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Review.

*A Guide to St. Margaret's, Lower Halstow. By A. K. W. Wright, B.D.
W. J. Parrett Ltd., Sittingbourne. 1943. 1s.*

FOR wartime this is a very well produced and reasonably priced and comprehensive guide to a church which up to early in this century was little known and almost unrestored. With the book are five views—one a double page—and a plan giving approximate building dates. Included also is a list of the Vicars, an account of the wall-paintings, which were revealed at repairs undertaken in 1907, and a record of that surprising discovery of a twelfth century lead font, till 1921 hidden under a coating of plaster. This and the chandelier are the outstanding fittings of the church but the structure is equally valuable with its evidence of pre-Conquest work. This is clear from the amount of Roman material built into the walls of the west end of the nave and the west end of the walls of the chancel, combined with a blocked opening turned in Roman bricks high up in the south wall of this latter. The compiler of the guide says it is not to be considered a critical architectural account, the plan however may be questioned in that the whole length of the long chancel is shown as Norman. This does not bear out examination as the western end is earlier Romanesque. It was only in the thirteenth century that the thin-walled chancel was extended and the delightful arcading added to the walls. A further criticism of the plan is that it marks the aisles as contemporary with the nave when an examination of the masonry of the west wall and its stopped base-course is sufficient evidence for their later date. A special point again is made of the nave and north aisle being roofed in one slope. This ugly makeshift savours of churchwarden practice. Evidence that the aisle was formerly roofed in a normal way may be seen in the packing up of the walling at the west end to give a continuous slope from nave ridge to wall-plate of aisle. It is never likely to have been original practice.

On page 12 mention is made of the western tier of seats which were still in existence when the writer made his survey. This feature was for the musicians, from which they looked up the nave to the clerk with his pitch pipe in his part of the "three-decker." This was such an unusual survival that it should not have been destroyed.

An existing fitment, formerly possessed by all churches, is the Alms Box of which a few pre-Reformation examples survive. Before compulsory Poor Law Rates were enacted these boxes were provided for the voluntary contributions of the well-disposed; and their silent appeal continued and is well seen in the number of seventeenth century examples that survive. The regulation for three locks or padlocks on

alms boxes and chests was the natural outcome for the oversight of church funds contributed by the faithful. The chest itself sometimes added to its uses that of a poor box. A slit in its lid conveyed offerings to a till beneath. The obligation to collect Peter's Pence about the parish before the Reformation confuses the issue. Ecclesiologists would like to know a little more about the Communion Vessels referred to on page 25. A pre-Reformation chalice would be a very precious possession.

The few misprints mainly occur in the section on the font. In the first paragraph bays has become bags and in the second "pillar" should read "engaged shaft," Lower down "cut in parts" should be "cast in parts."

W.P.D.S.

Kent Records Society.

~~THE REGISTER OF DANIEL ROUGH. Transcribed and edited by K. M. Elisabeth Murray, M.A., B.Litt., F.R.Hist.S. Records Branch, 1944.~~

~~This notice must necessarily be brief, as Volume XVI of Kent Records, *The Register of Daniel Rough*, was not published in time for it to be reviewed at length in the present volume of *Archæologia Cantiana*.~~

~~Daniel Rough was the Town Clerk of New Romney in the reign of Edward III, and his Register, which is preserved in the Library of St. Catharine's College, Cambridge, covers the period from 1353 to 1380. The entries in the Register range over a wide variety of topics and show the diversity of the business with which the 14th century Bailiff, Jurats and Barons of New Romney concerned themselves. In addition to the Register proper, the volume contains an Anglo-French version of the Custumal, instructions for auditing manorial accounts, and a collection of precedents for legal and other documents. Most of the entries are in Anglo-French or Latin, but the Editor has prefixed to each an adequate explanatory note in English.~~

~~The Records Branch were fortunate in obtaining the services of Miss K. E. M. Murray, the author of *The Constitutional History of the Cinque Ports*, as special editor of the volume. The editing could not have been in better hands. Her Introduction, which sets the matters recorded in the Register against the wider background of the history of the 14th century town and port to which they belong, is of particular interest.~~

~~It is hoped to include a fuller review of *Rough's Register* in volume LVII of *Archæologia Cantiana*.~~