

PROCEEDINGS  
OF THE  
**Cambridge Antiquarian Society,**

OCTOBER 1928—OCTOBER 1930

WITH  
**Communications**  
MADE TO THE SOCIETY

VOLUME XXXI

Edited by E. A. B. BARNARD, F.S.A., F.R.Hist.S.



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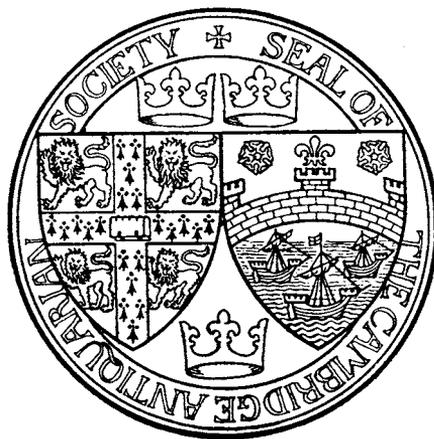
## NOTE

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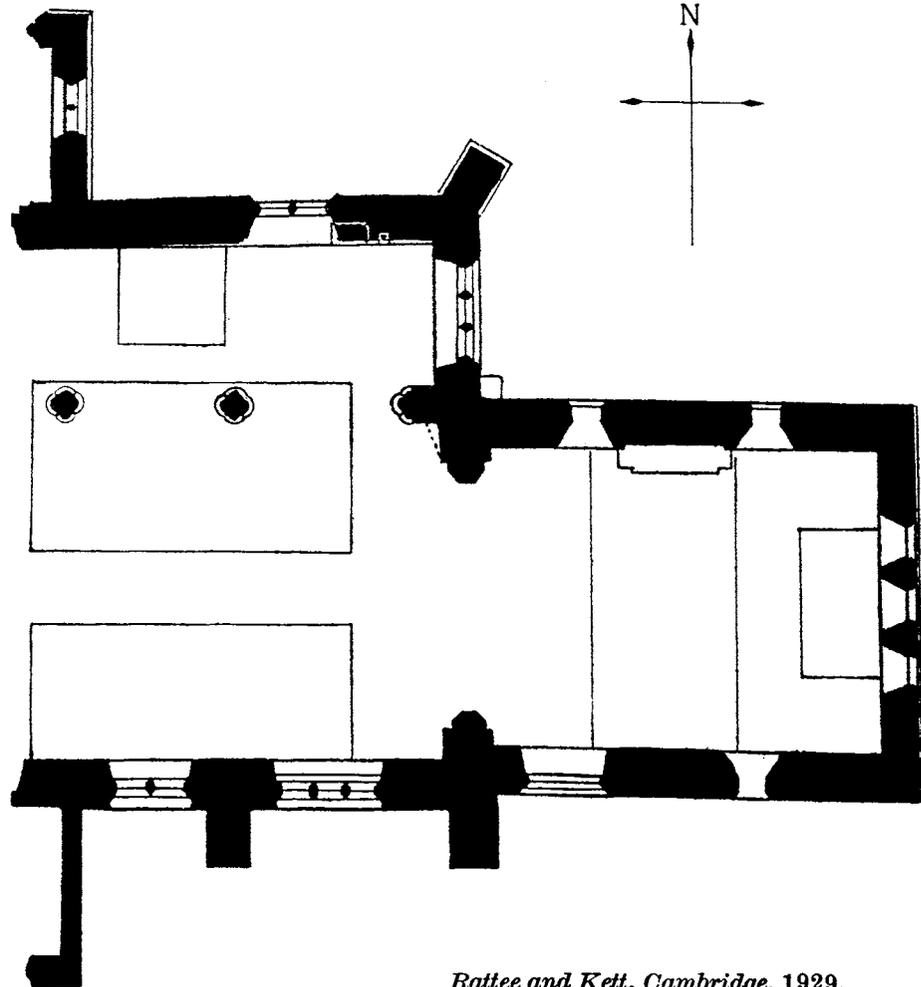
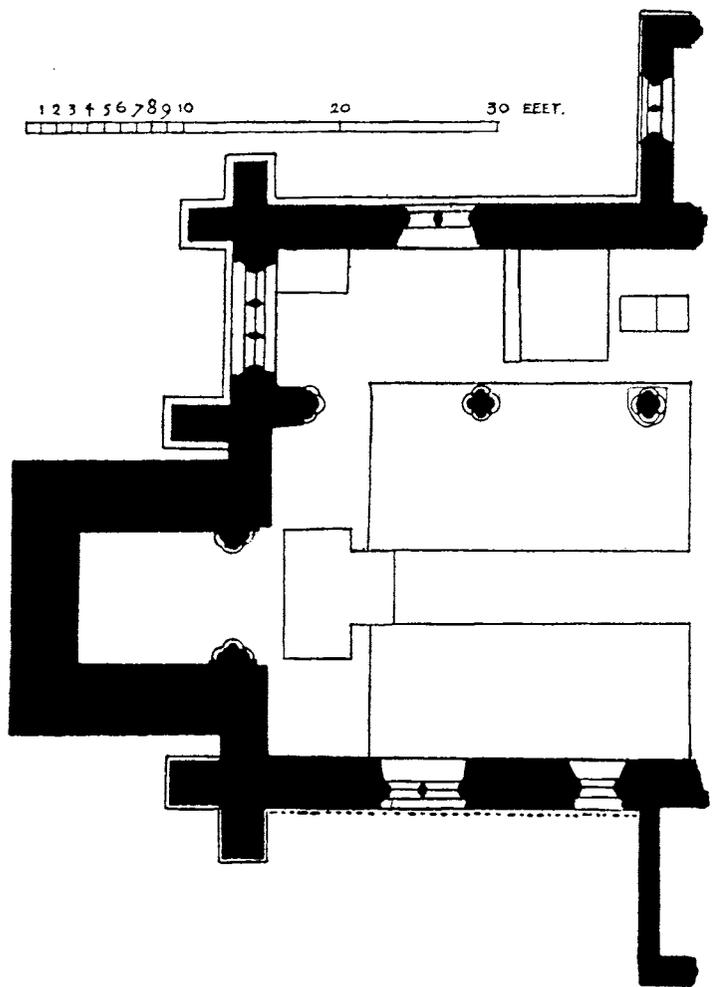
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Madingley Church

*Rattee and Kett, Cambridge, 1929.*

## THE PARISH CHURCH OF MADINGLEY.

By A. H. LLOYD, Ph.D., F.S.A.

(Read 3 February 1930.)

It is not possible to say at what date a church was founded at Madingley. The Domesday Book for Cambridgeshire and the allied documents make such very rare references to parish churches as to prevent any deduction from their silence on the subject in the Madingley entries. But other documentary evidence shows that there was a church at Madingley in 1092, when Picot the Sheriff, who figures so largely in the history of the County town and the shire, gave the church of *Maddingele* along with many other churches to the Canons of St Giles<sup>1</sup> whose house, newly founded by him and his wife as a thank-offering for her recovery from sickness, and placed first near the Castle of Cambridge, was removed twenty years later to Barnwell. That Picot founded all the churches he gave to the Priory need not be supposed; they were appurtenances more probably of the manors which he received for his share of the spoil as one of the followers of the Conqueror. Madingley then is likely to have had a church *tempore regis Edwardi* and possibly even much earlier. Of that pre-conquest church nothing now remains visible, but it is reasonable to assume that it stood until it was replaced, about the end of the 12th century, by the building the greater part of which still stands in the parish church of to-day (Pl. II).

From the year 1092, when the church was appropriated to the use of the Canons, the priory became the rectors and presented to the vicarage down to the Dissolution; the patronage now lies with the Bishop of Ely.

The dedication is to St Mary Magdalene, not, as is sometimes said, to St Mary (the Blessed Virgin). It is not known whether the present dedication is the ancient one, but in the middle of the 18th century the church is referred to as St Mary Virgin<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> *Eccl. de Bernewelle Lib. Mem.*, edited by J. W. Clark, p. 40.

<sup>2</sup> Baker MSS., xxviii, p. 211.

The registers of baptisms, marriages and burials begin in 1539, the entries to 1597 being found not only in the usual certified transcripts upon parchment, but also in the original paper, except that "In the time of Kinge Edwarde there was noe Register kepte from the yeare of our Lorde 1553 to 1559"; they continue without a break throughout the Commonwealth. The baptisms have no serious lapse thereafter but between 1682 and 1687 there would appear to have been some irregularity, resulting in no entries between 29 October 1682 and August 1683, while from that date to 1687 the book may have been misplaced, for the entries are made upon a sheet which appears to have been interpolated. Marriages, exceptionally numerous in 1660, show no entries at all between 20 March 1673 and 13 April 1686. Burials cease from 19 January 1673 to 13 October 1678, when there is a single entry but no other until (in an illiterate hand) 26 December 1684. There are spaces for the years 1685, 1686, 1687, but no entries, which become continuous again from 12 July 1688. The first affidavit of the burial having been made in woollen is dated 19 October 1678.

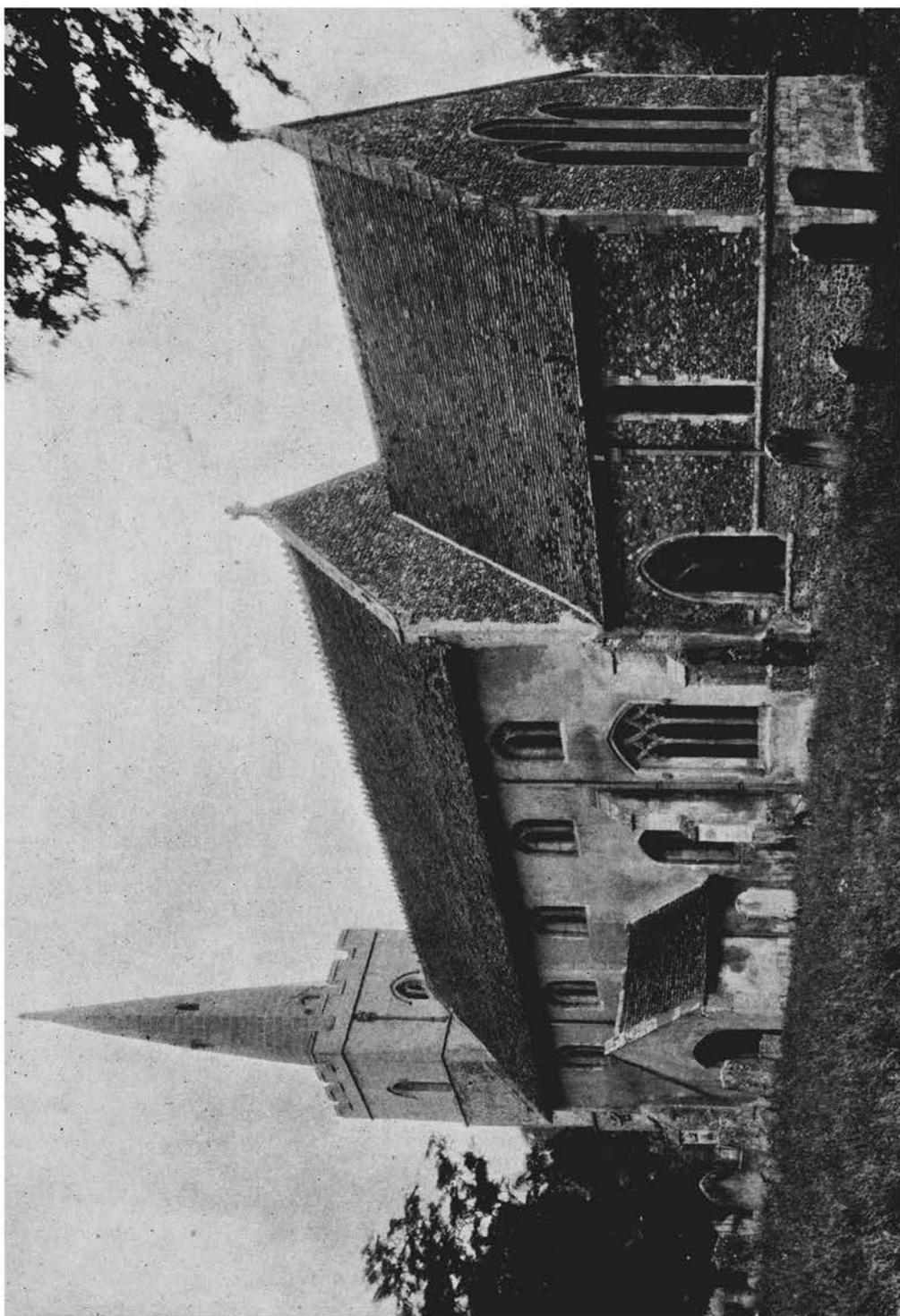
The registers have much of interest in their evidence of the persistence of names known from the 14th century (in other documents) and their record of others still familiar in the present inhabitants of the parish. But, alas, they are entirely without reference to passing events, such as are occasionally encountered in some parish registers, and, still more unfortunately, they contain no notices of incidents in the life of the building such as the erection of additions or the re-opening after repair, which may here and there be seen elsewhere. Entries of the latter character might more properly be sought in churchwardens' accounts and minutes of vestry meetings, but these have no existence at Madingley until within the memory of man.

Layer, the antiquary, who died in 1641, has this note upon Madingley: "This church is very small and not much to be commended for the decency thereof."

At the archdeacon's visitation in 1662 (Sept. 25) we learn "we have a font of stone, a decent communion table," and "The book of canons was taken away by the souldiers." At the visitation of 1665 the order was given "The elderne about the Church to



PLATE II



Madingley Church, from South-East.

be cut down” and the statement made that the stone wall at the east end northward was out of repair.

Cole in his note dated 2 June 1744 takes a less gloomy view than Layer. He writes: “This is a neat Church having a square Tower with a Steeple of Stone on it, at the West end, with 3 Bells in it; a Nave and N. Isle leaded, and Chancel with 2 Porches tiled.” Cole, who was in orders, was at one time offered, but declined, the vicarage of Madingley.

The first vicar recorded in the table preserved at the entrance to the chancel is Henry of Landbeach, 1313, but we have the name of an earlier vicar, though not his date, as will appear later. Parts of the existing building however are much earlier in date than the incumbency of Henry of Landbeach, for the nave and chancel, with the tower (not the spire) appear to have been built about 1200, before rather than after (Pl. IV). About 100 years later, *circa* 1300, the north aisle was added, its five arches with four pillars and two responds being a very beautiful example of the early stage of what is generally called the Decorated Period of Gothic architecture (Pl. V).

The builders of the aisle did what was very unusual in replacing the capitals of the chancel arch (of *c.* 1200) with capitals having the same mouldings (Pl. VI A) as the capitals of the aisle arcade, and in replacing the Early English arch (which may have been no more than a doorway) of the tower (*c.* 1200) with the present arch having responds (i.e. half-pillars) with bases and capitals reproducing the details of the aisle arcade, as does also the arch they carry, allowing for the modifications due to its smaller width (Pl. VII).

There were no further changes of importance until towards the close of the 15th century, say between 1475 and 1500, when the clerestory was added to the nave and a rood-loft was set up (the blocked entrance to which is seen in the N.E. angle of the nave) with a screen beneath it whose lower part was probably of stone (Pl. V). The clerestory addition called for new roofs to nave and aisle but these have in their turn disappeared in modern times.

The south door is in essence that of the late 12th century church and preserves the fine iron hinges of that date (Pl. III A).

The north doorway is mediaeval and may have been moved from the north side of the nave when the aisle was built *c.* 1300. The treatment it has received in 19th century restoration has involved the application of cement and calls for caution in considering the period and original position of the doorway.

Minor changes were made in window openings from time to time. One of these gave us the beautiful three-light decorated window at the eastern end of the south wall of the nave (Pl. II), but these detailed adaptations of the church to the needs of successive centuries are best discussed when we are considering the various parts of the building to which they severally belong.

The spire which, with the stage of the tower immediately beneath it (Pl. IV), was added to the Early English tower in the 15th century, was found to be unsafe a few years ago, and a large part of the tower and the whole of the spire were taken down in 1926 to be rebuilt, as far as possible with the old material. Some of that consisted of coffins of the 13th century, broken into pieces of suitable size. One of the coffins has been loosely put together and is to be seen at the foot of the south side of the tower (outside). The three bells were of necessity removed and two of them were re-cast before replacement; the third, a fine mediaeval example, has been placed permanently on the floor of the aisle.

Until 1779 the chancel was 12 feet longer than it is now and there is no reason known why it was then shortened; as the shortening was done with the sanction of the bishop, and at the desire and expense of the principal parishioner, Sir John Cotton, the reason must have been adequate in the eyes of the effective authorities of that day. In the churchyard behind the east wall of the chancel is a deep depression whose occasion is not obvious. Cole, however, supplies the explanation when he says that the bricklayer had to dig 6 feet (owing to obstruction from graves and vaults) before he could lay a foundation for the east wall.

From the sketch which accompanies the note by Cole in 1744, it appears that the chancel at that time had three lancet windows on the N. side and a Decorated or Perpendicular east window of three lights with a traceried head. The east wall and so much of the N. and S. walls as removed the easternmost of



PLATE IIIA



Madingley Church, South Door.

the three lancets shown in Cole's sketch (Pl. III c) are what was taken down by Sir John Cotton in 1779. This is beyond question, for Cole's details of the monuments and the positions they occupied in the chancel in 1744, entirely confirm the deductions drawn by comparison of his sketch with the decapitated chancel to be seen to-day. The work of Sir John Cotton was undone in 1873-74 and we are dependent for any details of it upon what can be gained from pictures, from Cole's notes of 1779-80, and from a report dated 21 April 1873, addressed to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners by their architect, Mr Ewan Christian. We learn that he blocked all the side windows of the chancel "for the purpose of fixing monuments," built a new east wall containing a "modern window" and put up a modern roof "of the roughest description made of common fir poles cut down the middle, with occasional principals of square timber of rather large scantling." We have no view of the window Sir John Cotton inserted in the east wall but he showed his design to Cole who says that it was "by Jeffs." This was probably the senior partner of Jeffs and Bentley, stonemasons, who a few years before refaced the first court of Christ's College<sup>1</sup>. The window was to be in three panels, and Sir John Cotton asked Cole's advice about painted glass. He recommended the Hindes' arms in the two side panels but Sir John "thought there would not be light enough as no windows would be left on the sides." In the end, he appears to have preserved the 16th century crucifixion, with St John and the Blessed Virgin below, and a Flemish Jerusalem in the background, which now stands in the south-west window of the chancel (Pl. VIII). The work Sir John did was, Cole says, "to his own great Expende of 300£" a sum equal to-day to £2500 at least for such work.

It is remarkable that, in a church where so many ancient features are preserved, there is no remaining piscina niche. As far as the high altar is concerned, however, that is due to the shortening of the chancel, for the twelve feet removed would include that portion of the eastern end of the south wall of which Cole writing in 1744 says "in ye S. wall within ye Rails also are 2 Holes, divided by a sort of Pillar for Holy Water."

<sup>1</sup> Willis and Clark, Vol. II, p. 225.

Against the N. Wall, between the more eastern window and the window that was taken down by Sir John, stood the handsome monument to Miss Jane Cotton which now stands in the west end of the N. aisle (Pls. III B and IX).

There are two pictures which show the chancel from the south side as it appeared after the shortening; they are undated but may be attributed to the 2nd quarter of the 19th century. One is from a drawing by William Fleetwood Varley, whose dates are 1785–1856<sup>1</sup>.

Restoration of the Church—it is interesting to find this late survival of the use of ‘Church’ to discriminate the nave and its appurtenances from the Chancel—was put in hand in 1872. This appears to have brought the question of Chancel repairs before the Bishop, the rector in succession to the dissolved priory of Barnwell, and the Ecclesiastical Commission, acting on behalf of the Ely Bishopric Estates, instructed their architect, Mr Ewan Christian, to report upon the work which should be done. To the courtesy of the secretary of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners I am indebted for a complete copy of Ewan Christian’s report. He advised them on 21 April 1873 that “To be put in accordance with the Church, and indeed for substantial reasons also, the Chancel should have a new roof of better form and materials, and it would be a great improvement to insert a new and larger east window. I estimate that the repairs such as could be required of a Lessee<sup>2</sup> will cost about £38. 0. 0. The further cost of re-roofing the Chancel, opening and restoring the windows, putting in a better east window, and relaying the floor with tiles would be about £298. 0. 0.

New benches about	£43. 0. 0.
New Communion Rail	£18. 0. 0.”

That makes a total of £397. It appears from an examination of the fabric that the east wall above the string was rebuilt and it is to the credit of the architect that the work was carried out for a total cost of about £500<sup>3</sup>. It is pleasant to record that the Bishop, or the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, defrayed the whole

<sup>1</sup> *Dict. Nat. Biog.* lviii, 153.

<sup>2</sup> I assume this to be the measure of the Bishop’s legal liability.

<sup>3</sup> *Cambridgeshire Chronicle and University Journal*, 30 May 1874.



Madingley Church, Chancel Monument, from Cole's drawing.







Madingley Church, exterior from North-East, and Mistress Jane Cotton's Monument, from Cole's drawing.

of that expense, though the legal liability was no more than £38. The builder employed was Mr Brown of Lynn.

We are now free to consider what of the ancient church these various changes, dilapidations and repairs have allowed to survive.

#### THE CHANCEL.

Externally the original string course is left below the window level; its semi-hexagonal form, slightly undercut, is one of the principal grounds for suggesting that the church was built rather before 1200 (Pl. II). Above the string, the east end wall (erected in 1779–80) was entirely rebuilt during the 1873–4 restoration; to what extent the window follows in general character the original opening is impossible to judge. It is not badly out of keeping with the building and, since Sir John Cotton destroyed the 14th or 15th century window he found, there could be no objection to the introduction of an E.E. type. The three lancets, two in the north wall (Pl. IV), one in the south (Pl. II) are in their original positions, although much of their stonework has been renewed. There was a fourth lancet at the west end of the south wall which was replaced by a window of the present size in the first half of the 14th century; part of the 12th century string was cut out and dropped to adjust its position in regard to the larger window. The jambs, sill and dripstone still remaining are original, but all the rest of the stonework is modern and the tracery does not reproduce the forms of the 14th century windows (Pl. II).

The principal internal feature of this part of the building is the chancel arch which, with its responds of semi-octagonal form, their bases and the hood-mould, is that of the late 12th century church (Pl. V). The capitals it has already been said were replaced about 1300 (Pl. VI A). The bases of the responds are at different levels, the plinth of the southerly side standing  $10\frac{1}{2}$  inches above the present ground level, the northerly one 5 inches only (Pl. IX). The original form of the base moulding is better seen on the northerly side; it consists of two rolls separated by a water-hollow having a raised rim on each side, and the flat almost rectangular form of the hollow points again

to the reign of Richard I rather than later as the date of the building. The hood-mould of the chancel arch has a rounded slope above and a hollow chamfer below, with a quirk between them, the whole moulding typical of late transitional work. The arch above the capitals has two members of rectangular outline with chamfered edges, a form possible at any date from, say, 1150 onwards. The soffit of the inner member is broad and has two wide joints, continuing from capital to capital and separated by a course of masonry about  $4\frac{1}{2}$  inches wide (Pl. VI A). The probable interpretation of this puzzling feature is that the chancel arch above the rood loft was filled in solid, as may be seen at Bettws Newydd<sup>1</sup>; the builders cut grooves to receive the timber frame and the grooves were filled in after the removal of the rood loft in the reign of Elizabeth or later, for though her ordinance was issued in 1561, it was not always immediately and completely obeyed<sup>2</sup>.

The screen was still in place in Cole's time and there is no reason to suppose that it was removed before the shortening of the chancel in 1779-80. It is improbable that it survived that and the changes which accompanied it; the blocking of side windows with monuments that made the chancel too dark to support the armorial bearings in stained glass in the side panels of the new east window would scarcely permit the retention of a mediaeval screen under the chancel arch. It is worth while to quote Cole's words about the screen: "The Nave and Chancel is separated by a Screen of open work...Over ye s<sup>d</sup> Screen are ye Royal Arms painted." (It is possible that it was the fixing of the framework for the royal arms that occasioned the cutting of the grooves in the chancel arch.) It is to be regretted that Cole does not say whether the screen was of wood or of stone; 'open work' would suit either but, whatever may have been the position with regard to the 'open work,' it is clear enough that the lower part, usually solid panels, was of masonry. It is difficult otherwise to interpret the marks against the western faces of the arch responds and bases.

The monument (Pl. III c) which formerly stood against the

<sup>1</sup> See measured drawing *Screens and Galleries*, Francis Bond, p. 179.

<sup>2</sup> Cooper's *Annals of Cambridge*, Vol. II, p. 172, n. 3.

east end of the N. wall and is now at the west end of the aisle has been mentioned. That which rears its tall height between the two remaining windows in the same wall is in the position it occupied when Cole wrote (Pl. III B). This "very noble Monument," as he justly describes it, of Dame Jane Cotton, the heiress who brought the Hinde property of Madingley into the Cotton family, has well withstood the ravages of nearly 250 years. Cole refers to the pathetic little tablet which is now placed on the north wall between the arch and the window (Pl. IX); in Cole's day it was "Ag<sup>st</sup>. ye same wall near ye Screen and below ye east Window." It is not known whose child is here remembered; the inscription clearly refers to a female infant.

There are six paintings on wood against the east wall, three on each side of the altar. They represent:

*North side.*

St Andrew  
St Thomas  
St Peter

*South side.*

St John, the Evangelist  
St Paul  
St James, the Greater

and are referred to by Cole in the words (under date of 5 Nov. 1779) "Sir John has further ornamented this part of the Chancel with... the Figures of six Apostles well painted... being Paintings of some Repute and formerly hanging in Frames in the Gallery of the Mansion House." Of the altar rails he says that they formerly belonged to Great St Mary's Church at Cambridge.

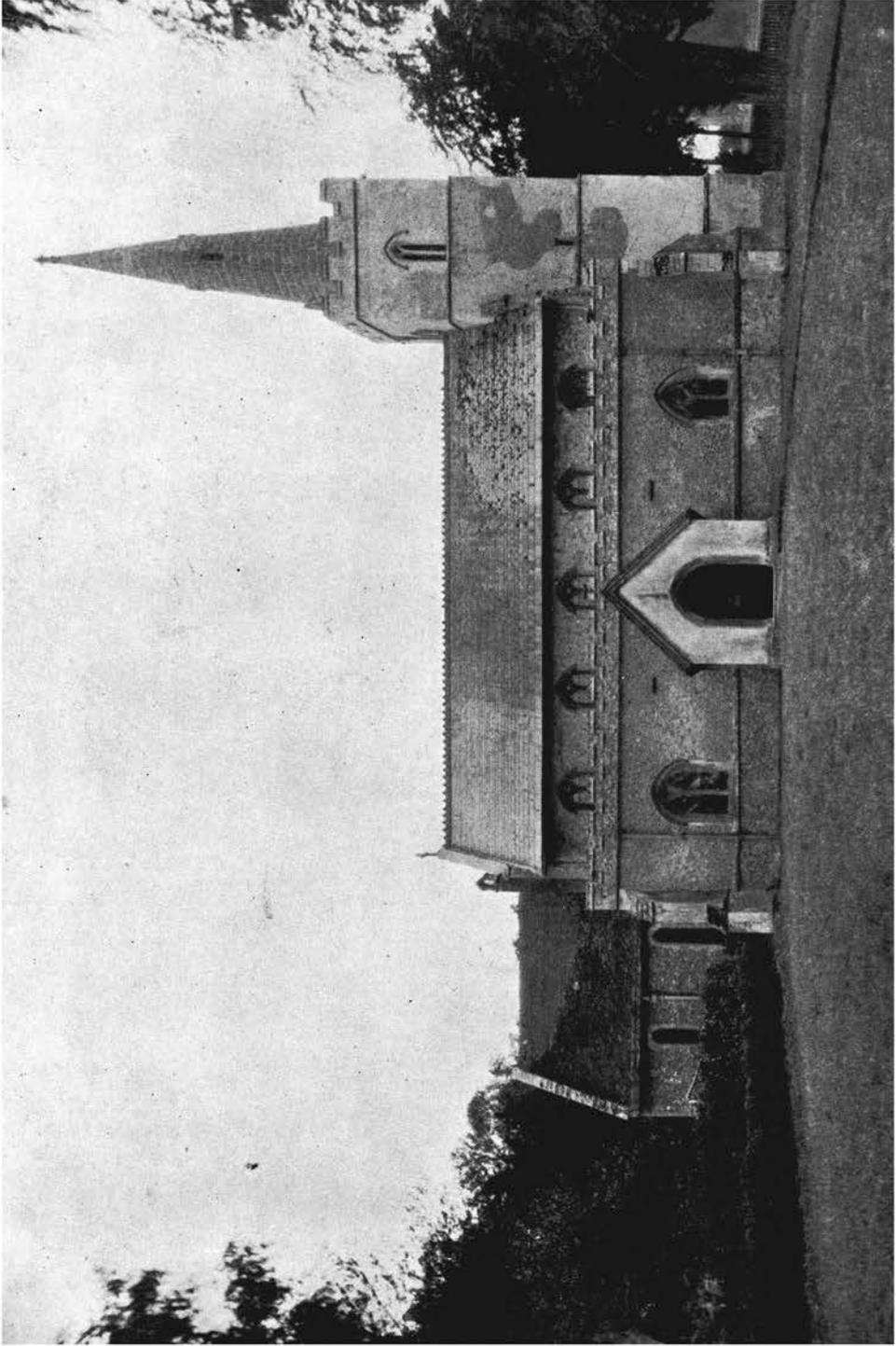
## THE CHURCH.

The work done in 1873-4 in the chancel was necessary from every point of view but it was difficult, in the absence of contemporary evidence to reconstruct the state of things obtaining before the Ecclesiastical Commissioners stepped in. The architect's report preceding the work has made it possible, in the light of Cole's sketch and notes, to read unmistakably the history of the eastern arm between 1779 and 1874. In the remaining portion of the building, the architectural history of the last century was sufficiently plain, but it is useful to have deductions based upon observation confirmed by testimony of contemporary date. The parishioners seem to have taken action

first, for the Commissioners' architect, in the course of reporting upon the state of the Chancel, says "The restoration of the Church which has a very good arcade of the 14th century (Pl. V) is now in progress. The whole of it was re-roofed and is about to be re-floored, but the funds are not sufficient at present to provide for refitting." I had learnt from the register that the church must have been out of use for about two years, and this was confirmed with the addition of simple and quaint details by the oldest inhabitant who has since died. More particulars have been gained from a search of the file of the *Cambridgeshire Chronicle* preserved in the University Library. The number of that paper published 30 May 1874 says "The pretty little Church situate in the Park at Madingley was re-opened on Wednesday last (May 27) by the Lord Bishop of the Diocese after undergoing extensive reparation. New roofs have been placed on the nave, aisle and chancel, a portion of the aisle wall has been entirely rebuilt; the stonework inside has been cleaned, the plaster renewed, and new floors put over the whole area... the benches...are to follow. The cost of the restoration will be between £800 and £900 for the Church, the work done to the chancel involving an expenditure of about £500. The chancel part of the restoration has been executed at the expense of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, whilst the work in the other part of the Church has been carried out by public subscriptions, chiefly through the munificence of one member of the late Cotton family. The work has been in hand since July 1872." The report goes on to say that the architect for the 'Church' portion was Mr J. Morley, Cambridge; the builder Mr Warboys of Comberton, and the stonemason Mr Tomson of Cambridge. For the chancel portion, Mr E. Christian of London was the architect, and Mr Brown of Lynn the builder.

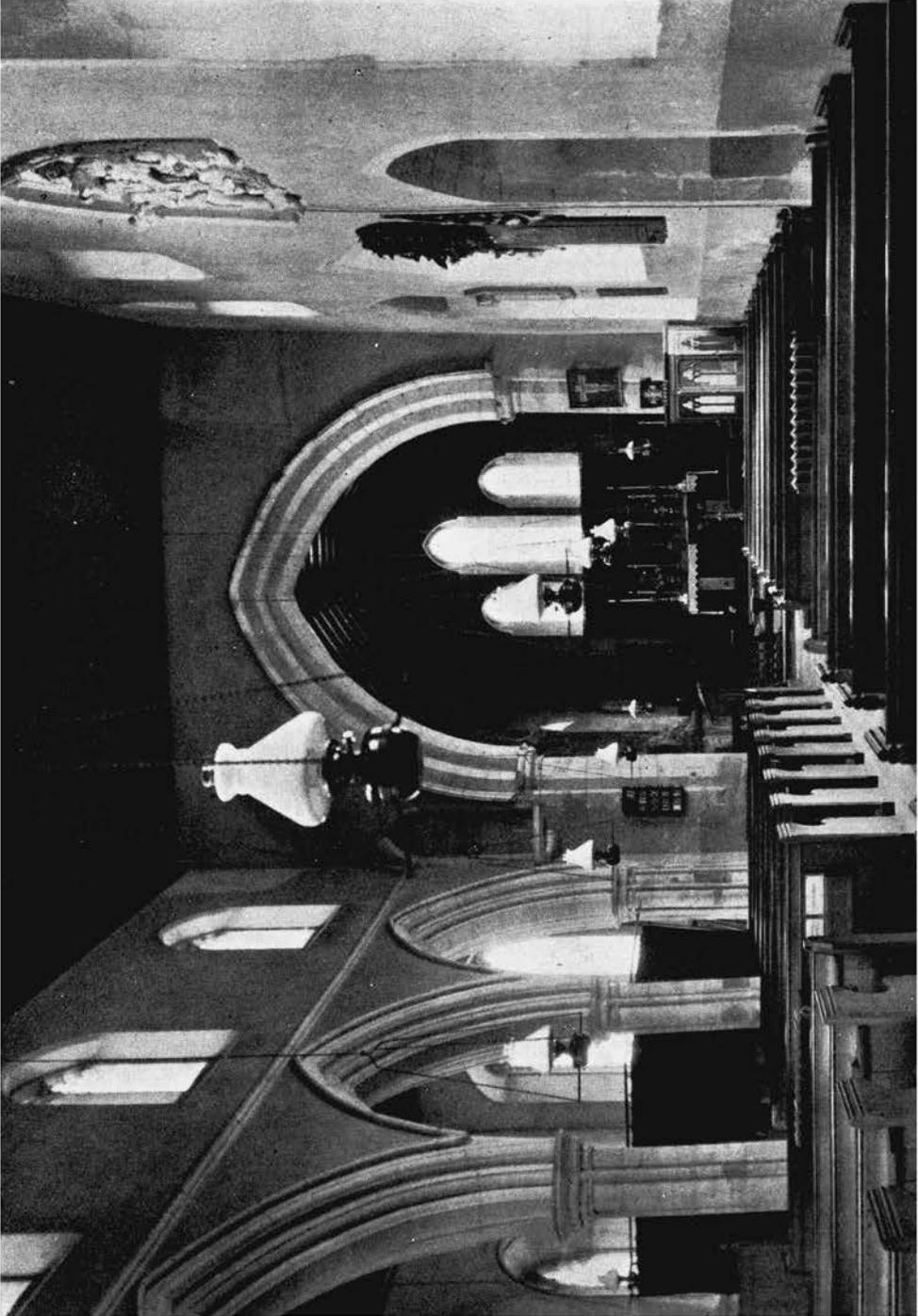
#### THE NAVE.

The south wall of the late 12th century church probably remains in its entirety (Pl. V). There is no complete original window-opening, but traces remain of the eastern half of a lancet window-opening in the wall over the pulpit. Adjoining this fragmentary window is that which occasioned its destruction; a three-light



Madingley Church, from North.





Madingley Church, looking East.



window under a flat pointed arch, the head filled with tracery of two quatrefoils and five cusped, triangular openings. Except for patching, the window with dripstone and terminals, sills, jambs, mullions, arch-head and tracery, is complete and is a beautiful example of work of *circa* 1325 (Pl. II).

The window between the one just described and the porch, as also the westernmost window, are of two lights of late 15th century type and are co-eval with those of the clerestory. The loftier window of a single light on the western side of the porch is also of the late 15th century, and its different form may have been dictated by the proximity of the porch. The doorway is in the original position; its inner face may be original in the main but its outer side is certainly later. The porch (Pl. II) which we see to-day is not earlier than the 17th century. The door itself has already been described (Pl. III A.).

Over the south doorway, within the church under a pointed arched canopy of plaster, are the Royal Arms of 1802 by Coade and Sealy of Lambeth (Pl. V).

#### THE AISLE.

The pillars of the arcade (Pl. V) with their bases and capitals are of Barnack stone; the arches they carry are of clunch. Unlike the chancel arch, the arcade has the same ornamental treatment both to nave and aisle, to which is largely due its rich effect. The hood-molds terminated in heads which have all disappeared, leaving no trace save in the western respond on the north face and in the eastern respond on the south face; their removal was not due to decay but was deliberate, the fruit presumably of iconoclastic zeal.

The interior of the north wall had a string-course at the window-sill level; it remains for about 7'6" between the doorway and the south-east window. The only aisle window that is certainly ancient is that in the west wall; it dates from the late 16th or the early 17th century. Those in the north wall are new; there is authority for their position and perhaps some for their general form in Cole's sketch.

The north doorway is, in the main, medieval. It may even be the doorway removed from the north wall when the aisle was

built, *circa* 1300. It has been so treated with cement that it is impossible to determine its original details with certainty and, while the general disposition of the mouldings is that of the E.E. period, their detailed forms have Decorated characteristics. It seems fairly safe to regard it as being, possibly, the original door, moved and modified *circa* 1300 and rather over-restored in the late 19th century. The north porch was added in the 15th century (Pl. IV). The east end of the aisle, now used as a vestry, had an altar; there is no trace of a piscina but the space on the south is so small that it may have occupied an unusual position; though the south wall is normally their place, piscinæ are in special circumstances found in the east wall, or in the north wall, and even in the floor. There is an aumbry in the N. wall and, east of it, a small opening with traceried head on whose use it would be easy, but perhaps not profitable, to speculate.

We should ordinarily assume that the east end of the aisle was occupied by a chapel with its own altar and, happily, we have proof of that in Cole. He refers to the aisle arcade and says that against the 1st pillar "goes a sort of Screen to ye opposite N. wall, w<sup>ch</sup> as I guess, made a private Chapel, and might be the Chantry mentioned at p. 66 N<sup>o</sup>. 2." That parclose screen has disappeared, like the chancel screen; it ran across the W. end of the chapel and would originally have had a fellow across the south side from the pillar to the respond. The reference to the chantry is in a deed of 1469, the 8th year of Edward IV, where the lands belonging to a chantry in Madingley are included in a lease; there are no other particulars.

In Dr Palmer's *Village Gilds of Cambridgeshire*<sup>1</sup> he draws from Cole three references to Gilds in Madingley, Our Lady, St Catherine and St Michael, one or more of which may have used this chapel for their annual and special gild services.

When Cole wrote in 1779 the chapel was the family pew of the Cottons.

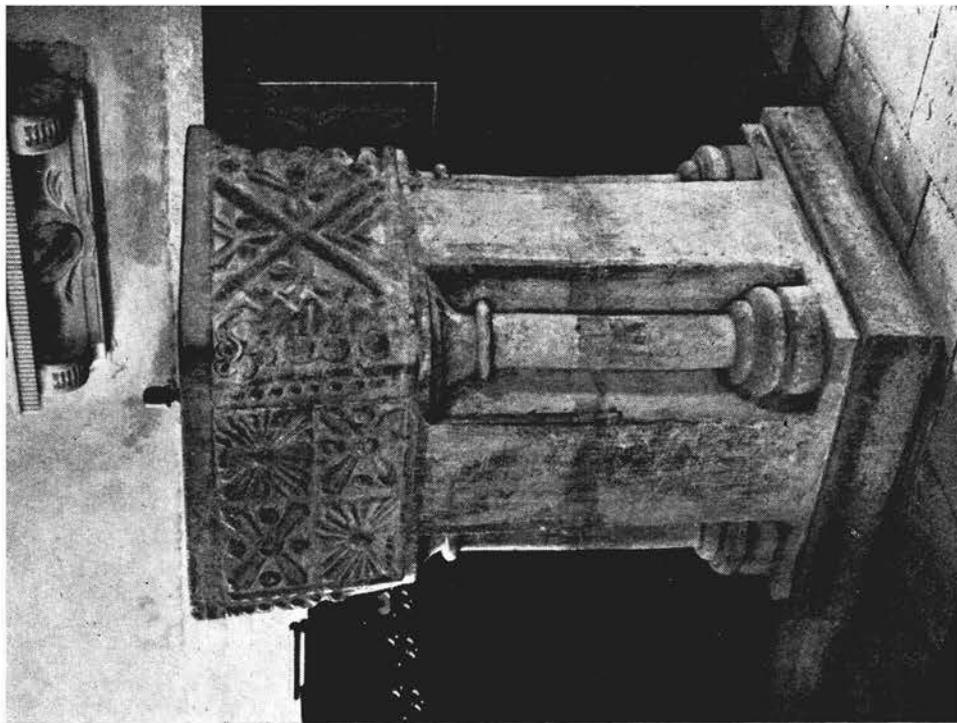
The aisle arcade, the most beautiful feature of the Church, has been attributed here to *circa* 1300. The earliest vicar named

<sup>1</sup> *Transactions*, Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire Archaeological Society, vol. I, p. 395.



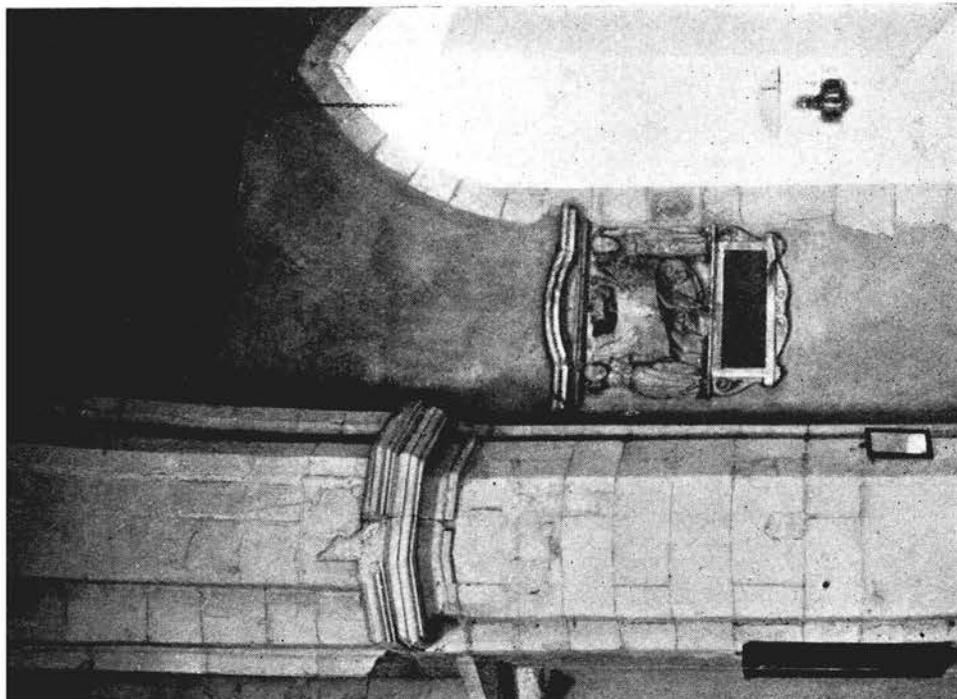
PLATE VI

(B)



Font from South-East.

(A)



Madingley Church, Chancel Arch, North Respond.

in Canon Crosby's list is Henry of Landbeach, 1313, but *Vetus Liber Archidiaconi Eliensis* mentions one Albert, sometime vicar here. His date cannot be given with certainty but the entry in which he is mentioned is written in the hand to which Dr Minns ascribes a date after 1278 and before 1304. The reference to this vicar records the fact of his having presented vestments to the church, a gift which may well have accompanied the consecration to God's service of the altar in the aisle which it is reasonable to suppose may have been built during his vicariate.

At the opposite end of the aisle is the beautiful monument already mentioned as having stood against the N. wall of the chancel until 1779 (Pl. III B). Between the monument and the N. door is

#### THE FONT (Pl. VI B).

There is a reference to a font at Madingley in the visitation of 1662: "we have a font of stone." Cole (1744) says "ye old stone Font is under ye Arch of ye last Pillars, of w<sup>ch</sup> there are 4 very neat ones on ye N. side of ye Nave."

Boissier, who wrote in 1827, says "the font is modern," and Paley, in *The Ecclesiologist's Guide* (1844), makes the same statement. This 'modern' font must have been introduced between 1744 and 1827, perhaps when Sir John Cotton made his great alterations in the chancel in 1779. It has disappeared and I am told that inquiry has failed to trace it.

In its place there is now the truly remarkable font which stands between the monument and the gangway from the north door. It consists of a basin of rectangular form, measuring about 2'2" one way by 1'11" the other, of Norman date, say 1135, upon a pedestal of rectangular plan with the angles hollow-chamfered and occupied by attached nook-shafts with bases of triple-roll form. The basin underwent considerable alteration to fit it to the pedestal, and its decorative features were also modified.

The Rev. C. H. Evelyn-White states<sup>1</sup> that this font was brought from Madingley Hall having been removed thither when Sir Francis Hinde, about the year 1600, demolished St Etheldreda, Histon, for the purpose of using its material to enlarge his house.

<sup>1</sup> *The Churches of Cambridgeshire*, 130, 131.

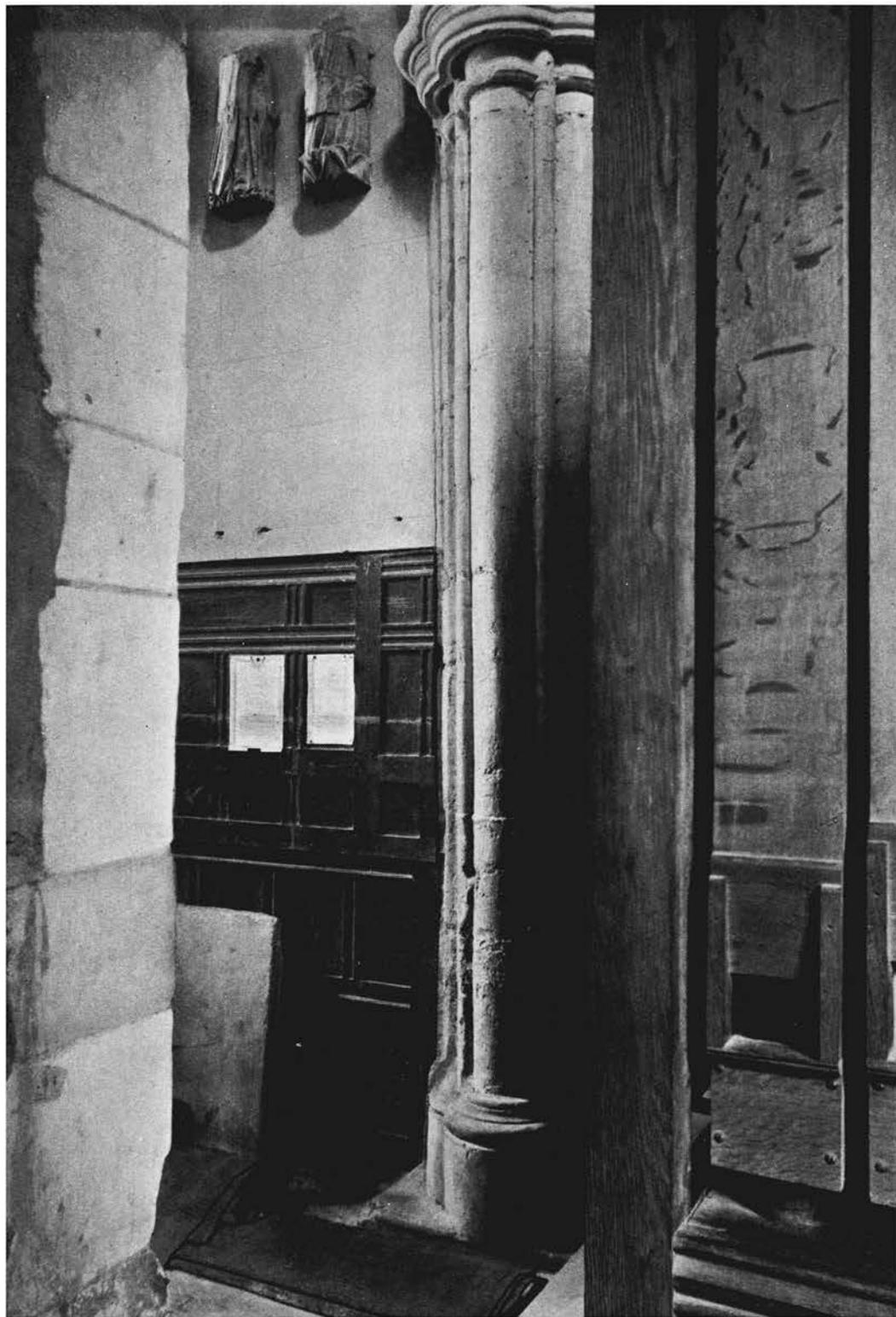
The sacrilege of Sir Francis Hinde created a grave scandal the memory of which still agitated the faithful many years after his death. The curious may find it treated of in Wharton's *Life of Archbishop Laud*, p. 562, or in *The Churches of Cambridgeshire and the Isle of Ely*, Cambridge Camden Society, 1845, p. 64.

A communication received from Mr Hurrell, formerly of Madingley Hall, now of Harston, led me to ask Mr Evelyn-White for the authority upon which the statement as to the Histon provenance was based, and he replied that he had no documentary evidence and that, so far as he could remember, it was the expression rather of a general impression than anything else. This sets me free to say that Mr Hurrell and his sister inform me that, when they went as children with their parents to live at Madingley Hall, the font now in the church "was standing up at the house round behind the front door; one side was broken away and our father had it restored and put back in the church where the one in use was a kind of hand-basin on an iron stand."

With this evidence before us of eye-witnesses long resident at Madingley Hall, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the present font is the early medieval font mentioned by Cole, and others before him, which suffered serious injury late in the 18th or early in the 19th century, and was carried away to the Hall for its preservation from further damage. And it is reasonable to assume further that the replacement by Mr Hurrell, senior, was a restoration to its original home of the font at which the parishioners of Madingley had been baptised for nearly eight hundred years. Messrs Rattee and Kett carried out the repairs, the marks of which are plainly visible, especially on the westward side.

#### THE TOWER (Pl. IV).

The unbuttressed tower of four retreating stages on a plain tall plinth is of the date of the nave and chancel. Internally, its door, or arch, to the nave was replaced about 1300 by the existing arch. The spire was added in the 15th century, as well as the topmost stage of the tower with its battlement, a change which probably accompanied the erection of the clerestory. The



Madingley Church, Tower Respond: Wooden Figures.



mark on the face of the tower, seen from the nave, appears to be that of the outer roof before there was a clerestory.

On the interior walls of the lowest storey are ten wooden figures firmly fastened (Pl. VII); they are usually referred to as 'angels' but, while they may be scriptural, they are not celestial bodies. It has not been possible to discover when they were placed in this position. Of more interest, perhaps, is the question of their original position and purpose.

They are coped figures of the 15th century and formerly bore shields and other emblems which, if they had survived, would have made identification possible. They are, undoubtedly, figures which adorned roof timbers either as wall-plates into which the principals or hammer beams were tenoned, or decorative additions to the under side of the rafters. This latter and less usual use is well seen in the medieval roofs of Fen Stanton church at the ends of the principal and secondary rafters where, as in the example of Madingley, the figures vary in height; the church of Great Gransden has roofs illustrating the use of figures in this manner<sup>1</sup>.

The question of provenance is more difficult. They do not appear to have been used in the nave or aisle roofs in this church, for those roofs were renewed in 1872 to 1874 and the architect, Mr Morley, says positively that no such figures were to be found in the roofs then removed. He has no recollection of the figures being seen in the tower at that time.

There remains the possibility that the figures came from the chancel roof which Sir John Cotton must have taken down when he shortened the chancel in 1779-80, replacing it with the rough work which Mr Ewan Christian found it necessary to remove in 1873-74. Sir John Cotton had some of the instincts of an antiquary, though they were rather cramped in their manifestation, and it is conceivable that he carried these sculptured portions of the old roof away to the Hall whence they may have been restored by his successors in the 19th century.

I have said that the figures are mutilated and, it should be added, they were deliberately mutilated; there is no time in the

<sup>1</sup> Similar figures so used may be more readily seen in the 15th century roof of the south room in the University Library.

history of the building between the 15th century and the present day when such an outrage would be so likely as during the iconoclastic visit of Dowsing in 1643 (old style).

Let us see what he says in his Journal:

March 6, 1643. Maddenley. John Ivett and Theodore Wictham, Church Wardens, Edward Dantry, Cunstable. There was 35 Pictures superstitious, and Christ on ye Cross, and ye two Theves by him, and Christ and ye Virgin Mary in an other Window, a Christ in ye Steple Window, and ye Steps to be leveled, and 14 Cherubims in Wood to be taken down, which promised to be taken down.

It is perhaps not unreasonable to suggest that our ten wooden figures may be ten of Dowsing's "Cherubims in Wood" which have survived to bear witness against him. Our figures are locally called 'angels' though they have no wings, and similar figures are described as 'angels' in Brandon's *Timber Roofs*, p. 63, where, indeed, there are also angels. Angels are a frequent surviving feature in medieval roofs but I should be hard put to it to find local medieval Cherubim in wood. It is not necessary to infer from the form of Dowsing's ecclesiastical activity that he was learned in the artistic lore of medieval sculpture, while it is a not unfair inference that a visit so hurried as to lead him to take promises without supervising their performance may have led to a misinterpretation and mis-description of the sculptured details on the roof of a building, lighted by stained glass windows, which he visited in the early days of March.

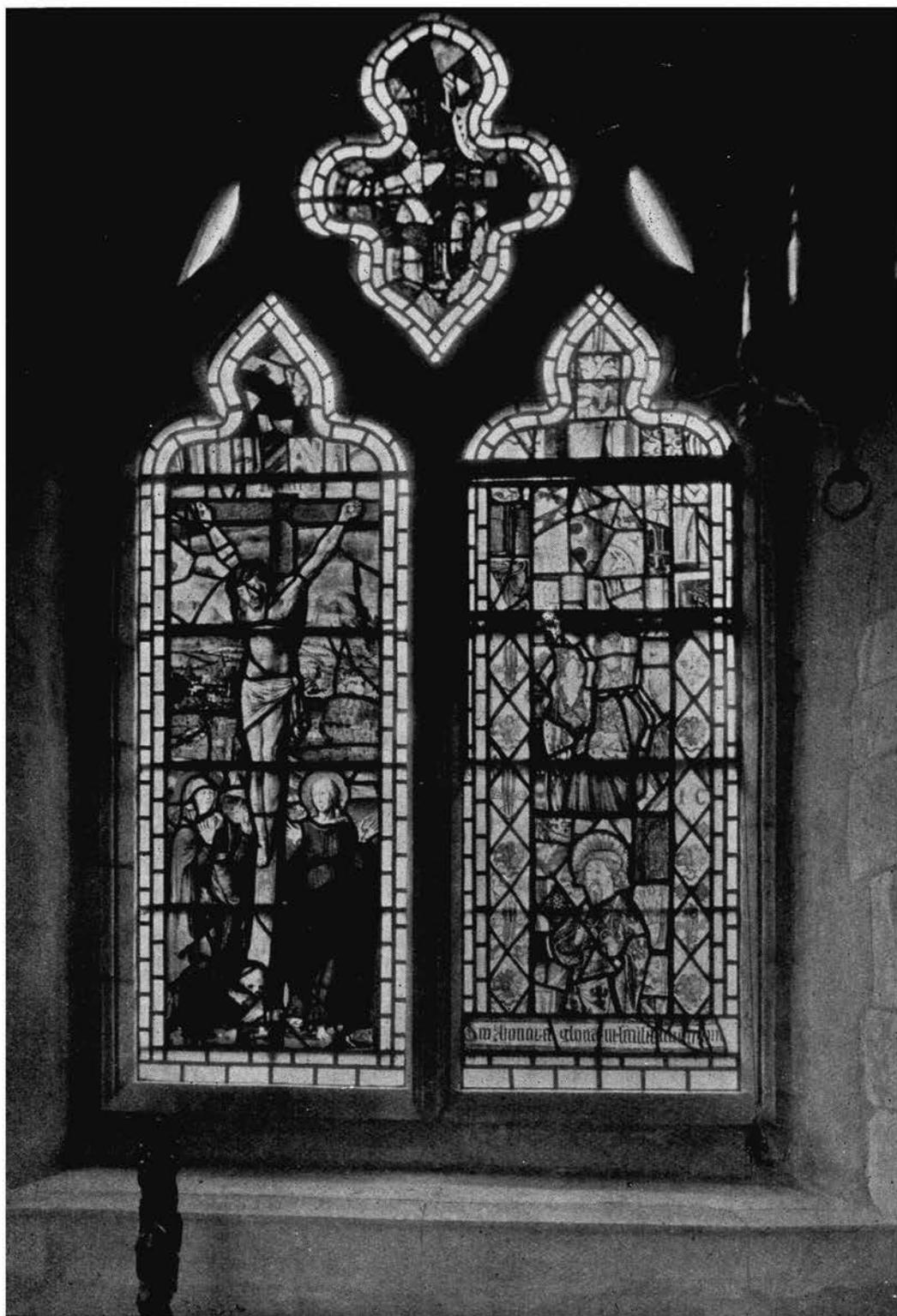
If we regard it as possible that our ten figures are survivors of Dowsings "14 Cherubims in Wood," we must assume that the Wardens and Constable, the promisers it is to be supposed, found it would be dangerous to the stability of the roof structure to take the 'Cherubims' down and compromised with their consciences by mutilating instead of removing. And we are not entirely without justification for that assumption.

When writing his account of Madingley in 1744 Cole, after quoting Dowsing as above, goes on to observe

I know not how it happened, but so it is that ye chief Crucifix in Glass w<sup>th</sup> ye Virgin and St John on each side of it, extremely well painted, are still preserv'd in ye middle Pannel of ye E. Window, over ye Altar. I suppose ye 2 Theives fill'd up ye 2 other Pannels and made it a Compleat



PLATE VIII



Madingley Church, South-West Window of Chancel.

Window ; however they are lost, w<sup>th</sup> a good part of ye other Glass painting w<sup>ch</sup>. sh<sup>d</sup>. have been above ye s<sup>d</sup> Crucifixion, w<sup>ch</sup>. is perfect. In all probability ye Parishioners saved this w<sup>th</sup>. a promise to demolish it.

The opinion of Cole, indefatigable visitor of churches in his own and many other counties, written only 100 years after Dowsing's visitations, is entitled to great respect. Since the parishioners saved the glass, so also may they have saved the 'Cherubims.'

### STAINED GLASS.

The glass crucifixion so admired of Cole in 1744 is shown by him in his sketch of the church (Pl. III c), and it was still preserved by Sir John Cotton in his new east window built in 1779. The architectural window has gone but its main stained glass feature remains to be seen 'compleat,' almost, in the S.W. window of the chancel, with a fascinating Flemish Jerusalem in the background (Pl. VIII). Cole's description is unmistakable, and the connecting links between his 1744 description and our own time are to be found in Britton and Brayley's *The Beauties of England and Wales*, 1801, volume II: "The village church... with a beautiful window over the Communion table. The centre division represents our Saviour on the Cross, with some buildings in the background exceedingly well managed"; and again, in *History of Cambridgeshire*, 1851, "painted window over the Communion table representing the crucifixion."

This ancient rood in glass occupies the eastern panel of the window, the western is made up of fragments, among which may be seen

The Virgin and Child, perhaps made up out of more than one picture.

A head with long tresses, as of a Magdalen, and the beautiful Baptist which remains almost entire. He holds on his left arm the books of the prophets, on which rests the Lamb, and to the Holy type of Christ he points with the forefinger of his right hand over a scroll on which is inscribed the words *ECCE AGNUS DEI*. He wears the hair shirt, almost completely hidden by the voluminous folds of the richly embroidered cope (Pl. X A).

In the borders are various fragments of background or border, especially the three devices,

Three feathers, upright, on a trefoiled base, piercing a label on which, on either side, are the letters ION MER.

Eagle, with raised wings, standing on a similar trefoiled base, with a label in its beak bearing the letters ELY.

The letters IC intertwined with a cord.

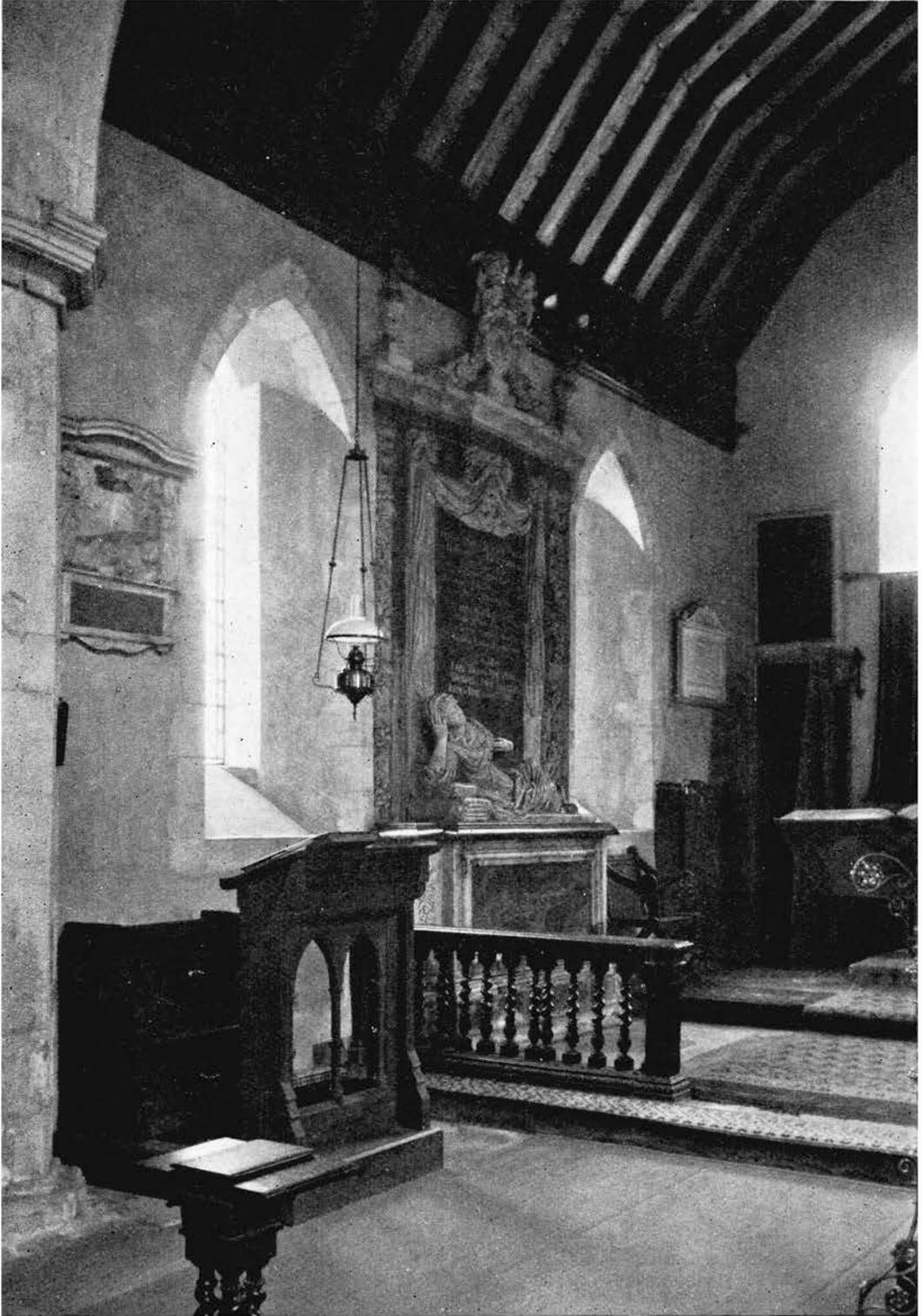
Under the whole window the legend DEO HONOR ET GLORIA IN SECU LA SECU LORUM.

The three feathers device puzzled me for a long time. It is clearly a canting badge and all efforts to find a name combining feathers, quills, or pens with the termination MER were unavailing. At last I discovered that the three feathers, or quills rather, are the heraldic charge of the family of GILMOUR, spelt in ancient days GILMER. Of that name I think it is reasonable to suggest that this is a rebus.

There is an interest attaching to the quarry bearing the initials IC. Anyone knowing the history of the parish immediately thinks of John Cotton, not the one of 1779 but a predecessor of the previous century. But the true story is given by Cole who writes (5 Nov. 1779) "Somewhere in the Window is a small Lozenge of painted Glass and on it I.C. conjoined with Strings, done in an ordinary and coarse Manner, but as it expressed the Initials of Sir John Cotton's Name, I gave it to him....It was sent to me some 3 years before, with a Dozen other Pieces of painted Glass (none very good) by Mr Horace Walpole from Twickenham, who told me that he had purchased them at Mr Ives's Sale of Curiosities not long before: as Mr Ives [is] now of Yarmouth, it is probable he picked up his Collections chiefly in Norfolk: otherwise I should have thought them to have belonged to Sir John Cutts of Childerley<sup>1</sup> in the Windows of the Hall of the Mansion House, now Farm House there, I remember to have seen the same Initials and painted much in the same Manner."

There are panels of later glass, also 17th century, in the window immediately west of the south door. (Pl. X B.) The eastern panel of the two is a composition of two subjects, the upper

<sup>1</sup> There is no ancient glass remaining at Childerley.



Madingley Church, North Wall of Chancel.



(A)



Madingley Church, Details of Chancel Window.

(B)



Window in South Wall of Nave.



half of a female figure holding a pelican in her piety being fixed upon the lower half of a figure of Justice. There are small fragments in other windows.

### BELLS.

Previous to the recent (1926) rebuilding of the spire, the tower contained three old bells. Numbers 2 and 3 bore the legend "T. Tymbs and R. Stephens C. W. Tho. Newman made me 1723." Newman was a Norwich bell-founder. The two bells taken down in 1926 were recast and then restored to the tower.

No. 1 is an important medieval example which has been placed in the aisle adjoining the north door. Its legend is very clear and runs

DICOR : EGO : THOMAS : LAVS : EST : XPI : SONUS : O : MAS

A note affixed to the back of a seat states that the bell was made by John Rufford of Toddington, Beds. c. 1330–40.

The apparent meaning of the hexameters is: I am called Thomas my sound is the praise of Christ O man.

*Mas* is an unusual form, and when employed is to be expected rather as the equivalent of *vir* than of *homo*, but rhyme rather than reason was the objective of the composers of medieval hexameters on bells, especially a rhyme that satisfies the eye<sup>1</sup>.

John Rufford did not receive his patent as royal bell-founder until 1367<sup>2</sup>, which makes the date of 1330–40 seem unduly early. The dates 1350–80 would command wider assent as the range of time within which this fine bell may have been made.

My thanks are due to the vicar of Madingley, for exceptional facilities for examining the registers; to Dr Palmer for the loan of prints and of his valuable rotographs of the relative pages of the Cole MSS, as well as for many kindnesses not easy to specify; and to Messrs Rattee and Kett for the ground-plan which they specially made and presented to me, also for access to their books of account and for transcripts of several pages thereof.

<sup>1</sup> See an interesting article by the Rev. A. H. F. Boughey in the *Archaeological Journal*, 1919, 74–83.

<sup>2</sup> *V. C. H.*, Buckinghamshire, ii, 118.

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