

### Ivinghoe Church.

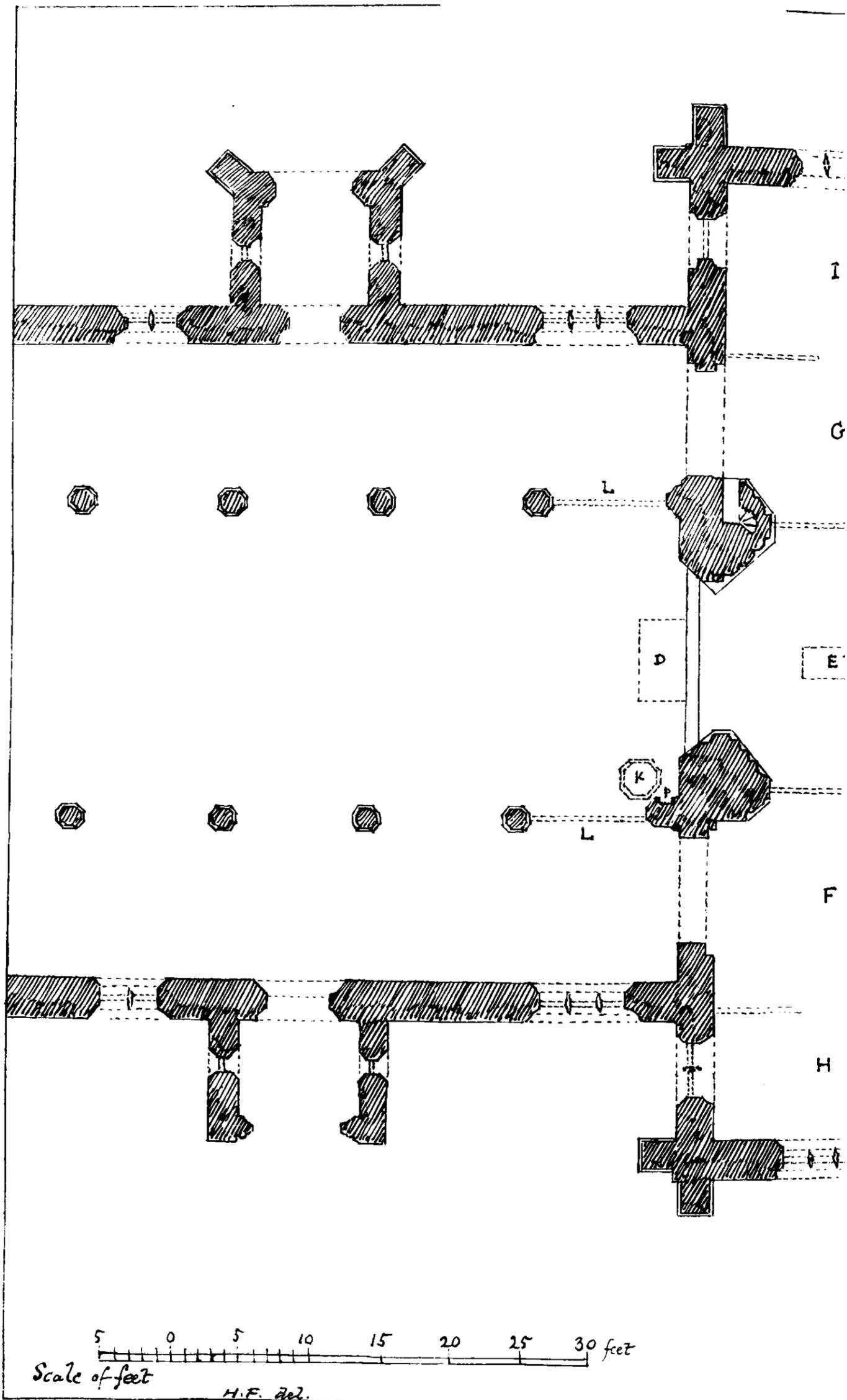
BY THE REV. H. FOWLER, M.A.

Ivinghoe is the place which suggested to Sir Walter Scott a title for one of his well-known romances. He spells it corruptly, "Ivanhoe." In his preface he informs us that he was in search of an ancient English name which should convey no indication whatever of the story, and this came into his mind as he recalled an old rhyme, which runs:—

"Tring, Wing, and Ivinghoe  
Hampden of Hampden did forego,  
For striking the Black Prince a blow."

It would appear that this is rhyme without reason, for the antiquary, Frederick Ouvry, writing about Wing in 1855, informs us, "There is no evidence of any of these places ever belonging to the family of Hampden." I have to suggest an etymology. The name is spelt in "Domesday," Evinghchoe, probably pronounced Ewinghoe. The first syllable is *Iw*, pronounced *yew*, Anglo-Saxon for a yew-tree. Ing in a suffix used to form patronymics (in a primitive stage of the language), thus, Woden-ing means the son of Woden. It has been observed that many of the Anglo-Saxon clans bore names implying their descent from plants or animals, a notion

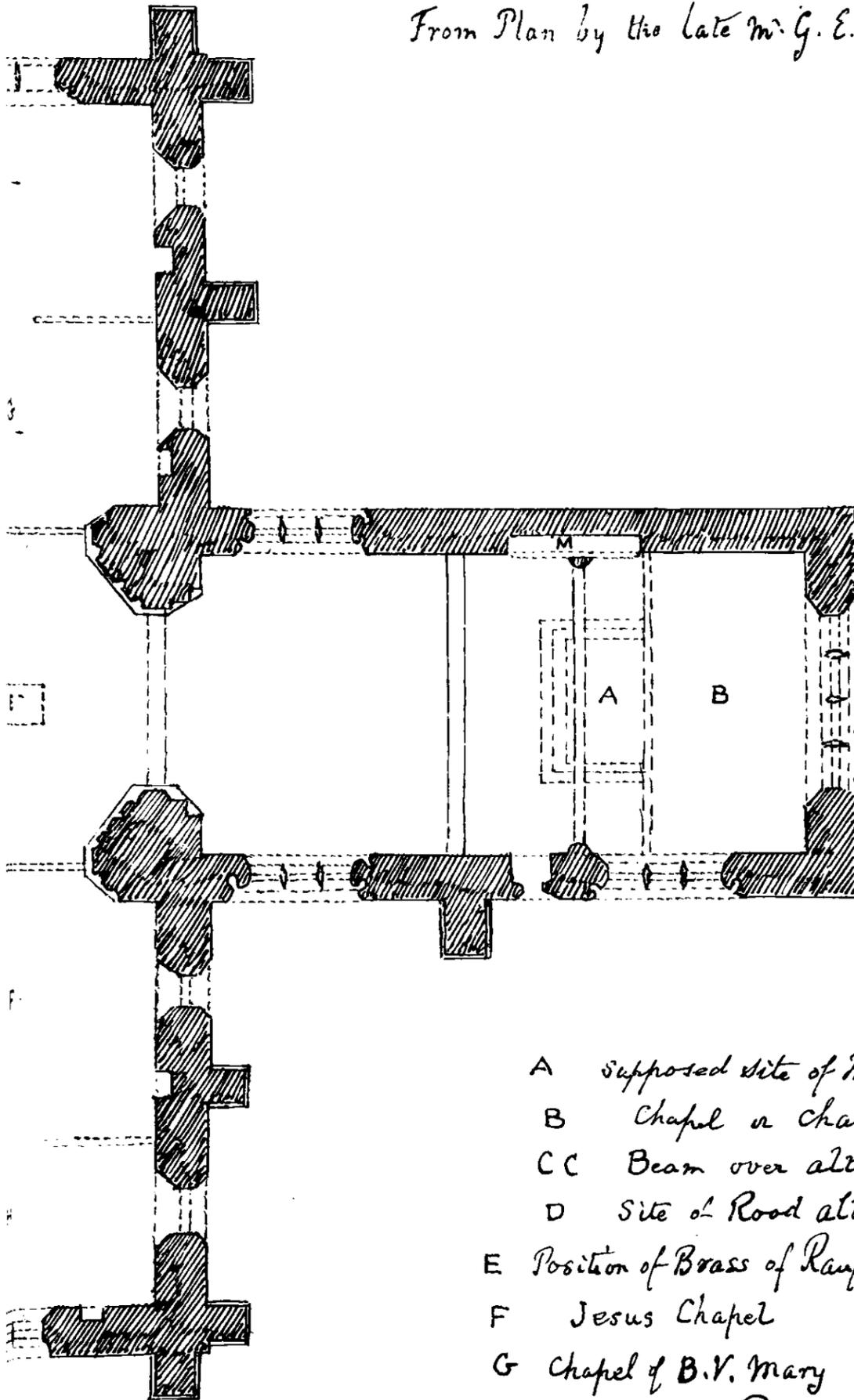




5 0 5 10 15 20 25 30 feet  
 Scale of feet  
 H.F. 202.

IVINGHOE CHURCH

From Plan by the late Mr. G. E. Street



- A supposed site of High altar
- B Chapel or Chantry of Founder
- CC Beam over altar
- D Site of Rood altar
- E Position of Brass of Rauf Fallywolle
- F Jesus Chapel
- G Chapel of B.V. Mary
- H Chantry of the Duncomb family
- I Chapel or Chantry, (Blackhed family?)
- K pulpit - p. piscina to Rood altar
- L L Screens flanking Rood altar
- Recumbent Effigy of Peter de Chauporc



characteristic of the Pagan barbarism of our forefathers. Thus in early documents we meet with the Wylfings, or sons of the wolf; the Aescings, sons of the ash; the Thornings, sons of the thorn. So, following this analogy, the Iwings (or Ivings) would be the nomenclature of a family who supposed themselves descended from a yew-tree. Hogh (hoe) signifies a *high* place; thus the whole name would import the high ground occupied by members of the *yew-tree* clan. The name would have originated before their emigration to Britain. The *hogh*, or *hoe*, is characteristic of the situation of the land of the Ivings here. The village, which may be the site of the primitive Saxon settlement, lies on the slope of the downs, which, as they stretch eastward, rise into lofty ridges. These Ivinghoe hills are spurs of the Chilterns. We are here on the watershed; a brook (the Whistle) which rises near the bottom of the town, flows towards the Ouse. The high lands before us much resemble those of Dunstable, with which they are connected by the "Icknield Way." A branch of this British track passes by the church. In travelling on the main track as we proceed to Edlesborough, we shall see the "Beacon," on which appears to be a primitive barrow. The highest of the eminences, Crawley wood, is 800 feet above the sea level, and 400 feet above this churchyard. I quote these levels from the Ordnance map. The ridge called "Duncombe-terrace," probably Down Combe, gives its name to an old family in the parish. Combe means a valley, it is the appellation of the hollows beyond the hills eastward. There is Ward's Combe, and Hanging Combe; the woods, with which these valleys are covered, here hang on the slopes. Ivinghoe Common extends eastward to Whitecraft Hill, suggestive of the superstitions of our ancestors. Gallows Hill, which we shall pass, must be associated with the history of the Manor, of which I must now speak. The ancient *vill* appears to have been the private property of the Saxon kings. Edward the Confessor granted it to the see of Winchester. Stigand was probably the bishop at that time. In the Domesday Survey the manor is rated at 20 hides, valued at £18, showing its large extent. There was arable land for 25 ploughs; the woodland was sufficient to maintain a stock of 600 hogs. No pasture is mentioned; probably the downs were reckoned as

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moorland. The site of the bishop's manor-house is close to the churchyard on the east; it was called, according to Lipscomb, "Berrystead House." When the parish came into existence, it comprised Ivinghoe Aston, a manor which was held at the time of the "Survey" by the great Baron Geoffrey de Mandeville. We find no record of a church till the year 1221 when Bishop Peter des Roches presented a clerk to the rectory. There probably was a church in Saxon times. The manor remained in the see of Winchester till about 1552, when Bishop Poynt surrendered it to King Edward VI. in exchange for other lands. Queen Mary regranted it to Bishop White. It was resumed by the crown, and Queen Elizabeth conferred it on Sir John Mason. It passed in 1604 to Sir Thomas Egerton, Lord Keeper, who became Baron Ellesmere. He also acquired the advowson of the church. It has remained with his descendants, the Earls and Dukes of Bridgewater, owners of Ashridge, who are now represented by Earl Brownlow. Within the parish was the manor or estate of Muresley, five miles to the south-east. There about 1120 Bishop William de Gifford founded a small Benedictine nunnery dedicated to St. Margaret. Camden attributes the foundation to Bishop Henry de Blois, but the charter (given by Dugdale) refutes him. No vestiges of the priory now remain. In 1226 (according to the Dunstable Annals) Roger, Chaplain of Ivinghoe, gave a certain wood called Wodenshale (signifying the hall of Woden) to the priory of Dunstable. I suppose he officiated in the parish church. A town appears to have grown up around the church before 1227, at which date King Henry III. granted a fair, to be held on St. Margaret's day, July 20th. The Bishop had the tolls of a weekly market, and of another fair, granted by charter in 1318; it was held on the Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, August 15th, which was probably the parish festival, the church being dedicated to St. Mary. In 1234, according to Matthew Paris, the manor suffered from the troubles occasioned by the political misgovernment of Bishop Peter des Roches. It was ravaged by Richard Siward, leader of some exiles; the crops were destroyed, the cattle carried off, and the buildings belonging to the king's party set on fire. The rector at this time was Humphrey de Medliers, the clerk mentioned

above, who is likely to have been among the sufferers. The incumbency of his successor brings us to the history of the present church. The main features of this building may be dated somewhere about 1250; assuming this the church must have been erected in the time of Peter de Chaceport, who was rector from 1244 to 1255. The vicar has informed me a tradition exists that he was the founder, and other circumstances seem to fall in with the tradition. I have found some interesting particulars of the career of this ecclesiastic in the "Historia Major" of Matthew Paris. His name, spelt by Matthew Paris, "Chacepore," meaning "pig-driver," is suggestive of a humble origin for his ancestry. De Chacepore was a foreigner, one of the Poitevin favourites of Henry III. He was his special chaplain; keeper of the wardrobe; treasurer to Queen Eleanor; and a member of the council. He was presented to this rectory by the king, during a vacancy of the see; in 1249 he also acquired the rectory of Tring. According to Tanner, he subsequently became archdeacon of Wells. He therefore possessed considerable influence and large emoluments. In 1250, on the death of Bishop Raleigh, he was sent to Winchester, in company with John Mansel, to canvass the monks in favour of the election of Aethilmar (or Aymer) de Valence, a young man, probably in minor orders, whose chief recommendation was that he was the king's half-brother. De Chacepore managed the king's business on this occasion with much tact and with complete success. We may suppose that Bishop Aymer, when elected, would have been well disposed to assist De Chacepore in his undertakings. In 1252 the rector of Ivinghoe was sent to France to negotiate with Queen Blanche about a safe transit for the royal troops to Gascony. Two years later the king paid a ceremonious visit to Louis VIII. at Paris. De Chacepore was in his retinue. On the return journey he fell ill and died rather suddenly in the church of St. Mary at Boulogne, January, 1255; there the king, it is said, buried "his beloved clerk" with much honour. The historian affirms De Chacepore merited a glorious end, because he made a noble will. By this he provided for the foundation of a house of Austin Canons at Ravenstone, in the north of this country, to be endowed out of estates to be purchased there. The king took care to have his wishes

carried into effect. These facts show that De Chaceport possessed ample means for executing such a work as the rebuilding of this church. He designed to have his chantry in the house of Austin Canons. No record appears to be extant in regard to a chantry here. Among his successors were some ecclesiastics of note. William de Wyckham, c. 1262, became chancellor of York. Rector Ralph de Ivinghoe was president of a court appointed by King Edward I., 1294, to settle the claims on the estate of Queen Eleanor of Castile after her death in 1291. Rector Richard Mitford in 1396 became Bishop of Salisbury. The advowson of the church remained with the Bishops of Winchester till Cardinal Beaufort, who was translated to Winchester from Lincoln in 1405, granted it to the College of Bonhommes at Ashridge in 1413, when the great tithes were appropriated, and the vicarage ordained with the sanction of the Bishop of Lincoln (Repingdon). The first vicar, William German, was appointed in 1420. In the *Liber Regis* the clear yearly value is given as £36 16s. 6d.; an annual sum of £10, perhaps equivalent to about £100 of present money, was assigned for the repair of the fabric. After the dissolution of the college in 1535, the advowson descended with the manor; in 1604 it was held by Lord Chancellor Ellesmere, and has now devolved to Earl Brownlow, whose shield of arms we shall see on the western porch.

#### THE FABRIC.

To turn to our architectural subject. This fine cruciform church is mainly Early English. I am advised that it may be dated about 1250. The excellent condition in which we see it is mainly due to the care bestowed upon it in 1871, when the restoration was carried out by the eminent architect, the late Mr. G. E. Street, under Vicar Hamilton. I am indebted for information to the kindness of the vicar, Mr. Wauton. Unfortunately none of Mr. Street's notes appear to be extant. A noticeable feature here is the extent of the chancel and transepts in relation to the nave. The chancel is 40 feet long, the transepts extend 74 feet, and the nave 58 feet 6 inches. The chancel at Berkhamstead is about the same length, with a nave of 100 feet. The arrangement affords room for internal chapels.

Another characteristic is the use of large circular windows in the clerestory—we shall see this in the transepts. Those of the nave have been walled up, we see their vestiges here; there were four circular lights in each side. I believe this is a French feature. The nave arcades, of five bays, resting on octagon piers, have hollow chamfers; their attractive feature is the carving of the capitals, the stiff curling foliage stands out in good relief, and is varied in every example. These caps may be compared with similar work which we have seen at Kimpton and Great Offley; the finer examples which we shall see at Eaton Bray are much earlier. There is an irregularity in the arcades; all the piers on the south side stand a little westward of those on the north; the cause of this is to be seen at the east end; the eastern arch of the north arcade springs from the tower, that on the south side from a piece of wall projecting two feet from the tower. The same thing is observable in Berkhamstead Church and elsewhere. Of course there must be some reason for this (the Mediæval architects did nothing without a reason). The purpose was, I think, to make room for a piscina on the south side in connection with the Rood altar. The Rood loft was here, in front of the tower arch; the evidence of the altar is the special ornamentation of the bay of the roof above. We have observed this indication of an altar at Hemel Hempstead and elsewhere. The altar would require a piscina, and the place for this would be here, behind the present pulpit. (N.B.—Vestiges of it were found at the inspection.) The pulpit formerly stood against the easternmost pier of the south arcade. In the adjacent arches were perhaps screens flanking the altar.

#### THE TOWER.

The original tower was, of course, Early English. The work which we see is Decorated. We have to date it by the mouldings of the pier capping. We shall see also that the features of the exterior are Decorated. These piers and arches then must have been remodelled, or more probably rebuilt, within a century of De Chaceport's time, perhaps on account of some failure in the foundation. The anomalies which we see here (in the two eastern arches), I suppose, must be connected with this reconstruction of the tower. There are traces

of colour on this fine tower arch. In the Elizabethan time the Creed and Ten Commandments were painted here in black letter. I think there is monumental evidence of the benefactor to whom this work of the tower is due. In the chancel is a brass plate which has been moved; it is probably that described by Lipscomb as being, in his time, under the tower. The inscription, in Norman-French, commemorates Rauf Fallywolle, who died 3rd May, 1349. The slab has the indents for the half effigies of himself and wife Lucie. According to Lipscomb, Ralph Fallowville (clearly the same person) was lessee of the manor from 1336; he was presumably the most important person resident in the parish. I conjecture that he may have rebuilt the tower, or had much to do with rebuilding it, somewhere about 1340. This was in the time of Bishop Adam de Orleton (1333—1345). The rector was James Francis de Florence, who was perhaps an Italian, and non-resident. Other alterations were made in the Decorated period. The aisle windows, next the transepts, have reticulated tracery. The north and south doorways are good Decorated. The porches have been rebuilt by Mr. Street, conformably. The fine western window is Mr. Street's restoration (as the vicar informs us), the original design being indicated by the jamb shafts. The clerestory windows have been inserted by a Perpendicular architect, who probably raised the walls, and no doubt put on the handsome open-timber roof. The eastern bay has a boarded ceiling, carved with flowers. The details seem carefully studied. The figures, which we see above the grotesque corbel heads, may be intended for the twelve apostles, as the vicar has suggested. The angels on the wall plate have had their wings renewed. The poppy-head seat ends have grotesque faces and figures carved in the foliage. The pulpit is good Jacobean; in the panel at the back is a carving of the Resurrection.

#### THE CHANCEL.

The aspect here has been altered to Perpendicular by the insertion of the 15th century windows. The shell of the building must be Early English, because on the north side are the vestiges of two tall lancets, visible in the exterior; one on the south side is just opposite this step.

There may have been originally three lancet windows on each side. The walls are thick and without buttresses. The priest's door having a straight sided arch, appears original. The good Perpendicular roof resembles those of the nave and transepts. The attractive feature is the handsome canopy on the north side, which is early Perpendicular. It was probably designed for an Easter sepulchre. The head terminations of the hood-moulding are new. In Lipscomb's time, on the west side there was a female head crowned. The effigy is clearly earlier than the canopy, it must have been inserted here, and probably at the period of the Reformation. It represents a priest habited in eucharistic vestments (alb, chasuble, with stole and maniple, and cope). Lysons says this is commonly reported to be the monument of Bishop Henry de Blois, brother of King Stephen. The report, I suppose, arose from the erroneous statement of Browne Willis, that Henry de Blois was buried in Ivinghoe Church. There is evidence that he was buried at Winchester. Lysons was aware of a tradition that the effigy is that of Peter de Chaceport, but he erroneously attributes the opinion to Browne Willis. The disproportionate size of the head, and the appearance of the hair are indications of an early date for the effigy. This may be the founder's memorial even if executed considerably later than his time. De Chaceport's monument here would be a cenotaph, since he was buried (as we have seen) at Boulogne. There is now no evidence of the original place of the tomb. The vicar suggests that it was behind the high altar. There may have been a chantry, for which there is ample space. I would suggest there is evidence connected with these angel heads, that the altar stood about eight feet in advance of the east wall. I take these to be corbel heads; they are directly opposite one another. From these may have sprung brackets supporting a beam carried across the sanctuary over the front of the altar. The purpose would have been either to carry the *beam light* (a taper kept, burning before the pyx) or to display images of Saints. In S. Albans Abbey such a beam was erected (in late Norman times) over the High Altar; it supported images of the twelve Patriarchs and of the Apostles (Gest. Abb. I. 287). This is the only instance which I am able to quote of a beam carrying images. The "bem-lyght" is mentioned

in some ancient parish records. At Chichester Cathedral, as appears from the Statutes, as early as the Thirteenth Century it was the custom to have on great festivals eight tapers on the beam above the High Altar.\* Unfortunately the sedilia and piscina, which would have been evidence of the position of the altar, are not existent. The brass of Rauf Fallywoolle is next to the east wall. The inscription in black letter reads:—  
 “Rauf Fallywoolle q<sup>e</sup> morust le iii jour de Mai l’an de gr<sup>e</sup> MCCCXLIX et lucie sa feme q<sup>e</sup> morust le vintisme jour de januer l’an gr<sup>e</sup> MCCCXLVIII gisent icy. Dieu de lour almes eit mercie.”

## SOUTH TRANSEPT.

The early English windows here are attractive. There is considerable variety. We see tall lancets, a two-light and a three-light window, and circles, all have good tracery. Where the clunch was decayed the new work is doubtless a correct reproduction of the original. The circular lights in the clerestory are sexfoiled. The fine three-light window is without nook shafts; also the two-light geometrical window. One window has been inserted in the Decorated period. We observe two piscinas (Decorated) marking as many altars and chapels. The ancient screens or parcloles have disappeared. The chantry of the Duncombe family was here. Their brasses, dating from 1531 to 1591, have been removed to the chancel. The chantry of Thomaas Duncombe, in Henry's VIII.'s reign was endowed with an annuity of £3 9s. 4d. out of land in Edlesborough. Thomas Barker, Vicar of Ivinghoe, served the chantry. (Browne Willis). Members of this family lived at Aston and Barley End. Stocks in the parish of Aldbury was also one of their possessions. William Duncomb, of Aston, in 1576 bequeathed land (called Bestes) for doles to the poor—(tablet in the church). In the roof above are angels bearing shields displaying sacred symbols. We see the emblems of the Passion—the spear and reed with the sacred heart,—the chantry beneath it may have been the “Jesus Chapel.” The shield above the southern altar is charged with a saltire cross; this may indicate that the chapel was dedicated to S. Andrew. The sword

\* I am indebted for this information to a paper written by J. Lewis André, Esq., F.S.A.

and key in saltire on the shield opposite are, no doubt, the arms of the See of Winchester as Lipscomb states—there should be two keys according to heraldic authorities—(gules, a sword and two keys in saltire). This perhaps may indicate that the roof was erected before the patronage of the church passed from Winchester to the College of Ashridge, 1413. The roofs and other Perpendicular work may be in part due to the liberality of Cardinal Beaufort.

#### NORTH TRANSEPT.

The windows here are similar to those in the south transept. The two piscinas in the east wall appear to be early English. An altar was here (in the east wall next to the tower). In the roof above is an angel holding a shield charged with a celestial crown. This may be an emblem of the Blessed Virgin, and indicate that the Lady Chapel was here. The shield over the other altar is charged with a wreath. The brass of Richard Blackhed, dated 1516, was here. It is now in the chancel. The plain doorway on the west side is ancient. We see here a list of vicars, commencing with Robert Bostock, presented in 1630, also Mr. Street's plan of the church, which I have found very instructive. Lipscomb states that there was a substantial repair of the church effected in 1819, under Vicar Blythe. Over the door of the turret staircase leading to the belfry is an inscription which informs us that the five bells were re-cast in 1872, and a sixth added in memory of the Rev. William J. Hamilton, vicar, the promoter of the restoration of the church.

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