



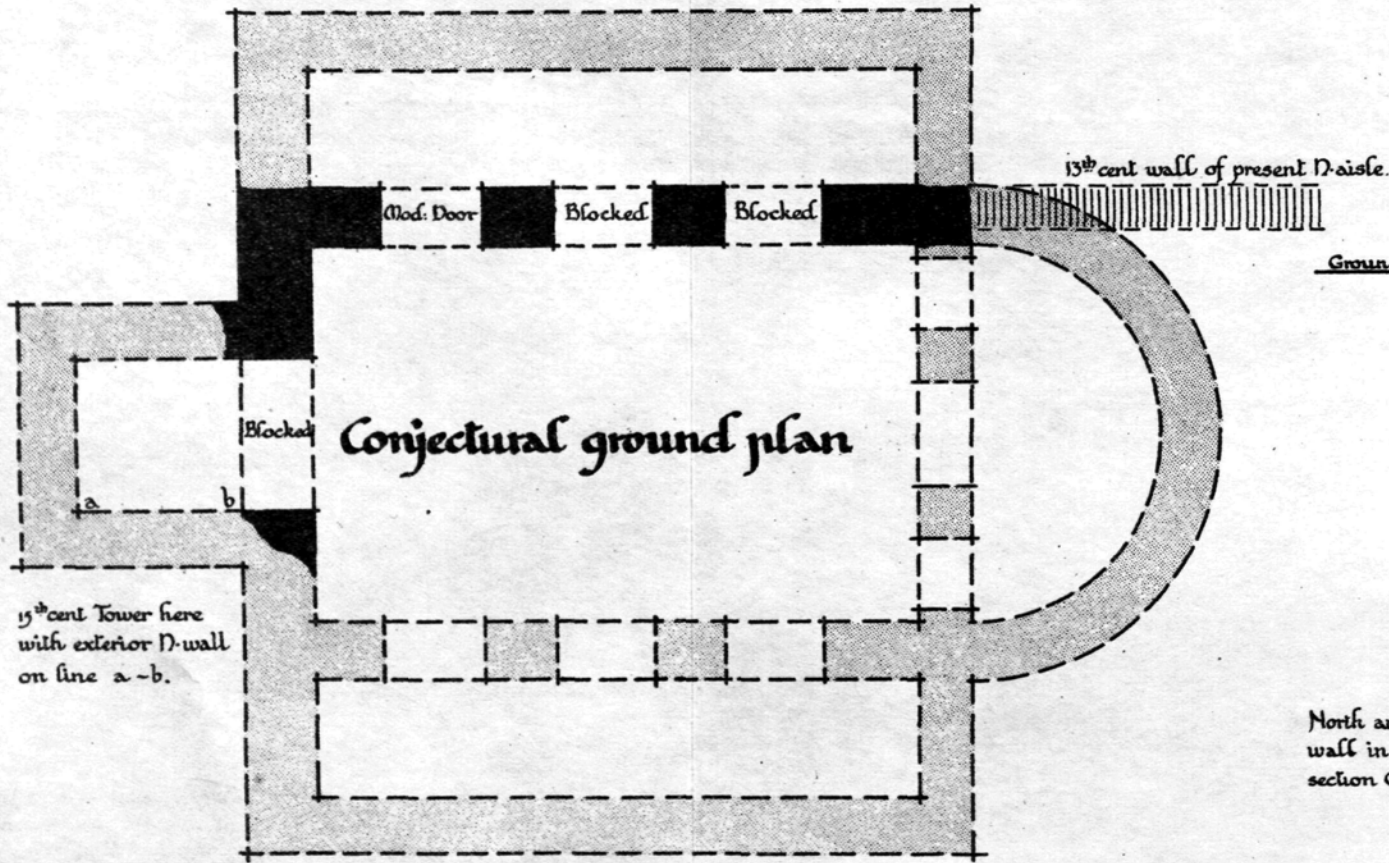
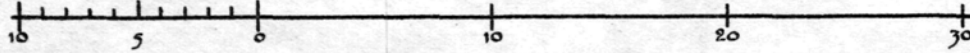
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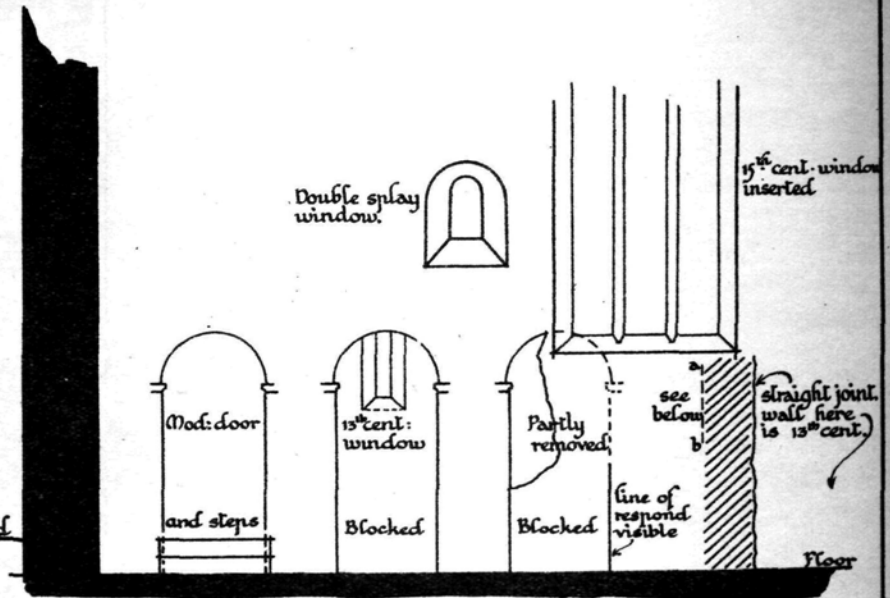
# Lydd, Kent. Preconquest Church.

Scale of feet.



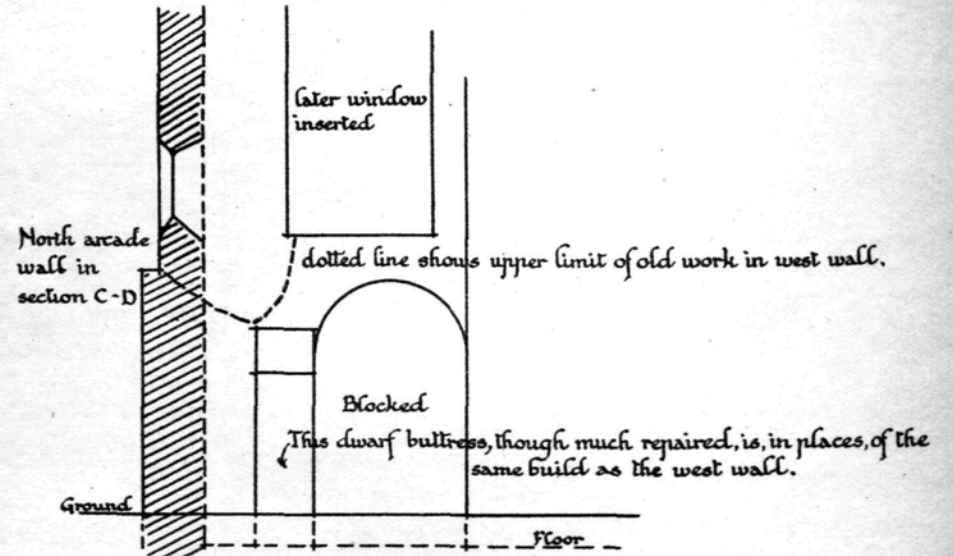
Conjectural ground plan

■ Preconquest work.
   
 □ D<sup>o</sup>, conjectural.



Interior Elevation, north arcade.

At a - b (above) are distinct signs of an internal angle and a return wall.



Exterior Elevation, west wall.

NOTES ON THE CHURCHES OF ROMNEY  
MARSH IN THE COUNTY OF KENT, 1923.

BY F. C. ELLISTON ERWOOD.

SUMMARY.

- I.—The pre-Conquest church at Lydd.
- II.—The ruined churches on the Marsh—  
    (a) Hope.  
    (b) Midley.  
    (c) Eastbridge.
- III.—Architectural notes on the churches of—  
    (a) New Romney.  
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    (e) St. Mary in the Marsh.
- IV.—Miscellaneous notes on some of the remaining churches.

I.—THE PRE-CONQUEST CHURCH AT LYDD.

When Canon Scott Robertson wrote his account of Lydd Church,\* he entirely missed the significance of the curious remains of arcading at the west end of the north aisle. He described them as a mural arcade of the late twelfth or early thirteenth century. This was perhaps excusable, as the whole of the wall was covered with a thick plaster, which was not removed till 1907. The late Mr. Micklethwaite visited the church in 1898 or thereabouts, and, as would be expected of such a discerning antiquary, he immediately recognized the work as Saxon, and in the latter of his two invaluable papers on Saxon church building† he gave a fairly full and detailed account of those parts of the building that

\* *Arch. Cant.*, XIII., pp. 427—450.

† *Arch. Jour.*, lv., pp. 343-344.

were of an early date. He illustrated his remarks with a plan on a small scale, but made no attempt to suggest the original plan of the Saxon church, nor did he venture to assign a date to it. Professor Baldwin Brown\* carries the investigation a few steps further. He gives a plan and sections of the walls under consideration, again on a small scale, but does not amplify the description of the fabric, as the walls still retained their coat of plaster. He does, however, suggest a date for the church, assigning it to the ninth or tenth century, and he compares it with the other aisled basilicas still remaining, complete or in ruin, in this country, *i.e.*, Brixworth (Northants), Reculver (Kent), and Wing (Bucks).† As, however, the walls have been stripped of their plaster covering since the last account was written, thus giving an opportunity for an examination of the fabric that was not possible for the earlier writers, I venture to give the following description, which is an effort to continue the architectural history of this most interesting building a little further. No attempt is made to pronounce a final judgment. That would only be possible after complete excavation both within and without the present church, and as this seems unlikely to occur in the near future, there is no object in further delaying the publication of this essay.

Lydd Church as it exists to-day is a large, imposing structure of considerable interest, second only to New Romney in interest and importance among the churches of Romney Marsh. Its general architectural history has been described by Canon Scott Robertson in the paper in *Arch. Cant.* already mentioned, but there is still much to be done before the history of the building is quite clear. This paper is not, however, concerned with the mediæval church nor its details.

At the west end of the north aisle it will be noticed that about 28 feet of the north wall presents a very rough appear-

\* *Arts in Early England*, vol. ii., pp. 245-246.

† *Proc. Camb. Ant. Soc.*, xxv., p. 50 *et seq.*, suggests another pre-Conquest aisled basilica at Great Paxton, Huntingdon, but this church has *pillared* aisles and is *late*, if indeed, it is pre-Conquest.



Fig. 2.—LYDD CHURCH  
Pre Conquest Arcade, Interior.



Fig. 3.—LYDD CHURCH  
Exterior of Pre Conquest Church.

ance. A set-back of about 6 inches marks the termination of this primitive walling, and beyond, a more normal plastered wall continues. It is very evident that the stripped wall was at one time pierced by three arches, two of which are now blocked, while the third serves as an entrance, though it too was probably at one time blocked. Judging from the eastern arch, the filling was of two periods. From the evidence of the middle arch, it was at first filled to within about 6 inches of the south face of the piers, a splayed thirteenth-century window being inserted at the same time. Subsequently this window was blocked also, and possibly the remainder of the arch was filled, to bring the whole wall to a flush surface, such as remains in the eastern arch, though it may be that only this arch was so treated, in the fifteenth century, when the window which cuts into the head of the arch was inserted. This window was also the cause of the destruction of the upper part of the east respond of this arch, but near the floor a straight joint preserves the line of it. The arches are 4 ft. 4 in. wide and 10 ft. 3 in. high, with semicircular heads, which are slightly wider than the clearance between the responds. The piers are 3 ft. wide and 2 ft. 6 in. thick, and the arches spring from stepped imposts cut from slabs of stone 4 in. thick. These moldings, which are cut on the reveal only, are very roughly worked, generally a hollow quarter round, though in the case of the eastern one of the central arch the mold has been produced by two straight cuts, meeting at an obtuse angle. These impost blocks, with the two or three stones immediately below them, are the only stones which show any signs of having been worked. The remainder of the wall consists of irregular pieces of Kentish rag, with here and there fragments of tile, with very little attempt at coursing. The arches have been turned in flat irregular pieces of rag, used in the same manner that Roman brick is used in constructing an arch. A stretch of wall 6 ft. 3 in. long extends beyond the eastern arch, 4 feet of which is original wall surface—original, that is, without the plaster; the rest is the ragged tothing of a return wall, which was

therefore 2 ft. 3 in. thick. Immediately beneath the eastern light of the inserted fifteenth-century window are obvious signs (see Fig. 1, *a-b*, Interior Elevation) where three squared stones have been removed. These were the interior coins of this return wall. Beyond this point the wall is thirteenth century building, and is set back 6 inches from the line of the more ancient structure. From this it is evident that the fragment represents the entire length of an arcade of three arches with two free piers. Above the eastern pier is the interior splay of a double-splayed, circular-headed window 4 ft. 6 in. high and 3 ft. 6 in. wide, with the bottom edge of the splay 13 ft. above the floor. The window opening is 2 ft. 8 in. by 1 ft. 5 in. with inclined jambs, but as the window has been much plastered and patched, these details may not be ancient. There were presumably three windows of this type, the east one being totally destroyed by the perpendicular light above, while the west example probably still exists, blocked under the memorial tablets and hatchments. Mr. Arthur Finn, F.S.A., who takes a very great interest in the church, and who was responsible for stripping the walls to reveal their long-hidden story, tells me that he took these wall memorials down and carefully examined the area for evidence of this window, though without success. There is a somewhat close similarity between the texture of the old work and the newer filling that renders a differentiation difficult. If anything, the earlier mortar is of a more pebbly nature.

From the exterior it will be seen that the western arch has had its details obscured under an unfortunate cement rendering, and the reopened arch has been fitted with a modern wooden door frame. A few stones have been removed from above the central arch to show its position, while the site of the eastern arch can only be located by removing the rank grass that covers the foot of the wall. Above the crown of the arcade, the wall is set back about 9 inches, the wall above being thinner. The exterior splay of the double-splayed window is opened out, and preserves in a more or less degree its original proportions, though the

lower splay has been altered, most likely when the set-back was filled in with cement to make the wall weather-tight (see Fig. 2). East of this window the walling is of a later date contemporary with the 3-light inserted window, it being impossible to detect the original termination of the wall. The west coin of this wall is not original; it is quite evident that something has been removed and the angle made good with other stones.

Returning to the interior again, the west wall of the present aisle now demands attention. Here the chief feature is a large arch of similar character to those of the arcade, but of different proportions. It is 6 ft. 6 in. wide and 11 ft. 5 in. high, with imposts of the same stepped character. Though now blocked, it is quite clear that at one time it went through the wall, the arched head being visible also from the outside. As this arch was presumably in the middle of the west wall of the old nave, the width of this latter may be put at 16 ft. The south jamb and the first foot or so of the adjoining wall are early work, but the building of a tower in the middle of the fifteenth century resulted in the removal of all traces of the south wall and arcade.

An examination of the outside of this wall shows that the upper part has been rebuilt. This is shown by a dotted line on the Exterior Elevation (see Fig. 1). But the most important feature is the cement-rendered buttress, a detail that hitherto has been overlooked. This is so small, and so obviously useless as a support, that some reason must be found for its presence. It is not shown nor mentioned by Micklethwaite; Professor Baldwin Brown shows it as a modern addition, overlapping the north jamb of the western arch. I think, however, that careful measurement and observation will show that a very small part of this buttress is of old work, of the same build as the old part of the west wall, and that, moreover, the south side of the buttress is in the same straight line as the north jamb of the arch. Briefly, here is the fragment of the toothing of a return wall—similar to the faint but certain indications of the east wall



already described—which extended westward to form the north wall of an annexe of some sort. When this addition was destroyed, the ragged end of the wall was smoothed up to form the insignificant support that now remains. Professor Brown also shows that the present tower overlaps the south respond of the western arch, but I am inclined to think that the north wall of the tower is built on the line of the old wall, if not actually on the footings themselves. Mr. Finn made some slight excavations here, and reports that the whole of the area consisted of sand and shingle, with little loose stone, a few bones and no foundations. Unfortunately I did not see these results, but the account is quite what might be expected. When the tower was built, the whole area was carefully cleared, including the foundations, which were probably not very extensive.

There are not many other details to record concerning the actual remains, but before proceeding to considerations of plan and date, it may be worth while to record the positions of various small holes  $\frac{3}{4}$  in. in diameter and of varying depth. They were originally covered with the plaster (two of them were uncovered by myself) and had been plugged with wood.

They are to be found:—

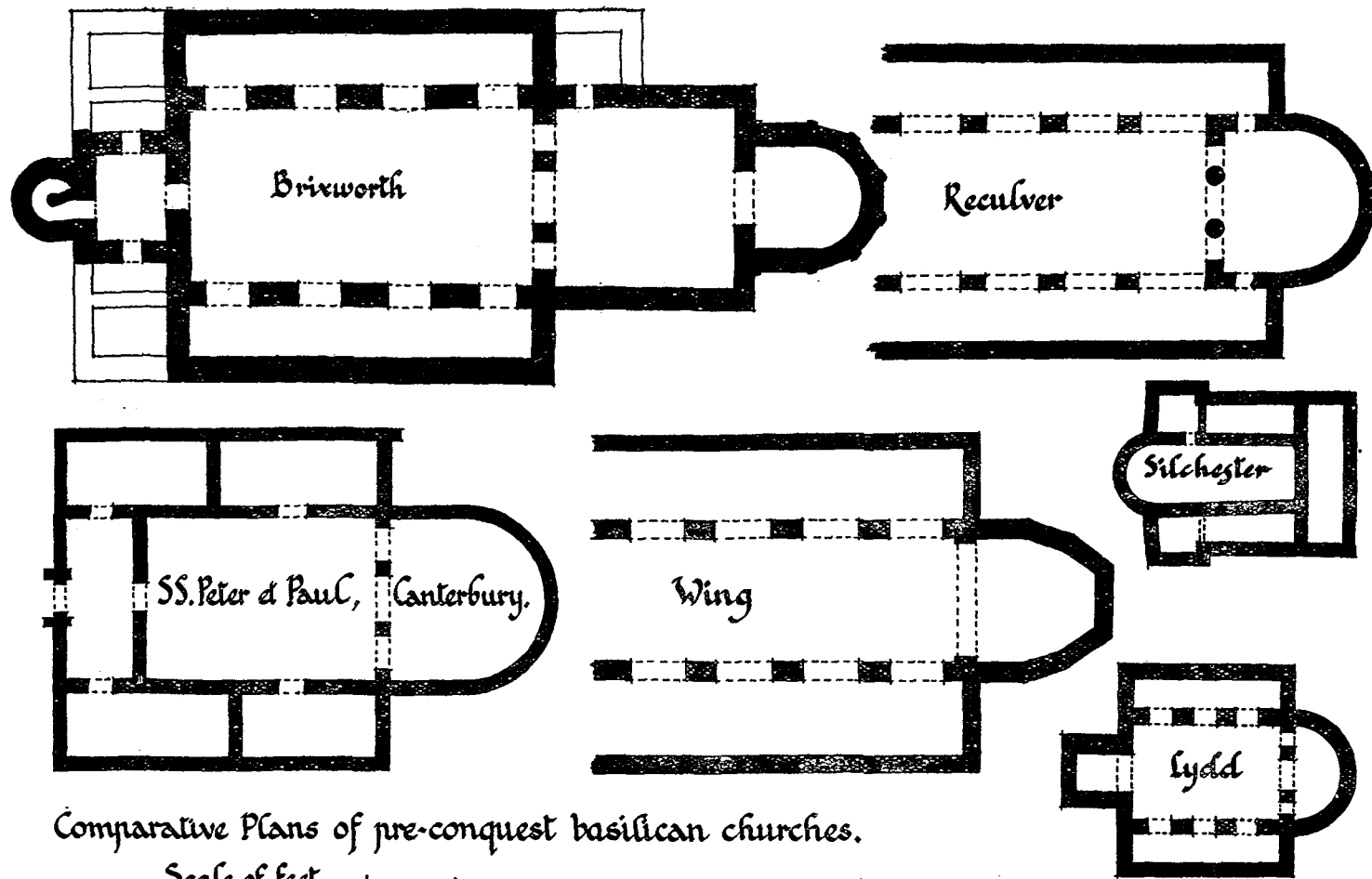
- (a) Impost, north side of west arch, in the hollow mold.
- (b) West side of present doorway, on south face of first stone below impost. This stone is covered with very rough diagonal tooling, and the hole contained a wooden plug.
- (c) East side of the same arch, but about 10 in. below the one opposite.
- (d) East side of middle arch, south face, 4 ft. 8 in. from the floor.

From their irregular positions and lack of uniformity of level, it is not likely they were for curtain or lamp supports. More probably the stones are re-used (? Roman) material brought from elsewhere, and the holes are “lewis holes.”


From the foregoing it is evident that the remains at Lydd represent the complete north arcade wall and the greater part of the west wall of an aisled basilican church. The plan accompanying this paper (Fig. 1) shows these parts in solid black; the conjectural parts are indicated by a tint. It is now necessary to justify the restoration. The aisles are obviously indicated by the arcade and by the setback for the wall-plate, above the arches and below the double-splayed window. The width of this aisle is unknown. It might be recovered by excavation, but it was undoubtedly narrow. Above the roof of this aisle appeared a range of three windows similar to that which remains, forming a clearstory.

Professor Baldwin Brown gives four examples of pre-Conquest aisled basilicas of which any vestiges exist. There are, of course, several others whose like plan can be inferred from documentary evidence, but in the absence of all but general dispositions, they do not help very much. Reculver, which is in the list, is a doubtful example. I hope to be able to deal with this church at some future time; meanwhile it is sufficient here to remark that the evidence for Reculver at present favours a first plan more like that of St. Paneras, Canterbury, in that it had a "porticus" north and south. Reculver was, however, certainly aisled in pre-Conquest times, so for the present it may be considered. Comparative plans of these are shown (Fig. 4), from which the insignificant size of Lydd is apparent. It could easily be placed inside the spacious and unique nave of Brixworth, while on the other hand it is only a trifle larger than the presumed Christian basilica unearthed at Silchester. None of the architectural details at Lydd compare in the least with the magnificent craftsmanship at Brixworth, though if the plaster were taken from Wing a parallel technique might be revealed. In all the churches the arcade consists of four arches, save at Lydd, where only three are found. The result is that in this exceptional instance the over-all width of nave and aisles is greater than the length of the nave. The addition of another arch at Lydd would bring it

FIG. 4.



Comparative Plans of pre-conquest basilican churches.

Scale of feet. 

to more normal proportions, and I had hoped to be able to read the evidence of the eastern end of the remaining arcade as indicating this missing bay, but it is quite out of the question. The length of the nave is absolutely fixed.

I have indicated the eastern termination of the building, of which no trace remains, as apsidal. My reasons are:—

1. The apse is the normal E. end of churches of this and allied character, especially in the south. For a similar reason a triple arcade is shown in front of the chancel, though in this instance there is no reason why a large single arch, such as that at the west end, should not have formed the chancel arch.
2. The wall terminating as it now does, with a ragged end, must mean that it originally curved from that point eastwards. It was therefore removed, as it could not be incorporated in the extension.

Mr. Micklethwaite mentions in his account of the church that the sexton told him of a vault and some walls below the floor, somewhere near the east end of the early work. It is only right to add that Mr. Finn discredits the existence of these supposed foundations. He was continually in the church during the time the repaving was in progress, and would have certainly known of any such discoveries. He suggests that some vaults opened in another part of the church gave rise to the story.

But the feature that I have ventured to add to the plan is the rectangular forebuilding at the west end. It is analogous with the western porches at St. Pancras, Monkwearmouth, or Corbridge, rather than with the western tower at Brixworth. It is quite possible, however, that, like the two northern examples, a tower may have been built over the porch. Excavations, as I have already indicated, gave but negative results. Obviously the large arch must have given access to a western annexe of some kind, as it was much too large for a doorway, and the examination of

the dwarf buttress convinced me that a fragment of the wall of this forebuilding was incorporated in it. Where ancient mortar remains it is of the same pebbly character as that in the west wall. There may have been an apse here in the west; the fragment of walling is too small to show any curvature, and Mr. Micklethwaite suggests either a baptistery or an altar here, as at Silchester. It is perhaps of little use to speculate on the form or use of a building that is not absolutely proved to have existed, but as north or south porches on the aisles would have been very insignificant features—the walls of the aisles cannot have been more than 8 ft. high—it seems more than probable that an entrance was made at the west, which was, and is now, the line of approach to the church.

Now remains the final matter, to suggest a date for the erection of the building. From architectural evidence the most noteworthy feature is the absence of all characteristics of late pre-Conquest work, such as long-and-short work, double windows with mid-wall shafts, pilaster strips, strip-work round openings, and internally splayed, long, narrow loops. The double-splayed clearstory window at Lydd may be late or early. It is certainly not a good specimen of its kind. The mid-wall opening is not much further from the outer face of the wall than in a good number of twelfth-century examples. It certainly has double splays, but the external one is slight. And again, the window is far from being untouched. A western porch of the type suggested here is not necessarily late, nor is the divergence of arch width and the distance between the piers. Though it is found at Wing it is of probable Roman origin. The walls are thicker than late Saxon walls, and they are not of great height. Everything points in the direction of a comparatively early date.

This is confirmed by a reference to existing documents which make mention of Lydd. The first notice of the place is found in a charter of 741 A.D., wherein Eadbriht grants to the Church of Christ in Canterbury pasture for 150 beasts near the marsh called Bisceopeswic, which was the

nucleus from which Lydd grew.\* In 774 A.D. Offa of Mercia granted to Jaenberht, Archbishop of Canterbury, three ploughlands or sulings of Mersware land called Hlidum.† In 790 A.D. is a strange entry in the A. S. Chronicle, though not in all MSS.‡ Jaenberht is succeeded in the primacy by Aethelheard, *Abbot of the Monastery of Hlud*. This, taken in conjunction with the old name of Lydd, looks promising, but unfortunately on philological grounds Lydd must be ruled out. In 893 A.D. the Danes sailed up the Rother to Appledore, passing Lydd, which they no doubt attacked also. From this brief sketch of the early history of Lydd, it seems that the church was either erected before the Danish invasion or else at the beginning of the tenth century, when peace was more assured. In the first case the church must have survived, whatever damage was inflicted in the pagan descent. Professor Baldwin Brown also accepts these limits, when he classifies the building as either "B" (800—950 A.D.) or "Ci" (tenth century). Brixworth in its earliest form dates from 680 A.D., which is possibly the date of the additions to Reculver, but Wing is most likely tenth century.

There seems to be no work in Lydd Church that dates between the building of this first church and the thirteenth century. It is quite reasonable to suppose that the early building survived till the rebuilding *circa* 1238. Some tradition of the sanctity or associations of the older building may have lingered, so that the whole of it was not ruthlessly destroyed, but a part left to preserve the site.

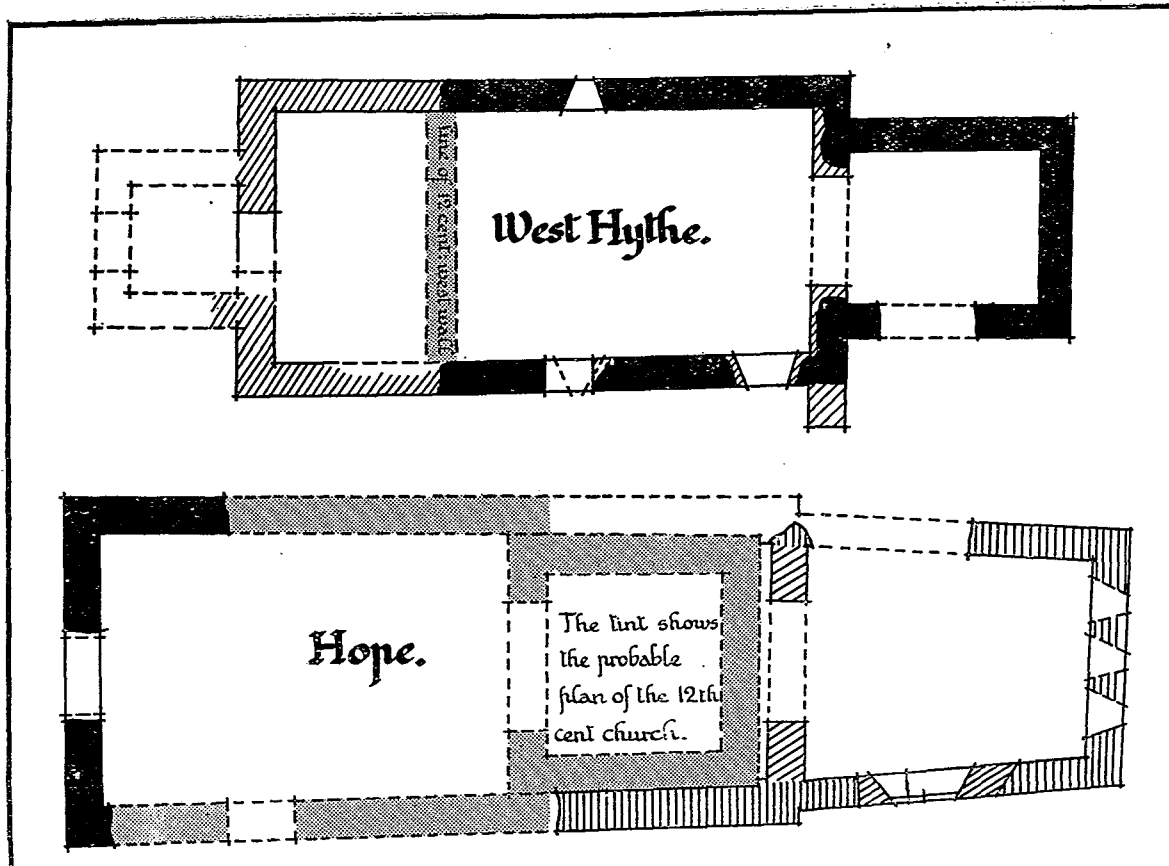
It is of importance also to note that the charter of 741 (*supra*) also refers to the existence of an oratory dedicated to St. Martin in what is now New Romney. It is possible that the church at Lydd may have been erected at a somewhat later date to serve those in Denge Marsh who were separated from St. Martin by the course of the Rother.

\* Kemble, *Codex Diplomaticus Cart.*, 86, 122, and 1003; Burrows, *Cinque Ports*, p. 14; *Arch. Cant.*, XIII., p. 349.

† Burrows, *op. cit.*, p. 14; McClure, *English Place-names*, pp. 215-16.

‡ McClure, *op. cit.*, p. 235 and note i.

FIG. 5A.



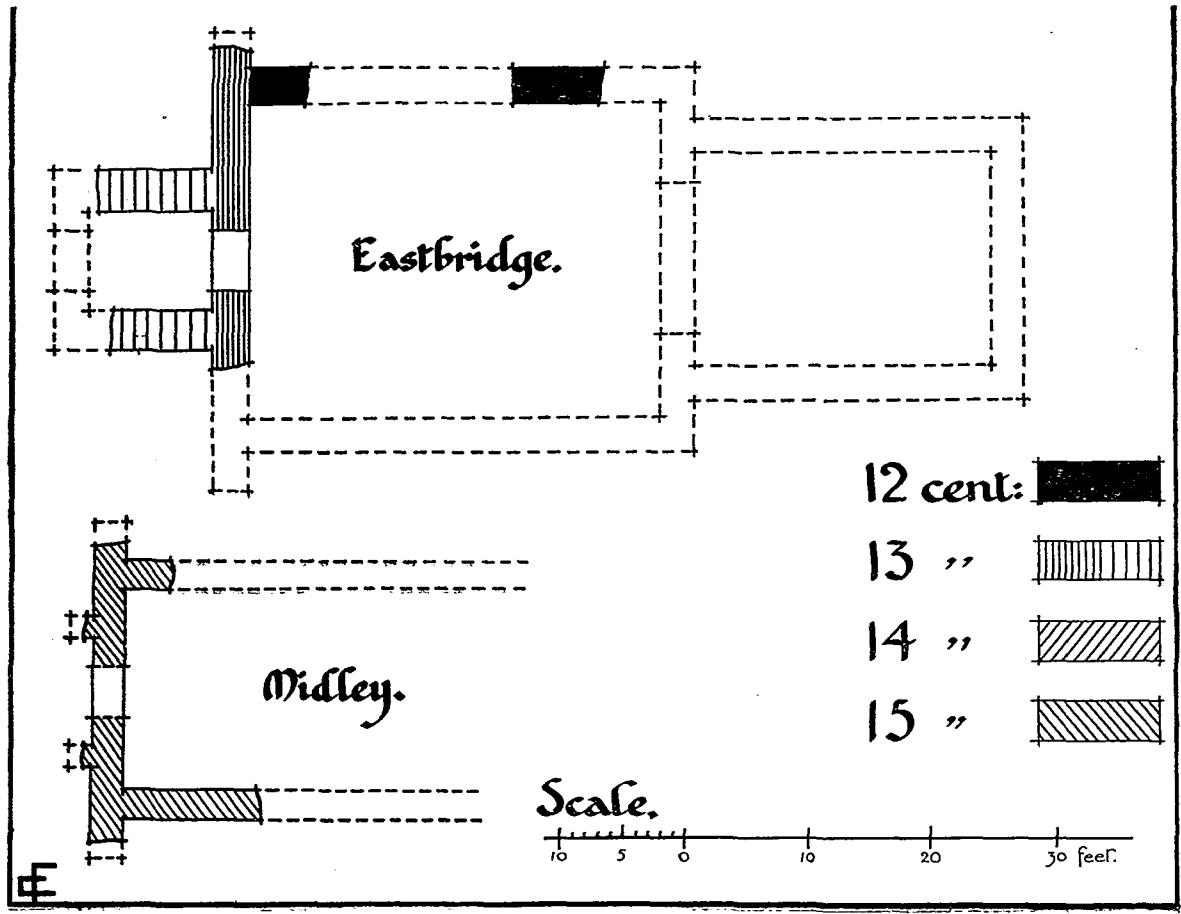


FIG. 5B.



which then flowed in its ancient channel. Denge Marsh was inned during the latter part of the eighth century, as was the district known as Westbrook.\* These dates may be taken as indicating the period when Lydd developed, and when a church became necessary. Taking all matters into consideration, it appears that a date somewhere between 775 A.D. and 825 A.D. will agree with all the evidence, architectural and documentary, that has been adduced.

NOTE.—The bulk of this section of this paper has already appeared in the *Archæological Journal*, vol. xxviii., 1921. It is here printed with a few additions and emendments on account of its importance and local interest.

## II.—THE RUINED CHURCHES ON THE MARSH.

The number of destroyed or ruined churches of which something is known amounts to eleven, if the Priory of St. John Baptist and the Hospital of SS. Stephen and Thomas in New Romney be included. Of these only four possess any intelligible remains at the present time. These are Hope, Midley, Eastbridge and West Hythe. This last is not strictly on the Marsh, and in addition its architectural history has been admirably worked out by Canon Livett, F.S.A.,† but for the sake of comparison the plan has been redrawn and reproduced on the same scale as adopted for the other churches. The destroyed churches of New Romney have already been dealt with,‡ and as there are no vestiges of any of them, they do not come within the scope of this paper. St. Martin has already been referred to in the previous section on the church of Lydd; St. Lawrence, though its site is known, was evidently destroyed by the middle of the sixteenth century; the Priory (which seems to have been a cell of Pontigny) and the Spital offer more scope for the political student than for the architect. The same remark may apply to the alleged church of

\* Burrows, *op. cit.*, p. 237, and map, p. 16.

† *Arch. Cant.*, XXX., pp. 250—257.

‡ *Arch. Cant.*, XIII., pp. 237—249.



Fig. 6.—HOPE ALL SAINTS  
from South-East.



Fig. 7.—HOPE ALL SAINTS  
Chancel from North-West.



Fig. 8.—EASTBRIDGE  
from South-East.

St. Michael, whose site is marked on the O.S. map, and is also mentioned by Hasted, though Canon Scott Robertson doubts its existence. Blackmanstone, about three miles north of New Romney, and Orgarswick, a mile and a half north-west of Dymchurch, have both disappeared, though there are a few stones scattered about the site of the latter. Broomhill is really in Sussex, being two miles west of the county boundary, but there are no remains of the church. Most of this little "Member of Romney" was swept away by the storm of 1287, but on rising ground in a distant part of the parish were long to be seen the ruins of a church.\* Mr. Finn tells me that in Broomhill Farm is a "Chapel Yard," wherein is a heap of stones from the walls of the church, but no indication of the church, whose site is well known, though a recent writer† says that traces of this church do remain.

(a) HOPE, ALL SAINTS.

The remains of this interesting building are situated on a slight eminence north of the main Ashford-New Romney road, about a mile and a quarter from the latter town. The church has been a ruin since about the middle of the seventeenth century, being certainly in use in 1541, though none of the existing features seem to be as late as that date. In 1573 (Arch. Parker's visitation) the church was in decay for lack of repairs. In plan the church consists of a simple unaisled nave, with a very irregular chancel, which, though the fabric has suffered much from the treacherous nature of the marshy subsoil, so that walls have slipped in some places and fallen in others, seems to preserve the original shape. The nave is now about 54 ft. long internally, with a width of 19 ft. 6 in. at the east end and 21 ft. 6 in. at the west. The chancel is roughly 22 ft. 6 in. from east to west, but tapers remarkably in width, being 18 ft. 6 in. at the west and but 15 ft. 6 in. at the east. Of the nave, the greater part of the north wall, a considerable part of the south, and

\* Burrows, *Cinque Ports*, p. 252.

† Bradley, *An Old Gate of England*, p. 251.

the central portion of the west have disappeared, though sufficient of the coins remain to indicate the size of the building. The walling consists of a mixture of local stones in which rag predominates, generally in irregular blocks, though the coins are squared. There are plenty of beach pebbles of large size, and a few pieces of Caen stone, with characteristic diagonal tooling. The great gap in the west wall marks the position of the west door, with probably a window above, but there is not a sign of any feature that would be of value in assigning a date to the church. The interior is plastered, but there are no such indications on the exterior. The putlog holes are somewhat unusual, going right through the wall in a diagonal direction. They are lined with ashlar, and, as a matter of fact, look directly on to the responds of the chancel arch, where there were altars, but no legitimate inferences can be drawn from this as to their use as squints. In any case, those on a higher level, which are of the same character, could not be so used. The north wall, as much of it as remains, displays the same features, is also plastered, and has three rows of putlog holes. The south wall is destroyed with the exception of 20 ft. at the eastern extremity, but a photograph in the Petrie collection shows that in 1806 the remains of a doorway existed near the west end of this wall. This is indicated on the plan (Fig. 5A), and the view in Hasted shows this to be twelfth century. There are also two windows of the same date. At the east end of the nave are the two fragmentary responds of the chancel arch. That on the north stands to a height of a few feet, but the one opposite is almost gone, the lowest course only remaining, covered with grass and débris. These responds seem to be bonded into the wall but slightly, that on the south almost suggesting a straight joint. They contain much re-used material, including Caen stone, and are obviously later than the nave. In fact there are slight evidences that they are the responds of the second chancel arch on this spot, for they are built on the footings of a slightly wider wall.

The chancel, with the exception of about half of the

north wall, is in a fair state, and its history can be quite clearly read. The east end on the exterior shows no signs of the window arrangement, a large gap merely indicating their position. The greater part of the wall is plastered, but the usual material, rag, pebbles and local sandstone, is found. The coins are of ashlar, either Caen or Reigate stone, and very badly weathered. They are of small scantling, and some seem to show diagonal tooling, but they are most likely re-used stones. From the inside the reveal of a lancet window can be seen, worked in the rubble, 2 ft. 6 in. from the south wall. This is the sole surviving fragment of a group of three lancets which adorned this east wall, and is sufficient to suggest a thirteenth-century date for the chancel. The major portion of the north wall has but recently fallen, and it has lost its north-east coin in its lower part. The south wall is the most interesting, for it tells more of the changes that took place in this small building than does any other part. Five feet from the east wall is the reveal of a blocked lancet window of similar character and date to those in the east wall, evidently indicating a group of two or three on each side of the chancel. But at a subsequent date these windows were blocked and a larger two-light window was inserted in their place. This window was probably of the fourteenth century. In the lower part of this same wall is the west jamb of a small priest's door, which was about 3 ft. wide.

From such architectural details as are given above it is possible to reconstruct the history of the fabric. The first building on the site of which any fragments have survived was a little twelfth-century oratory, consisting of a nave roughly 33 ft. by 21 ft. and a chancel 14 ft. by 17 ft. interior measurements. This compares remarkably well with West Hythe, whose corresponding dimensions are: Nave 31 ft. by 19 ft., chancel 12 ft. by 15 ft. This church occupied the area now covered by the present nave. Its relation to the existing building is shown on the plan (Fig. 5A). In the thirteenth century the usual enlargement was carried out: the north and south walls of the nave were extended east-

wards, a new chancel arch was erected just east of the old east wall, and a new chancel erected, the whole of these alterations taking place without disturbing the old arrangements till the new altar was ready for hallowing. In the succeeding century alterations in the lighting arrangements were carried out, and seemingly a new chancel arch erected. The fact that just 20 ft. of the south wall remains, broken off at the precise spot where the junction between twelfth and thirteenth century work would have taken place, lends some kind of confirmation to the suggested line of development.

(b) MIDLEY.

The church of Midley is situated midway between Lydd and Old Romney, a quarter of a mile away from any road, in the midst of fields. There are various footpaths—remnants, maybe, of older roads—that lead to it, but to the average traveller to the Marsh, Midley will but remind him of that gaunt ruin that stands close by the railway that takes him to Lydd or Littlestone, about a couple of miles before the former station is reached. Midley, like Hope, stands on a slight eminence, and was quite likely, as its name suggests, an island. That is indeed suggested in the map in Professor Burrows' book,\* where the church is indicated as standing on the banks of the old course of the Rother. Little has been written of the early history of Midley, chiefly because there was little to write. There are some dozen references in the Romney Marsh volume of *Arch. Cant.*, XIII., but the sum and substance of them all is that there was a church at Midley in Domesday times, that in the late fourteenth century there were 43 adults, implying a population of about 60 all told, and that in 1570-1571 a tax of a fifteenth and a tenth only produced 4s. 2d., the least amount of any Marsh parish. In 1573 (Parker's visitation) the church was decayed. Turning to the church for further information, only the west wall, with fragments of the north and south walls, remain above ground, and none of it can be assigned

\* *Cinque Ports*, facing p. 16.

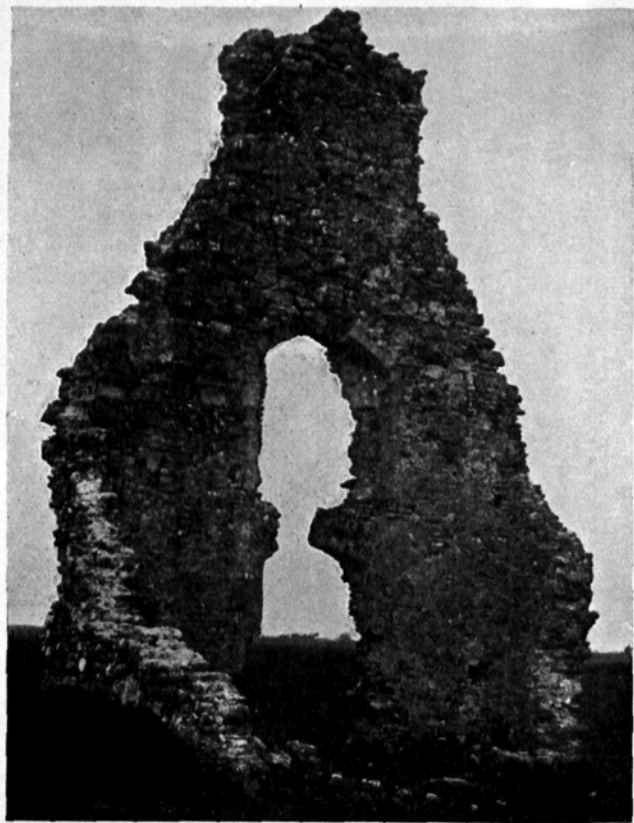


Fig. 9.—MIDLEY  
West End, Interior.

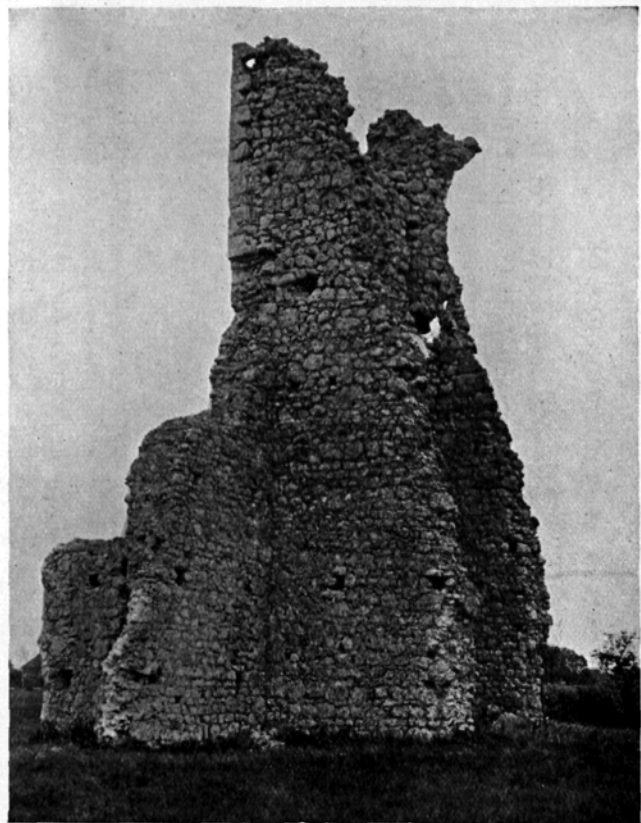


Fig. 10.—EASTBRIDGE TOWER  
from North-West.

to a date earlier than the fifteenth century. The fabric is of the usual marshland character, but in this case there is a considerable admixture of brick—thin, reddish yellow, and sometimes coursed. In the west wall is a four-centred arched doorway turned in this brick, with ashlar dressings, and above it is a window of like construction, having a rere-arch of ashlar with a hollow chamfer. The interior is plastered, and remains of the gabled weather mold can still be traced. Above this mold the wall seems to indicate a bell-cote. Above the window is a weathered corbel that supported part of the timber roof; it bears a nearly obliterated device. There were buttresses north and south, and two smaller ones flanked the west door. The east end of the church has gone, but the site seems to suggest a plain rectangular building about 15 ft. wide and not more than 50 ft. long, without any constructional chancel. Petrie's sketch, *circa* 1806, which shows the whole of the south wall standing, implies this, and it also shows a breach in the wall midway along its length. This may indicate the position of a door. In the jambs of the west door are the draw-bar hole and stop for fastening the door. The hole runs the entire length of the north-west end, and is carefully lined with red brick, which has been worn into a considerable hollow by the frequent use of the bar.

From the architectural evidence there are no signs of an early church, but it appears probable that Midley was not entirely deserted in the fifteenth century, as the church was almost completely reconstructed in that period.

(c) EASTBRIDGE.

The ruins of Eastbridge Church are to be found just off the road leading from Dymchurch into Kent *via* Aldington. Again we have a village, at one time evidently of some importance, but leaving little or no trace save in its ruined church. The Doomsday survey credits Eastbridge with two churches, but as Dymchurch was then included in the manor of Eastbridge it is most likely that the church in that hamlet was intended.



The remains of the walls indicate a nave about 33 ft. long and 25 ft. wide, with a western tower internally about 10 ft. by 8 ft. The west wall of the tower has entirely disappeared, likewise all walls except a few feet of the return on the north, with about 6 ft. more as a detached mass further to the east. The dimensions, where absent, may be possibly recovered from the slight trenches in the ground, indicating where walls have been removed for their stone, a rare material on the Marsh. From such indications it can be inferred that the chancel was about 24 ft. by 17 ft., with a chancel arch of 12 ft. span. The wall material is almost entirely rag with coins of the same material. The fragment of the north wall is of rather rougher construction, and moreover it makes a straight joint with the west wall. It seems likely, therefore, that there was first of all a small twelfth-century church here of somewhat similar size to those of Hope and West Hythe, and that in the succeeding century a new west front was built on to the old nave, which may also have had an aisle added, though there is no evidence other than the greater width of the present nave to suggest this. There is re-used twelfth-century material in the tower. The west wall of the nave shows the positions of a doorway with a window above it: it also shows the weather mold of the nave roof. From the existence of a window in the west wall, and from the evidence of the fabric above the weather mold, it is probable that the tower is an after-thought, but the building was not long delayed. There is a record of roofing works in 1452, but evidently soon after this date the church became neglected.

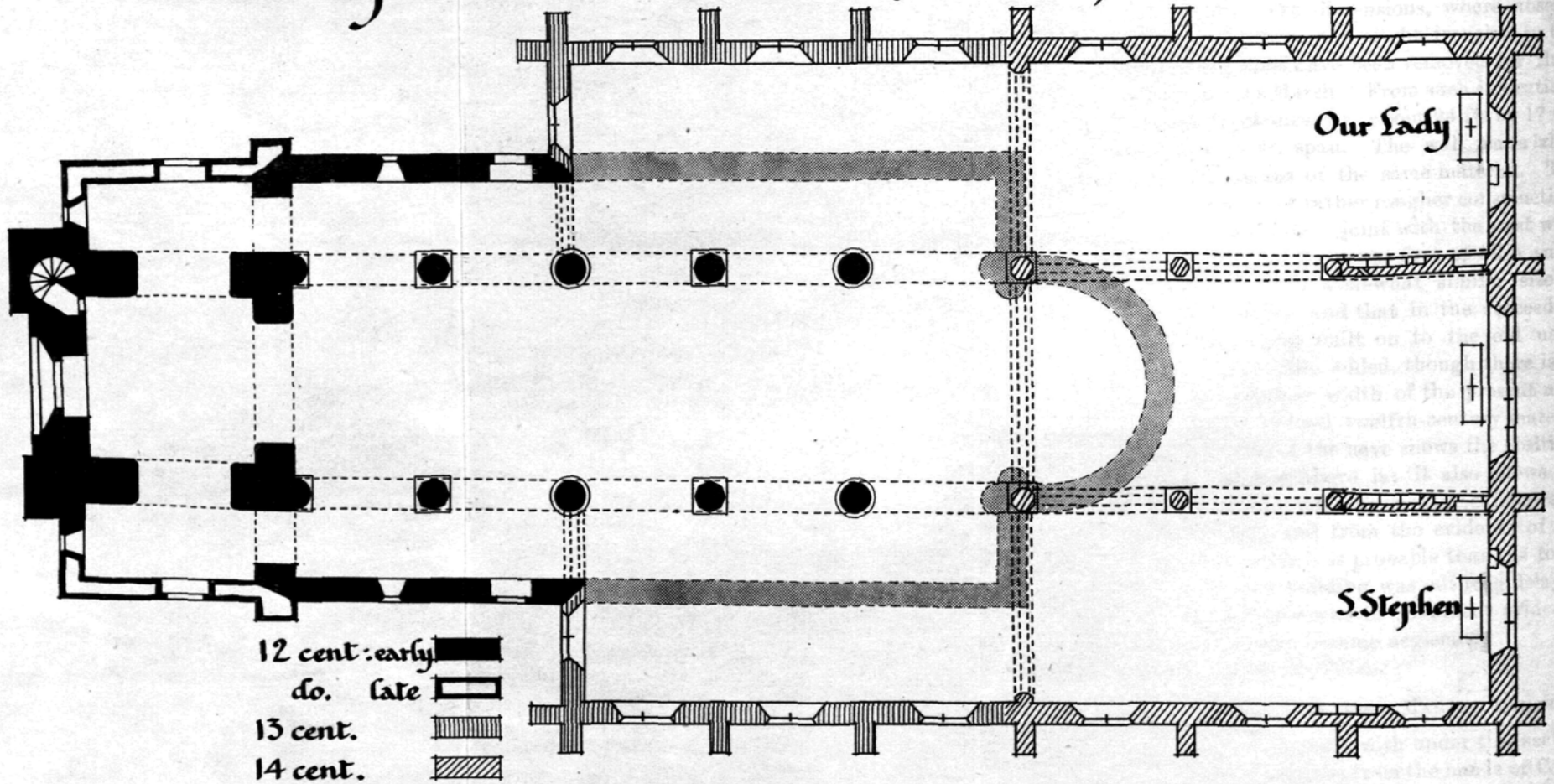
### III.—ARCHITECTURAL NOTES ON SOME MARSH CHURCHES.

Of the five buildings to be dealt with under this section, two have already received attention from the hands of Canon Scott Robertson, namely, those of Old and New Romney.\* In these cases I venture to submit a hatched historical plan that will make the growth of the church more evident,

\* *Arch. Cant.*, XIII., pp. 408—418 and 466—479.

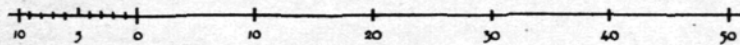
FIG. 11.

# New Romney. S. Nicholas. Historical Ground Plan.



The tint indicates the extent of the 12 cent: church.

Scale of feet.



leaving the student to turn to the articles above mentioned for more detailed architectural information and documentary references. In the case of the magnificent church at New Romney this, I think, will be admitted of some little value, as the growth of the church in that once important town reflects well the increasing fortunes of the port till the end of the fifteenth century. In the case of Old Romney I am compelled to admit that the development of that church is somewhat obscure, and my solution is by no means the only one. But I think that it has a reasonable probability. The three remaining churches have not been treated in the pages of *Arch. Cant.* before, probably because they were considered to be of slight interest. If this be true the reason is not a satisfactory one, and I have endeavoured to repair the neglect; and I think it will be observed that none are devoid of some appeal, while the church of St. Mary in the Marsh is particularly interesting. Concerning the plans, I have endeavoured to make them as accurate as time and circumstance would allow, but I only would designate them sketch plans, and in many instances I have not troubled to date every window or door or arch. The plan of New Romney is enlarged from that which accompanies the paper previously mentioned, and is reproduced, as are all the plans except where otherwise stated, to a uniform scale of 16 ft. to the inch.

(a) NEW ROMNEY, ST. NICHOLAS.

The possession of a magnificent harbour marked out New Romney as an important centre even before the Conquest, and in spite of the chronicler's statement that the Conqueror, after the victory of Hastings, marched to Romney and there took "what vengeance he would for the slaughter of his men,"\* there is no doubt that the place prospered in Norman times. The records give in Domesday times the total of 156 burgesses, which was the eighth of the total for Kent.

\* *Cinque Ports*, p. 49.

In any case confirmation of this prosperity may be found in the fabric of the great church of St. Nicholas, which can show evidence of at least four building periods during the twelfth century. These may be summarized as follows:—

- (a) A small aisleless church, with a small chancel, the whole occupying the present nave as far as the last pair of twelfth-century cylindrical columns. Of this church only a fragment of the west front remains in the portions of arcading that appear above the western thirteenth-century arch of the tower.
- (b) This church was subsequently enlarged by the addition of aisles and a probable extension eastward. To this period belongs the present arcade of alternate cylindrical and octagonal columns with heavy scalloped caps, and the two fragments of the aisle walls north and south that intervene between the later aisle and the annexes to the tower. The plan at this period was, at its eastern end, somewhat as indicated in tint on the plan (Fig. 11). The arrangement of the octagonal piers, with one diagonal east and west, is unusual. It is found also at Bapchild, Kent, and was evidently the arrangement at Thetford (Cluniac) Priory.
- (c) Immediately on the conclusion of the work comprised in the above reconstruction a tower was built, the present structure, though, as Canon Scott Robertson points out, by no means all the work that is now apparent, which obviously belongs to a later period. At the most only the two lower stages are of this building activity.
- (d) The next and final stage of this twelfth-century church was to add, north and south of the tower, extensions of the aisles westwards, the walls of the tower being pierced and the two late-Norman arches being inserted.

I have already referred to the peculiar flanking additions to a western tower in my paper on Teynham Church,\* which also has these features, though of a much later date. I give there a list of churches that also possess this same detail. In this case of New Romney it is even more difficult to suggest a reason for them. The plan of the church at the beginning of the thirteenth century, if my suggestions are considered reasonable, bears a remarkable likeness to the fine twelfth-century church of Melbourne, Derbyshire,† for though this building has a tower over the crossing and two small flanking towers at the west instead of the large central feature of Romney, yet in proportion, in the nature of its nave arcade and in its narrow aisles, it is in many ways reminiscent of the Cinque Port church. Melbourne had also an apsidal east end, which will justify the introduction of that type of eastern termination here.

It should be noted, however, that Mr. C. Stokes of Ashford, who knows this church very well, tells me that underneath the choir stalls, midway between the two free fourteenth-century piers on the south side, is the base of another twelfth-century pier. If this is so, it would necessitate a revision of my plan, but I rather suspect some detail of the thirteenth-century chancel, the arrangement of which nothing is known. Mr. Stokes admits that he saw this base as far back as 1880, and in any case its distance from the next twelfth-century pier is excessive.

This building, then, imposing as it must have been, was soon further enlarged. The typical early narrow aisles and the apsidal sanctuary were both inadequate, small and old-fashioned in plan. The thirteenth century saw these details changed, but for some unknown reason the aisles were only widened for the three easternmost bays of the old nave, two bays still remaining therefore of the original width, a half arch being thrown across this aisle from each stump of the twelfth-century walling to the second free pier from the west. As at Melbourne, the chancel was squared and

\* *Arch. Cant.*, XXXV., pp. 145—157.

† *Archæologia*, vol. xiii., pp. 280—308.

lengthened, or so it may be presumed, in which case the new chancel extended to about the beginning of the present sanctuary with its peculiar dwarf walls.

The succeeding century was the culmination of New Romney's commercial and architectural activity. The church was again extended, becoming in form as well as in fact a typical merchant's church as is found for instance in East Anglia. The thirteenth-century chancel gave way to a more elaborate example flanked by aisles of the same width as those of the previous century, but separated from the chancel by an arcade of molded arches carried on slender octagonal columns with typical molded caps. The whole of the windows throughout the church were reconstructed in the newer style, and in its glory of glass, painting and tombs the whole building must have been of a spacious magnificence. The chapel on the south was dedicated to St. Stephen, as is seen from the wills of members of the Stuppeney family, who desired to be buried there. Most probably, therefore, the chapel on the north is that of Our Lady, which is also mentioned in other wills. These chapels are very interesting, being separated from the high chancel by a dwarf wall, filling in the lower portion of the easternmost arches of the extended arcade. In each wall is a piscina, a triple sedile, with a "squint" cut through the rear wall of the western seat, while close to the east wall in each partition is a doorway.

There were lights in the church to : The Rood, Our Lady, St. Clement, St. Erasmus, St. George, St. Katherine, St. Nicholas and St. Stephen. Some of these were associated with guilds or brotherhoods such as those of St. Clement, St. Edmund, St. George, St. John, St. John Baptist, St. Katherine and St. Stephen.

(b) OLD ROMNEY, ST. CLEMENT.

The interesting article on the destroyed churches of New Romney in the volume of *Arch. Cant.*, frequently referred to, should be considered with reference to the building at Old Romney, and the writer of the article on this

church in the same volume points out the fact that in all probability no part of the church now under consideration was erected till after these now non-existent churches had been built.

Concerning the present church of Old Romney, it is fairly evident that, from the plan of the nave alone, it is hardly likely to belong to the early period of Norman architecture. The walls are too thin and the nave is too wide in proportion to its width, and yet not wide enough to have had an aisle. I venture to ascribe it to the latter part of the twelfth century, to which period I also date the tower. The western part of the present north aisle and the part of the one on the south between the tower and the eastern chapel are probable additions of the thirteenth century, while the whole of the western extensions, *i.e.*, the choir and the chapels of Our Lady and St. Katherine are Decorated work of the early fourteenth century. Thus the growth of Old Romney was more or less on the same lines as at its greater namesake, but the workmanship is curiously primitive. For instance, the arches from the nave to the aisles, though pointed, spring from very plain impostes, and the piers are not much more than the fragments of walling left after the arches were cut through, a feature that is generally associated with work of an earlier date than I have suggested. But I cannot think that they are so early as any part of the twelfth century. The original chancel has left no indications of its extent: it probably was about two-thirds of the length of the present one. Both fourteenth-century chapels are boarded off, that on the north serving as a vestry. There are the remains of a rood stairway entrance, a curious coffin slab, and the original mensa of the altar. The south chapel is deplorable. A huge brick buttress has been built in its north-west corner to support the tottering walls, and the whole chapel is a repository for coals, wood, discarded decorations and miscellaneous rubbish. It was evidently like this in 1880. The entrance to this lumber room is through the fragments of the fifteenth-century rood screen, which has evidently been sawn up to make the partition.

The whole of the chancel and of the chancel arch is covered with panelling that effectually obscures the architectural details, and moreover makes it almost impossible to tell the state of the fabric, which is seemingly in a precarious condition. The font is an interesting example, and the roof retains its early timbers. There were lights to the Rood, St. Christopher, St. James, and brotherhoods, with lights to Our Lady, St. Katherine and St. Margaret. There was also a picture (? wall painting) of St. James.

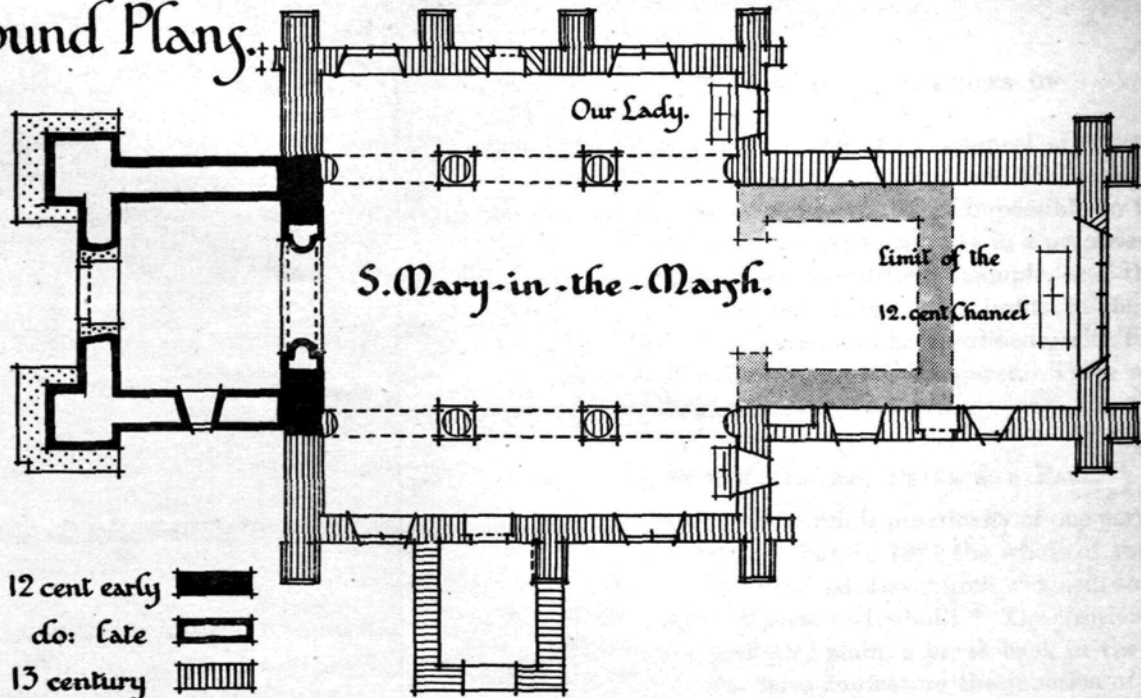
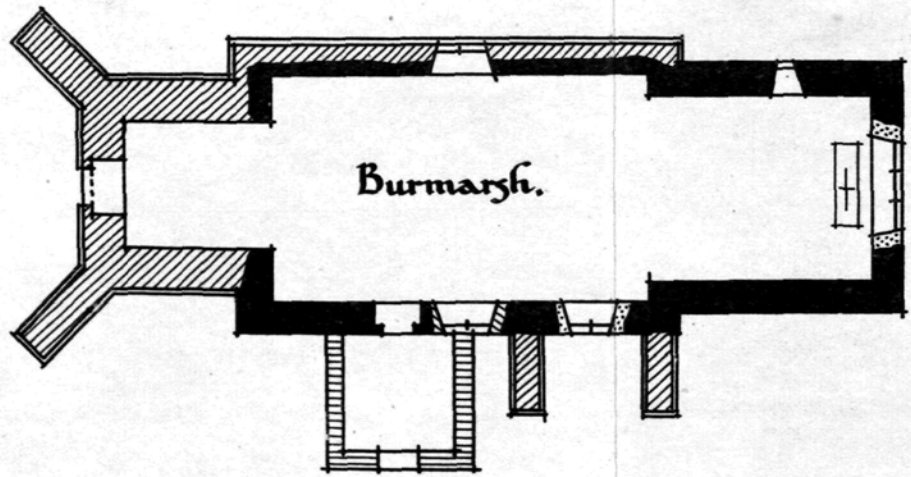
(c) DYMCHURCH, SS. PETER AND PAUL.

The church of Dymchurch is practically of one period, the twelfth century, except that in 1821 the whole of the north wall of the nave was removed, the church widened, and some years later a semi-octagonal vestry built.\* The position of this destroyed wall is perfectly plain, a break back in the line of the east wall of the nave indicating the junction of the old work with the new. Till this alteration the building was, in plan, a Norman church of the simplest type, consisting of a nave and chancel only, the former being about 39 ft. by 22 ft. and the latter 17 ft. by 18 ft. 6 in., internal measurements. The windows in the chancel are Transitional in character. The chancel arch is 10 ft. wide, and at present shows signs of subsidence, the crown of the arch being considerably depressed. On the west side the arch is ornamented with an outer semicircle of chevron ornament, with an inner roll supported by angle shafts. To the south of this arch is a thirteenth-century recess in the wall, with a pointed arched head. There was probably a similar one on the north side, as the wall sounds hollow at this spot. These were most likely for altars, though none seem to be mentioned in old wills. In the south wall, close to the aforementioned recess, is another blocked arch, wider and higher than the other, but its purpose is not clear; it may have opened out into a transeptal recess or it may only have

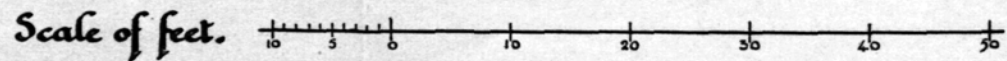
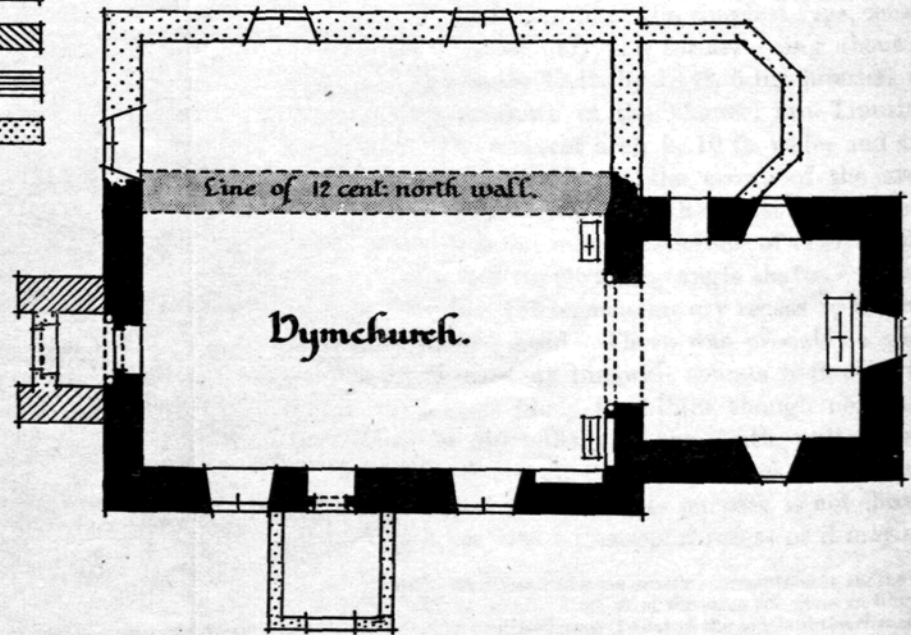
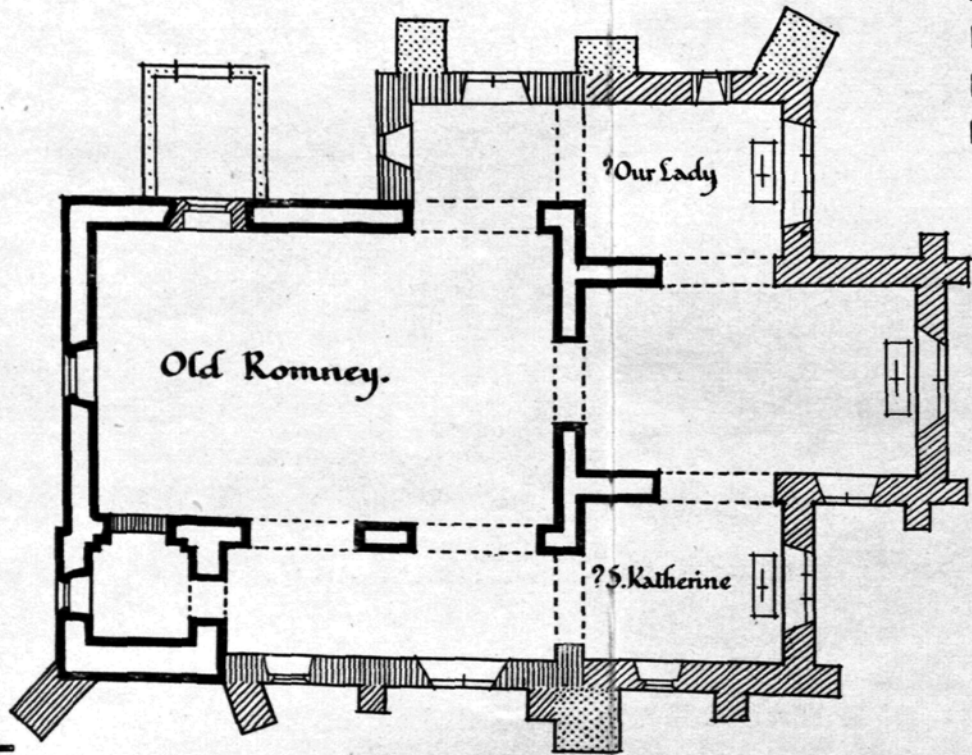
\* For this enlargement, and some caustic comments on it, see the first volume of *Jour. B.A.A.*, pp. 41-42. Page 47 of the same vol. gives an illustration of a censor top found in a blocked arch (? that to the south of the chancel).



# Romney Marsh Churches. Historical Ground Plans.



- 12 cent early
- do: late
- 13 century
- 14 century
- 15 century
- 16 century
- Modern



been a door or window, probably the last. It is remarkably like an arch in a similar position at *East Ham, Essex*. Two twelfth-century doorways remain, one on the south, forming the present entrance to the church, and the other in the small west tower. Both of these have herring-bone tilework in their tympana, and the west porch has scalloped caps and chevron ornament. The tower is quite modern, being formed by enclosing the space between two large buttresses built on either side of the west porch, most likely in the fourteenth century. There are the remains of the old screen in the chancel arch, and on the south-east coin of the nave is a twelfth-century scratch dial. Most of the windows are insertions, and in their present form modern. Though there seem to have been no secondary altars here, there were lights to the Rood, Our Lady, Corpus Christi and St. Peter.

N.B.—I have to thank the Rector for pointing out that there is another “scratch dial” on the south door. I had not noticed it in my survey.

(d) BURMARSH, ALL SAINTS.

The church of “*Boroughmershe*” consists of a large embattled western tower, a small aisleless nave 31 ft. by 19 ft., also embattled, and a chancel 18 ft. 6 in. by 15 ft. 6 in. internally, with a high-pitched gable, which is in strong contrast to the nave where the roof is hidden. The most remarkable feature of the church is the series of huge buttresses, two on the south side of the nave and two equally large, placed diagonally at the western corners of the tower. It seems most likely that at some period the church was in a rather dilapidated condition. There is now no chancel arch, and its disappearance must be associated with the two nave buttresses, which were therefore built to preserve the south wall after the collapse of the chancel arch. Further, the whole of the exterior of the north wall and the outer faces of the tower were at least recased in the fourteenth century, as there is a continuous plinth course from the north-east nave coin up to and round the tower. It is

not improbable that a great deal of these walls was entirely rebuilt.

In the chancel, one window of the original building alone remains on the north. The wall opposite is blank, while the east window is a modern insertion. In the nave all the windows save that near the porch, which is fifteenth century, are modern insertions. The arch into the tower is Transitional in character, with a chamfered abacus. The tower itself is in the main fourteenth-century rebuilding, with a west door with bracket moldings and a hood. The porch, of stone, is about sixteenth-century work, but it shelters a good Norman door with angle shafts with scalloped caps, roll, chevron and billet moldings, with a sculptured head at the crown of the arch. The hidden roof of the nave, with the signs of the old weather mold on the east side of the tower, also points to some disaster to the church about the fourteenth century. Otherwise the plan is simply that of a typical small twelfth-century church, the bulk of the fabric being of that date.

According to wills there were lights in this church to the Rood, Our Lady, All Saints, St. Anthony, St. Christopher, King Henry, St. Katherine, St. Margaret, St. Thomas (? Apostle or Archbishop) and the Easter Sepulchre. There is a bequest for the reparation of a window at the west end of the church, which may be that over the porch, since it is the only one retaining any work of the period, *i.e.*, 1508.

(e) ST. MARY-IN-THE-MARSH, ST. MARY THE VIRGIN.

Though in all probability there was a Norman church here, its plan can only be recovered by the application of those principles that generally underlie church extension. Arguing thus, the north and south walls of the twelfth-century church were on the line of the existing nave arcade, while the chancel was a small eastern extension, occupying just over half of the present chancel. Its dimensions would be roughly, a nave about 34 ft. by 19 ft. and a chancel 13 ft. by 14 ft., or possibly a little larger. These propor-

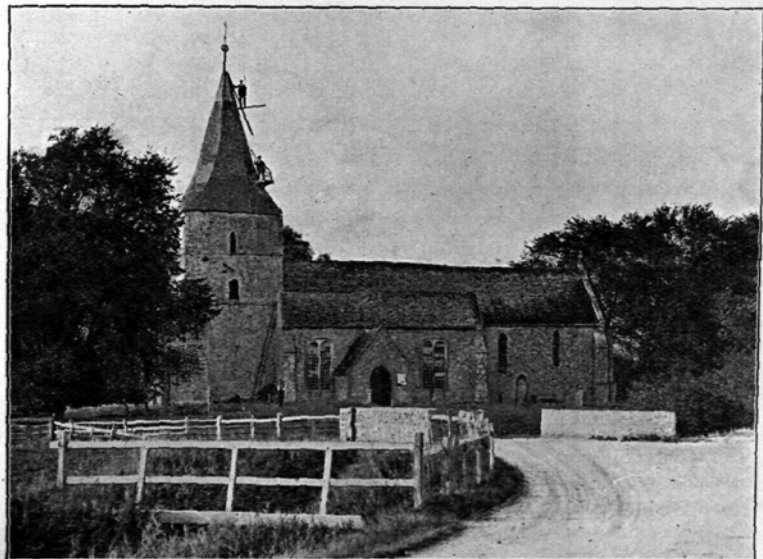


Fig. 13.—ST. MARY IN THE MARSH

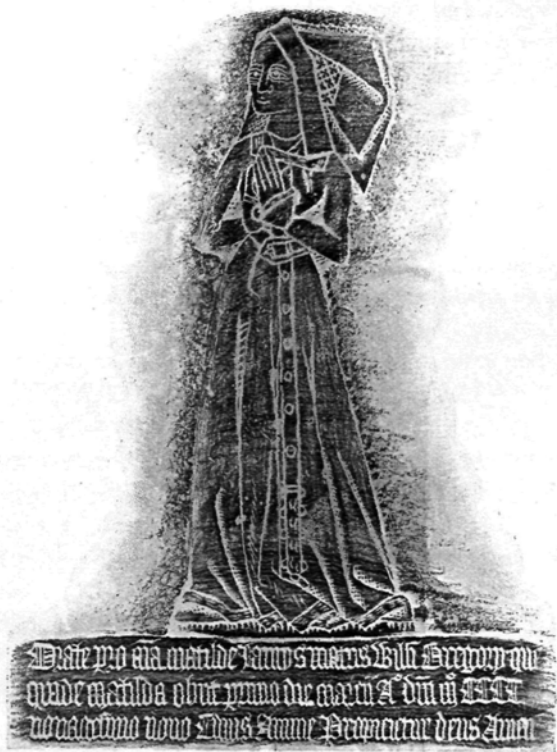


Fig. 14.—ST. MARY IN THE MARSH  
Brass to Maud Jamys.

tions are those of Burmarsh. To this church was added, some fifty years later, a tower, the present structure, which seems to be of Transitional date. But quite early in the thirteenth century the whole church was rebuilt. Following the usual practice, a larger chancel was built round the earlier structure, while the nave walls were pierced with arches and narrow aisles added north and south. It is quite possible that the walls above the nave arcade may thus be of Norman date, though there is nothing to indicate that such is the case.

The chancel is a spacious one, the more so because, for some unknown reason, it has lost its arch from the nave. All the windows except that at the east are of thirteenth-century date, with chamfered rere-arches springing from molded mask corbels. The east window is a four-light insertion of the following century, but it retains its thirteenth-century angle shafts. There is a good fourteenth-century double piscina and double sedilia, also with hood molds and mask corbels. The dividing shaft has a molded cap and base. There is a peculiar recess on the south side of the chancel.

The nave arcades are supported by two corbels and two free-piers, with simple molded caps and bases of the period, but most of the windows are of fifteenth-century work or later.

The arch leading to the tower is pointed, springing from two semicircular responds with scalloped caps, having a calyx of conventional foliage below. Early windows remain in the upper stages of the tower, but the west door has been repaired in cement. There are huge clasping buttresses to the tower, evidently of later date (they were in existence in 1806 according to a photo in the Petrie collection), while at the east end there is an unusual batter, which is, however, probably not original. The porch is probably sixteenth century and the north door of the fifteenth, though much restored. There is a scratch dial on the jamb of the thirteenth-century priest's door in the chancel. In the interior patches of the original yellow and green paving-tiles still remain, as does the lower of the original altar-pave-

steps. The font, plain and octagonal, is of the thirteenth century, and there are two ancient brasses on the floor of the nave, one of which, to Maud Jamys, 1499, is here reproduced. The ancient bells are described in Stahl-schmidt's *Church Bells of Kent* and the interesting Communion Cup in *Arch. Cant.*, XIII., 478.

An altar to Our Lady stood at the east end of the north aisle, and there were lights, etc., to the Holy Trinity, the Rood, Our Lady, St. George, St. Katherine, St. Mary Magdalene. There were also Brotherhoods of Our Lady and of St. Katherine.

This church has been recently restored and the roof rebuilt, chiefly through the efforts of Mr. C. W. Richardson, a member of the Kent Archæological Society, to whom thanks are also due for the loan of the blocks illustrating this account.

#### IV.—MISCELLANEOUS NOTES.

##### IVYCHURCH, ST. GEORGE.

This church is described in Vol. XIII. of *Arch. Cant.*, and there is little to add save that, after being allowed to fall into a very bad state of repair, it has recently been cleaned and repaired, and is now in a better condition than it has been for some years. The whole of the north aisle is partitioned off, a good fifteenth-century window at the east end is blocked, and vestiges of painting that remain are quickly vanishing. The floor of the room above the south porch is gone, leaving the vaulting exposed. There are remains of five screens, one dated 1686, a particularly fine one of its type. It is quite clear, from the existence of the base of a thirteenth-century respond on the east wall, north of the altar, that there was originally an Early English chancel, narrower than the present one, and that this chancel was separated, on the north at least, from an aisle or a chapel by an arcade. It is a matter of urgency that something be done further to preserve this, one of the most beautiful of the Marsh churches, but the help must come from without, as the parish is but sparsely populated.

## BRENZETT, ST. EANSWITHA.

The chief points of interest in this church, with its particularly Kentish dedication, are :—

Twelfth-century chancel arch with roll and chevron mold.

Thirteenth-century north aisle.

Fourteenth-century work in nave and Fagg Chapel. 1639—1646. Tomb of John Fagg of Rye and his son. The shields have evidently been freshly painted.

The sounding board of the old pulpit has been preserved as a table top.

## BROOKLAND, ST. AUGUSTINE.

Failing a complete new description of this interesting church with a plan, that already appearing in the pages of *Arch. Cant.* must suffice. The famous wooden detached belfry is sadly in need of preservative measures.

## NEWCHURCH, SS. PETER AND PAUL.

This church has already been described, though without a plan. It is in excellent condition and is well looked after.

## SNARGATE, ST. DUNSTAN.

This building has also been fully described, though it is still without a plan. The most interesting feature, which receives slight mention, is the doorway at the east end of the south aisle. This evidently led to a small chamber, which is generally thought to have been a vestry. The position is practically the same as a similar feature at Lydd (*q.v.*), and the question arises whether this may not have been an ankerhold. There do not seem to be any references to an anker here, however.

## LYDD, ALL SAINTS.

At the east end of the south aisle, in the angle between that aisle and the south wall of the chancel, are obvious signs of a small room, approached by a small door in the chancel wall. This was evidently only a low-pitched building, as one of the corbels that supported the roof remains on the

exterior of the aisle wall. On the chancel wall, just below the group of three lancet windows, are the remains of the lead roof, a strip of the tucking still being embedded in the walling. Like the similar example at Snargate, this is also spoken of as a vestry, but as there are documentary references to an anker here, it is most likely that this is the fragment of the ankerhold. Though the printed accounts of this most interesting church are several in number, there is still room for a thorough examination of the fabric, illustrated by a plan.

#### CONCLUSION.

These notes, of varying degrees of completeness and exactitude, were originally written after a few weeks' investigation of the churches of the Marsh, but, after repeated visits, they have grown somewhat beyond my original idea. They are designed to supplement but not to supplant the series of articles in Vol. XIII. of *Arch. Cant.*, to which frequent reference has been made.

To indicate all those who have assisted me in this work would be a long task, but to the various incumbents of the churches dealt with, to Mr. Arthur Finn, to Mr. C. W. Richardson, among others, special thanks are due. Nor must I omit any reference to the late Leland L. Duncan, M.V.O., F.S.A. For many years I have been indebted to him for help on those matters in which he was so particularly qualified—wills and the like—but in this case he was able to point out a very serious omission in the plan of Hope-All Saints. When I made my plan a recent fall of wall and a copious growth of rank grass had obscured several details, which were thus omitted. Mr. Duncan, at a previous visit, had made a sketch plan with no other assistance than his umbrella, yet when I subsequently went down especially to verify his discoveries they were correct in every particular. The lamented decease of Mr. Duncan leaves a gap in the ranks of Kentish antiquaries that will not easily be filled.