

Notes connected with the Old Church of Saint Alkmund, Derby.

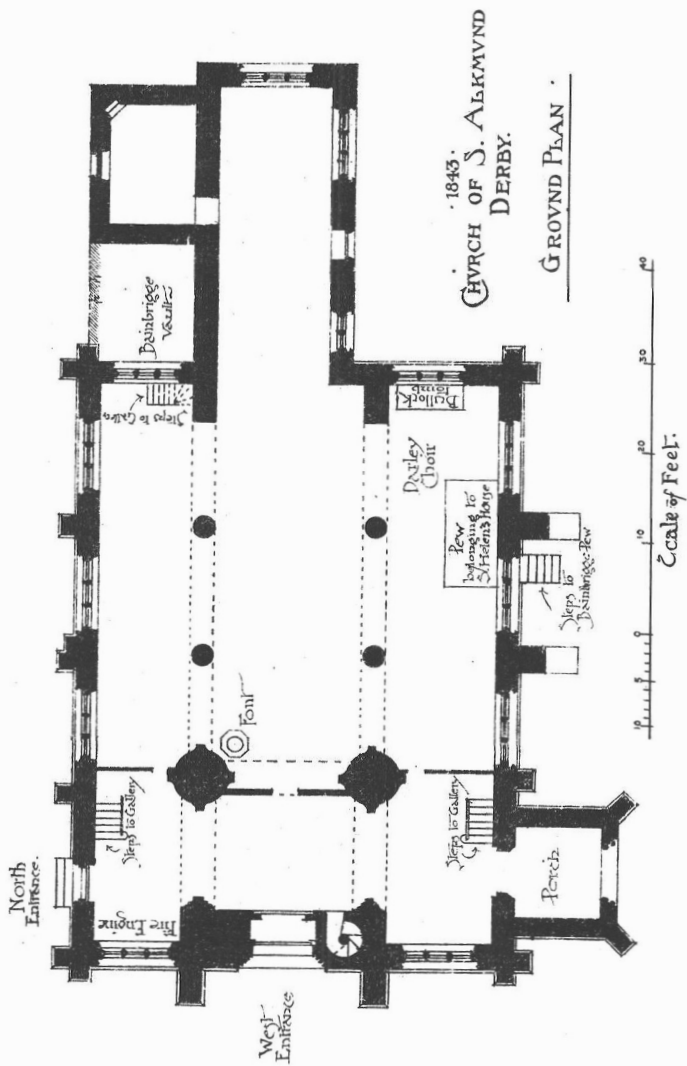
BY F. J. ROBINSON.

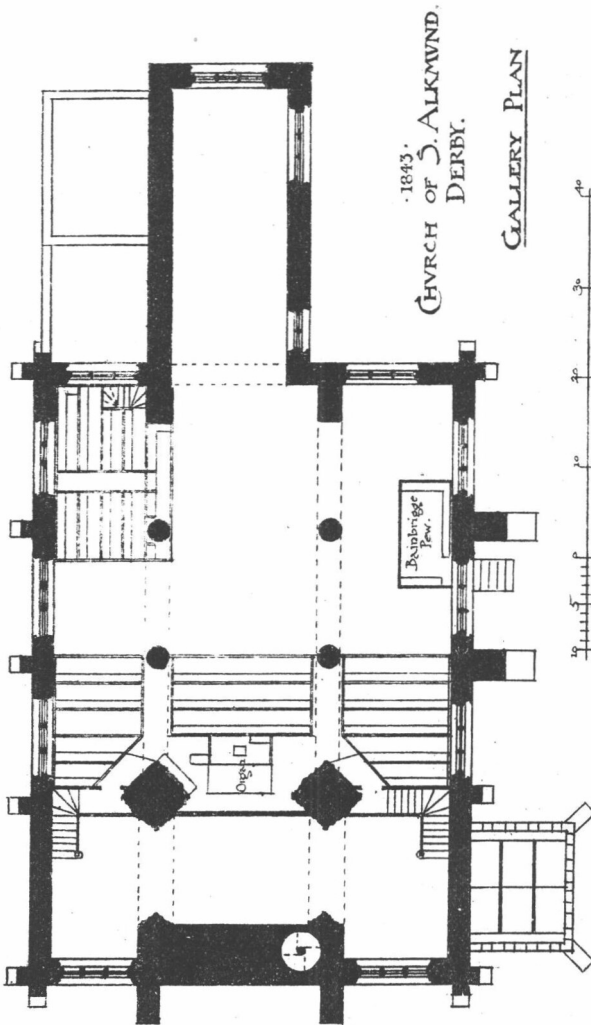


S. VIEW OF OLD ST. ALKMUND.

UPON the last anniversary of Saint Alkmund's Day (March 19, 1890), the Reverend Canon Abney, the late Vicar, laid a corner stone of an addition to the church which was re-opened in the year 1845.

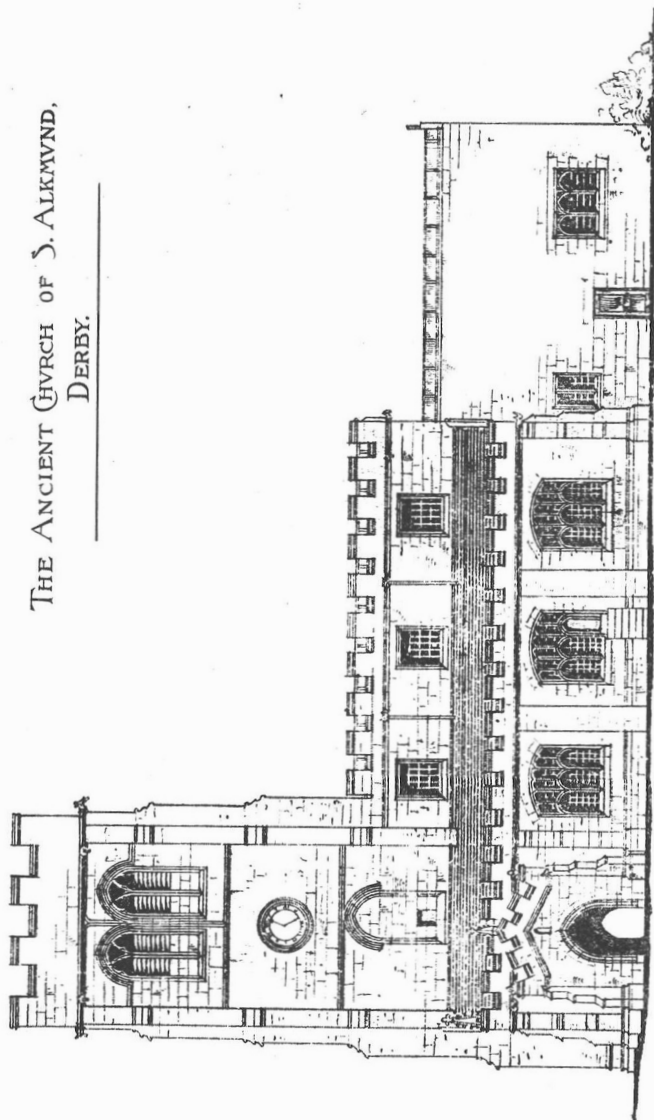
Advantage has been taken, during the carrying out of this work, to reinstate some of the ancient monuments in positions more nearly corresponding with those they occupied in the church which was removed in 1844, to make room for the present larger building.





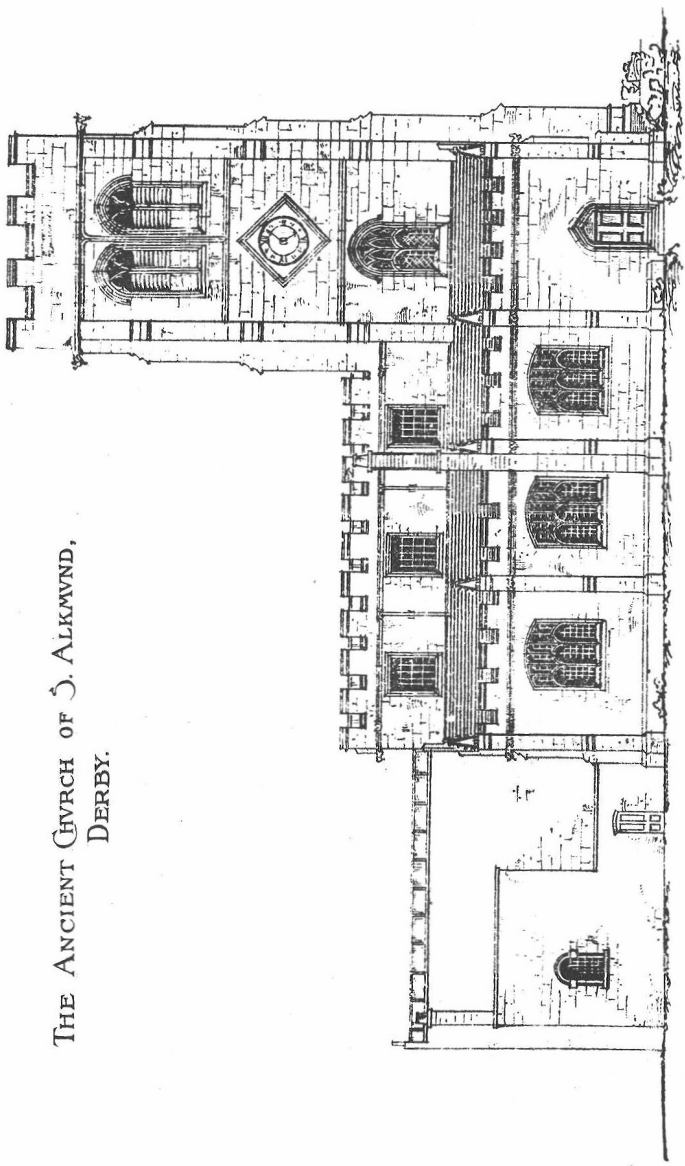
E. Robinson del.

THE ANCIENT CHURCH OF S. ALKMYND,
DERBY.



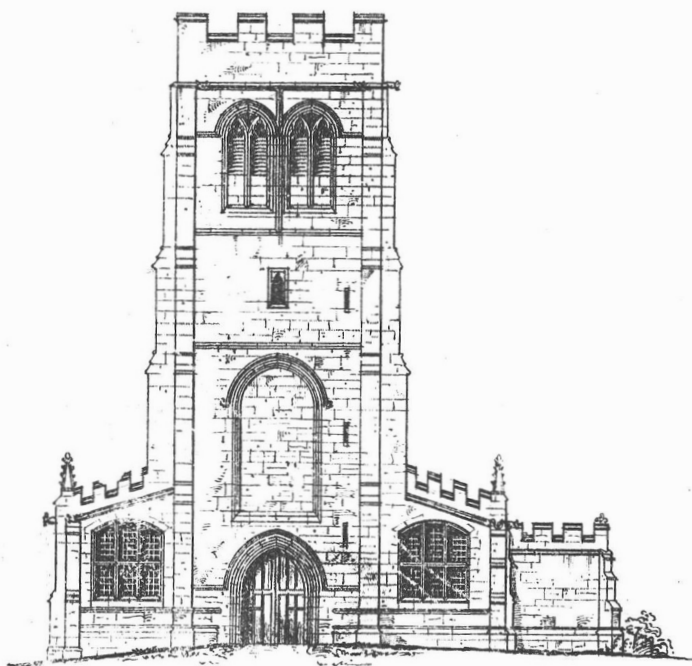
SOUTH ELEVATION.

THE ANCIENT CHURCH OF S. ALKMWND,
DERBY.



NORTH ELEVATION.

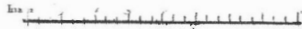
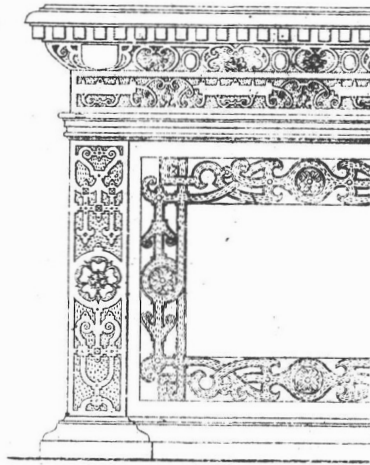
THE ANCIENT CHURCH OF S. ALKMYND,
DERBY.



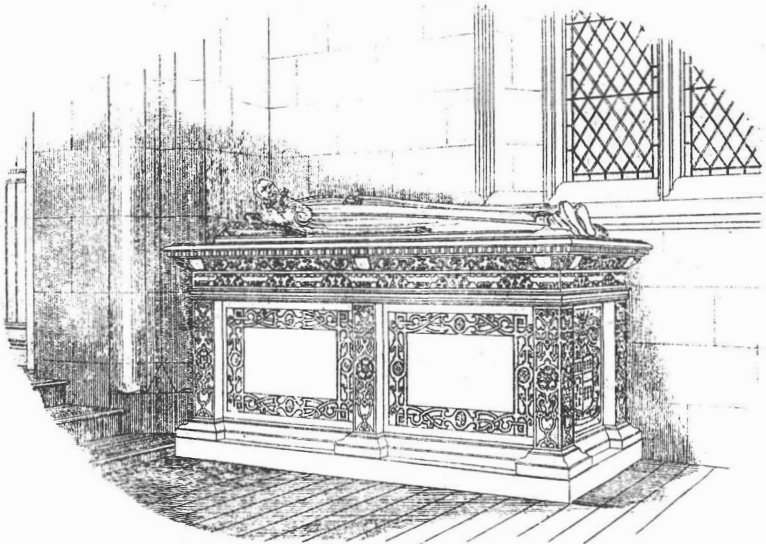
WEST ELEVATION.

CHURCH OF S. ALKMNND DERBY

DETAIL OF THE BULLOCK TOMB.



TOMB OF JOHN BULLOCK OF DARLEY ABBEY.



It seems desirable that some notice should be made of these changes, but, before doing so, I wish to put on record a few particulars about the old church itself.

The church appears to have been built, almost entirely, during the Late Perpendicular period (early in the 16th century). It consisted of nave with side aisles, south porch and well proportioned tower, 69 feet in height ; all with embattled parapets. The buttresses in the north aisle, and also those of the porch, were finished above the parapets with crocketed pinnacles. The two central buttresses of the south aisle had been replaced by some others of larger size, and with one long, projecting slope, showing that the walls were giving way from the pressure of the roof.

The tower was not detached from the building : but, like the tower of Chaddesden Church, built upon pillars and arches opening into the nave and aisles. The base of the tower seems from the mouldings of the arches, to have been built at least a century earlier than the other parts of the building. The chancel, again, bears evidence of having been repaired and altered about the time of the institution of the Rev. Henry Cantrell, as Vicar, in 1712 ; it had a perfectly plain parapet, and was covered by a low-pitched roof laid with lead. It was, in plan, very long and narrow, measuring 32 feet 9 inches in length, and only 12 feet 4 inches in width.

The west end of the building was separated by screens from the nave and aisles, thus forming a narthex, or division from the church, in which catechumens and penitents were received. In later times, this space was used for secular purposes, as in it the town fire-engine was kept. It was also used as a public mortuary, into which the bodies of those accidentally killed were brought to await the coroner's inquest.

There were three entrances from the outside into this narthex, the principal one being at the west, through the tower. Over the west door was a large window opening, which was, however, together with one on the south face of the tower, blocked up with

solid stone, the tower not being sufficiently strong in the lower part to support the superstructure.

The font stood just within the screen, in the west end of the nave.

In the south aisle were private pews belonging to various families residing in Derby or the neighbourhood; one belonging to Saint Helen's House was surrounded by oak screens, and over it, and entered by steps from the outside through one of the windows, was a gallery owned by the Bainbriggs family.

At the east end of this south aisle was the Darley quire, where the sittings belonging to the family residing at Darley Abbey were placed. Here, under the east window, stood an altar tomb, which, at the rebuilding of the church, was placed with other monuments in a dark corner at the west end of the south aisle. This tomb has now been removed to a position more nearly corresponding with its original site. The tomb is very beautifully designed and executed in alabaster, and upon it rests the effigy of a man in a long cloak with sleeves to the elbow, over a coat buttoned to the waist and secured by a girdle, and with ruffs at the neck and wrists; in the left hand is a book; the right hand, which is partly broken, rests against the face; the face is represented with moustache and pointed beard. The sculpture of the figure is faulty, especially as regards the head.

At the end of the tomb are the arms of the family of Bullock of Unstone, but no inscription remains. It is, however, without doubt, the monument to the memory of John Bullock of Darley Abbey, who, according to the parish registers, was buried on the 13th of October, 1607.

Another monumental stone, which has received attention during the alterations, is the large, carved stone which was dug up from the foundations when the new church was built, and which has remained since that time upon the ground near to the vestry door. This stone is now preserved in a recess in the south wall of the new transept. On it, on each side, are represented an arcade of eleven arches, with twisted columns and square capitals. I believe this slab to be undoubtedly of Saxon

date ; it reminds one of the stone cover of a Roman sarcophagus. The ends of the slab are quite plain, as if it had been placed under an arch. It may have been the lid of a coffin or the base of a shrine, as suggested by the Rev. Dr. Cox in his " Churches of Derbyshire " ; but I differ from him as to the probable date of the stone, he dating it much later than I do.

It is difficult at the present day to denote the exact position of the site of the old church in relation to the new one. From what I have been able to learn, I find that the former east wall extended to the boundary line of the churchyard. The east end seems to have been set back about two feet to allow room for the east end buttresses. The vault belonging to the Bainbrigge family, which is seen on the north of the chancel, still remains, and has been in use until quite recently. Taking these as fixed points, the new church appears to have extended about 20 feet both towards the south and west beyond the older one. The floor was lifted about 3 feet above the old level. The new porch is almost upon the line of the old one, but is carried out to the south, the old porch being now enclosed within the walls of the new building.

Under the old porch, the family of " Wright," of Derby, had a vault. The artist, to whom this name more especially applies, was not buried in the vault, but in the centre aisle of the church, as recorded on his monument. This monument has again been replaced against a column in the centre aisle, and the monuments of other members of the family have been brought out of their hiding-places into view. Some monuments, belonging to the Gisborne family, have also been cleaned and refixed within the lower part of the tower.