British Museum, there is a Roman shaft, or cylinder, clothed with a similar, but coarser, scalework of overlapping leaves. It formed the terminal ornament on the cover of a Roman sarcophagus, found in London Wall, during the year 1852. Somewhat similar, but very inferior ornamentation is seen upon a rectangular pier of the cloister at Moissac, in Aquitaine, the date of which is A.D. 1100.*

With respect to the exquisite ornament on this column, in the crypt chapel of the Holy Innocents, it is remarkable that the Canterbury sculptor, of the twelfth century, used it with greater skill and with more artistic feeling than a modern sculptor has shewn in our own day. The canopy over the Duke of Wellington's tomb, in St. Paul's Cathedral, is supported by twelve columns which are clothed with a similar scalework of overlapping leaves. Our modern sculptor has very fitly used oak leaves, and has carved them well; but he has destroyed the repose and true feeling of the ornament, by making his leaves run up the columns, instead of falling naturally downward.

This northern chapel, of the Holy Innocents, beneath St. Andrew's tower, is of especial interest, because it enables us to realize the original form of the corresponding chapel on the south, beneath St. Anselm's tower. The latter was altered, and its apse blocked up, at so early a period that Gervase omits all mention of it, although he describes the tower above it.

* J. H. Parker, in *Archæologia*, xxxvi., 9, 10.



Is south and east sides



South and east sides

The divided entrance to the small apse seems peculiar; and it has been suggested that there may have been, within the apse, two altars. Fortunately, the testimony of Gervase is explicit upon this point. There was but one altar, that of the Holy Innocents. The dimensions of the apse, however, are so small that, even without the written testimony of Gervase, no reasonable doubt could have been felt about the matter. At the east end the apsidal curve is stopped, and a rectangular recess, 9 feet 1 inch wide, and 2 feet 7 inches deep, is formed in the wall. A Perpendicular east window has been inserted, having three lights; two being trefoiled, and one being fivefoiled with two cusped cusps. When we are within the apse, we find that its width, which at the west is $18\frac{1}{2}$ feet, dwindles to 9 feet 1 inch at the east; while the depth of the apse, between the line of its greatest width, and its east wall is 9 feet 6 inches. At the entrance to the apse, the clear width of each little archway is 4 feet 10 inches; but when we have passed the dividing column, which is but 20 inches in diameter, we find that the main pier walls (4 feet 7 inches thick), are 12 feet 6 inches apart, and that there is an equal space of 12 feet 6 inches between the dividing column and the east wall. The pier-walls of the chancel arch project three feet beyond the north and south walls of the apse. These figures I give simply as approximations, for the use of the general reader.

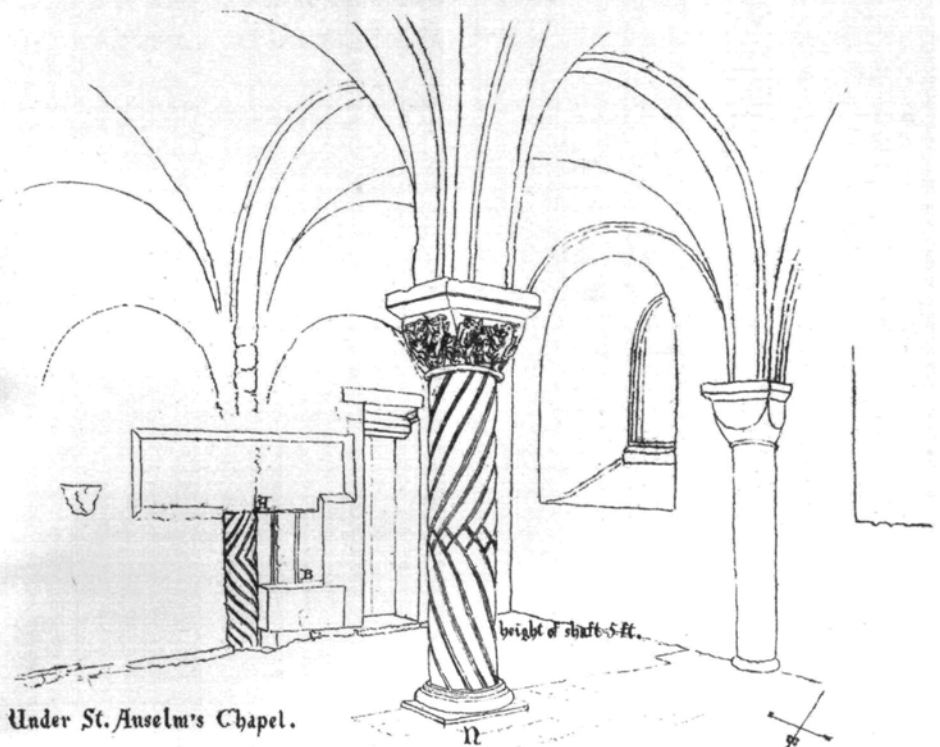
Two original, round-headed, windows still remain in the north wall of the nave, of this chapel of the Holy Innocents; in the south-west angle there is a wide circular staircase, which led up to the chapel of St. Andrew, and to the tower above.

ST. GABRIEL'S CHAPEL.

Entering the nave of St. Gabriel's Chapel, by the arch which is adjacent, westward, to Lady Athol's tomb, we find that it has a clear length of about 21 feet from E. to W., and a clear width of about $19\frac{1}{2}$ feet from N. to S. In the centre of this nave is a circular column (N), with square abacus, the shaft and capital of which are both richly adorned with carving. Grotesque creatures playing on musical instruments, birds, and other monsters, ornament the cap; and bands of flutings decorate the shaft. The four bays of the groined roof, supported in the centre by this handsome column, have been entirely covered at two, or three, distinct periods, with painted designs, of which scarcely any remain complete. The colour of the original 12th century work, in this part of the chapel, says Mr. N. H. J. Westlake, F.S.A., was laid on when the plaster was fresh, or as nearly so as possible, without any other vehicle than water. He calls it "a sort of solid stain, absorbed by the wall sufficiently for adhesion."* Covering the original designs, there are traces of green foliage, possibly of the 13th century. Tudor roses suggest a still later period, of renewed decoration.

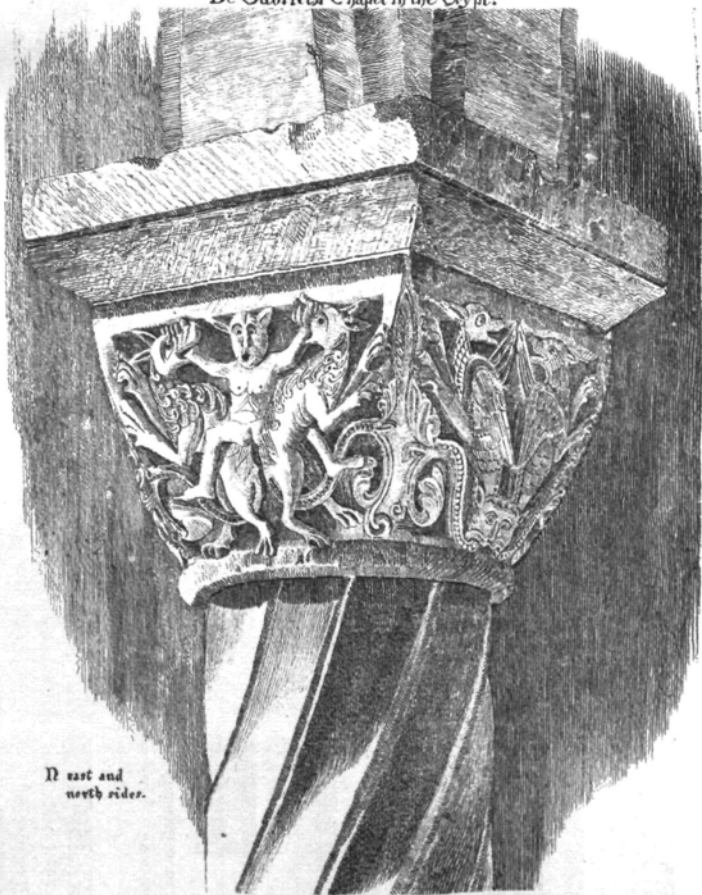
Where the plaster has scaled off, we find evidence that the addition of plastering, and of colour, was an afterthought, not originally planned by Ernulf. Beneath the plaster, the squared edges of the arch, above Lady Athol's tomb, are ornamented with designs, wrought with a hatchet, similar to those used by Ernulf, for decoration, in the aisles of the choir.

* *The History of Design in Painted Glass*, vol. i., part i., p. 40^a.



Under St. Anselm's Chapel.

St. Gabriel's Chapel in the Crypt.





Elevation of west
side of N

scale of inches.



Elevation of south side
of N

scale of inches

Remembering that Prior Conrad was renowned for the glorious paintings with which he adorned the choir, mainly built by his predecessor Ernulf, may we not conjecturally attribute the decoration of this chapel to Conrad's time? It was undoubtedly executed after Ernulf's departure from Canterbury (1107), and before A.D. 1174. If work of such merit and magnitude had been undertaken, between 1174 and 1200, Gervase would certainly have mentioned it. Mr. Westlake has expressed an opinion that the decoration of the nave bears a more distinctly Norman, or Norman-English,* character, than that of the sanctuary, or apse, of this chapel.

The designs seem to have consisted of numerous subjects, from Holy Writ, arranged in medallions; of which several of small size, each containing the half-length figure of a saint or angel, were grouped around one of larger diameter. The borders, of conventional patterns, remain upon some of the square-edged members of the groining arches.

The floor of this nave has been raised, nearly two feet, by the accumulation of soil, so that the base of the central column has been covered up. Two window arches, on the south, seem to be those built by Ernulf. Professor Willis describes Ernulf's crypt windows as being "4 feet wide, $6\frac{1}{2}$ feet high, having their sills level with the top of the abacus of the groining shafts, and coincident with the earth-table of the wall; they had merely a narrow chamfer on their outer edge."†

In the north-west corner of the little nave, there is a circular stair which led up to St. Anselm's tower,

* *The History of Design in Painted Glass*, vol. i., part i., p. 39^a.

† Willis, *Architectural Hist. Cant. Cath.*, p. 74 note.

and the chapel of Saints Peter and Paul. Against the northern pier of this nave, we still see a miserable little fireplace, and chimney, which were inserted by the French Protestants when they used this chapel, as the Vestry of their Elders. The joists of a wooden floor, likewise inserted by them, have left their marks upon the soil at the east end, causing it to look like a series of parallel grave-mounds. This flooring, and the wooden panelling with which the French cased the walls, were both removed many years ago.

The east end of this little nave was, during the middle ages, a straight wall, in which towards the south there was a piscina-like niche, beneath a simple pointed arch. The central portion of the wall was very slightly recessed, as if for the reredos of an altar. Northward of it, traces still remain of a bracket for an image, or a lamp. Behind the altar, there was, low down in the wall, a rectangular aperture (marked **A B** on the plate), 22 inches high and 18 inches wide, through which persons could with difficulty creep. It admitted those who performed this gymnastic feat into a small apse, perfectly dark, but exquisitely adorned with painting. The apse corresponds in shape, in position, and mainly also in size, with that of the Chapel of the Holy Innocents on the north side of the crypt.

Respecting the mysterious walling up of this apse, there are a few facts upon which we may found some reasonable conjectures.

The recessing of the wall as for the reredos of an altar, and the insertion in it, north and south, of a bracket, and an early arched piscina-niche, prove that the apse was walled up before the period of the Reformation. Upon examining the wall itself, it was

found to be several feet thick, and it became obvious that, ancient as its outer western face undoubtedly was, that facing had been added, long after the apse had been first walled up. The original blocking-wall had been plastered, and painted, before the existing outer facing of stone was added. When this fact was discovered, in 1879, the idea of pulling down the blocking-wall was abandoned, because it contains the only existing evidence of date; so that nothing more than a rough doorway, of sufficient size, was opened (or perhaps reopened) through the wall. The top lintel of this doorway is a moulded stone, of the Transition or Early English period. When, then, was the apse originally blocked up? Mr. J. Brent, in his second edition of *Canterbury in the Olden Time*, p. 283, says, "late in the thirteenth century, in order to substitute a square east end, a wall was built on the chord line of the apse." The arch of the piscina-like niche in the outer face, and the moulded stone in the head of the doorway, now open, might perhaps suggest this date; but, if so, it must be that of a subsequent addition to the wall, not of the original blocking up of this apse. Perhaps, after the interment of the Countess of Athol, a chantry altar may have been dedicated, outside the blocking wall.

The fact which determines the early period at which the apse was first blocked up, is its omission from the minute account, given by Gervase, of every apse and altar in the crypt. Writing in, or about, A.D. 1199, he gives a systematic survey of the whole building, as it appeared in 1174; and, after naming any altar in the choir, he immediately mentions the altar which stood beneath it in the crypt. When, however, he comes to St. Anselm's tower, and mentions the altar there,

of Saints Peter and Paul, in the upper church, he entirely omits to mention the altar-site in the crypt beneath. This is the only similar spot which he does not duly describe. As Professor Willis says, "Saint Gabriel's altar is not mentioned by Gervase, but is known by the ancient painting and inscription which still remain."*

It is certain that Ernulf designed the apse to contain an altar; and it is equally certain that this very beautiful chapel contained the altar of St. Gabriel, in A.D. 1174; why then, in 1199, did Gervase omit to mention it? The only possible reply must be, that, for some cogent reason, the monks had already shut up the apse, and desired to keep its existence secret. One side of the necessary window-arch of Ernulf can still be traced, in the north part of the east wall of the apse, but it has been admirably blocked up, with well-finished Norman masonry, so that upon the exterior of the building there is no sign whatever of any window or chapel, in the apse. It is evident that the monks, in blocking this apse, sought the greatest possible degree of secrecy. The apse of 'The Holy Innocents' Chapel was precisely similar in character; but it was not so private. Being close to the Priory, and near the monks' entrance to the north transept of the crypt, it would be passed continually, from hour to hour, by monks and by pilgrims. On the other hand, St. Gabriel's chapel was so entirely out of the way, that in St. Anselm's tower, above it, the monks subsequently constructed the secret "*Watchers' Chamber*;" from which they kept constant watch and ward over Becket's Shrine, in the Trinity Chapel, above. Even the exterior of St. Gabriel's apse was at the obscurest

* *Architectural History of Canterbury Cathedral*, p. 39, note m.

corner of the monks' cemetery; having near it the high boundary wall, which shut off the cemetery of the monks from that of the laity.

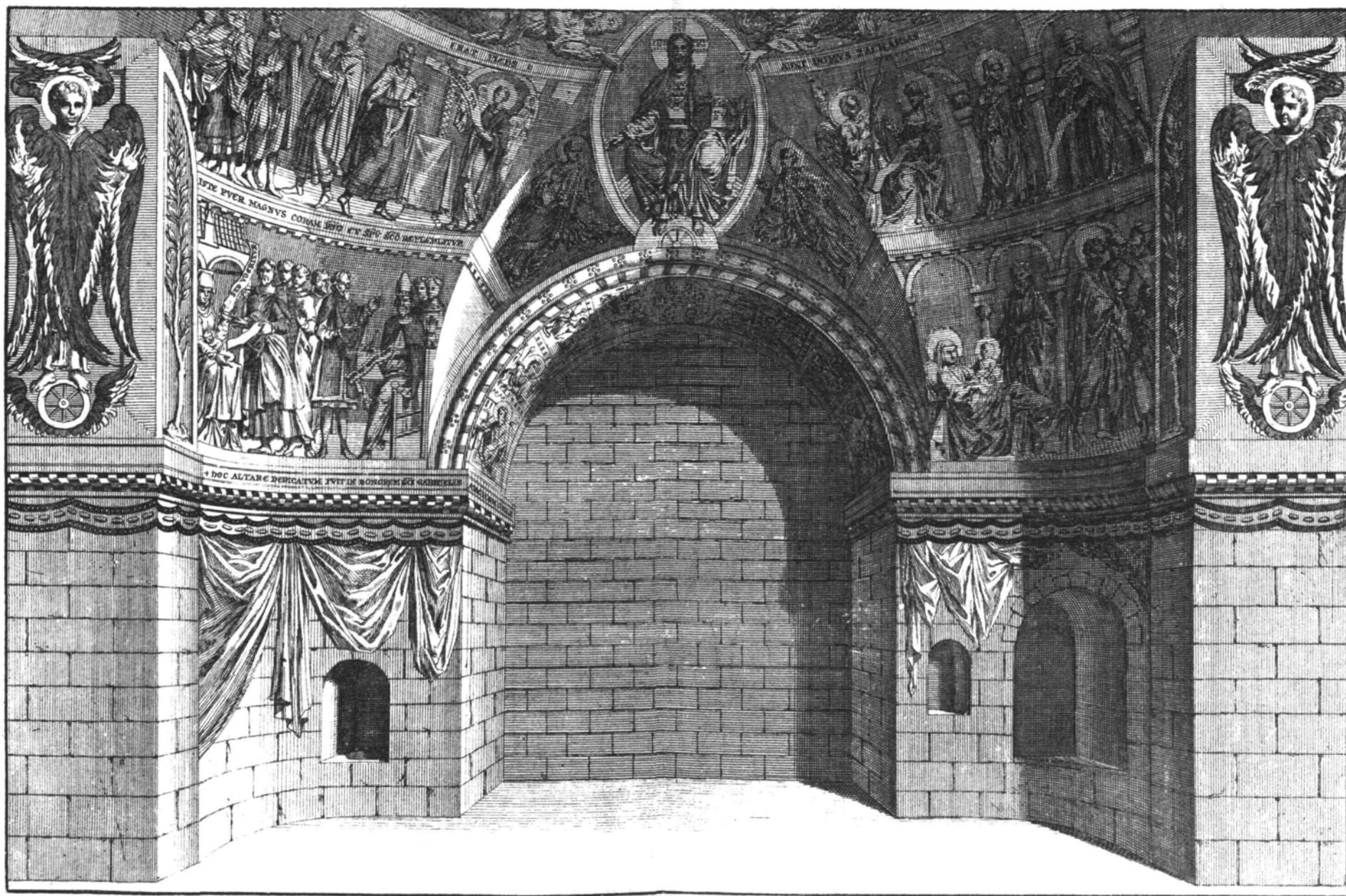
What then, during the period when Gervase was a monk of Christchurch, could have caused the secret, and mysterious, closing of St. Gabriel's apse? It seems to me that in the troubles, and alarms, of the monks, during the period between A.D. 1170 and 1199, we may find the cause. The fierce threats of Becket's enemies induced the monks to carry his body, in haste, from the High Altar down to the remotest chapel of the crypt, for safety, within twelve hours after the murder. A stone sarcophagus is said to have received it at once; but the crypt was kept bolted, and barred, for more than three months. After many months had elapsed, and many miracles were reported to have been wrought at the tomb of Becket, there were again such definite threats of abstracting his body, that the monks hid it somewhere near the Lady Chapel. During the fire in 1174, and again during the period when the new eastern crypt was building around Becket's tomb, there would be great anxiety respecting the safety of his wonder-working body. A few years later, occurred the disputes with Archbishop Baldwin, who actually sent armed men to besiege the convent, from the 10th to the 14th of Nov. 1189.

I believe that during one of these troublous periods, which filled the monks with the utmost terror and alarm, the apse of St. Gabriel's Chapel was converted into the most secret hiding-place in the church. To the prior and the monks in authority, it was easily and privately accessible by means of the mural stair from St. Anselm's tower. Whether it was used for concealing in safety the body of Becket, or for hiding some of the very

numerous and cumbrous treasures of Christ Church, it is impossible now to say. The facts, however, point to its being blocked up during the lifetime of Gervase, its existence being concealed by him; and that period was undoubtedly a period of continual terrors and alarms.

As many persons suppose that this apse has been very recently discovered, it may be well to quote, in a note, the description given of it, 154 years ago, by the Rev. John Dart, in his *History of the Cathedral of Canterbury*, published in 1726.* Notwithstanding his many misconceptions, and erroneous suggestions, Mr. Dart's testimony is useful. He took vast pains

* "In the south part of [the crypt] was the Chantry of Prince Edward, and not far from it, viz., in the place used for their [French Protestant] Vestry-room, is a passage behind the wainscot, through a hole in the wall, into a dark chapel, or vault rather, where by the help of candle, I could discover the remains of ancient painting, and the appearances of a chapel, sometime of no small esteem. On each side the door, is painted upon the wall a picture of St. Catherine [Dart mistakes the Seraphim for two figures of Saint Catherine]; on the roof is painted God the Father, and *Ego sum qui sum*, and round it some broken sentences, intimating that many people were at the house of Zacharias. There have been two altars; over one this expression, shewing it to have been sacred to the Archangel Gabriel, *Hoc altare fuit dedicatum in Honorem Sancti Gabrielis Archangeli*; and another, not unlikely to have been dedicated to St. John Baptist, though the inscription is partly defaced, *Hoc Altare, &c., &c.* And though the marks are defaced, yet I take it, St. Catherine's altar was in this place, for I read she had one in the crypt, and likely, here. Against the wall is written in paint, the words *S. Johs.* and a book, in which is the title *Apocalipsis*, and the name *Elizabeth* is likewise written; and this phrase *Johannes est nomen ejus*; and again, *Iste puer magnus coram Domino et Spiritu Sancto replebitur*. And now it remains to point out the name of this chapel, which I think may with ease be called, St. John Baptist's . . . the floor of this chapel, under which are large numbers of human bones. (*Hist. of the Cuth. of Cant.*, pp. 33, 34).



Whitman & Bass, Photo-Litho, London.

VIEW OF ST GABRIEL'S APSE, IN A.D. 1726.

[FROM DART'S HISTORY OF CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL]

to elucidate the paintings, within the closed apse; and the poor engraving of them, which he published a century and a half ago, is now extremely valuable. It must be observed that the rules of perspective are therein disregarded, for the purpose of shewing all the details in one view. The monk Gervase enables us to correct Mr. Dart's erroneous suggestions respecting the altar of St. Catherine, and the chapel of St. John Baptist. The former was in the centre of the south transept of the crypt, in the chapel now called the Black Prince's chantry. The chapel of St. John the Baptist was beside, and around, the tomb of Becket; beyond the Lady Chapel, eastward.

The subjects depicted upon the groined roof of the blocked apse are extremely appropriate to their position, in the Chapel of St. Gabriel. In the centre of the roof is the Divine figure, seated in Majesty, surrounded by a wide vesica, to which the hands of four adoring angels (or archangels) are extended. By the position of the fingers, the Divine figure seems to direct attention, with both hands, to the scenes, four upon the north wall, and four upon the south, which represent the history of the glorious missions entrusted to the Archangel Gabriel. On the north side, Gabriel announces to Zacharias the coming birth of John the Baptist. On the south, Gabriel announces, to Mary, the Incarnation of Jesus our Lord. The results of the first annunciation are sketched, on the north side, in three further scenes:—(ii) Zacharias, dumb, appearing to the people outside the Temple; (iii) Friends come to Elizabeth's couch to name her son; (iv) They appeal to Zacharias against her naming him John. The history of the second annunciation is further depicted in three scenes, on the south:—(ii) Elizabeth saluting Mary;

(iii) Mary on her couch with the infant Saviour; (iv) The fourth scene is very indistinct. Right and left, of the entrance to the apse, are the admirably painted figures of two seraphim; each having six wings full of eyes, within and without. One stands on each side, with his feet on a winged wheel; they face the north and the south, as if guarding the entrance. To complete the allusions to the angelic host, we find, above the site of the altar, around the soffit of the arch of the eastern recess of the apse, figures of the angels of the seven churches of Asia, each holding a candlestick. At the apex of the arch is a circle, containing representations of "the seven stars, [which] are the angels of the seven churches" (*Revelation* i. 20). Seven being an uneven number, there are four angels with candlesticks on the south side, but only three on the north. To fill the fourth compartment, on the north side, the artist has depicted St. John the Evangelist, in the act of writing the Apocalypse.

Thus all these subjects, which so fitly adorn a chapel dedicated in honour of the Archangel Gabriel, are derived from the New Testament. They depict angels in their relation to Christ and His Church.

The archangel Gabriel had ever been honoured here. His gilded image, surmounting a vane on the summit of the central tower, was a well-known landmark for pilgrims, who called that tower the angel-steepie. In honour of the same archangel, Archbishop Arundel named his third bell, Gabriel; in that peal of five which he gave to this Cathedral, and which he consecrated here, on the 8th of April, 1409.*

* Memorandum quod octavo die mensis Aprilis Anno Domini millesimo cccc^{mo} nono Reverendissimus in Christo pater et dominus Thomas dei gratia Cantuar: archiepiscopus. unxit

When Mr. Dart wrote his history (A.D. 1726), St. Gabriel's chapel was used by the Elders of the French Church as their vestry; their Deacons using another vestry, which was parted off from the Black Prince's chantry. Mr. Gostling, the chatty Minor Canon, author of *A Walk in and about Canterbury*, says that this chapel of St. Gabriel was still the French Elders' vestry, when he wrote, *circa 1770*.* He adds that an old clerk, of the French church, had dug the soil of the floor of the apse, but could find nothing except

benedixit et solempniter consecravit quinque campanas novas in campanili Angelorum extra chorum sue sancte Cantuarien. ecclesie pendentes quas prius in ibi appendi fecit et dicte sue ecclesie predonavit et diversa nomina eisdem apposuit:—prime videlicet maiori imposuit nomen Trinitatis; secunde nomen Marie; tertie nomen Gabrielis archangeli; quarte nomen Sancti Blasii; ac quinte et minime nomen Johannis Evangeliste. Presentibus tunc ibidem venerabilibus et discretis viris domino Johan: Wakeryng, Archidiacono Cantuar., Magistris Philippo Moritan utriusque juris doctore, ac Will'mo Milton, archidiacono Buck', et aliis clericis et laicis in multitudine copiosa. (*Registrum Archiepi. Arundel*, i., 410^b.)

* "A smaller pillar between two arches parted the rest of the chapel from this, before the wall was built, and is still to be seen within-side. The French clerk keeps the key of this vestry; and when strangers have a mind to see the place, *by removing some parts of the bench here*, he opens a square hole, through which you crawl, on your hands and knees, into a dark semicircular room, where candlelight discovers remains of some very ancient paintings.

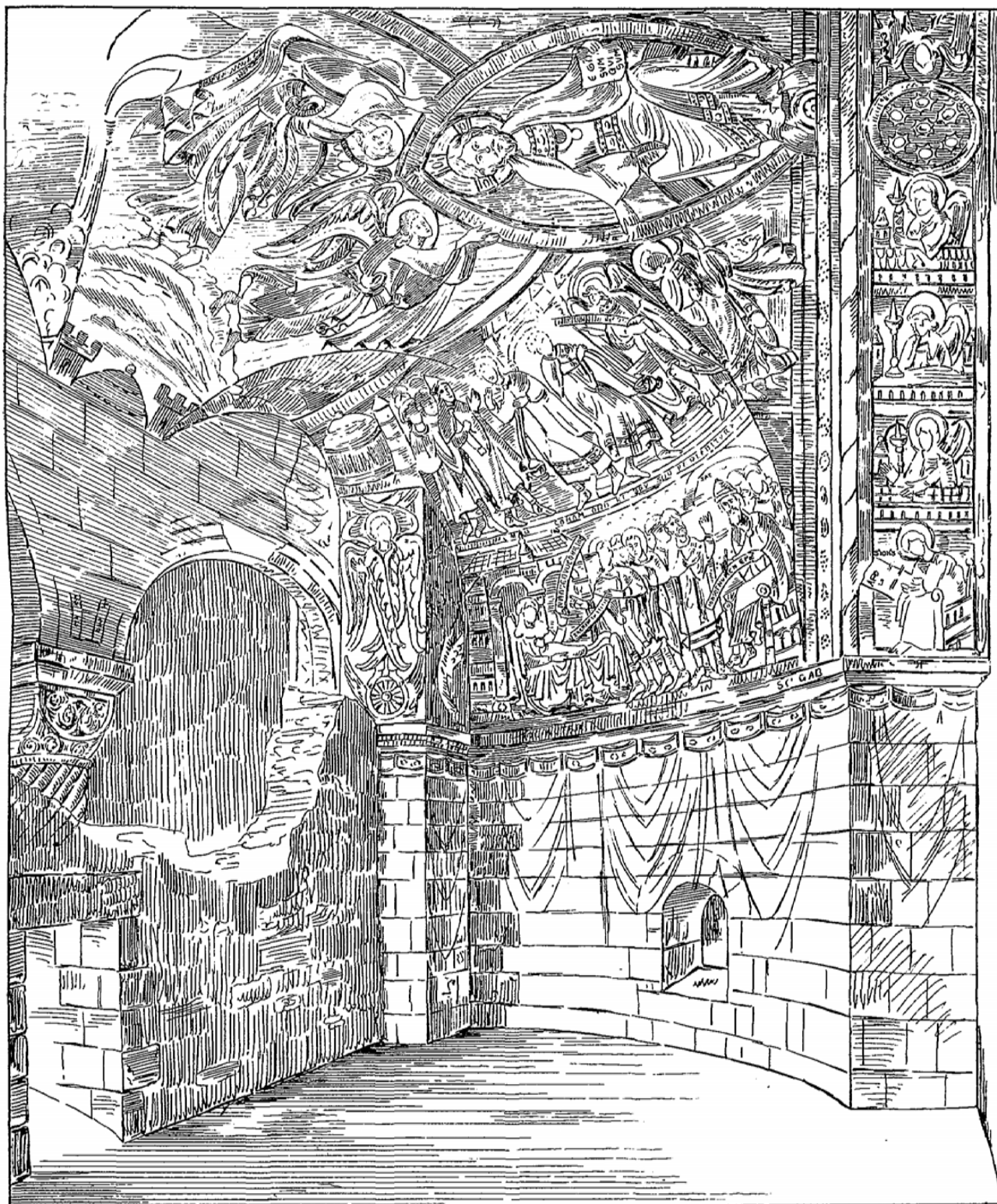
"The roof has, in a compartment, a figure designed for the Almighty, with a wheel, the emblem of eternity, under his feet; an open book in his hand, where are the words *Ego sum qui sum*, and four angels adoring round it. Below these on a kind of cornice was '*Hoc altare dedicatum est in honorem Sancti Gabrielis Archangeli*,' hardly legible now; for when the views were taken for Mr. Dart's description of Canterbury Cathedral, the draughtsman employed here, by wiping the inscription in hopes to get a better sight of the letters, defaced it pretty much."—Gostling's *Walk*, pages 224, 225.

bones. The mural stair, in the north-west corner of this chapel, led to that upper chamber, in St. Anselm's tower, from which the monks are said to have maintained constant watch and ward over the costly shrine of Becket. This chamber contains an oven, and has, by some, been supposed to be a prison.

Entering the mysterious little apse, we find that its greatest depth, E. to W., is $11\frac{1}{2}$ feet; its greatest width, N. to S., is 17 feet. It has on the south two round-headed niches. One, which is 43 inches high, 32 inches wide, and $25\frac{1}{4}$ inches deep, was probably a *sedile*; I can sit comfortably in it; the other was a *piscina*. On the north there is one niche, which likewise resembles a *piscina*. The pillar which divided the arch of entrance has a well-carved cap, somewhat like its fellow in the chapel of the Holy Innocents; and its shaft, ornamented with bands of fluting, bears traces of colour. With the exception of the east wall every portion of the apse seems to have been covered with painting. Spaces over the arches of entrance were thus adorned; although they could only be seen by those who stood beside the altar looking westward. Fragments remain, shewing an angel with a scroll, inscribed EVM; there are also domes, and trees. The lower portions of the walls, beneath the string-course, were painted with representations of drapery or curtains, similar to those in a fresco, of the twelfth century, within the Galilee porch of Durham Cathedral.*

As to the date of the paintings, within this apse, there is no doubt whatever. Illuminated manuscripts of the twelfth century contain many scenes and de-

* Engraved by Mr. N. H. J. Westlake, in *The History of Design in Painted Glass*, vol. i., part i., p. 38.



Whitman & Bass Litho London

APSE OF ST. GABRIEL'S CHAPEL IN THE CRYPT.

FROM THE S. E.

tails which resemble them in crucial points. Every expert who has treated of them ascribes these frescoes to artists of the twelfth century.*

With respect to the method in which these paintings were executed, Mr. Westlake has made the following observations :—

“ The method of its execution [*i.e.* of a fresco in the Galilee at Durham] is principally in tracing lines of red ochre, in manner something like glass painting of the same period. Both the ornament and figures are slightly tinted, in certain parts; and it appears to have been executed on the wall when it was fresh, without other vehicle than water. The work in the nave roof of the crypt chapel at Canterbury is executed in the same manner; *but the sanctuary is more highly finished in body colour.* They are methods quite parallel to those used by the artists in the manuscripts of the period.”†

These observations, based upon an examination of a simpler fresco of the twelfth century, at Durham, are extremely interesting to any one who examines the frescoes in St. Gabriel's apse. We here see very evident proofs that the artist first traced in red ochre the outline of his designs, and afterwards filled them in. In the scene of the naming of St. John the Baptist, he found that his original outlines were in some cases unsuitable; and he disregarded them,

* Mr. Planché, in his *Cyclopædia of Costume*, vol. ii., opposite page 48, gives, as an illustration of the costume of the twelfth century, a coloured plate (very incorrect in colour and details) of a fresco on the north wall of St. Gabriel's apse. Mr. N. H. J. Westlake, in his chapter on “English Art of the Twelfth Century,” says of the decoration of this apse: “It is the most perfect and beautiful decoration of the period that I have seen in England, and every student should examine it” (*Hist. of Design in Painted Glass*, i., 39^b). Mr. Wright, in the *Archæological Album*; Mr. C. E. Keyser, in the *Archæological Journal*, xxxv., 283; Mr. De Gray Birch, Mr. M. H. Bloxam, and Mr. J. H. Parker, C.B., all express the same opinion.

† *Hist. of Design in Painted Glass*, i., 40.

leaving the red lines still visible.* Illuminators of manuscripts used the same method, of drawing their outlines in red, and afterwards filling them in. This can at once be seen, by any one who examines Ælfric's Paraphrase of the Pentateuch, a MS. of the eleventh century.

With respect to the artist, and the school of art, to which these paintings must be ascribed, there seems to be little doubt that they belong to that English, or Anglo-Norman, art which was derived from the French school. Mr. Ruskin, when inspecting this apse, could not refrain from expressing regret that English artists had been employed, when the authorities of Christ Church might have commanded the best talent that Italy could produce. Mr. Westlake has suggested that the work on the apse may be Italian; but he, nevertheless, draws especial attention to the resemblance between these Canterbury paintings and the illuminations in a Psalter of the twelfth century, which formerly belonged to the Nuns of Shaftesbury (Nero C. IV. in the Cottonian Library). It has 38 leaves, and all the subjects, says Mr. Westlake, seem to be by one master, excepting two which appear more Italian in character. The authorities of the British Museum ascribe this psalter to the English School of Art. Mr. Westlake likewise calls attention to the similarity between the Majesty in this apse, and (i) the figure of a king, from a Jesse window of the twelfth century in York minster; (ii) the figures in MS. Nero

* Thus he drew, in red outline, the feet and legs of two persons, whom in the filling up he has left deficient in those members. Observe also the outlines of the hat of Zacharias; the scroll from the mouth of Elizabeth; and the heads of some of the figures.

C. IV. ; and (iii) the glass at St. Denis and Chartres.* Thus he practically agrees with Mr. Ruskin's opinion, notwithstanding his bias in favour of an Italian origin for these paintings. Mr. De Gray Birch, of the British Museum, considers that there can be no doubt of their English origin, and especially mentions the foliage as having a thoroughly English-art character. He and Mr. M. H. Bloxam have both noticed the remarkable resemblance between two angels, carved in the Saxon church of Bradford-on-Avon, and similar angels in the paintings here. Peculiar details in these paintings find parallels in carvings at Ely Cathedral, and in many English manuscripts of the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth centuries in the British Museum.

Before examining, in detail, each portion of the decoration, it may be useful to enumerate, briefly, the peculiar features, and the general treatment, observed in these paintings.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FRESCOES.

The eyes are so drawn as to afford a sure mark of date. Mr. Westlake says, "There is another singular characteristic in the work of the middle of the twelfth century ; that is a second line, or iris, to the eye. That is not common to the earlier years of the twelfth century, and it ceased, as a rule, to be used late in the twelfth, or early in the thirteenth century, until it was again revived late in the fourteenth."†

The rules of Perspective were unknown to our artist of the twelfth century, yet he tells his tale plainly and forcibly ; going so far as to omit lips and mouth, from the face of Zacharias, to ensure our understanding that the old priest is dumb.

Careful elaboration of the folds, in all drapery, is a striking feature of this artist's work. All the main portions of his designs, such as heads, legs, feet, robes, and nimbuses,

* *Hist. of Design in Painted Glass*, i., 40^b.

† *Ibid.*, vol. i., p. 45^b.

are broadly outlined with black. The good effect of this black outline is, in many cases, enhanced by a thin line of white, placed between it and the adjacent mass of red, or yellow. The artist's treatment of high lights is remarkable. He draws across the forehead three white lines; he places beneath each eye a white curve, from which descend to the cheek a series of short vertical white lines; the fleshy portions of the palms of hands are indicated by white curved lines; the ankles, by concentric circles of white; the ball of the heel by a white curve; the jewels are touched with white. The whiteness of drapery, of hair, and of beards, is enhanced by blue lines, which indicate shading or folds.* There are some very remarkable points to be observed in the treatment of hair and beards. After obtaining a rich ruddy colour, by brushing yellow thinly over red, the flowing lines of the hair or beard are lightly traced over it in dark brown. In three beards, this brown tracing assumes a very curious form; being either a series of minute concentric circles, or a continuous line coiled spirally. Notwithstanding diligent search, I can find no parallel to this treatment of the beard.

The infant, John the Baptist, is not swathed in bands, as is usual, but appears to be enveloped in a bag-like, sleeveless, robe, which opens only at the head. The angels, and St. John the Evangelist, all have bare feet; and all are represented with the circular nimbus, generally golden, sometimes red, and, once, gold tinged with red. In every case, a thin white line intervenes between the mass of colour (of the nimbus) and the external black outline or rim. All the human figures wear hose, and brown shoes, studded with rows of white buttons, or discs of silver;† these shoes cover the entire foot up to the ankle.

The robes of angels are three in number: the longest (*tunica talaris*), with wide sleeves and a jewelled neckpiece, reaches to the feet; over it, each wears a short, girded,

* This may be observed in illuminations of manuscripts, *e.g.* in the twelfth century Psalter, *Cotton MS. Nero C. IV.* folio 29, etc.

† Similar ornaments on brown shoes are seen in the twelfth century manuscript, *Cotton, Nero C. IV.*, folios 7, 15, 21, etc., and on the twelfth century mosaic figure of Pope Calixtus in Santa Maria Trastevere, at Rome.

sleeveless tunic (or a swathing mantle) which is seen in front from the waist to a little below the knees, but seems to reach higher and lower behind; over all, each angel wears a loosely flowing mantle without fastening, and without sleeves.

The Divine Figure is similarly though more richly robed, with the addition of a stole, which intervenes between the girded apron-like tunic, and the long *tunica talaris*.

Shorter robes are worn by the human figures. The men wear a loose sleeveless cloak, fastened by a round morse at the neck; and under it a tunic, with tight sleeves and jewelled cuffs, the skirt of which reaches halfway down between the knees and ankles. In the Temple, Zacharias wears, under that, a third robe which is a little longer. Two of the men wear girdles, with long pendant ends.

The hair of the women is simply parted in the middle; that of the angels, of several men, and of the infant John, is elaborately arranged; having, along the front, a row of tight round curls, reaching from ear to ear. Other men have large curls, over the whole head: and one "exquisite," with a handsome jewelled neckpiece, or collar, wears his hair in rolls, which nothing but combs could keep in place.* No such vanities are seen in the arrangement of the hair of St. John the Evangelist, or of the Divine Figure. Zacharias wears a white "Jew's hat," with pointed apex: more like an Indian pith helmet than anything else familiar to us; and one other man has a pointed white head-dress, or hat.

To each of the human figures, the artist gives a height of from 3 to 4 feet, and behind them he hangs a blue curtain, or *dado* (against a background of greenish neutral tint); this *dado* is 2½ feet deep, and the top of it is nearly level with the eyes of the standing figures. A narrow white line, above and below the *dado*, adds greatly to its effect.

The paintings are executed on a coat of distemper, laid upon a layer of coarse mortar, about a quarter of an inch thick. Consequently, wherever the mortar has cracked and fallen from the roof, the painting is utterly gone. Fortunately, such gaps are comparatively small, except in the

* All these varieties of *coiffures* are found in the *Cotton MS.*, Nero C. IV. fol. 2, 5, 6, 10, 19, 20, 29; 11, 14, 25, 32.

Divine Figure, which, being at the apex of the roof, has suffered much loss. The remaining plaster has now been securely and skilfully fixed, by Mr. Jas. Neale, F.S.A., whose services the Dean and Chapter retained for the work. One large painting remains quite perfect; and we have reproduced it in colours. It represents the naming of St. John the Baptist. The preservation of the colours is admirable.

The Annunciation to Zacharias.

On the north side of the apse-roof, nearest to the outstretched right hand of the Divine Figure, which, with projecting finger, seems to call attention to the scene, stands the Archangel Gabriel, beside the altar of incense, in the Temple at Jerusalem (*Luke i. 9, 11*). His head, encircled by a golden nimbus, has brown hair, arranged in tight curls, along the front from ear to ear. His long tunic is white; his apron-like short tunic is of a drab hue; his outer mantle is red. In each of his wings, the great pinion, or highest and innermost portion, is of dull red hue; tips of 14 white feathers appear next to it; and below them we see 17 tips of black feathers. From the archangel's left hand ascends a scroll, inscribed "[AVDI]TA E[ST] ORATIO TVA" (*Luke i. 13*). Beneath the whole scene is written, in large capitals, the Latin version of Gabriel's statement (*Luke i. 15*), "*He shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost.*"*

Facing Gabriel, stands Zacharias; holding by three white cords, or chains, a jewelled censer, which swings between the spectator and the south end of the altar. Through the falling of some plaster, we have lost the head of the old priest; but his white beard remains, shaded with blue lines. His outer sleeveless mantle, fastened at the neck with a round morse of gold, is of pallid, pinkish hue; it is lined with brownish yellow. His red, tight-sleeved, tunic has,

* *Iste pver magnvs coram Dno. et Spv. Sco. replebitvr.* Over the words Dno., Spv. and Sco. there are, in the fresco, marks of contraction, which are not easily seen, and they do not appear in our autotype plate. They do, however, appear upon the photograph taken for Mr. J. H. Parker, 35 years ago. The letters used in this inscription should be observed; they resemble those found upon seals of the twelfth century, and are useful marks of date.



around its cuffs and skirt, yellow bands of jewelled embroidery; the round pellets upon them are white (pearls?); the elliptical jewels are red, and blue, alternately. A longer white tunic appears below the red one. His hose are of dark hue, and the tops of his shoes are decorated with two rows of silver buttons or discs. The figures of Zacharias and the Archangel are about 3 feet, or $3\frac{1}{4}$ feet, high.

Between Zacharias and the Archangel we see the small white-vested altar, of ruddy Wealden marble; north of which are two round-headed arches, supported by Wealden marble shafts, with caps and bases of the Norman style; and through the arches we see a blue *dado*, or curtain. The altar stands on three steps. It is exactly like the altars shewn in the *Harley Roll*, Y. 6 in the British Museum, a MS. of the twelfth century. Therein we find, on the fifth and sixth miniatures, or roundels, altars on three steps, similarly vested with short white clothes, which permit the green marbled stone of the altar to be seen at base. In the twelfth century manuscript, *Cotton Nero C. IV.*, fol. 8, there is likewise an altar similarly placed and vested. In our fresco, the fossil shells in the marble are clearly depicted.

Zacharias appearing, dumb, to the People.

The only mark of separation, between this scene and that of the Annunciation, is the base and cap of a dividing column; seen between the feet, and over the left shoulder, of Zacharias. The figure of the aged priest is reproduced, exactly as before, but *dos-à-dos* to the figure in the former scene. Now, however, being dumb, he raises his right hand, and with his forefinger points to his mouth.

Six persons are represented, outside the temple, as regarding Zacharias with astonishment. Foremost is a man who is distinguished from the rest by wearing a white conical hat,* with an ornamental band around its base; also by having a beard, the lines of which assume the shape of a symmetrical spiral, of six or seven coils; and by having three rows of silver discs around the top of one shoe, and

* For hats similar to this, and to the one worn by Zacharias in the scene of the Naming of St. John, cf. *Cotton MS. Nero C. IV.* 3, 9, 16, 19, 23, 25.

only two rows around the other. His cloak is red, lined with white or pink, fastened by a morse near his right shoulder. His tight-sleeved tunic is white, and devoid of ornament.

Behind him is a woman, of whom we see only the head and one foot; her face is carelessly depicted, as coming between us and that of a curly-headed man, whose left shoulder, nevertheless, is in front of her breast. The allotment of feet and legs to this woman, and to three other persons behind, is audaciously scanty and careless.

As the artist was obliged to shape his design in accordance with the lines of the groined roof of the apse, his picture of the two incidents in the Annunciation of the birth of John the Baptist is consequently narrower at the top than at the bottom, and its base line is curved.

Beneath that picture, we find a delineation of the incidents connected with the naming of St. John the Baptist. As this picture is perfect, it is here reproduced in colour, upon a scale of two inches to one foot. Mr. Walter de Gray Birch, of the British Museum, a *connoisseur* well known to be an expert in such matters, has most courteously favoured us with the following descriptive notes upon this painting.

The Naming of St. John the Baptist.

“The cartoon, although arranged to appear as one scene, really contains the depiction of two separate incidents in the ceremony of naming St. John the Baptist. It forms a fitting *pendant* to the fresco above it, in which are shewn the scenes connected with the Annunciation of St. John's birth by the Archangel Gabriel [Luke i. 19, etc.].

“On the left hand side we have five figures, in a group, illustrating the three verses of Luke i. 59—61. They are in a building of quasi-ecclesiastical character, adorned with columns of plain shafting, with foliage carved upon the bases and capitals; with a shingled



roof, the single plates of which are held down by a central nail; and with a campanile, or turret, of two stories of arcading, finished off at the top with a central spherical knob. The sides of the building are indicated by three rows of arcading, in that conventional, but faulty, way of drawing perspective, so much used by illuminators, and draughtsmen, in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Beneath the outermost of two semicircular arches, propped up upon a couch, of which the drapery is seen at head and foot, reclines the newly-made mother 'Elisabet.' She is clad in a white dress flecked with yellow, with tight sleeves, embroidered cuffs, and wimple or head cloth which falls down to the shoulders. Her placid features shew, as much as the artist could put into them, a little feeling of determination and surprise. She holds in her right hand the infant John, who is not in the conventional bandages attributed to Jewish costume. Her left hand holds a scroll, upon which is inscribed her answer, recorded in Luke i. 60, 'Nequaquam sed vocabitur Johannes.' Over her lower limbs a counterpane of dark red colour is thrown; the folds of which have been arranged, by the artist, in that symmetrical manner which is so distinctive a feature in English art of the early periods. [Of *Mus. Brit.* Claudius B. iv., eleventh century; *Harl. Roll*, Y. 6, etc., twelfth century.] The three persons who have come 'to circumcise the child' (Luke i. 59), stand before the mother. One appears to be an aged man, with light coloured hair, curled over the forehead, beard, and moustaches, in a cloak which apparently denotes superior rank, and with embroidered cuffs and hem of his skirts. The second figure is a man in middle age, having brown hair with lambent cusps over the fore-

head, embroidered collar and sash. The third, a woman or youth, with smoothly parted hair of light brown, is only indicated by a head, between the other two; the feet of this figure, by some inadvertence, to which further notice will presently be drawn, have been omitted by the artist. Of these three, the two latter are shewn as earnestly listening to the conversation, at which they are present; the elder figure, with upraised hand and extended forefinger, is enunciating the sentence, which is inscribed upon the scroll that he holds in his left hand, 'Zacharias' It is unfortunate that the concluding part of this inscription is wanting, because we are unable to supply it from the text of Scripture.

"The group to the right also consists of five personages. Seated upon a carved throne with ornamental panels and carved bosses, not unlike the thrones of the early Norman Kings of England, as shewn upon their great seals (see also Claudius B. iv.; *Harl. MS.* 603, eleventh century), is the ancient priest, Zacharias, wearing a cap of peculiar shape, with ogival outline and embroidered rim, his hair long and straight, beard of moderate length, draped in a cloak of dignity, which is fastened, by a circular stud or brooch, over his breast, with a flowing dress adorned with embroidered cuffs. Before him is a desk or stand, whereon he holds a scroll upon which he is writing the legend 'Johannes est nomen ejus' (Luke i. 63). 'And he asked for a writing table, and wrote, saying, His name is John.' The remainder of this verse,— 'and they marvelled all,' is shewn by two figures, their upper part only being shewn in the fresco; one has light brown hair curled over the forehead; the other, hair of a darker hue, and an embroidered collar.

This latter figure elevates his left hand, in the natural attitude of one who is astonished. Of the other two persons, who complete this second scene, one is represented with hair curled in a series of short small bunches, over the head; there is only one foot and leg drawn for this person. The other figure stands out well in front. He is making 'signs to his father how he would have him called' (Luke i. 62). From his dress, and attitude, he is evidently a personage of high rank and considerable authority; his hair, which is of a dark rich brown colour, is of ample quantity and falls over behind his neck; his beard is full and compact. He is dressed in a cloak, of the form so constantly seen in early twelfth-century art, and well shewn in the seals of Stephen and Henry II. There appears to be a stole, or long band, with embroidered border at its ends, hanging down in front of his dress, the skirt of which is adorned with an embroidered orphrey, or border. He is elevating his hands, and from the extended position of the fingers it is evident that the designer of the picture endeavoured thus to shew the vivid action, and excited feelings, of the 'neighbour,' who feels perhaps somewhat scandalized at the mother's objection to bestowing upon her offspring the name of his father.

"There is no horizon or landscape to the picture, and this was commonly the case with all early illuminations; for there is no attempt at definition of distance until long after the period when this fine fresco was executed. The broad band of neutral blue, speckled with white, which runs across the panel, may represent the sky, or the wall or curtain of an apartment; the narrower borders of green may represent a

floor and ceiling, or a green sward, although it would be difficult to imagine in the latter case why green should be placed over the blue. But we can only conjecture the real intention of the artist in this point; for, after all, the colouring may only be intended to serve an ornamental purpose.

“One peculiarly artistic merit, in this picture, is the arrangement of the hair of the figures; for, while we have no less than ten heads, in not one instance is the exact style of arranging the hair repeated. It is perhaps worthy of remark that here, as in much earlier, and in even modern pictorial church art, the colour of the hair is made so much lighter than we should expect, from the well-known physiological peculiarity of the Jews to have black hair. The costume is English of the twelfth century; according to the customary rule of the artist of that age to put all his characters into the current costume of his country. It is this fact, among others, that renders all conventional delineations of Biblical scenes so valuable an aid towards the elucidation of the manners and customs of any country. A history of the illuminations of English Bibles and service books, and of frescoes, such as this and the later ones which adorn the churches of England, would really amount to a history of our national costume prior to the sixteenth century. There are several striking points in the picture before us; the balancing of the groups in a beautifully conceived harmony,—the mother and babe against the aged father;—the three who confront the mother with the two who are arguing with the father,—and these two again with the two figures behind the sacerdotal chair.

“Several alterations appear to have been made, as

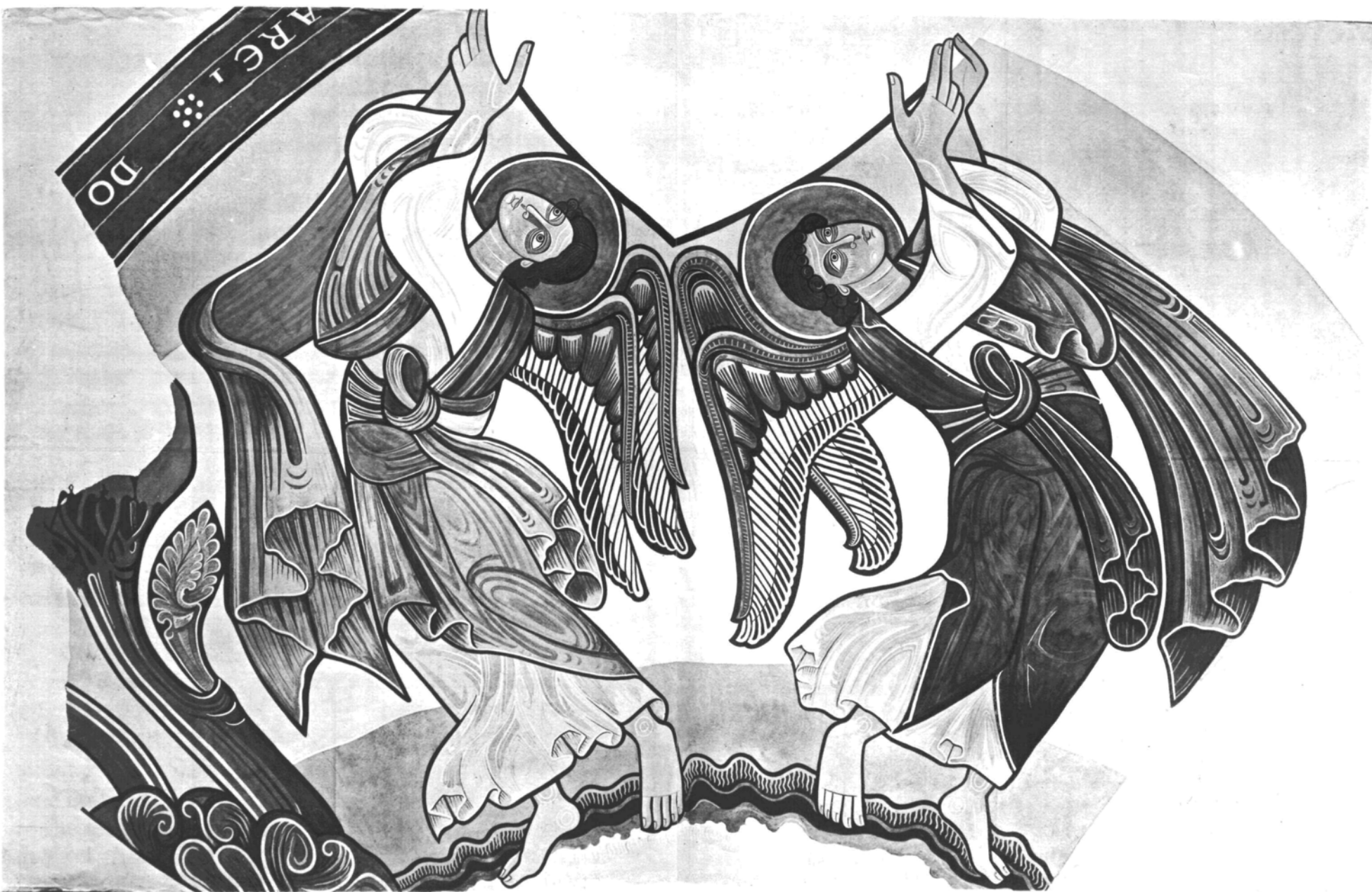
the original work progressed; after the design had been in some cases drawn, and filled in with body colour. The head and part of the shoulders of the man bearing the scroll; the outline of the scroll itself; the head of the central figure in the background; the cap of the seated priest; the heads of the two persons behind his chair; and many indications of departure from the first design among the feet of the throng; all these clearly indicate that for some reasons the proportion was found to be capable of improvement, and hence the divergencies were decided upon. But it is curious that the alterations were so effected as to leave such visible traces of the first state of the picture. The discrepancy of feet and legs not being duly proportioned to the heads, and being absent where we should look for them, is not unique. Such accidents, if they can be rightly so called, are by no means uncommon, even in pictures of a later age, when the rules of illumination were more closely insisted upon. Several examples may be seen in the Paraphrase of *Ælfric*, in the British Museum, a work not far off, in point of date, from this fresco. The custom of placing the name, in capital letters, over the heads of principal figures, seen here in the case of Elizabeth, obtains even in classical times. Roman frescoes, and the classical manuscripts of the fifth, sixth, and seventh centuries, all shew instances of this custom, which is found in vogue at all periods of art. Even in portraits of the sixteenth century, this custom of placing the name near the head of the individual depicted, shews how universally the method had become a part of the design. The embroidered ornaments, upon the collars and skirts of some of the figures, may probably be intended to represent precious

stones; the circular boss or knob, and the elliptical or vesical shape, are seen upon the jewels in the cover of the celebrated Durham Gospels of St. Cuthbert. In this case, the pale blue of these elliptical figures would probably represent crystals, as seen upon the cover of that book, and other manuscripts of much the same age.

“The peculiar shape of the tiles in the roof of the house, each with its central pin or stud, is seen in the Harley Psalter (No. 603), a manuscript of the eleventh century which, in its turn, is derived from the well known Utrecht Psalter, for which some have claimed an English origin. The turret may be compared with those seen upon the seals of Christ Church, Canterbury, Battle Abbey, and other examples of twelfth century sphragistic art.

“The scene of the two angels, in adoration at the head of the Divine Figure, with expanded wings, outstretched hands, and eager countenances, is very beautiful. They recall to the mind of an archæologist the two angels, carved in stone, found by the Rev. W. H. Jones, F.S.A., of Bradford-on-Avon in Wiltshire, in the course of his discovery of the Saxon church of St. Lawrence.* These ancient carvings, although of a date somewhat earlier than the drawings on the fresco (and indeed attributed by Mr. Jones to the ninth century), shew an arrangement of drapery not very unlike that on the picture at Canterbury. But the angels of Bradford are in a flatter or more recumbent position, whereas here they are gracefully

* See *Journal of Brit. Arch. Assoc.*, vol. xxxi., p. 144.



falling down as it were; for the artist was evidently unable or unwilling to depict them with any foreshortening of the perspective. The heads of the figures are, perhaps, somewhat small for the bodies. It is worthy of observation, that care has been taken to avoid having a similarity of outline in the folds of the drapery, although the pose and action of each angelic figure is identical. The foliage is very rich, and distinctly of an English art-character."

Two Angels at the head of the Divine Figure.

These angels, floating in the clouds, form the most charming picture in this series of frescoes. Their attitudes are characterized alike by force and exquisite grace. Their drapery is so skilfully treated that it enhances, instead of lessening, the buoyant appearance of their graceful figures. The colour of the blue background, against which their bodies appear, as high as the shoulders, is very well chosen. Above and below the blue there is, as usual, a neutral tint of greenish hue; against it appear the angels' heads and hands.

Although admirably paired, the two figures are by no means treated alike in all details. On their golden-nimbed heads, the ruddy hair of one is plainly parted in the middle, while that of the other shews, in front, a row of small round curls, reaching from ear to ear. Their long under-robcs are white, shaded with blue lines; their short apron-like tunics are in different shades of red, lined with yellowish hues, and each is fastened around the waist in a bold, knotted, single bow, with one long pendant end.* Their flowing outer mantles are, likewise, of varying shades of red and yellow.

Their wings, about eighteen inches long, are more gracefully drawn, and more elaborately coloured, than others in these frescoes. The pinions, like the highest innermost

* A parallel to this bow knot is seen, carved in stone, on a figure of our Lord, over the Prior's doorway (of the twelfth century) at Ely Cathedral; also in *Cotton MS. Nero C. IV*, folio 21; and on a figure of Queen Clotilda (circa A.D. 1100) in Plate 9 of Shaw's *Dresses of the Middle Ages*.

feathers, are of reddish hue streaked with yellow; the mid layer of feathers is white; the longest and outermost feathers are black. The feet of these angels touch rosy, wavelike, clouds, which rest upon blue ether. Oddly enough, the artist has here introduced trees with stiff foliage, as if springing from the clouds. The foliage resembles that seen on capitals of the twelfth century; and the hues are yellow and white, as if to represent golden vegetation. On the north side, small cuplike flowers, of red colour, are placed among the foliage.

From the vesica, near the hands of the angels, inscribed bands of colour spring, on each side. The centre of the band is red edged with white; it is flanked by two bands of yellow similarly edged, and broad black rims complete the wide band. The inscribed words defined the locality of the uppermost scenes, depicted on the north and south sides of the roof of the apse. On the south side, the word NAZARET still appears, above the scene of Gabriel's Annunciation to the Virgin Mary. A rosette-like stop, formed of seven white pellets, separates this word from those which localized the next scene. The letters are almost all gone; but with the help of Dart's engraving, taken 154 years ago, we know that DOMUS ZACHARIÆ was the inscription which stood over the scene of the greeting exchanged between Elisabeth and Mary in the house of Zacharias (*Luke i. 40*). Dart does not place these words in their true position.

Upon the north side, nothing remains but the words BEAT PLEBS . . ., over the scene wherein Zacharias, dumb, appears to the people outside (*Luke i. 21, 22*).

The Divine Figure.

Occupying the highest portion of the vaulted roof, where the surface is nearly horizontal, the Divine Figure has suffered, much more than others, from the falling of the plaster. Fortunately, a photograph was taken from it about 35 years ago, for Mr. J. H. Parker. It shews the left hand (now gone) holding a book, inscribed EGO SVM QVI SVM.



Majestic, graceful, and well posed, this seated figure does great credit to the artist of the twelfth century, who drew it. He has given to it a vertical height of four feet. Within an elaborate vesica, five inches broad, formed of fourteen narrow bands of yellow, orange, red, white and black, the Divine Person sits upon an arched throne, represented by a band six inches wide; of which four inches are white as crystal, but beneath the white is a border of red and yellow hues. His feet rest upon a semi-orb, eighteen inches in diameter; two-thirds of it are white as crystal, but in its centre is a dark brown semicircle, which encloses half an eightfoiled circle, or rose, six inches in diameter.* The entire background of the figure, within the vesica, is blue.

The head of the Divine Figure has a grave and majestic aspect. Its circular or elliptical nimbus is white as crystal, save where the blood-red cross, studded with jewels, imparts a warmer hue. Blue lines of enamel separate the rows of pearls, on the cross, from the elliptical jewels. The light brown hair is parted in the middle, and falls in wavelike masses down to the shoulders. The moustache and beard are small and youthful. The eyes are large, and deeply set; beneath them are the usual curved white lines, from which a series of short white vertical lines descend, towards the cheek. Three white lines on the forehead give the high lights. The neck is bare; but the red neckpiece of the long wide-sleeved white tunic (shaded with blue lines) is elaborately jewelled; and attached to, or beneath it, is a red and jewelled pendant, (in shape three-quarters of a circle), to which is appended a small circular red knob, likewise jewelled.†

Above the long white tunic, a stole, one inch and three quarters in width, of ruddy brown hue, passes over the shoulders, beneath the girdle, and appears below the jewelled border of the blue, apron-like, short tunic. This blue tunic is

* The form of this semi-octofoil exactly resembles the ornaments upon the crown of the Emperor Henry, in a window of the twelfth century, in Strasburg Cathedral, on the north side near the door. Westlake's *History of Design in Painted Glass*, vol. i., p. 36.

† A similar neckpiece, with pendant, is seen on the figure of our Lord, at the head of a tree of Jesse, in *Cotton MS, Nero C. IV*, fol. 9.

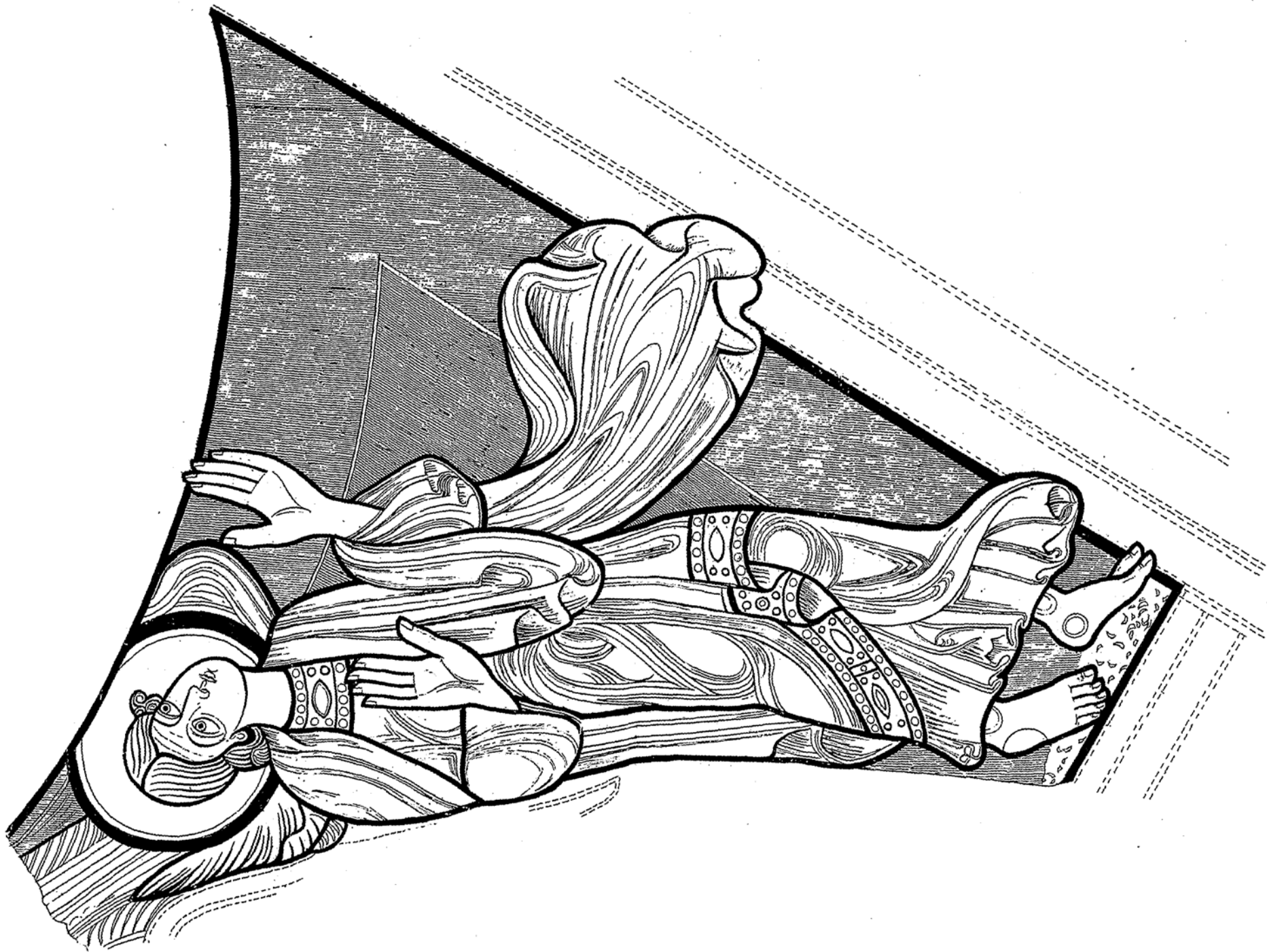
not seen above the handsomely jewelled red girdle-band. The lower edge of the blue tunic has a red jewelled border, four inches wide. The loose outer mantle, which has no fastening, is of a red colour; it covers the left arm and shoulder, and appears upon the right shoulder and right knee. The feet are bare; and the hands, extended on a level with the girdle, seem to point right and left, as if directing attention to the two missions of the Archangel Gabriel which are depicted near them. The right hand is so far outstretched, as nearly to cover the vesica; one digit is extended, and three are folded upon the palm; whether the thumb or other finger was likewise folded, the broken state of the plaster prevents us from ascertaining. Probably the thumb is behind the three folded fingers, and it is the forefinger which remains, extended; but the treatment of the nail makes this a matter of doubt, and difficulty. The left hand, which held the book, being gone, we take its attitude from Mr. J. H. Parker's photograph; which shews three fingers clasped over the book, and one extended in front of the vesica. The thumb must be behind the book, or the book would fall. This enables us to suggest that originally the right hand may perhaps have held some orb, or other symbol of power, which concealed the thumb.*

The word NAZARET is inserted, upon our plate of the Divine Figure, to shew how decidedly the extended finger on each side draws attention to the representation of the mission in which Gabriel is occupied, close at hand. Exactly beneath the word NAZARET,† the scene of the Annunciation to the Virgin was depicted.

Dart, Gostling, and the early writers who mention these frescoes, all speak of the Divine Figure as representing God the Father. Modern observers see, in that Figure wearing the stole, our Lord Jesus Christ enthroned in Majesty, with heaven for his throne, and earth for his footstool.

* Mr. C. E. Keyser has remarked that our Lord is represented with his right hand raised, in benediction, upon frescoes of the twelfth century in the churches of Kempley, Copford, and St Mary, Guildford. I believe that our Canterbury frescoes are of earlier date, in that century, than any of those referred to.

† The exigencies of space caused our lithographer to compress the letters of the word *Nazaret* and place them closer together than they are in the original.



Two Angels below the Divine Figure.

The triangular spaces, just above the springing of the vaulting, north and south of the altar-space, are occupied each by an angel, 3 feet high, in adoration, at the feet of the Divine Figure. The angelic figure upon the north side, being perfect, is reproduced in the annexed plate. Upon the usual background of cerulean blue, edged with a broad band of greenish neutral tint, we see the angel with hands uplifted towards the Vesica, wearing a long white tunic with jewelled and embroidered neckpiece; a red short apron-like tunic, with a jewelled and embroidered border at base; and a loose pinkish mantle, lined with pale brown floating around the shoulders and back. The golden-nimbed head is thrown back, as the eyes gaze up at the Divine Figure; and the ruddy hair, parted simply in the middle, is seen to cluster behind the ears. The wings are not very clearly seen, they are most visible above the head, and show mainly a reddish hue. The feet are bare, and as usual, the one seen in profile is well drawn; the other not so. The circular white lines, by which the artist sought to indicate the ankle and ball of the heel, are conspicuous here. The shape of the space at his disposal fettered him sadly; and to most spectators, these angels are the least pleasing of all his designs.

Angels of the Seven Churches of Asia.

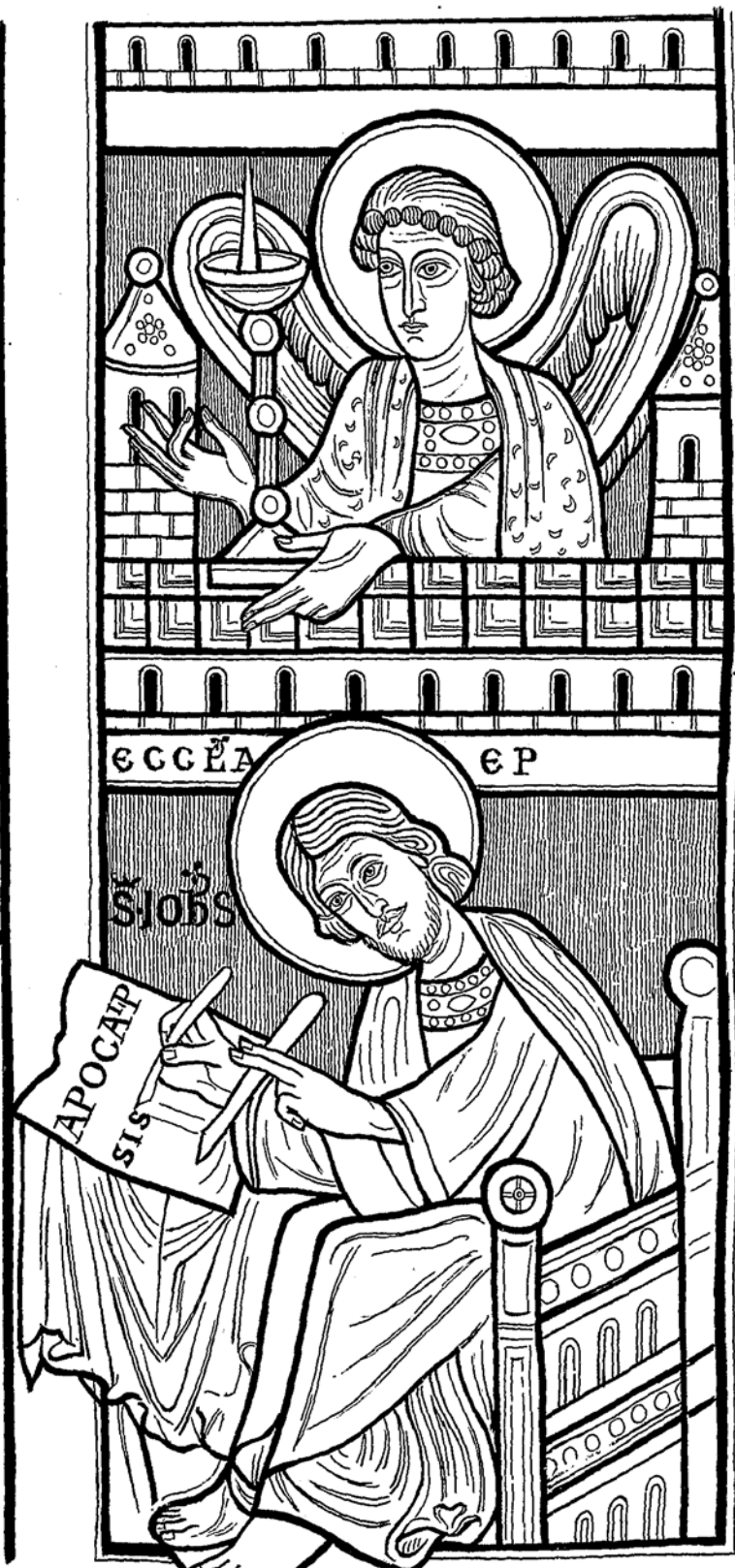
The soffit of the round arch, above the recess in the east wall, is adorned with painting in nine compartments. At the apex is a blue circular panel, having representations of six golden stars, surrounding a central seventh. Around the panel is a circular band, inscribed *SEPTEM STELLÆ — ANGELI SEPTEM* (*Rev. i. 20*); the remainder of the inscription is obliterated by damp. The four rectangular compartments, on the south side of the apex, contain each a representation of an angel holding a huge pricket candlestick of gold. Beneath each compartment was the name of the church thus symbolised; Thyatira nearest the top, then Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea, one below the other. These have faded very much.

On the north side, the four rectangular compartments are in a better state of preservation. Beneath the top compartment we can still read the inscription *ECCL'A PERGAM'*. Next, below, was the candlestick and angel of Smyrna, but that inscription is illegible. The two lowest compartments are reproduced in the annexed plate. One represents the angel and candlestick of the Church of Ephesus; and beneath it, is the seated figure of St. John the Divine, writing the Apocalypse, which contains the messages sent by God to the angels of these seven churches (*Revelation* ii. and iii.)

The golden candlesticks, and the methods of holding them, are made to differ in the various compartments. All have prickets, on which the candle was impaled; some have tripod stems, some are held with both hands, some with the right, and some with the left. The angels are represented in half-length only, and the nimbus around the head of each is not always of the golden colour used elsewhere; in some, it is tinged with a bright red hue. Their wings are of dark ruddy hues, their mantles red, and tunics white.

St. John the Divine is represented at full length, seated in a massive throne-like chair, decorated with arcading, somewhat similar to that in which Zacharias sits. His feet are bare; around his head is a nimbus, which, although mainly golden, has, close to the head, a ruddy effulgence. He leans forward to write upon a book, which lies upon a desk that is covered with a white cloth. In his right hand he holds the long thick, but pointed, pen; and in his left hand a broad eraser, similar to that seen on a medallion, among the twelfth century frescoes, in St. Mary's Church, Guildford.* Upon the book is inscribed the word *APOCAL[Y]PSIS*; and beside the nimbus is his name *S. IOH'S*. Over the first *S* there is an ornamental mark of contraction, shaped like a crown.

* In the British Museum, a MS. of the twelfth century (10 A, xiii) shews St. Dunstan writing, on a desk covered with a white cloth, holding a similar pen and an eraser, and sitting in a similar chair. Similar use of the pen and eraser is seen in the twelfth century MS. *Cotton, Nero C. IV*, folio 46. St. Wulfstan, writing, is similarly represented in an eleventh century MS. *Cotton, Claud. A. iii*. The desks used by him and St. Dunstan resemble that employed by Zacharias. Edwin the monk drawing a plan of Christ Church Priory, in the twelfth century, is similarly represented. The MS. is at Trinity Coll., Cambridge.



The mark of contraction between H and S terminates prettily in a trefoil.

The Six-Winged Seraphim.

On the piers, at the entrance to the apse, stand the bright Seraphim, one on each side, facing north and south. The artist here depicts one of the living creatures thus described in *Revelation* iv. 6, 7, 8:—" . . . full of eyes before and behind . . . the third beast had a face as a man, . . . and the four beasts had each of them six wings about him ; and they were full of eyes within ; and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty." To the six-winged attendants of the Almighty, who ceaselessly utter this cry, Isaiah gives the name of Seraphim;* but no portion of Holy Scripture describes them, as depicted here, except *Revelation* iv. 6, 8. The attribute of wondrous swiftness, and perpetual motion, is signified by placing beneath the feet of each seraph a wheel, which is borne likewise upon wings.

The rectangular background of the figures is of a glorious bright crimson colour. . It is framed within a broad band of yellow ochre, duly edged with broad black lines, on both sides ; but having a white line, on the inner side, between the yellow and black. Upon the glorious crimson background Mr. Neale believes that he sees a regular diaper, or marbling, of white. I believe this to be imaginary ; the effect of damp, during long centuries, is calculated thus to mislead.

Each seraph's body is four feet high. The wheel (white as crystal) on which he stands, is $13\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter, and has eight broad spokes, of oak colour, arranged as if a St. Andrew's cross were laid upon a Greek cross, with limbs of equal lengths. In the centre is a broad round ring, or crystal "box." Two encircling wings, each more than two feet long, support the wheel from beneath, and their tips extend far above the level of its apex.

Over the seraph's body two wings are folded, each being 33 inches long and 12 inches broad ; two wings of similar

* Isaiah vi. 2, 3. The *cherubim* described by Ezekiel i. 4—23, and chap. x were totally different ; having but four wings each ; and having also eyes in their hands and in their wheels (x. 12.)

size are spread open from the shoulders; and above the head two smaller wings are waving. The eyes are admirably depicted, with eyelids and eyebrows, like human eyes; not like the eyes of a peacock's tail-feathers. Seven eyes are seen on the seraph's right side, below the chin, and seven on the left side. On the topmost wings, above the head, are four others. As usual in these frescoes, the wing-feathers are in three layers of different colours; white in the middle, between layers of black, and dark brown streaked with a lighter shade. Small portions of a white *tunica talaris* appear at the ankles. The seraphs have each a golden nimbus, eight inches in diameter, and their dark ruddy hair is dressed in tight round curls, which form a continuous line, like a coronet, around the head.

It is believed that, in method of treatment, these figures are unique. Four-winged cherubim are not uncommon; but seraphs, with six wings full of eyes, standing on winged wheels, and having men's heads, feet, and hands, are not easily to be found.*

The soffits of the two arches, by which the apse was originally entered, are painted with geometrical patterns, and medallions. Domes and buildings, palm-trees and foliage, appear on small irregular spaces, and corners, of the walls and roof of the apse.

It is matter for congratulation, that while the colours of the chief frescoes are still well-preserved, the Kent Archæological Society has been able, on the one hand, to obtain the services of an artist (Mr. James Neale) fully competent to copy these early frescoes, in facsimile; and, on the other hand, to defray his charge of more than two hundred guineas for his work.

W. A. SCOTT ROBERTSON.

* The Sion Cope (of the thirteenth century) now in South Kensington Museum has, on it, six-winged seraphs standing each on a wheel; but the eyes on their wings are like those of a peacock's tail. In the Brit. Mus. *Arundel MS.* 83, folios 5^b, 131^b, we find six-winged "*cherubim*" on wheels, but their wings lack eyes; and the wheels lack wings; the MS. is of the fourteenth century. A Greek mosaic at Monreale Cathedral shews seraphs somewhat like ours, but they lack the wheel. At Orvieto, on the Duomo's façade, a six-winged angel expels Adam and Eve from Paradise. At Forest Hill Church, Oxon, a pulpit cloth is embroidered with a seraph much like these at Canterbury; but yet they differ considerably.

