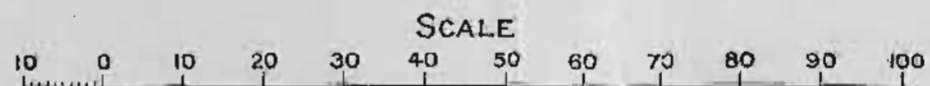


MALLING ABBEY

-  Late XIth & Early XIIth c.
-  Mid XIIth c.
-  Early XIIIth c.
-  XIVth c.
-  XVth c.
-  Mid XVIIIth c. House.
-  Post Suppression & Modern.



F. J. F. mens. et del. 1911.

THE ABBEY OF ST. MARY, MALLING, KENT

By F. H. FAIRWEATHER, M.D., F.S.A.

I. HISTORY¹

The earliest ascription of a monastic foundation to the Malling area is to be found in Mr. Walter de Gray Birch's *Fasti Monastici Aevi Saxonici*, p. 6, where in the list of religious house foundations a nunnery is stated to have been founded at Malling in 688. No reference is given, but the lists are compiled from definite sources given on pages 14 and 15 of that work. Subsequent to this, the connections of the land, upon which this Abbey stands, with the church, commenced with the grant by King Edmund, of lands in Malling to Burhric, Bishop of Rochester, for the benefit of the revenues of that diocese, in the year 945.² During the anarchy of the Danish invasions these lands were lost by the Church, and reappear after the Conquest as a part of the Kentish lands granted to Odo of Bayeux by the conqueror. In connexion with his installation of Gundulf as Bishop of Rochester, Archbishop Lanfranc employed his influence in 1076 in re-establishing the revenues of that diocese, and at the Shire-mote held on Penenden Heath in that year, in common with manors at Stoke and Denton³ and probably Fawkham, these lands at Malling were recovered by him, and returned to Rochester. Thus, when Bishop Gundulf, after completing the foundation for monks of his Cathedral Priory of Rochester, desired to found a house for nuns, this manor of Malling was selected as a suitable site.

The foundation date is usually given as 1090.⁴

¹ The following historical summary is based upon the *Victoria County History of Kent*, ii, 146. I am also very greatly indebted to Dr. Rose Graham, F.S.A., for many suggestions and additions to references.

² Mon. Ang. i, 352 charter.

³ Thorpe, *Reg. Roff.* 27.28.

⁴ Philpot.

Confirmatory charters of Rufus (at the extreme end of his reign), Henry I, and Henry II, are proved by being recited in a Charter of Edward III in 1347.¹ These bear upon the subjection of the convent to the see of Rochester. This was marked by an annual contribution of ten pounds of wax and a boar, to the cathedral establishment.²

A charter of King John, confirming the church of East Malling, also exists.³ Various minor charters and documents are quoted in Thorpe, *Registrum Roffense*, pp. 480 to 486, etc., relating to manors and tithes.

Gundulf's original endowment seems to have consisted of the manor and church of Malling. To this, at various periods, were added the church of East Malling, and tithes or lands at Buckland, Wouldham, Cuxton, Aylesford, East Malling, Parrock (near Brenchley) and Westwell, in Kent, Wimbish and Sible-Hedingham in Essex, and Cornard, Newton and Bures in Suffolk.⁴

The dedication, with the installation of the first abbess, Avicia, was performed by Gundulf himself in 1106, shortly before his death, which occurred in the same year.

From this time the history of the Abbey is a blank for 200 years, with the important exception of a destructive fire in 1190, which seems to have consumed both Abbey and town. In 1313 we have proof of the establishment of markets at Town Malling, as the abbess in that year claimed, and was allowed, markets on Wednesday and Saturday, with three annual fairs on the vigils and days of St. Peter, St. Martin and St. Leonard.⁵ From the beginning of the fourteenth century the names of the abbesses are again recorded, principally in connexion with the visitations of bishops for the remedy of abuses of administration, both spiritual and temporal. The Rochester Episcopal Register records the removal of the abbess, Elizabeth

¹ *Ibid.* 353 and Thorpe, *Reg. Roff.* p. 224.

² *Ibid.* 62.

³ *Mon. Ang.* i, 354.

⁴ For the Kentish details see

Hasted i, 473, 486; ii, 160, 176, 212 etc., 368. For Suffolk, *Calendar of Letters Patent*, 1317-21, p. 120.

⁵ V.C.H.

de Badlesmere on this score, in 1321, as the result of a direct appeal to the king, and the appointment of¹ Agnes de Leybourne by the Bishop, without election. She lived, however, only until 1324, when election was again resorted to, and Lora de Retlyng appointed. This election is of interest, as the existing number of nuns is recorded, 15 voting for this new abbess, and 12 for a rival candidate, two being unable to record their votes, thus giving a total of 29 nuns.² The monastery was visited by the Black Death, and two abbesses Isabel de Pecham and Benedicta de Gray died of it in 1349, and the numbers of the religious were so reduced that the administration was again very defective, eight nuns only being left, and none of these suitable for appointment as abbess. The Bishop's report of 1350 even expresses doubt that the Abbey can ever recover. This, however, must have been a condition of affairs common to religious and lay establishments throughout the country while the scourge of this pestilence lasted. It seems probable that the Abbey again became more prosperous during the end of the fourteenth and beginning of the fifteenth centuries as, though no documentary record reports it, we have structural evidence that a considerable amount of repair and reconstruction took place at this period, involving the gatehouse and its chapel, the rebuilding of the octagon of the western tower, probably the recasting and re-roofing of the southern range of the cloister buildings, with repairs in the chapter house and the insertion of a large number of new windows throughout the buildings, of which portions survive, or appear in Buck's drawing. The guest house also was rebuilt.

In the last years of the Abbey considerable competition for the stewardship occurred, probably with a view to the coming suppression, and resulting in the resignation of the abbess, Elizabeth Rede. Her successor, Margaret Vernon was transferred from Little Marlow, recently suppressed, and was the last abbess.

¹ *Ep. Reg. Roff. Hamo de Hethe*, 217-220. (Canterbury and York Society), Wharton, *Anglia Sacra*, i, 362. ² *Ep. Reg. Roff. Hamo de Hethe*, 140-144. (Canterbury and York Society).

She was a friend of Cromwell and probably appointed as being amenable to the king's will. The Abbey escaped the fate of the lesser houses, and surrender took place October, 1538, the Abbess and 11 nuns who then formed the establishment being pensioned in 1539.

The lands were first exchanged by the crown, 32 Henry VIII, with the Archbishop of Canterbury, and re-exchanged under Elizabeth. They were then granted to Henry Brooke of Cobham, who became Lord Cobham in 1596, and forfeited by attainder in 1604, when they were granted to Sir Robert Brett. They were resumed by the crown on his death, 1620, and granted to John Rayney whose son, Sir John, sold them to Edward Honeywood. It is a descendant of his who brought the Abbey to its present condition. Buck's drawing in 1735 shows the conditions immediately before the alterations. Frazer Honeywood, who was the innovator, proceeded to graft a house upon the remains of the southern cloister walk, which he retained, and upon those of the refectory and the adjoining part of the eastern range, for which he employed much of the old material and tracery. It is stated, apparently from an account of this work, that the clearing of the ground revealed foundations showing that the old building consisted of two courts, one of which was, of course, the cloister. The second may have been an irregular court formed by the junction of the existing guest house at its extremities with the main buildings, or may have been a court on the southern side, now totally destroyed, and formerly in connection with the infirmary, or the abbesses' apartments.

The Abbey passed out of the hands of the Honeywoods in 1799, and passed through those of the families of Foote (during whose occupation the present boundary wall and cascade were built), Losack, and Akers, finally being purchased in 1892 by Miss Boyd, who presented it to an Anglican Benedictine Sisterhood. It is still in the occupation of a religious community. It is owing to this that many desirable points cannot be verified. Access has always been very limited.

and difficult and the writer desires to express regret for many omissions.

2. THE SITE

The Abbey lies in that fertile and attractive strip of land situated upon the lower greensand

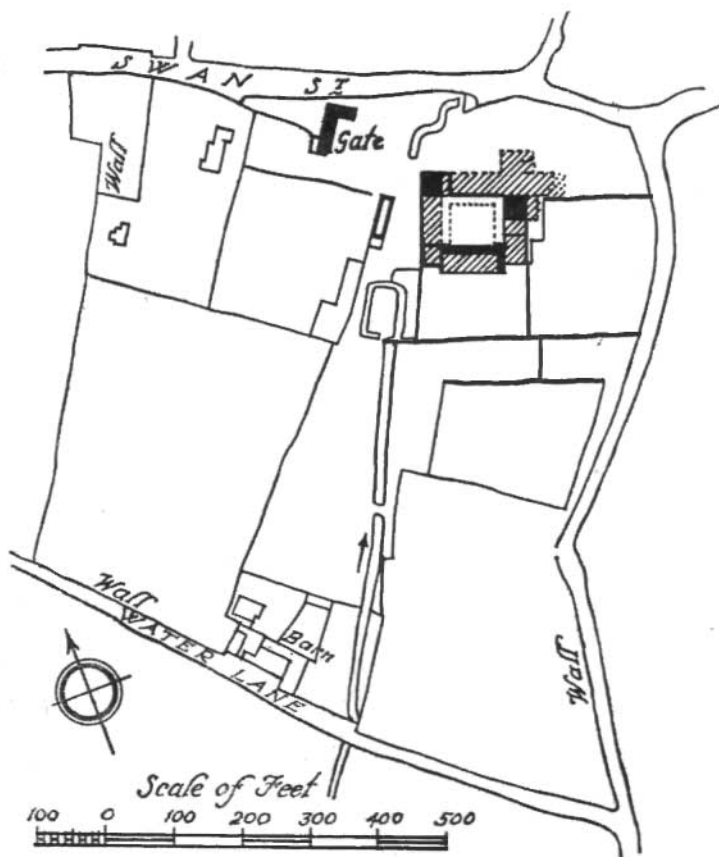


FIG. 1. GENERAL PLAN OF PRECINCT.

stratum, which traverses Kent from east to west, south of the chalk hills of the North Downs, and which contains the ragstone quarries of that area. The original precinct apparently occupied an area of about 16 acres, roughly square, and surrounded by a

containing wall, the lines of which are still existent (Fig. 1). This precinct was entered, about the centre of its northern face, through a gatehouse (Pl. v, B). This building, which is still intact, consists now mainly of work of the fourteenth century, possibly embodying some remains of an earlier building, and with some insertions of the fifteenth century. Projecting eastward from its north end is a square-ended chapel with lights of the fourteenth century, the building itself being probably of the same date. This was long desecrated and was restored to use about the middle of last century.

Facing the gatehouse at a distance of about 120 feet is the west tower of the Abbey church. This with its turretted façade is still standing in good condition. Eastward from this tower ran the aisleless nave, upon the western end of which a lean-to building was constructed against the east face of the tower at some time after the suppression, and previous to the conversion of the Abbey into a residence. The south wall of the nave, ruined to a height of some eight or ten feet, connects this building with the south transept, which, with its former arches to crossing and chapels blocked, still stands with its original walls in good condition to a considerable height, the extreme upper portion and roof being a restoration. From this point the remainder of the church has entirely disappeared, the north wall of the nave, the north transept, and the choir and crossing having been entirely demolished at some time between the suppression and the early part of the eighteenth century, when Buck's drawing supplies us with an excellent idea of the condition of this part of the buildings. The cloister was laid out in the normal position, to the south of the nave, and the range which formed its eastern boundary south of the transept still stands, comprising the chapter house and the undercroft to the dorter. The latter portion, however, and the whole of the southern range were recast in the reign of George II, to form a modern residence, which stands as then reconstructed. The buildings of the western range have entirely disappeared, and the square of the

cloister is now terminated on the west side by a modern wall joining the south west angle of the western tower and the north west angle of the Georgian building, and probably standing upon the line of the west wall of the western range.

Facing this wall at an angle stands the former guest house, and underground between the two, flows a stream which, after filling a fish pond south of the guest house, disappears and again emerges north of the west front of the church and discharges itself by a cascade under the north precinct wall. This provided an ample flow of water for the necessities of the monastery.

A fine medieval barn with timbered roof stands near the centre of the southern extremity of the Abbey property.

The spiritual needs of the community were provided for by a chaplain.¹ An old house near the Abbey has been said to have been his residence.

3. THE CHURCH.

The remains of the church of this Abbey are of exceptional interest. Not only are the survivals of nuns' churches in this country of the scantiest, but the employment of the unaisled plan on this scale and the stretch of practically unaltered early masonry, including the greater part of the transept and the nave wall as far as the commencement of the western tower, constitute a specimen of extraordinary value to the

¹ The endowment for this chaplain was known as a prebend, and is first recorded in 1207. Cf. also Thorpe, *Registrum Roffense*, 484, 485, 489-91. Archbishop Winchelsey presented to the 'beneficium magne misse ecclesie conventualis monasterii monialium de Malling' in 1299 (*Reg. Winchelsey*, p. 346, Canterbury and York Society). Two prebends are recorded in Archbishop Langham's register in 1366, 'magna missa majoris altaris' and 'alta missa,' cf. Professor Hamilton Thompson, F.S.A., *Double Monasteries and the Male Element in Nunneries*, p. 155 (being Appendix viii to the Report

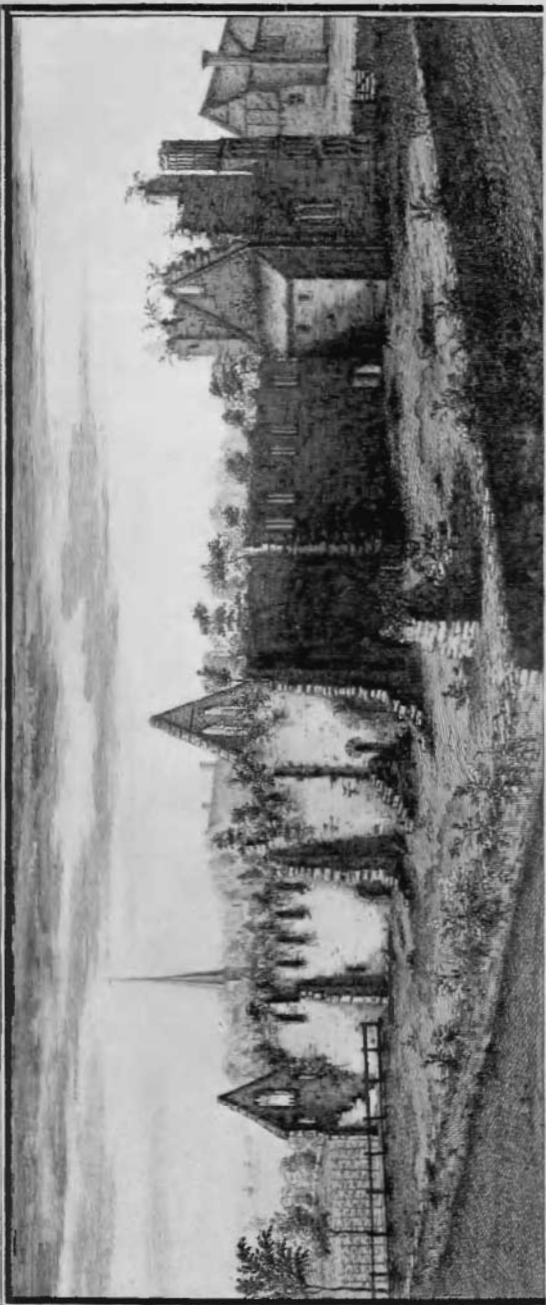
of the Archbishops' Commission on the Ministry of Women, S.P.C.K., 1919): 'the prebends in these cases were simply endowments for chaplains, but in certain monasteries they became benefices of some value, which in process of time were usually held by non-residents, whose duties in the monasteries were delegated to hired chaplains. . . . So far as England was concerned, the regularly endowed prebend, which was held as a freehold benefice in connexion with nunneries, was peculiar to southern houses, though early traces of it may possibly be found elsewhere.' Cf. also *Ep. Reg. Roff. Hamo de Hethe*, pp. 395-6.

ecclesiologist. It is a matter of the greatest regret that the plan of the eastern limb of this church, lying as it does in a perfectly open situation, has never been recovered. The work was proposed at one time by the late Sir William St. John Hope, but unfortunately the matter fell through. The recovery of this plan would not only provide a complete specimen of an aisleless Benedictine nunnery church of the end of the eleventh century, but it would give a valuable indication of the tendencies of Bishop Gundulf in his planning of the east end of a monastic church.

The Transept. As has been already mentioned, the south limb of the transept is its only surviving portion above ground. It is in practically original condition as regards its north, west, and south sides. On the north the large semicircular arch between transept and crossing stands intact, with its jambs. Its quoins and voussoirs are of well cut calcareous tufa from the Medway valley beds, the material employed here for all the early ashlar work. This arch was blocked to its full width at some period after the suppression, previous to the Honeywood alterations. The southern jambs of the east and west arches of the crossing are also existent, acting as buttresses, and also possessing tufa quoins. The commencement of the wall of the eastern limb of the church projects from the north-east corner of the transept, and terminates in the western side of a doorway with tufa quoins, showing a rebate and splay.

The western side of the transept, facing the cloister, was originally a very fine specimen of early masonry. It has been considerably marred in its lower part by the insertion of a modern door in its centre and a window to north of this. Originally it was apparently unpierced by any aperture up to the string course, and presented a wall of almost unbroken herringbone masonry, terminating with a quoin to the ground at its southern extremity where it is adjoined by the chapter house. The remains of the herringbone are still visible between the modern insertions, and above their level a very fine face of it still remains unbroken. It is formed of flat pieces of rag and reddish sandstone

THE NORTH EAST VIEW OF MALLING- ABBY, IN THE COUNTY OF KENT.



THIS MONASTERY of Benedictine Monks was Founded by Ethel. R. 6. 5. Abbot of St. Andrew's, and Dedicated to S. Andrew. Gundulph made Bp. of Rochester says, removed the Monks from this place, he dedicated to the hope of St. Leodegaria, & placed in lieu of them Thome. R. Hen. 2. 5. John & Thosine Archbishops of Canterbury, were Benefactors, whose names remain in the Mailing Chancel. The Monks were expelled by St. Gilbert & Robert de Abingdon, of his Lordship's lands of Canterbury, South of Mallow. In the late of Henry 3. after the Dissolution remained in the hands of the Mailing. The Monks of Canterbury, R. Hen. 3. 10. after the above, derive the name of this place from — Proposed to R. 2. Archbishop — where (as they being situated) St. John's has since been was proposed to the Crown, the present Proprietors, — Since, Henry 8. 1544. —

BUCK'S VIEW



WEST TOWER, SOUTH WALL OF NAVE, AND TRANSEPT. VIEW FROM THE SIDE OF THE CLOISTER

with some coursed tufa. Above the level of the string course are the remains of the Norman lighting, consisting of a large arch of tufa blocks with jambs of the same. This is now filled by a blocking, but from its large size it may reasonably be concluded that it contained a pair of sub-arches. There is also a suggestion of smaller arches flanking it. The whole of this composition, however, was blocked, and three very small pointed lights, constructed of firestone, were inserted in its place, at irregular intervals, the central one piercing the blocking of the early light. The southern wall of the transept is occupied by its junction with the gable of the chapter house. The upper portion and roof are a reconstruction, probably during the Honeywood rebuild. Buck's drawing of about 1735 (Pl. ii) shows it in ruin with a very steeply pitched south gable still standing, pierced by two long lights, whether round headed or slightly pointed it is difficult to determine from a rather doubtful perspective, but they were probably the latter, as the transept underwent a radical alteration about the commencement of the thirteenth century. This becomes evident on an examination of the eastern side where apparently the whole of the eastern wall with its early chapel or chapels was removed, and replaced by an elevation consisting of two large pointed arches, separated by a 7 foot block of wall, thinner than that of the original transept. These arches were turned in tufa, probably re-used, with jambs of ragstone, and the reconstructed wall was composed of a rubble of rag and tufa with no herringbone work, and containing a large relieving arch. This reconstruction doubtless produced a pair of square-ended chapels to the east of the transept, and the fractured ends of their walls can be seen in Buck's drawing. These arches were blocked before Buck's time, and the blocking pierced by a doorway which can still be traced, and is shown in his drawing.

The Nave. It has already been stated that the remains of the nave consist of the ruins of the south wall and of a short section of the north one, forming the north side of the lean-to building. In former years, however, in spells of dry weather the line of the

remainder of the north wall and of the north transept were traceable. The wreck of the south wall, from the transept to the western tower, is a valuable specimen of early masonry. It is strengthened on its southern face by two small original flat buttresses, each 1 foot 10 inches in width, and with a projection of 6 inches. These are quoined with large, well cut blocks of tufa. The wall itself, in almost its whole extent, shows excellent examples of herringbone masonry. This is mainly laid in flat pieces of sandstone, and is combined with straight courses of tufa, with some rag and sandstone. This early masonry reached to its highest point, as will be seen in the accompanying drawing (Pl. iii), in the part of the wall which was retained as the side wall of the lean-to building resting against the east face of the western tower. It terminates here in a well-defined vertical line at the junction with the tower, and this line is also emphasised near the base of the wall by a straight joint of tufa blocks, the south wall of the tower being recommenced against this straight joint by a similar one, also composed of tufa. This joint and its coincidence with the abrupt termination of the herring-bone work in the upper part of the wall, are important factors in the consideration of the date of the western tower, and will be referred to again in this connexion.

One portion only of this stretch of nave wall was badly damaged, by the insertion of a large doorway immediately to the west of the more western of the two buttresses. This has again been blocked, but is, of course, an unfortunate breach in an otherwise homogeneous stretch of eleventh-century wall. At its eastern end the nave wall is pierced by the eastern processional doorway, opening from the nave into the cloister. This is the original eleventh-century work, and is certainly one of the earliest doorways in that position in this country, as the majority of early eastern claustral entrances have undergone replacement at later periods by more ornate work. The doorway is splayed on the nave side and is now blocked; the arch on the cloister side can still be seen, an absolutely plain semicircular

arch, with head and jambs entirely constructed of square-edged tufa.

The Western Tower (Pl. iv). This is the portion of the buildings which is most widely known, owing to its first striking the eye, its good condition, its ornate character, and its somewhat unusual form. Its lateral walls carry westward the lines of those of the nave, with a very slight increase of thickness. Its east and west walls are much more substantial, the latter reaching the thickness of 6 feet 3 inches, the increase being required for the recesses of the arcading below, and for the central sloping set off at a higher level, which was needed to give a bold projection to the lateral turrets. The bases of these turrets are carried beyond the wall lines at the north and south extremities, thus acting as buttresses, and a third buttress is placed to support the north-east angle, at its junction with the north nave wall. There is no corresponding buttress on the south, the junction with the western range supplying abutment. The tower is square at the base and to about two-thirds of its present height. It is then surmounted by an octagon carried on squinches in the interior, which support the four diagonal faces. The south wall, externally, continues westward flush with the wall of the nave. Up to the level of the string course where the octagon commences, it is a plain rubble wall formed of small pieces of sandstone, rag and tufa, and showing no herringbone work. It is pierced about the centre of its base by a small late pointed doorway which has jambs of mixed rag, firestone and tufa. The projecting turret at its western end has quoins composed almost entirely of tufa. This is pierced at a height of about ten feet, by a doorway already mentioned, which communicated with the western range.

The north face of the tower possesses the two buttresses already mentioned. The western one is the base of the north-west turret and is pierced by arcaded niches similar to those in the lower part of the western front. Their arches and jambs are composed of tufa. The eastern buttress shows in its quoins, in addition to tufa, the use of rag and caen stone. The base of

the centre face is pierced by a small door, similar to that on the south side and opposite to it. Over this a large square-headed double light was inserted in the fifteenth century.

The eastern wall of the tower stands inside the lean-to building shown on the plan, forming its western side. It is a heavy wall of rubble, mainly of rag, and it is to be specially noticed that it meets the lateral nave walls with a definite straight joint, both on north and south. The portion visible is therefore, for certain, a later structure than the nave walls, and proves that nave and tower are not a homogeneous construction as they stand. The only aperture piercing this wall, as far as can be seen, is a rough doorway in the centre of its base, and this appears to have been the only connexion between tower and nave.

The western face is naturally the most interesting portion of the tower, constituting as it does the western façade of the Abbey church. It is flanked by two turrets, each possessing five stages of ornamental arcading. In the two lower stages this takes the form of plain austere niches, with tufa arches and quoins. The third becomes a definite arcade with pilasters, and the use of Caen stone is commenced. Above this the turret, hitherto square, becomes octagonal, the corners being chamfered off, and having a triangular stop at their base. The fourth stage contains two plain long niches on its west face, and is still attached to the main tower. The fifth, having reached the level of the central octagon, is entirely detached and is covered on all its faces with a high enriched arcade, carried on long slender pilasters with banded shafts, the whole executed in Caen stone. This doubtless ended in a conical cap, which is now ruined. The central space between these turrets in their two lower stages consists of a wall face now pierced in its centre by a depressed doorway with a fourteenth-century light over it. These are, of course, insertions and the original arrangement can no longer be made out. Flanking these are two high niches of the original work. They are perfectly plain with obtusely pointed heads, the jambs and arches entirely

constructed of tufa. Above the string which terminates this wall at the top, the wall is recessed by a long raking slope between the faces of the turrets, thus considerably reducing its thickness. Above this a band of arcading crosses its face on a level with the fourth stage in the turrets. At this level the octagon commences and is adjusted to the hitherto square tower by a series of four half-pyramids, the eastern ones being at a higher level than the western, for convenience in adjusting the weathering of the nave roof. The octagon, as it now stands, does not belong to the original work, but is work probably of the late fourteenth century. It is pierced on each alternate face by a two-light window, with square head and cusped tracery, as shown by the surviving one on the south side. The octagon is constructed almost entirely of ragstone.

Internally, the tower is roughly faced, mainly with rag. In the east and west walls bits of Norman squared stone appear among the rag. High up, at the angles appear the squinches for the octagon. The squinch arches are pointed, and constructed of large pieces of whitish stone. There are also corbels at this level, showing that a floor existed at the base of the octagon.

The dating of the earlier work in this tower is of great interest. It has been compared, and justly, with the west front of Rochester Cathedral, and its influence supposed to have been drawn from that building. This is more than probable. If it be remembered that this is an aisleless building and the comparison limited to the part of the west front at Rochester which covers the central alley of the nave, the resemblance is most striking. The austere base course with its pair of high niches, the arcading above this, the turrets at the flanks, first square, then becoming octagonal, with their arcaded faces, all form an exact parallel. There can be little doubt that one of these buildings influenced the other, and when their relative positions are considered there can be no doubt that Rochester was the primary influence. This being the case, this front at Malling cannot be

the work of Bishop Gundulf, as it has always been classified, as the work at Rochester is unquestionably of the middle of the twelfth century.

There is, however, structural evidence also at Malling, which strongly suggests that this conclusion is correct, and that the west tower is a later addition to the nave. It has been pointed out that the herring-bone masonry of the nave abruptly terminates when the tower is reached, and that there is also a quoin in this position at the base of the wall. This strongly suggests a break in the sequence of construction at this point, still more strongly borne out by the straight joints of the internal cross-wall, as these could never have existed if the work had been homogeneous. The work in the west front itself helps to bear out this conclusion. The pointed arches in the main niches, which are almost certainly original, could not have been employed at an earlier date, when Rochester was still using the semicircular form. Moreover, their form corresponds very well with the date of the arcading in the upper stages, where the use of the banded shaft predicates an advanced twelfth-century date. The writer is aware that it is usually stated that the lower and upper stages are of different periods, on the strength of the plain work of the lower elevation. It is obvious, however, that the lower work was planned to carry the turrets, and the ornate work commences at no great height, while in other buildings with Norman western towers it can be frequently observed that the lower portion is plain and austere, while the work increases in richness as it ascends. In the opinion of the writer the use of the pointed arch and the masonry evidence, together with the general character of the work, combine to prove that the tower is a later addition to the nave and should not be classified earlier than the middle of the twelfth century.

4. THE CHAPTER HOUSE AND DORTER RANGE.

This eastern claustral range is continued south from the transept, of the full width of the latter, and at its southern extremity becomes merged in the eastern portion of the house grafted by the Honeywoods



A. WESTERN TOWER FROM THE NORTH-WEST

To face page 188.



B. WESTERN TOWER FROM THE SOUTH-WEST

PLATE IV.



A. SOUTH SIDE OF CLOISTER



B. EAST SIDE OF GATE-HOUSE, WITH CHAPEL

upon the monastic buildings on their southern side. The arrangements of the Georgian house were carried through the whole of this, as far as the south wall of the chapter house. The walls of the dormer, with a range of five windows in the east wall, and its southern terminal gable (all shown in Buck's drawing), were pulled down, and the undercroft only retained. This was roofed at a considerably lower level than the chapter house, thus forming only a ground story, and the old walls were pierced for doors and windows and in parts reconstructed. The old material was freely used in these alterations, tufa quoins being largely employed for jambs and arches, and portions of mediæval windows being inserted. The wall on the cloister side is mainly original, with a blocked doorway, traceable with difficulty under thick ivy, opening into the chapter house. The east wall of the chapter house is probably an early reconstruction, very likely of the same period as the squaring of the transept eastern chapels, as it terminates at its southern extremity in a quoin of mixed tufa, rag and firestone, the use of the latter probably marking the commencement of the thirteenth century. The wall to south of this has received, as mentioned above, many alterations with old materials, but occupies the position, and probably contains throughout the core, of the old wall. A crypt or cellar lies beneath the chapter house. The chapter house possesses a timber roof, described and figured in the *Builder*, vol. iv (1846) as a mediæval survival. The plate shows an arch-braced roof of rather unusual design described as resting laterally on moulded corbels of stone and having a span of 30 ft. This is set, not the length of the chapter house, but to the length of the range, and the spacing of the trusses is imperfect. As a reference to Buck's engraving clearly shows that this range was a roofless ruin in 1735, it is evident that this existed elsewhere and is a re-erection.

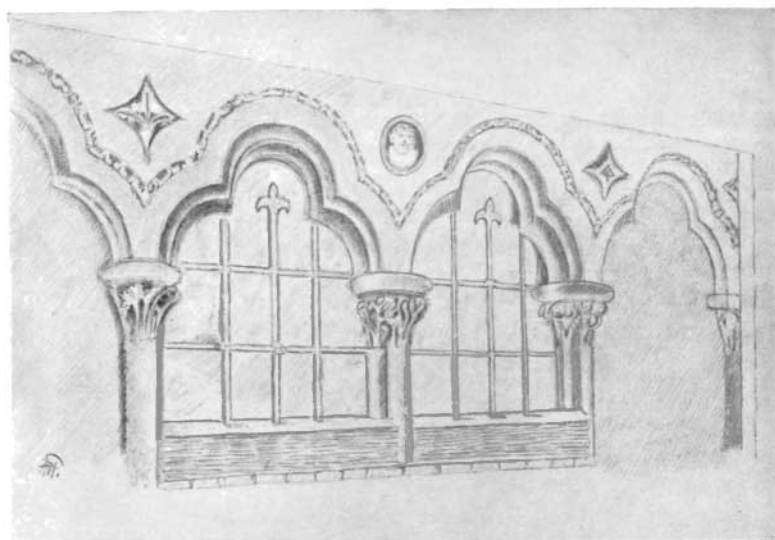
The gable at the south end of the dormer range is well shown in Buck's drawing (Pl. ii) where it is to be seen that it contained a large window in its upper part, of fourteenth-century date, judging from the remains

of the tracery. At a level below the sill of this were two small apertures, placed laterally. These may have been either windows or doorways, as a door in this position may conceivably have communicated with the rere-dorter, as in a number of instances in other monasteries.

Owing to its complete destruction, evidence is now lacking, but the apparent length of the range suggests that this gable stood beyond the limits of the present house. The eastern wall of the range was already ruined to the ground at this point, and it is the absence of this which allows of the interior view of the gable in Buck's drawing.

5. THE SOUTHERN RANGE.

This is the part of the monastic buildings upon which Frazer Honeywood, in the reign of George II, elected to place his new house. He aimed at a pseudo-Gothic building, and produced this effect by the free use of old materials and window tracery derived from the destroyed buildings. The southern front he entirely recast, using a grey sandstone in large cut blocks for the central façade, which was made to project, and employing a large amount of tufa with other fragments, in the lateral portions, for arches and jambs. On the northern side he incorporated the southern walk of the cloister with its arcade, and two projections at east and west, returned northward from the line of the arcade, probably mark the junctions of the east and west walks with the southern one. The north wall is placed upon the arcade and thus the southern walk of the cloister is included in the house, with apartments over it, instead of being applied to the building with a lean-to roof, as would be almost certainly the case in the original cloister here. The arrangement of apartments over some of the claustral walks was, however, adopted in a number of monasteries in their later periods, the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Of the arrangement in Norman days no evidence remains, as this part of the cloister is a rebuild of the early part of the thirteenth century, but its



THE CLOISTER ARCADE

arcade probably stands on the old line, as this spaces out for a normal square cloister. The remains of this claustral arcade constitute a very fine specimen of early thirteenth-century work (Pls. v, A and vi). The arcade consists of a series of trefoil-headed arches with deep mouldings, resting on quatrefoil-shaped pillars, having capitals of fine, stiff foliage, with circular abaci. The wall above shows an ornamental band of stiff trefoil foliage, following the lines of the arches, the intervening spandrels each having a carved ornament of foliage or faces. This work is carried out in firestone, the typical material for the period in this region, and the three buttresses projecting into the cloister garth are of rag. The wall above has been much altered in the Honeywood period, and contains relieving arches. A drawing of the cloister arcade is given in the *Builder*, vol. v, 1847, p. 207.

6. THE WESTERN RANGE.

The western range of the buildings surrounding the cloister, as was stated earlier, has been entirely destroyed. The evidence remaining suggests that it ran somewhat obliquely, and this, taken in conjunction with the date of the existing cloister walk, renders it probable that this range and the cloister walk corresponding to it were a reconstruction of the early thirteenth century, not improbably rendered necessary by the fire of 1190. A small firestone doorway, which formerly gave access from it to the south-west turret of the western tower at a height of about 10 feet from the ground, by its material, supports the probability of this dating.

7. THE GUEST HOUSE.

The guest house faces obliquely towards the position of the western range. It was originally an oblong building with a building, or buildings, attached at its southern end, which are now destroyed.¹ It is a construction or re-construction of the fifteenth century,

¹ Buck's engraving also suggests the destruction of a building at the north end.

and its walls contain a considerable quantity of re-used tufa. By refitting, and the addition of a building to its western side, it has been converted into a modern residence.

This monastery possesses one of the few authentic underground passages. This is not connected with the buildings, but descends into the ground almost at the extremity of the precinct at its north-east corner. It is stone walled and vaulted, and passes in a north-easterly direction, being blocked at a short distance from the entrance. Traditionally it has the usual long distance objective assigned to it, but whether it has been explored at all, or not, the writer has no knowledge.

The nuns' cemetery probably occupied the usual position east of the church. Some stone coffins with lids bearing crosses, the latter having quatrefoil heads and floreated stems, were unearthed in the area of the eastern claustral walk near the transept, and probably represent the interments of some of the abbesses in, or near, the chapter house.

The common seal of the abbey can be seen, attached to the Deed of Surrender, in the Record Office. It bears the figures of the Virgin and Child beneath a Gothic canopy.

At the valuation the Abbey was returned at £218 4s. 2d. (Dugdale), £250 10s. 2½d. (Speed).

The last abbess requested to be allowed to sell the Suffolk property at Cornard, in order that the Abbey might provide its own pensions independently—this, however, was not permitted, and the pensions were granted in the usual way.

In conclusion the writer desires to express his very grateful acknowledgments to Mr. A. W. Clapham, F.S.A., for the general precinct plan, for the photographs of the western tower and the gatehouse, and for the interior details of the latter.