

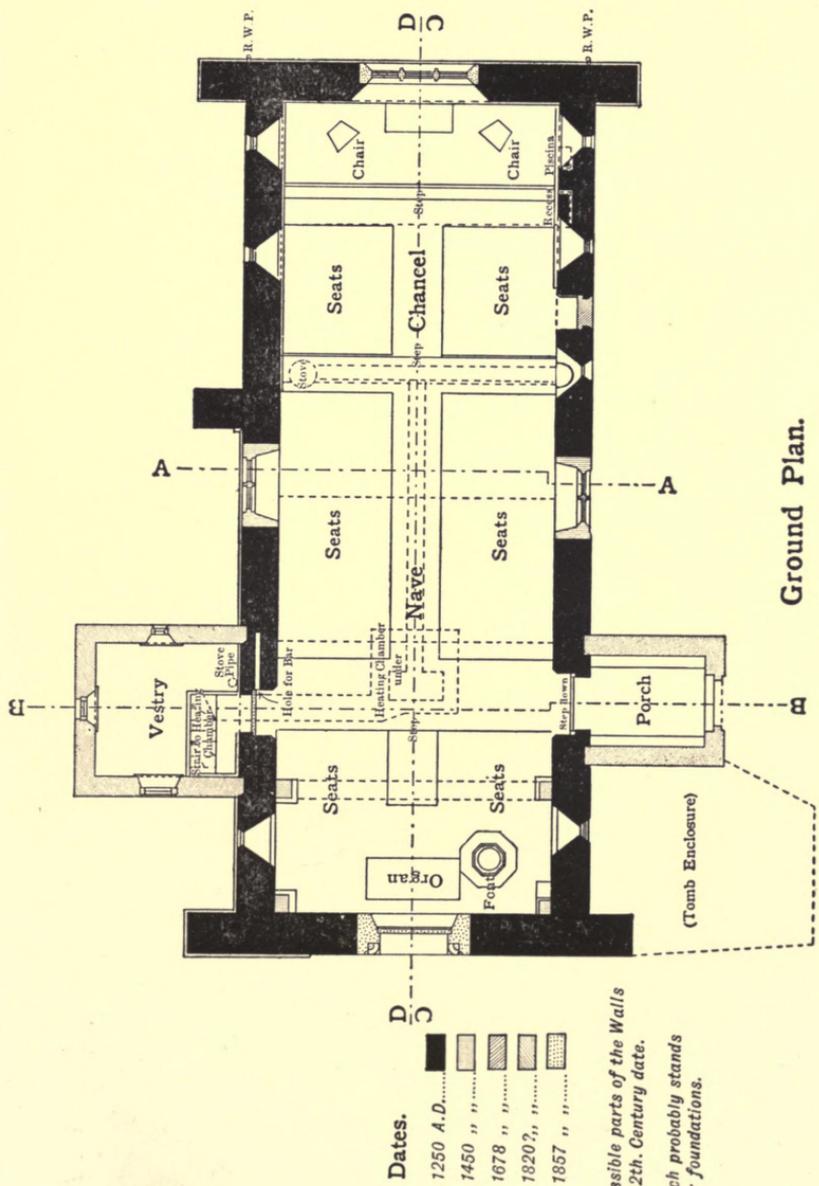
SOME FURTHER NOTES ON THE
RESTORATION OF WARLINGHAM CHURCH
IN 1893-4.

BY

PHILIP MAINWARING JOHNSTON.

TO my paper on "The Low Side Windows of Surrey Churches," contributed to Vol. XIV of these *Collections*, I added some remarks upon the restoration of Warlingham Church, a task carried out under my direction in the years 1893-4. Having a very strong feeling that the state of Surrey churches prior to their restoration ought to be permanently recorded in these *Collections*, together with notes of things found in the course of the works, I now supplement my former remarks on this church with the following notes, which form the substance of some papers written by me at the time for the *Warlingham and Chelsham Parish Magazine*, and accompany them with reproductions of the original drawings and plan which I made of the church before any of the work was set on foot.

It was imperative to enlarge the Church as well as to restore it. To save all that was of vital interest I prolonged it westward, pulling down the west wall, which was a late seventeenth century rebuilding. The original plans would have entailed also the pulling down of the south wall of the nave, but the important discoveries made in it after the removal of the plaster made it desirable that sufficient modifications should be made in these plans to secure the retention of the most interesting portion of this wall. Hence the Perpendicular window and the remarkable Early English sedile and



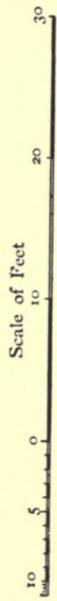
Dates.

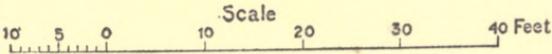
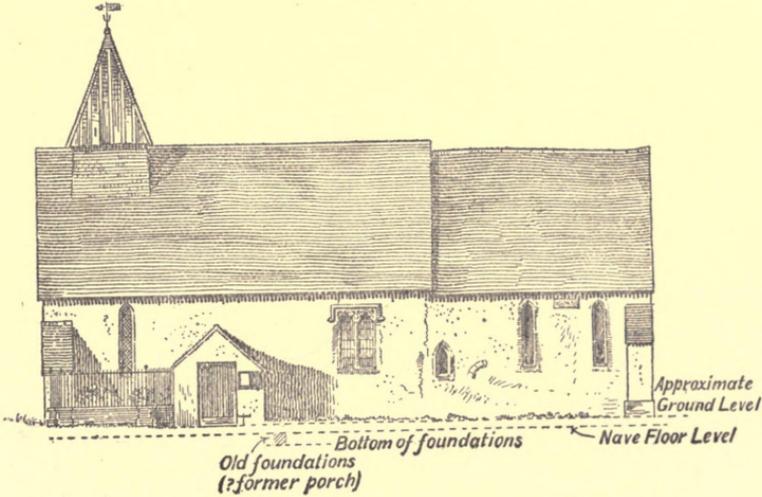
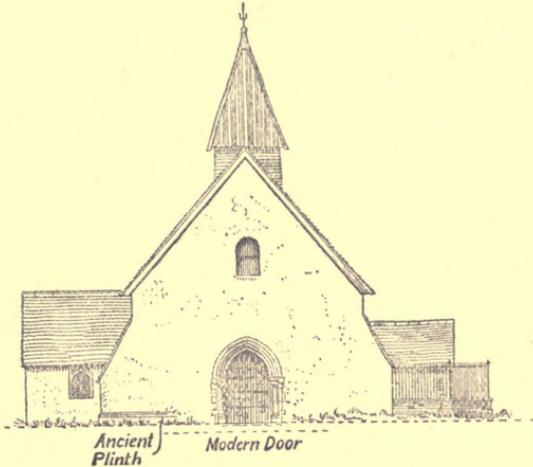
- E. E. c. 1250 A.D.
- Perp. c. 1450 "
- 1678 " "
- 1820 ? " "
- 1857 " "

It is possible parts of the Walls are of 12th. Century date.

The Porch probably stands on older foundations.

Ground Plan.





WARLINGHAM CHURCH, SURREY, PRIOR TO RESTORATION.

- (1) West Elevation.
- (2) South Elevation.

piscina below it were preserved, and only part of the wall was pulled down. But two ancient features were thus disturbed—the south door and the lancet window in the western end of the south wall. These, as I have already noted in my paper in Vol. XIV, were re-erected, stone for stone, in the new walls, the latter in the extended north wall of the nave, with an inscription recording its removal.

After the first work of removing such of the interments as came within the area of the proposed extension had been performed, with the utmost care and reverence, be it said, of all the workmen employed, the next step was to take down the old porch. This had been rebuilt on the site and partly with the materials of a much older



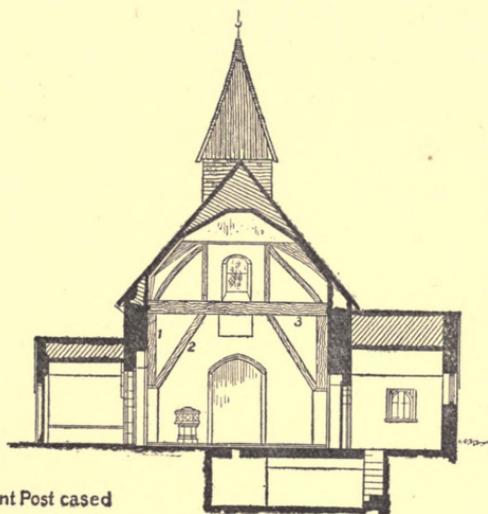
Stucco panel, S. wall of Chancel.

one in (probably) A.D. 1678—the date to be seen (with the initials O. A. for Olive Atwood) on the stucco panel, which is still preserved on the south wall of the chancel. The pulling down disclosed the fact

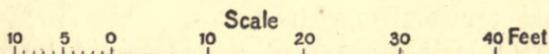
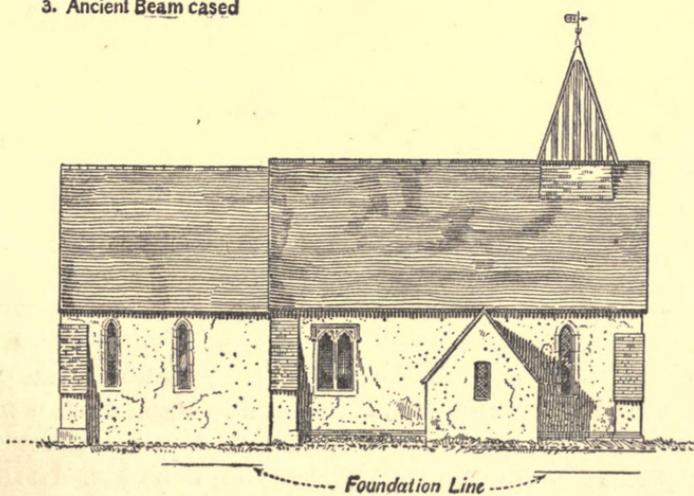
that the roof timbers were of great antiquity. Certain indications led me to believe that there must always have been a wooden porch enclosing the south doorway, which itself dates from the latter half of the thirteenth century, and it is *possible* that some at least of the timbers found were of that date. They were very rude and quite rotten, with the exception of some pieces of wall plate, which were deeply moulded and very well preserved. The porch, in common with every ancient feature likely to be disturbed, was photographed before removal.

Before commencing the taking down of the south and west walls of the nave I had them denuded of their inside and outside coats of plaster. This led to several discoveries of the highest interest. Briefly, they consisted of:—

- (1) A semicircular recess in the cill of the low side window in the western end of the south wall



1. Ancient Post cased
2. Modern
3. Ancient Beam cased



WARLINGHAM CHURCH, SURREY, PRIOR TO RESTORATION.

- (1) Section along line BB of Ground Plan.
- (2) North Elevation.

of the chancel. Upon this discovery, and the weight which it adds to the theory that this and similar windows were purposely made for the travelling friars to hear the confessions of the people, I have already commented in these pages.

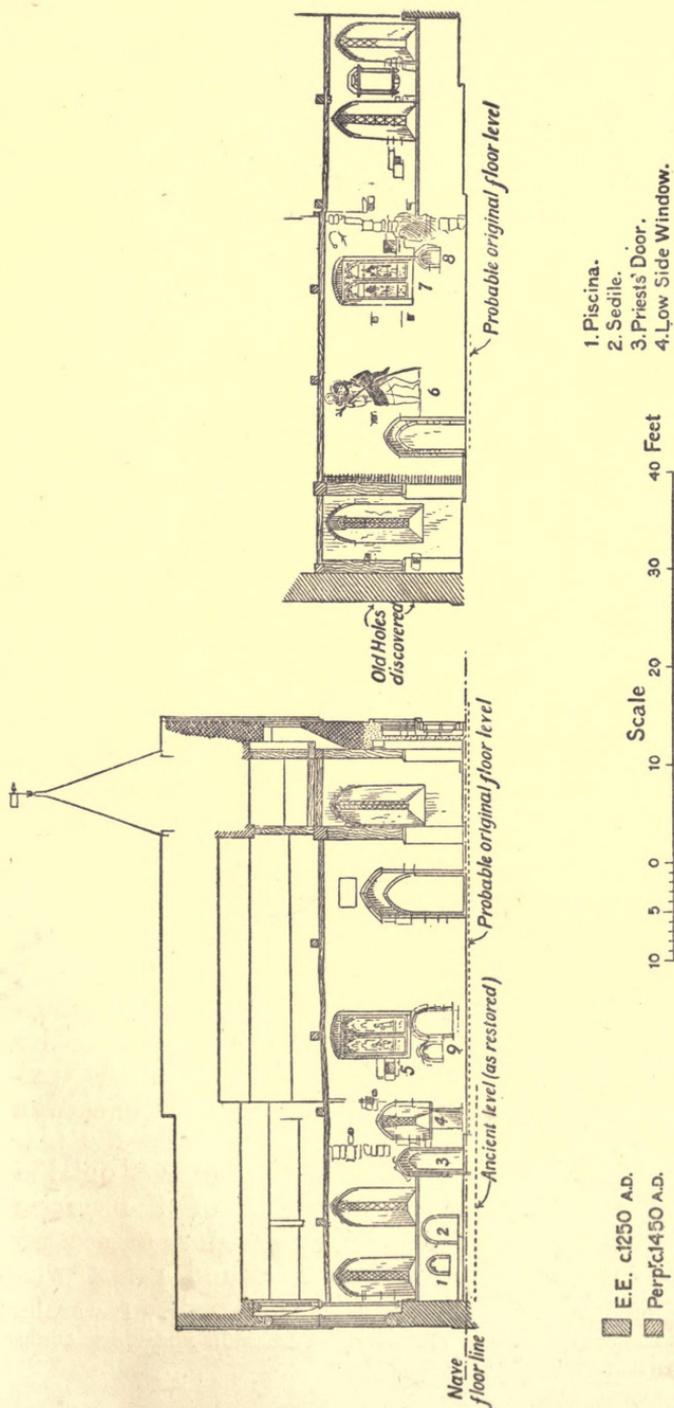
- (2) A very perfect piscina and sedile under the large two-light window in the south wall of the nave.
- (3) Another piscina of similar design, and similarly situated under the corresponding window in the north wall.
- (4) Two square holes, one in either wall, in which were originally inserted the ends of the rood-beam. Built into one of them (that on the north side) is what looks like part of an altar slab from the earlier church. I had the plastering cut back to show its chamfered edge.

Mr. Leveson-Gower agreed with me in assigning all these features to a date about the middle of the thirteenth century. As the present church, which replaced a still older building, was undoubtedly built not later than about A.D. 1250, it follows that these most interesting "finds" are coeval, or nearly so, with the building.

The late Archbishop Benson, to whom Mr. Leveson-Gower wrote immediately to communicate these discoveries, was so interested that he rode over from Addington on August 1st, 1893, and spent some hours at the church. Some passages from a letter written by him I was enabled, by the kindness of Mr. Leveson-Gower, to quote at the time, and they may be here repeated. His Grace wrote:—

"It is indeed interesting. I should be greatly distressed if features so interesting disappeared or were modified out of knowledge. I have really *never* seen anything so interesting on so small a scale.

"Of course, the first thing is to get the level of the whole floor back to its original place. In that way

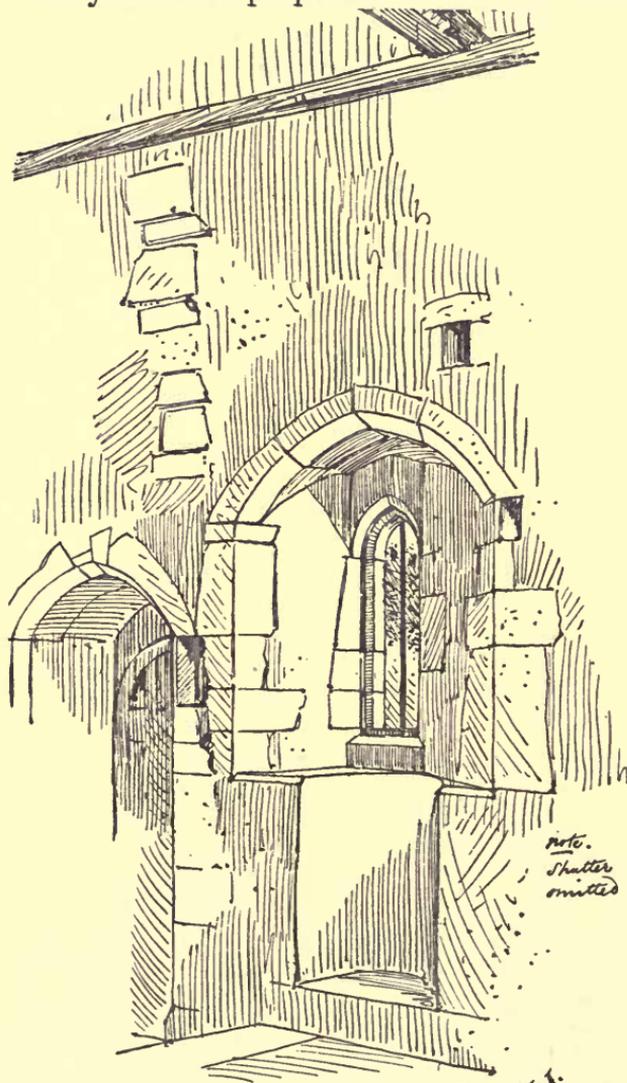


- 1. Piscina.
- 2. Sedile.
- 3. Priests' Door.
- 4. Low Side Window.
- 5. Rood-beam hole.
- 6. Painting of St. Christopher.
- 7. Ancient Glass (except figures).
- 8. Piscina.
- 9. Piscina & Sedile.

- E.E. c.1250 A.D.
- ▨ Perpendicular c.1450 A.D.
- ▤ — c.1678 A.D.
- ▥ — c.1857 A.D.

WARLINGHAM CHURCH, SURREY, PRIOR TO RESTORATION.
Sections along lines CC and DD of Ground Plan.

only can the proportions be seen.¹ But in any case,



Low side window,

WARLINGHAM CH:

Surrey.

*P.M.J.
del.*

*note.
Shutter
omitted*

the little rood-screen and the altar just outside it are most curious. The little tiny lancet windows, so graceful and so gracefully set apart in the chancel, are a lesson in themselves. Originally (I think), there was at the east end, south side of the chancel, the Early English piscina and the sedile. Though the latter is round-headed, this is only for convenience of the priest. The mouldings are exactly the same. At that time also was made the piscina outside of the screen for a second

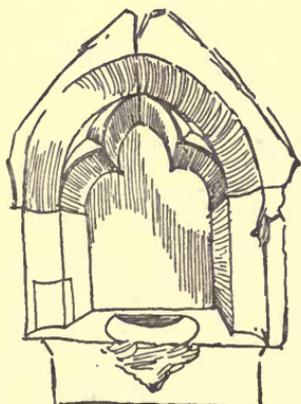
altar (? St. Cross). After a time a second priest was

¹ The level of the eastern sedile seat gave this exactly. It was the height of a human knee above the floor. Priests in chasubles could not sit as in a bath,

endowed for this second altar, which became someone's chantry (I suppose), and this priest wanted a sedile too, as his mass had become more important. And they copied the old sedile, not very well, with a poor late chamfer, not a moulding at all, and had to insert one or two stones for strength. About the same time they put in the window over it, and much weakened the wall.¹

"As to the semicircular recess under the window, just within the screen, I have never come across any rite in which the absolutions were given through a window. That may be my ignorance. But at Addington we have an arrangement for letting lepers (as in so many villages) assist. And this might be the same. If it is certain that there are hinges in the window jambs, I think this must be so."²

When this most interesting letter was penned by Archbishop Benson, His Grace was unaware of the subsequent discovery of the third piscina—that in the north wall of the nave. For a church of such small size to have no less than three piscinas, all of about the same date, is not only unusual, it is practically unique; for it shows that, besides the high altar, there must in the thirteenth century have been two altars in the nave of this tiny church. Hence the plea for retaining the piscina in the south nave wall with the sedile attached to it was a very strong one, and induced the modification above mentioned in



P.M.T.

Piscina, N. Wall of Nave.

¹ I have reasons for dissenting from the opinion held by the late Archbishop on this point. Mr. Leveson-Gower agreed with me in assigning both the piscina and sedile to the same date.

² As to the divergence of opinion between the late Archbishop Benson and Mr. Leveson-Gower on the question of the object for which the low side window was made, see my former paper in *Surrey Archaeological Collections*, Vol. XIV, p. 114.

the original plan for the enlargement of the church, whereby these two most interesting features escaped removal to a new position.

The finding of thatching pins on the tops of the nave walls led me to the conclusion that the nave, at any rate, was originally roofed with reed thatch—I believe, a very rare thing in these parts. The barn-like rudeness of the roof-timbers confirms this supposition. They must always have been ceiled with plaster. The chancel roof, on the other hand, is of well-formed and evenly-spaced timbers, in a capital state of preservation, and it would appear always to have been tiled.

Various moulded stones were found in the walls, mostly of thirteenth century date. Where the walls were pulled down these stones were carefully preserved and built into the new portions. Thus in the new portion of the north wall of the nave will be seen two old fragments built into one of the new lancet windows. One is a piece of the arched head and another a part of the cill. Both are old green sandstone and were found, built in as walling material, in the angle of the old west wall. As there was no doubt that they originally formed part of a lancet window, long since destroyed, I felt no hesitation in using them again in a similar window. In the internal arch of the same window another ancient fragment will be found, discovered and re-used in like manner. In the old portion of the north wall of the nave are several of the original "put-log" holes, *i.e.*, the holes formed through the walls, not merely in them, in which the scaffold timbers were placed when the church was built. These are more conspicuous on the inside, and I had them left exposed, as adding to the interest of the old walls.

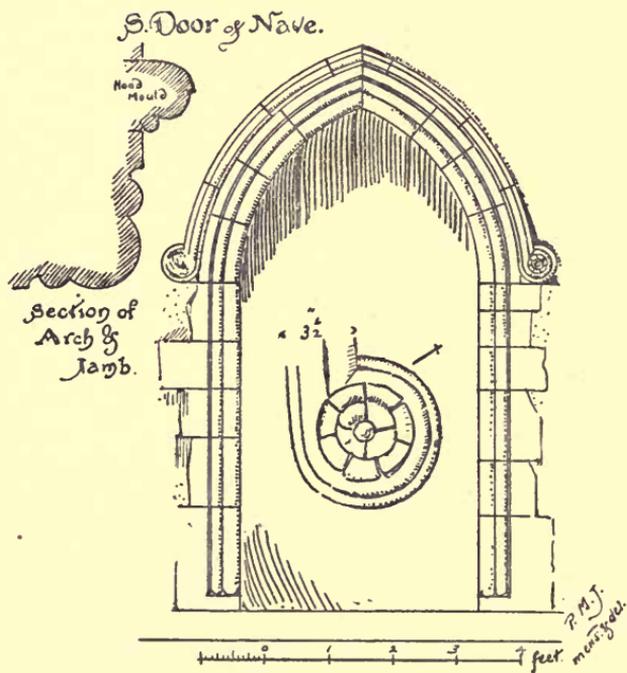
The north wall of the chancel is a specially interesting piece of old work, being full of ancient wrought stones and blocks of hard chalk, many of which bear evidence of having been used in a still older building. It is a singular fact that the building, of which these old stones and some others found elsewhere formed part, can only

have been some fifty or sixty years earlier in date than the present church. It is not easy to understand why it should have been demolished to give place to another church in so short a time. It is of course possible, as I suggested in my previous paper, that these stones may have been sent down by road, to be used as building material, from the Priory of Bermondsey, to whom Warlingham Church was given in 1158. Some of them have a chamfered edge clearly visible, showing that they must have belonged to window or other openings. Another has a rebated angle, as though a shutter may have fitted into it. Nothing whatever was done to this old wall except to very carefully point it, and the stonework was soaked with a preservative solution to harden it. Had funds allowed, the plinth which still exists in the nave should have been restored to the chancel, and the old buttresses, now largely composed of red brickwork, should have been restored with local stone. For the same reason the rough-cast plaster was left on the east wall, it having been found to be so loosely built that a great deal of repair would have been necessary had it been left uncovered.

Many interesting blocks of old stone were brought to light in removing the plaster from the south chancel wall. With the special significance of some of these, which formed "battering" quoins in the middle of the wall, I have already dealt in my previous paper. Built into the old buttress on this side are four ancient stones from the earlier church. They were all found in this south wall. One has been, perhaps, the head of a piscina. It has part of a trefoil arch worked on it. Another has been the base of a Transition-Norman doorway; the third is an arch-stone of the old priest's door; and the fourth looks like a piece of a chamfered plinth. The first had actually been reworked, fortunately without much injury to its older form, so as to make one of the jamb-stones of the western of the two lancet windows on this side. The later face had so entirely perished—as had most of the stonework of the two lancets on this side—that it could not be retained in

the window. Hence the welcome discovery of the more ancient use to which it had been put.

The removal of the whitewash from the south doorway disclosed a consecration cross on its right jamb.



The doorway, I think it will be admitted, has gained in the process of rebuilding it, stone for stone, in the new south wall of the nave, and looks, if possible, more venerable than before. Hardly any of the old stones had to be renewed entirely; and, where possible, patches were put in, instead of

wholly new stones, so as to preserve every bit of the old face. In the porch may be seen a piece of black oak wall-plate, found hidden away among the ancient timbers of the former porch. It was the only piece of moulded timber found,¹ and fortunately was in sufficiently good preservation to be re-used in the new porch.

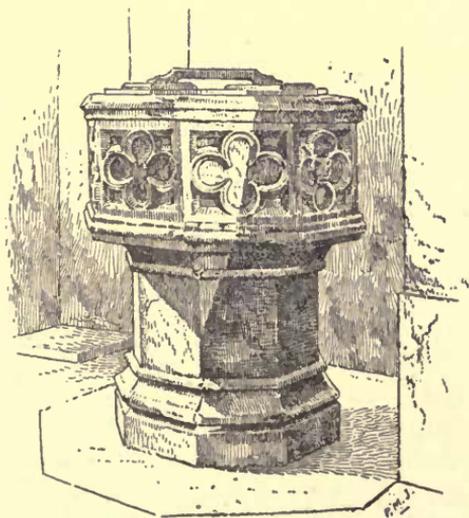
Of the interior it may be remarked generally that the ancient stonework of doors and windows has gained greatly in appearance and interest by the removal of the thick coating of whitewash. This was effected with great care, so as not in any way to injure the face of the old stone, and the latter now appears almost as

¹ With one exception—a piece that might have been originally the cill of the ancient rood screen—which also came out of the porch roof.

fresh as though it had but just been executed, the ancient toolmarks being very plainly visible. Perhaps we need not grumble at our forefathers for their liberal application of whitewash. In hundreds of cases it has kept in beautiful preservation the old face of the stonework, and in many instances colour decoration as well.

The lowering of the whole chancel floor one step instead of raising it, as had formerly been the case, was a restoration in which I confess to feeling some satisfaction. This peculiar feature of the church was mentioned in my former paper. That it was the original arrangement there was indisputable evidence to prove. The proportions of the eastern part of the church are greatly improved by this piece of restoration. The number of ancient churches in this country in which originally there was a step *down* into the chancel is larger than might be supposed, although, unfortunately, in many cases this arrangement, generally adopted for some good reason, has been obliterated.

An illustration of the octagonal font of Perpendicular date (c. 1450), mentioned in my paper in Vol. XIV, is here given.



In closing these notes, attention may be drawn to another old stone re-used in a position for which it was not intended. It is to be seen in the right hand internal jamb of the priest's door, and has a chamfer and rebate worked on one side.

NOTE.—Among the drawings in the MS. Department of the British Museum are some sketches by the antiquary, John Carter, of Warlingham Church in about 1800. In one of these the piscina in the chancel is represented as having a projecting corbel, shaped like a capital, to take the rim of the bowl. This no longer exists, having been obliterated in some churchwarden repair. The two other piscinas recently brought to light were originally similarly finished.