Flamstead.

BY MR. S. FLINT CLARKSON, F.R.I.B.A.

There is a sharp slope on the west side of the main road from Redbourn to Dunstable, and the village of Flamstead is perched nearly on the top of the hill. Looking across the valley from the slopes on the east of it the village shows to much advantage, and from the road—the Watling Street—it has also a pleasing effect. A few small houses peep out amid a sufficiency of good trees ; and a grey church, with large square tower and pointed spire, shows out above all.

The accepted explanation of the name of the village has had the sanction of nearly three centuries. Norden wrote his " Description of Hartfordshire " in 1597, and in it put forward the etymology which Chauncy, Salmon, Clutterbuck, Cussans and their followers have taken to,—more or less kindly. Norden suggested ;— " it may be Verlam-Sted, a place upon the river Verlame for there it riseth, which of the aunciients was called Verlame water,"—also that Verlam-Sted became Flamstead for conveniency,—" since Verlamsted is more tedious in pronunciation than is Flamsted." This change had been made five centuries and more at the least before Norden began to speculate on the subject,—for the name in Domesday is Flammestede. Naming places —or persons—in a deliberate way is no easy task ; and we could forgive the old people for throwing the name of the tiny stream—a neat brooklet in their eyes as in ours—at the first place standing along its course.

No one is, however, bound to silence if he thinks he can do better than Norden.* Chauncy—not quite satisfied with the suggestion—tried a derivation from the Flamens, priests in pagan Rome ; but he apparently did not think much of the idea, and turned abruptly from the subject. Camden in preparing for his first edition, 1587—evidently travelled by St. Albans, Redbourn, Flamstead, and then southwards probably over the high land to " a small market town called Hehan Hempstead," and he noted on his way at seven miles from Verulam, " a brooke which presently, whiles it is yet but small cutteth the highway crosse, and although it carry here no name at all yet beneath Saint Albans town it is called *Col*." Not finding a stream called the Ver below Flamstead, Camden was not temped as Norden was.

The Church.

Materials.—Totternhoe stone and flint were used in the original work of the church. Totternhoe, in Beds, is situated under the slopes from the west side of the tableland, on the eastern edge of which Flamstead is placed. It is only about two miles to the west of the boundary between Herts and Beds. That boundary is, however, drawn in a very eccentric way throughout,— so that, although only a couple of miles to the east of it, Flamstead is yet fully nine miles from Totternhoe.

Rough cast has been applied with much liberality to the external surfaces of the building, covering up both wrought stone work and flint work. Dampness, decay of surfaces, and odd taste are probably responsible for this in about equal proportions. Ashlered buttresses, stone dressings to openings, and split flint work remain visible in the vestry building. The chancel has wrought stone work to windows and buttresses and split flint wall surfaces,—having been restored about 1860 by University College, Oxford ;—the rectory was given to the College by the will of the Reverend Robert Gunsley, incumbent of the church, who died in 1618. Brick does not seem to have been used in the original structure of the church, but has been used a good deal in modern times in patchings : — the gigantic buttress at the south-east angle of the tower was put up about 45 years ago. The

* The Reverend H. Fowler has permitted me to give his conclusions—in a Note on Page 82.

bricks used in 1669—in building the Saunders alms-houses, on the north side of the street,—are of a thick-ness that—more's the pity—we cannot get hereabouts now-a-days. Being only 2 inches thick they make, with ½-inch joints, only 5 courses to the foot.

The roof of the tower and the spirelet are covered with lead ;—that on the spirelet appears to be in part ancient, that on the tower has been renewed. The nave roof is also covered with lead, and has elaborate inscrip-tions in honour of the overseers and churchwardens of 1791,—and the plumber,—Willoughby (of Dunstable). The slating of the aisle was an innovation about 50 years ago. Chauncy (1700) noted that "the Church contains three fair Isles, the Roof of the Church is covered with Lead, but the Chancel with Tile." The chancel is still covered with plain tiles, and the vestry building has similar covering. The hipped visible roof of that building is not ancient ; an old view shows it with parapet only, and no visible roof.

Plan.

The six arches in each of the *nave* arcades are all carried on octagonal piers. The scale is unusually small, — the distance from centre to centre of pier being only 10 feet, and the height between cap and base 5ft. 10in. In St. Neots Church,—visited last year,—the piers are 14ft. 3in. from centre to centre, and the tops of their bases 3ft. 11in. above the floor level ; but that church is as much above the average. The width of the nave between the piers is 21 feet ; the *north aisle* is 11 feet, and the *south aisle* 9ft. 3in. in width, their lengths being similar to that of the nave. The north and south door-ways are opposite to each other, and to the third arch counting from the west end ; the north porch has the date 1675 upon it.

The *tower* at the west end is just upon 23 feet square externally at the top, and about 1 foot more below the top stage, which was apparently added about the same time as the clerestory was put on the nave. The one change led to the other in a great number of churches. The tower has, with the additional story, about the same preponderance over the clerestoried church,—as

the tower before the addition had over the lowly, unclerestoried nave.*

The *chancel* is 16ft. 3in. wide and of fair length. A tall Perpendicular wood screen, solid for about 4 feet of its height and open above,—with nine divisions in its width,—runs across on the nave side of the chancel arch. There is one step up at this screen, and one step up at the rails. Sedilia, (two seats), piscina, and an external doorway are found in the south wall. In the north wall a door leads into a vestry. A little above mid-height in the lofty room the stone corbels remain which once carried a floor. The sight of them explains what looks curious in the arrangement of the windows as seen from outside. An upper room, —often called a muniment room,—is found not rarely over a vestry in this way :—there is at Flamstead no fireplace as at Warmington, south-east Warwickshire, between Kineton and Banbury, for instance,—where there is a practicable residence for a priest occupying the same position on plan.

Dates.

The history of the church is not clear at this moment in all respects,—for it has been a good deal altered ; and rough cast and brick patchings now hide some evidences of date. There are—as far as we know as yet—no contemporary documents with allusions to the church,— on which conclusions or debates might rest.

Norman.—The profiles of the abacus of the cap, and of the hood mould of the arch in the east wall of the tower, show that there was a Norman tower,—and therefore a church of some early date. No doubt a good deal of the present tower is of the Norman period, with fresh openings and added buttresses and top story. The Norman arch must have thrown open the tower to the church in a very effective way, as it had a span of about 14 feet—approaching thus the whole internal

* The Reverend W. T. Tyrwhitt Drake. Vicar of Great Gaddesden, has directed attention to the original windows of the upper stage of this Norman tower ;—features that had escaped my notice. Seven of the eight windows have been blocked up ; and, externally, the rough cast prevents their being looked for. One window opening remains unclosed, and through it access is obtained to the leads of the nave roof. Mr. Drake states that the treatment of the heads of the coupled windows resembles somewhat that at St. Benet's Church, Cambridge.

width of the tower :—a year cannot be named for the work as the archway is filled in with masonry. In the centre of this filling-in is a small archway—only 7ft. 9in. between the jambs—of Geometrical date, say about 1260. The crippling of the old tower may have begun early, and the larger arch may have been filled in as a precaution against further failure. The tower has been helped at various times since, by huge brick buttresses and iron ties.

Early English.—The nave arcades must be dated at about 1195 ; they are just beyond the period of Transition. The most noteworthy feature in the arcades is the foliage of the caps and responds :—the 10 caps of piers and 4 responds are all carved   They are varied in design throughout,—some of the designs being of much merit. The leaves are conventional trefoiled leaves, spreading over the bells of the capitals at different angles,—having lost some of the stiffness and most of the adherence to the bell which characterize the foliage the Transition—as far at any rate as about the year 1175 ; but the leaves are still formal and somewhat stiff, and are not fully relieved and downward-bending as are the leaves in later Lancet.

The Lancet window remaining in the north-west corner of the Chancel would lead us to believe that a Lancet chancel—it may be shorter than the present chancel—was joined on to the Lancet nave.

Decorated.—The arch now opening from the nave into the Tower has been mentioned as of Geometrical date (about 1260). The windows, sedilia and piscina in the chancel have been restored, but they no doubt represent —in the main—the original work of that part of the building; and the chancel arch is original work :—that is Curvilinear work of about 1330. The chancel was either added to or remodelled at that time. The chancel roof may well belong to the same period. It is a high pitched roof in three bays with purlins, collars, collar braces and wind braces,—all plain in the extreme. The Curvilinear window in the eastern portion of the north aisle should also be noted.

Perpendicular.—The present clerestory is a later addition. A somewhat roughly sloped set-off may be seen above the ground story arches. The upper wall is thinner than the earlier work below. A similar thinning

occurs in the tower where the earlier wall in the ringing chamber is four feet thick, and the wall in the belfry above is a foot less. The clerestory windows are of two lights,—each light having a cinque foiled head ;—the internal arches are segmental. The windows are placed over the centres of the arches of the ground story ;—not it is true in every bay, but according to a system. Windows in the north aisle have the same kind of 15th century character.

The roof of the nave is a plain low-pitched roof with strong timbers—plainly chamfered only. The carving of the corbels under the wall pieces is not meritorious ;—some have angels bearing shields, and some grotesques. The principals centre in a proper way with the columns of the arcades ; but in the aisle roofs the principals disregard the arcades in the most determined way. The aisle roofs are also plain and have plastered ceilings.

The *wooden screen* between the nave and the chancel is well moulded and fairly carved. There are remains of the old colouring in the division on the north of the central opening ;—graining and varnish have not been spared on the rest.

The *stair to the Rood Loft* is in the S.E. angle of the North aisle, the shape of the turret showing externally.

There are a few *old benches* in the westernmost bay of the nave,—of a simple satisfactory kind.

Later and Modern Work.—Allowing for injuries, neglect, and reparations,—the church is much as it was in the 16th century ;—no important structural changes have been made since then.

The *communion rail* is a heavy oak one, supported on turned balusters with twists ; apparently early 18th century work.

The pulpit was moved to its present position against the N.E. respond of the nave, and the (characterless) tall pews were shortened 18 inches, about 1859, under the care of the Rev. W. H. Hinde,—a benefactor to the parish,—who held the living from March, 1858, to June, 1875. The second pier from the east on the north side was roughly treated, when the pulpit was placed against it, (in the position from which Mr. Hinde removed it), and it has been ingeniously suggested that the signs of rough usage on the opposite pier (on the south side of the nave), may be due to the pulpit being tried there before being put on the north side.

There was a narrow *gallery* at the west end, which was removed about 6 years ago ;—its erection and its removal did little damage ; but the erection of the *canopy*—now removed—over the large pew at the south-east corner of the nave caused serious damage to the stone respond of the arcade.

Making all explanations and allowances it must still be noted that the building is not in good order ;—that in fact it should be a pleasing example, — in the eyes of the sentimentalists who delight in unarrested decay and slovenly hacking and patching.

Miscellaneous.

North Porch.—Mr. Cussans mentions a tradition among the villagers that poor travellers had formerly a right of shelter in the north porch. The village being so near to one of the most frequented roads in the kingdom,— needy persons left the road for the village when night came on, and used " the right of (finding any) shelter " near at hand ; and the use of the porch was no doubt frequently winked at.

The Bells are six in number. Five of them have the inscription. " Chandler made me, 1664 " ;—the sixth, " John Waylett London fecit 1729." " Chandler made me " was the favourite inscription of these founders. Their foundry was at Drayton Parslow, Bucks, about midway between Leighton Buzzard and Winslow, and from it were supplied a good many bells for this neighbourhood when the rush of business came at the Restoration. The earliest bell from the foundry now in Herts is dated 1651; this would be by Anthony, the second of the Chandlers, born 1622. The competition of the great London foundries led to the foundry at Drayton Parslow being given up in 1723. When Edward Hall, who thus gave up the struggle, died in 1735,—he was described in the parish registers, as " a poor bell-founder." Mr. North in his " Church Bells of Hertfordshire" suggests that the "4 Bells and a Sance Bell, in the Steple " in 1552, were probably recast by Chandler in 1664 into the five bells now existing.

The font is of Totternhoe stone, and is said to be the original font,—shaped afresh as we see it, between 30 and 40 years ago.

A little *stained glass* remains in one of the windows of
the North aisle.   It has been suggested that some might
be brought to light if the blocking up of the vestry
windows was removed.

Memorials : (placed in order of date.)

I.—There are two recumbent effigies under the third
arch from the chancel in the North side of the nave.   A
pinnacle runs down on each side, and a cusped crocketted
canopy with embattled cornice rises up behind the head
of each of the figures ;—all being nicely designed and
well executed.   The figures have loose robes,—feet
supported by dogs,—and a scroll runs from dog to dog.
The Reverend H. Fowler's long and careful study of
this monument, and of the history of this parish, will
doubtless lead to some identification of the persons
commemorated.*   Its date is evidently about the end of
the 14th century,—when the manor was held by the
Beauchamps.   Preparing a monument of this value and
leaving it without shield or inscription would deserve
reproach,—but such reproach was probably not deserved
by the designer.   Mr. Cussans suggests that the monu-
ment was perhaps removed to its present position,—
from the East end of the South aisle when the Saunders
monument was put up,—that is, after 1693, when
Thomas Saunders died.   This may have been so ; and
the lower part of the monument may have been shattered
in taking it down.   John Weever (1631) did not
however specially notice any such erection in the
South aisle of the church.   It seems most probable,
—as he does not mention it otherwise,—that this is one
of the,—" three wondrous ancient monuments in this
Church, whose inscriptions are quite perisht, supposed
by the Inhabitants to have beene made for certaine
Noblemen, Lords of this Mannor.   Which may very well
be true by the words of our grand Antiquarie, Master
Camden."   The quotation is from Philemon Holland's
Camden (1610),—a statement based on M. Paris to the
effect that,—" in the time of King *Edward* the Con-
fessour, Leofstane the Abbat of Saint *Albans* gave *Flamsted*
unto three Knights, Turnot, Waldese, and Turman, for

* Mr. Fowler's paper on the subject is printed in this number of
the Transactions.

to defend and secure the Country against theeues. But William the Conquerour tooke it from them, and gave it to Roger of Todeney, or Tony, a noble Norman, whose possession it was, but by a daughter it was transferred at length to the *Beauchamps*, Earles of Warwick." By thus quoting at sufficient length, Weever has left his drift in an agreeable vagueness. Did he intend to hint that the three ancient monuments commemorated Leofstan's three knights ?—or did he simply mean that distinguished Lords of the Manor might be expected to have " wondrous monuments " ?

Clutterbuck (1815) described the monument as,— "beneath one of the arches which separate the nave from the S. side aisle." This may be a slip, or it may indicate another resting-place of the figures. He evidently found neither heraldry nor inscription.

II.—The brass in the chancel floor, in memory of John Oudeby, sometime Rector of this church, who died 7 March, 1414, has a good figure under a canopy. The Beauchamps were lords of the Manor of Flamstead from 1316 to 1471; and the rectory and right of patronage were till 1487 vested in the lords of the Manor. Oudeby was, it is stated on the inscription,—Canon in the Collegiate Church of St. Mary in Warwick,—in which the Beauchamps took so much interest. The choir of that church is said to have been built by the second Thomas Beauchamp about 1392, and Oudeby no doubt did duty in that choir. Of the wonderful Beauchamp chapel, he of course knew nothing,—for the Richard Beauchamp who devised the building of that chapel, and fixed the spot for it during his lifetime, died at Rouen in April, 1439. The foundation was laid in 1443; it was completed in 1464, and consecrated in 1475. The generous interest in buildings, " well, fair and goodly built," of these great nobles seems, however, to have expended itself, without Flamstead gaining anything akin at their hands.

III.—The two small brasses of about 1450, represent a man in civil costume and his wife and children: the inscription and four shields have disappeared.

IV.—The rhyming inscriptions on the stone piers of the nave arcade are so old that they must be noticed; their dates are 1596, 1597 and 1598. They can hardly

be the crowned work of a fraternity of parochial versi-
fiers. No doubt some one person,—with a suitable
pocket knife, and a love of rhyming, and a pride in both,
—was responsible. Here is a specimen,—on the East-
ernmost of the piers on the South side of the nave :—

> " Within this yle
> Where bricks are laide
> There lieth buried
> A virgin mayde
> Frauncys Cordall
> Was hir name
> She lived & died
> In goodlye fame
> An° 1597 June VII."

This " Frauncys Cordall," who died in 1597, was
most likely a sister of the George Cordall born in
1569,—84 years old in 1653, whose virtues are recorded
in another position. Something should be ascertained
as to the Cordalls, John Grigge of Cheverills End, John
Pace, Sir Bartholemew Fouke, and I should be glad to
have assistance in ascertaining it.

V.—The monument to "Sir Bartholomew Fovke, Knt.,
[died 1604, aged 69], whoe served Kinge Edward,
Queene Marye, and was Mr. of the Household to Queene
Elizabeth for many yeares, and to King James that now
is,"—is just at the junction of the East and South walls
of the chancel. A small figure of a knight in armour is
kneeling in at a desk; the monument is in alabaster
with little obelisks of red marble, and was erected
by " Edmund Fovke, gent.," Bartholomew's brother.

VI.—At the East end of the South aisle is a large
monument of black marble with figures in white—a bit
of solid history, but not a beautiful work. The Thomas
Saunders of Beechwood commemorated died 1693. He
was the grandson of the first Saunders who came to the
parish. About 1579 Beechwood was in the possession of
a Thomas Saunders,—son of John Saunders of Amer-
sham. Anne, the daughter of the Thomas Saunders
who died in 1693, is one of the figures in white marble.
She is kneeling in the front, away from the figures of
the other children who died in her father's lifetime.
Anne, (born 1670, died 1719), was married to Sir
Edward Sebright of Besford, Co. Worcester, Bart.;
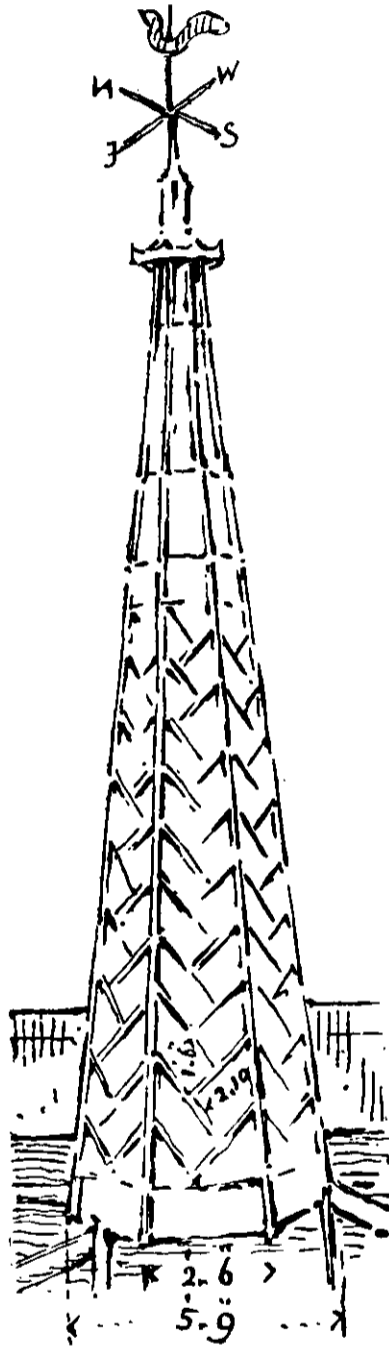born 1666, died 1702. The baronetcy dates from 2
Car. I (1626).

The wife of Thomas Saunders and mother of Anne was Ellen, daughter and heir of Robert Sadleir of Sopwell, St. Albans. Sopwell came to Thomas Saunders in this way; it was sold by him to Sir Harbottle Grimston,—(died 1683).

VII.—*Flaxman's Sebright monument.* It has apparently escaped notice hitherto that, at the foot of the monument in the East portion of the North wall of the chancel, is inscribed,—" 1782. John Flaxman fecit." The memorial inscription contains the names of six Sebrights, ranging from Sir Edward Sebright the 3rd Baronet—husband of Anne Saunders, died 1702,—to Sir Thomas Saunders Sebright, who died in 1764, with mention of Dame Henrietta who did not die till 1772. The monument was erected during Flaxman's seven years' absence in Italy, and when he was 27 years old. Perhaps it was carried out in England from a model sent from Italy. Several funeral monuments were produced in that way from his models,—notably that of Collins in Chichester Cathedral. Faith reclines on the East side of the urn, which is placed in the centre at the top; and Hope with an anchor reclines on the West side. The figures are less than life size—the extreme distance from toe to toe is only 7 feet 4 inches. The effect is conventional enough to us in these years,—but there is an engaging earnestness and simplicity, which will always make the work worth looking at. Not of course that the powers of the greatest designer of sculpture England has produced are fully shewn here,—for the monument was designed in early days of mastership, with figures in the round, which were never Flaxman's forte,—and was probably executed under adverse circumstances.

VIII.—The large Pickford tomb in the North East portion of the graveyard has less than no interest as a design, but should be noticed as a memorial of the founder of " Pickford & Co."—who started at Markyate Street, in the parish of Flamstead, what was afterwards developed into a great system for conveying goods by road, a couple of generations or more before railways came to the aid of his successors. Thomas Pickford departed this life on the 21st day of September, 1811.

The Spirelet.

We have at Flamstead a good specimen of a method of finishing a church-tower, of which there are several examples in the district. A spire is always in idea a high-pitched pyramidal or conical roof, covering the w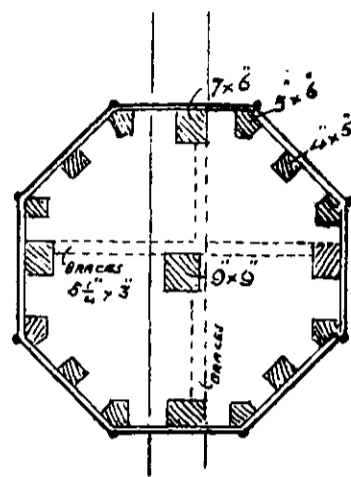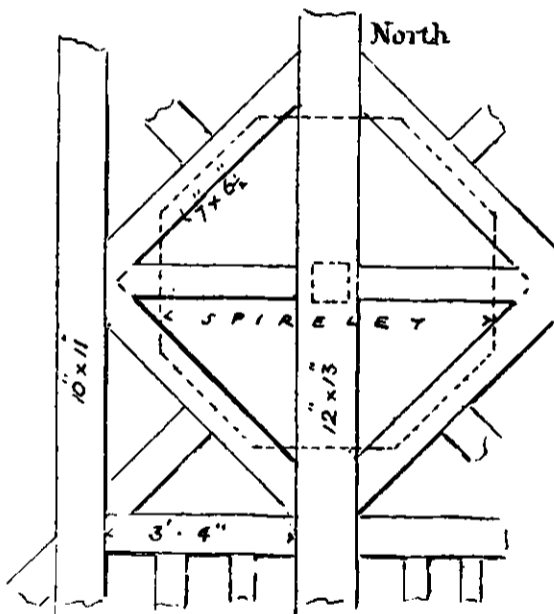hole or nearly the whole area of the tower. But this tower has lead gutters inside the parapets and a lead flat inside the gutters, and in the centre of the lead flat is a spirelet with very steep sides, —showing in a general view as a thin finger pointing upwards, contrasting in an agreeable way with the simple square out- lines of the good-sized tower. There are no distinctive details by which the date can be settled with certainty,—I should be much pleased to receive notes with reference to accurately dated (or dateable) example of flat roofs and central spirelets of this sort. There seems however no reason for supposing the present timbering, of the roof of the tower and of the spirelet, of a different date from the latest work upon the structure of the tower, thus belonging to the 15th century.

The size of the tower at the top is 22 feet 9 inches by 23 feet 2 inches externally, and the spirelet is octagonal in plan, and 5 feet 9 inches across—the sides

VIEW OF THE SPIRELET AT
FLAMSTEAD CHURCH.

of the octagon are thus about 2 feet 6 inches. Four of these sides are parallel to the four sides of the tower. Chauncy in 1700 found,—"a square Tower, wherein is a ring of Bells, and a shaft or spire about 20 foot high, erected upon the Tower, covered with Lead,"—the total height to the top of the vane is evidently more nearly 30 than 20 feet.

The centre portion of the tower roof is carried by a beam, 12 inches by 13 inches, running in the centre from North to South; and by beams, 10 inches by 11 inches, parallel to this beam, and at a distance of 3 feet 4 inches from it. Beams, 7 inches deep and 6½ inches wide, put diagonally from the side beams to the central one, form a square placed anglewise in the centre of the tower, and, from these and the adjacent beams, 7 inch by 6 inch pieces start in the centres of the North, East, South and West sides of the spirelet,—also 5 inch by 6 inch shaped pieces at its angles, and 4 inch by 5 inch bearers in the centres of the other sides of the octagon. The space between the inclined timbers is thus less than 12 inches at the bottom, and of course it is less and less upwards. These 4 plus 8 plus 4, that is 16 pieces, which make out the shape of the spirelet, abut at their upper ends

PLAN AT BASE OF SPIRELET.

PLAN OF TIMBERS:
(LOOKING UP).

THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE SPIRELET AT FLAMSTEAD CHURCH.

against an upright post, 9 inches by 9 inches, placed in the exact centre of the tower. This upright post is framed into the 12 inch by 13 inch carrying beam and runs up to the vane. The tendency to alteration of form by the wind's action is counteracted by raking braces, 5¼ inches by 3 inches, running parallel to the cardinal sides of the octagon, and secured at their ends to the 7 inch by 6 inch bearers which run up the centres of the cardinal sides. As these raking braces

pass the central upright,—at distances of about 4 feet,—something is cut out of each,—the braces thus pressing shoulders against the upright.

Battens, 5 inches by 1 inch and 2½ inches apart take the lead covering. There are lead rolls at the angles; and lead rolls,—making diagonal lines—between the pieces of lead for about two-thirds of the height, give an easy variety to the surfaces. Above that level the sides of the octagon have become narrow, and single pieces of lead are used. The extreme length of the longest bit of lead in the lower part of the covering is about 2 feet 10 inches. The access to the flat roof of the tower is by a ladder, placed in the centre of the bell-chamber,—and by a short and narrow door in the North-East side of the spirelet. Some additional height would have been convenient, but that would have forced the door into an awkward prominence, when seen from the village street,—unless the diagonal lines of the rolls had been continued over it.

Starting the timbers of the octagon upon a framed curb secured against any change of form, and some additional horizontal bracing at different levels, also a better way of hanging the lead, might be suggested; but, although of course nothing unusual,—the general construction is simple and effective. Descriptions of old examples being somewhat rare I have ventured on rather a minute account of this, stating or implying in going along the reason for each detail.

NOTE REFERRED TO ON PAGE 70.

Origin of the name Flamstead.

The following passage is extracted from an interesting lecture by the Reverend H. Fowler, M.A., delivered February 8th, 1888, at St. Albans ; and entitled " Some illustrations of the language of our Remote Fore-fathers."

" We will take one other place, nearer to St. Albans, *Flamstead.* This has been explained by the antiquary Norden to be a corruption of *Verlam-stead,* and to mean the place situated on the river Verlam or Ver. This has

been accepted by all our County Historians, and I have never met with any other interpretation : Norden's conjecture is no doubt very ingenious, but I will venture to say that it will not bear investigation. It is difficult no doubt to prove a negative in such cases, but I think we can come very near to it in this instance. There is another locality in this county which bears the same name, viz., Flamstead End, near Cheshunt ; this Flamstead is certainly not on the Ver or anywhere near it ; its etymology therefore cannot be *Verlamstead* : and it follows that we must seek another explanation of the word *Flamstead*.

The ancient spelling will guide us to a satisfactory conclusion. In the charter of King Ethelred, according to Matt. Paris, the name is spelt *Fleam-stede* (or *stude*). This is a genuine Anglo-Saxon word, composed of *stæde*, a place or station ; and *fleám*, flight or banishment, from *fléon*, to flee ;—the word *flema* signifies a fugitive or vagabond. *Fleam-stede* then is the place of flight or a refuge ; or it may be a shortening of *fleman-stede*—the station of fugitives, refugees or vagabonds. In either case it denotes a place of refuge. The name of the place in Yorkshire, now Flamborough, was formerly Fleám-borough ; and a " *Camp of Refuge* " is known to have existed there ; this was a place of protection against the Danes.

The little we know about the early history of the parish of Flamstead seems to accord with this etymology. The woods here and along Watling Street towards London were the haunts of outlaws and robbers down to a late date in the Anglo-Saxon period, and the manor of Flamstead was granted by Abbot Leofstan to three Saxon Thanes on condition of their guarding the roads from these freebooters. It is by no means improbable that the hilly ground of Flamstead, which was covered with dense forest, was one of the places of refuge for British fugitives, when Verulamium and the British stronghold, Arbury Camp at Redbourn, fell into the hands of the East Saxons. We learn from Bede that bands of the native Britons maintained a miserable existence as outlaws in forests and inaccessible places after the Saxon Conquest ; and such may have been the original freebooters who infested the forests here. In illustration of this conjecture I may quote a story from

the legend of S. Guthlac, the famous Hermit of Croyland, who lived at the end of the 8th century. It is said, that "the Saint being disturbed in his cell one night by a horrid howling was seriously alarmed, thinking that the howlers must be Britons. But upon getting up and looking out of the window he found they were only devils, whereby he was much relieved, the Britons being much the worse of the two." Whether the story be true or false, it proves this, that there were troops of native British or Welsh marauders within the territories of Mercia as late as the 8th century, and that they were considered more formidable than demons ; and perhaps we may say—no wonder, considering what they had suffered at the hands of our Saxon forefathers. Of course it is dangerous to make a history for a place out of its name, but I will venture to suggest that analogies are in favour of this account of the origin of Flamstead, that it was a refuge station of desperate British fugitives."