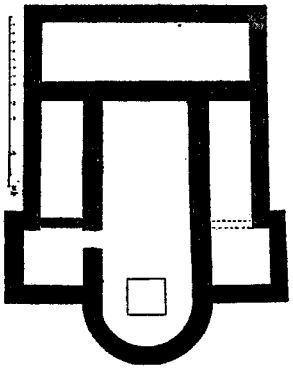
The Growth of our old Parish Churches

By J. W. WALKER, O.B.E., F.S.A.

Our old parish churches come down to us as a splendid legacy from our Saxon forefathers and their descendants, not indeed the present buildings but still the same churches, rebuilt and altered several times to suit the needs or the tastes of successive generations. They come down to us out of the darkness of the past, for long before the Norman invader planted his foot on English soil most of our old parish churches stood in their present positions.

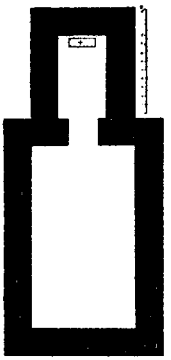
I claim for our English parish churches that they are the most interesting relics of the past which remain in our land, far more so than prehistoric antiquities like Stonehenge and Avebury, because the history of these latter is done and we have no share in it. They had their life in the far past; but it was over before what we know of history began, and we know them only as dead relics. Our parish churches, on the other hand, are still what they were when first built—living entities, and now, as then, people go to worship in them as they have done for may be fifteen centuries. Parish churches are more interesting to us than cathedral or abbey churches, because they are the product of the people, and not, as the others were, the work of powerful corporations. The only Romano-British church which has, to my knowledge, been found in England is the church at Silchester (plan 1), the foundations and mosaic floor of which were excavated in 1892, and show the basilican type of church, consisting of a central nave with a semi-circular apse at the west end. North and south of this were two narrow aisles, only five feet wide, terminating westwards in somewhat wider chambers or quasi-transepts. The eastern or square end of this building was



SILCHESTER CHURCH.

covered by a porch extending the whole width of the three main divisions. The altar was in the apse at the west end of the Church, and in this basilican type of church, where the apse was at the west end and contained the altar, the celebrant stood during Mass behind the altar, facing eastwards; the eastward position being the essential thing, and not the position of the altar in the building.[1]

Tertullian, writing in about 208 A.D., testified as to the existence of Christianity in Britain, and Origen, in about 230, confirmed this statement by saying that 'the religion of Britain was that of Christ, but that as yet not all the Britons have received the Gospel.' In the terrible persecution by Diocletian in 303 there were not wanting to the British church martyrs ready to confirm their testimony with their blood. At the Council of Arles in 314 three bishops from Britain were present and affixed their signatures to the decrees of the Council. Thus we may assume the general existence of churches in later Roman Britain, and it is an indisputable fact that the British church sent missionaries, St. Ninian to Scotland and St. Patrick to Ireland. Thus Scotland and Ireland received their Christianity from the civilized Britons, and it is evident that their usages were like those of the parent church. Now in these, and especially in Ireland, there are still the remains of churches of a type quite distinct from the Italian. These early Celtic churches had a small sanctuary, always square at the east end, communicating by an arch, scarcely larger than a doorway, with a rectangular aisleless nave, as is seen in the plan of the little Irish church of Killaloe (plan 2), or that at Perranzabuloe in Cornwall, which dates from the fourth century, before the landing of Augustine. Preserved in the sand, the ruins were cleared in 1835, when the ancient altar tomb was discovered.



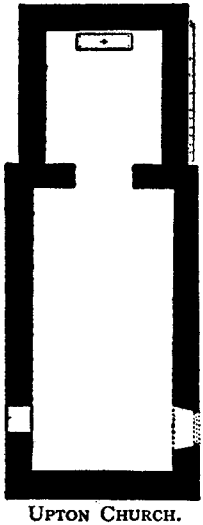
KILLALOE CHURCH.

On the re-introduction of Christianity into England by Augustine in 598, when he, probably not knowing that the remains of Christian churches already existed in the land, gave injunctions that, in place of the old sacrificial wakes, with their

[1] *Archæologia*, Vol. 53, p. 563.

revelry, a solemn anniversary of dedication should be celebrated in those churches which were made out of heathen temples; he only advised what it is likely enough the Britons themselves had done centuries before Augustine's time. In many places where these temples had been dedicated to the pagan gods, they were then re-dedicated to the worship of the one true God.

Where no churches existed, or where the heathen temples were inadequate, Augustine caused new churches to be built, and it was natural that the churches which were then erected should be planned like those which were in Italy, and this led to the re-introduction of the basilican plan. Of the seven churches connected with St. Augustine's mission in Kent we know that five ended in apses. Within a few years the Roman mission had sunk into a mere church of Kent, and the work of planting Christianity in all the English kingdoms was done in the majority of cases, not by the action of the Roman clergy, but by missionaries deriving their commission from Scotland or Ireland (that is, from ancient British origins) to whom the conversion of Saxon England was largely due; men who came from the north, from the great monastic centres of Iona or Lindisfarne, and in planting the faith erected churches of the old Celtic type, copies of those which their predecessors had introduced from England into Scotland and Ireland some centuries earlier.

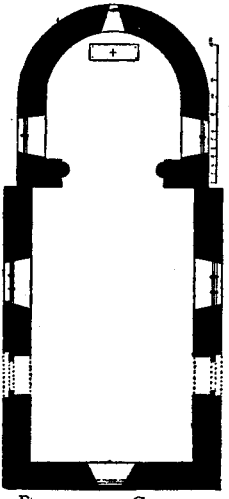


UPTON CHURCH.

In these later Saxon churches the aisleless nave and rectangular chancel were usual, but the chancel was larger and wider than in the old Celtic type, and the chancel arch was higher and wider, as at Upton in Berkshire (plan 3), or Boarhunt in Hampshire.

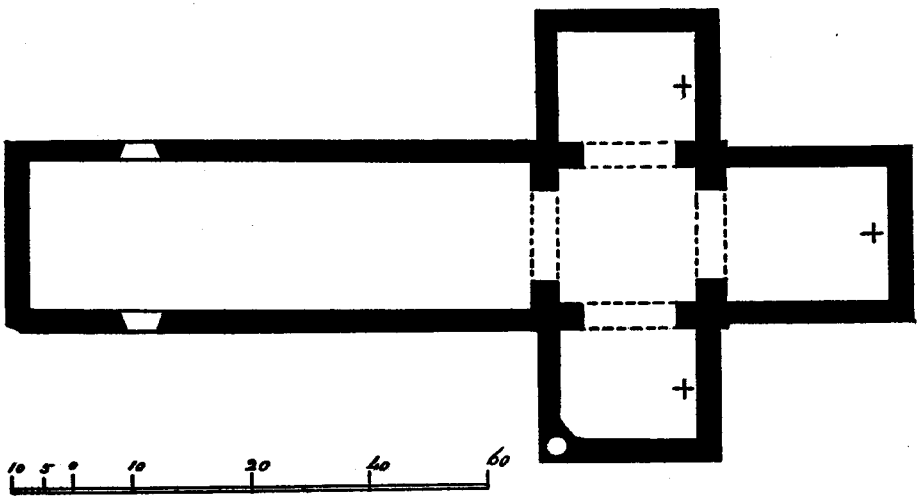
After the Norman conquest large numbers of churches were erected throughout the land by the new Norman lords. Even before the coming of William and his followers the Norman style had made its appearance, due to the influence of Edward the Confessor and his French courtiers, and represented the work of a foreign architectural school, gradually acclimatizing itself in England. The Norman architect designed his church with

apsidal chancel, transepts, central tower and long aisleless nave; but the local men compromised by building an aisleless nave with an apse at the east end and a western tower; the only remaining churches in Berkshire with the semi-circular eastern apse being those at Padworth (plan 4), Finchampstead, Remenham, and St. Leonard's, Wallingford; Tidmouth church has an early thirteenth century apsidal chancel of semi-octagonal form. The apse was comparatively rare, because the work of building it needed more skill, and the vaulting of it increased the difficulty and the expense; these examples tend to occur in small groups, and to show that skilled masons were to be found in these areas.

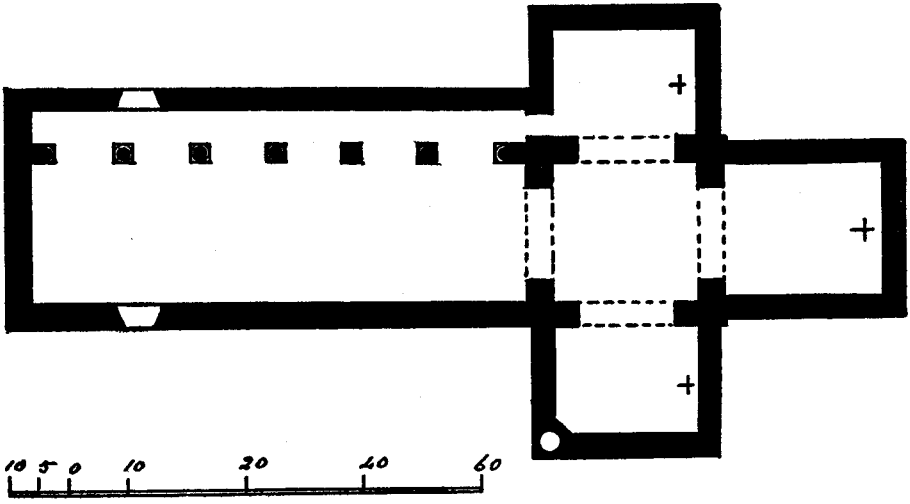


PADWORTH CHURCH.

I will now, by way of illustration of the growth of our parish churches, trace the architectural history, very shortly, of Wakefield church in Yorkshire, a typical town church, and, more minutely, that of East Hagbourne in Berkshire, a village church. In both cases there may have been Saxon churches; there certainly was a stone church at Wakefield of Saxon origin, but of its plan we know nothing, and every vestige of it has disappeared, our only knowledge of its existence coming from the Domesday survey. The earliest building of which we have any visible evidence was one built in the Norman period, some time in the half century of which the year 1100 is the middle. The plan of this church (plan 5) was that of a simple cross, which is the chief symbol of the Christian faith; but the common idea that the Cross of Christ was selected for these cross churches as a plan is quite erroneous. The form was due to a gradual development of ritual combined with structural necessity. The builders designed what was best suited to their purpose and to the services of the church; the idea of any symbolic meaning was probably altogether absent from their minds. Wakefield's plan then was that of a short chancel, a central tower with transepts and a long aisleless nave. The first change that took place was the building of a north aisle to the nave (plan 6), and it was put on the north side because the burial ground was on

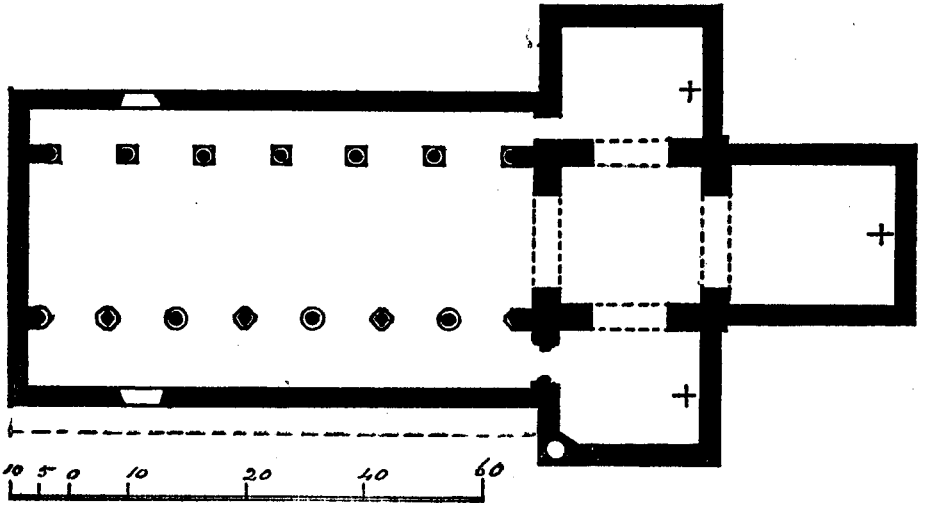


WAKEFIELD CHURCH, *c.* 1100.



WAKEFIELD CHURCH, *c.* 1150.

the south. Of this alteration a fragment was found in 1870, a voussoir of an arch enriched with the extremely characteristic star ornament of the later Norman work of the time of Stephen. The new aisle was, as usual, a very narrow one, only about six feet in width. Some seventy years later a south aisle (plan 7)



WAKEFIELD CHURCH, *c.* 1220.

was added, encroaching upon the cemetery; there were seven bays to this arcade, and the pillars were alternately round and octagonal.

The next change was a considerable one, little less than a complete rebuilding of the church. Probably this was caused by the fall of the Norman central tower. At the beginning of the twelfth century the masons were still working on traditions which had come down to them from the days of the Roman Empire. Their walls had a fair face of stone, but the substance of them was a kind of coarse concrete, which depended for its strength entirely on the quality of the lime used; and little care seems to have been taken in its selection in many buildings.

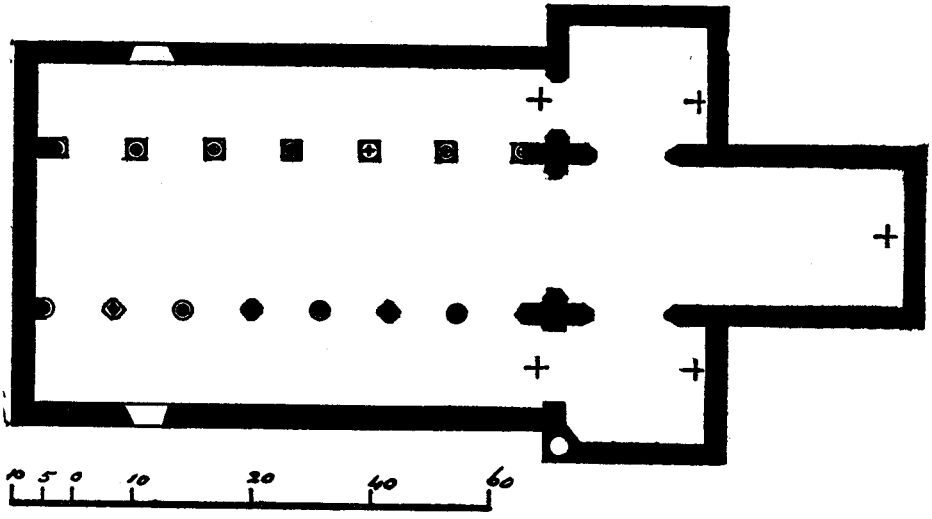
The fall of an early central tower is a common incident in the history of our cathedral and abbey churches, as at Fountain's Abbey, which completely collapsed towards the end of the fifteenth century; Furness Abbey, where the threatened fall was

only averted by taking down the upper storey; and in our own day the cases of Peterborough, Lincoln and St. Paul's (though the latter is of the seventeenth century, the cause, however, being the same—faulty construction of the piers) are but the last of a long series which began when the towers were still new. It is certain that there must have been many such accidents in our parish churches which are unrecorded, because their written records rarely go back beyond the sixteenth century. Another reason for the collapse of the central towers of parish churches is the addition of aisles, which, with the consequent piercing of the walls between the aisles and the transepts, did much to weaken the western supports of a central tower, and in many cases must have caused or at any rate hastened the end, as I believe it did at Wakefield.

The fall of the tower took place about the year 1300, or within a very few years of that date, and caused great destruction; the north-western pier of the tower, pierced by the rood stair, gave way, carrying with it a large part of the north transept and the east end of the north aisle of the nave. When a tower fell, or had to come down to avert the fall, men seldom rebuilt it in the centre of the church. Building was expensive in the Middle Ages, and though men gave according to their power, perhaps more freely than now, they were comparatively few, and money was scarce among them. It was to their wise use of small means that we owe most of the buildings which we inherit from them, and they carried on the work as they found themselves able to do it. Thus a tower, which was a very costly work, might take many years to build; to have the work going on in the midst of the church which they wanted for daily use was an inconvenience parishioners were not generally content to bear, so they completely altered the plan of their church, as was done at Wakefield. Little of the older church was kept save some of the nave piers, the south end of the south transept, and perhaps the east end of the chancel and the west end of the nave.

It has been said, and with a great deal of truth, that the chancel arch is the most stationary and lasting portion of any church, expansion taking place north, south, east and west, with the lengthening of chancel and nave or the addition of aisles; but all growth centres round the chancel arch, which remains

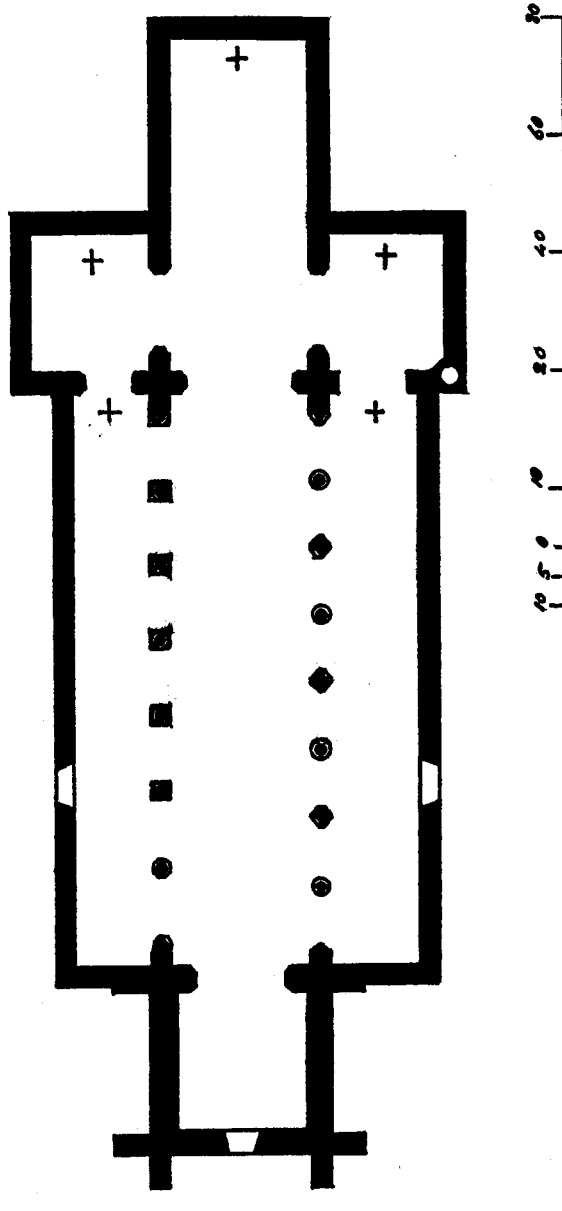
the one immoveable feature of a church. The new church (plan 8) was made loftier than the old one; a new chancel was built



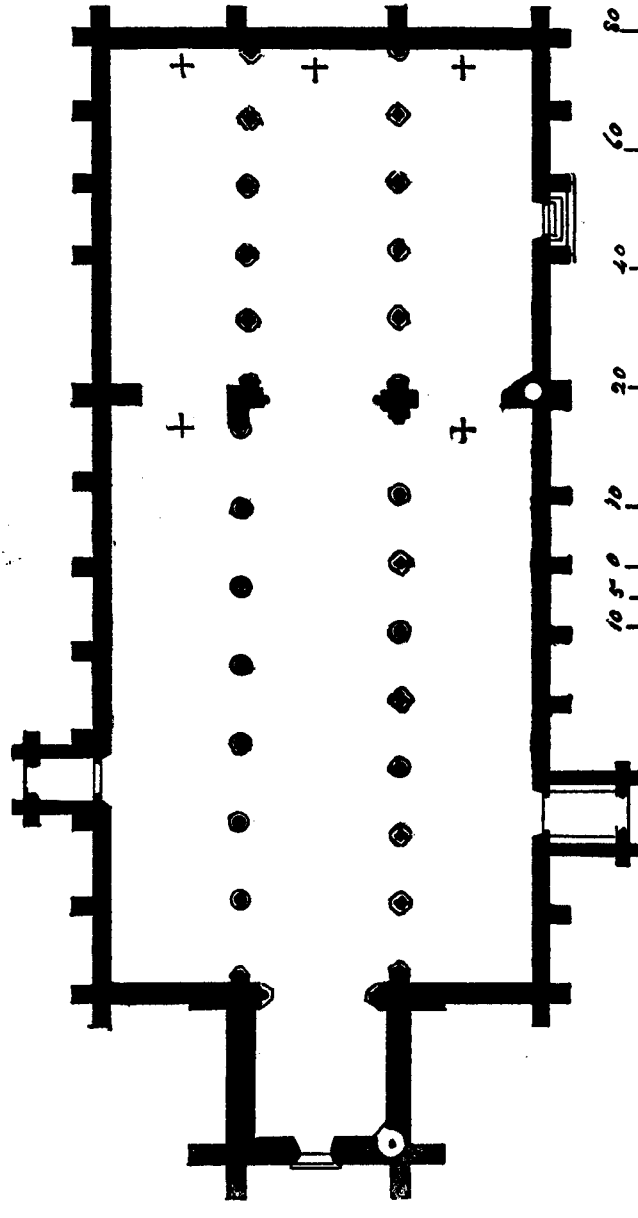
WAKEFIELD CHURCH, *c.* 1330.

with high pitched roof, the mark of which can still be seen on the east side of the present chancel arch, which was then rebuilt; the two most easterly of the Norman pillars of the north arcade, that had been destroyed by the fall of the tower, were replaced by new ones in the decorated style, although the old bases were retained; all the pillars of both arcades were about doubled in height; the older parts are marked by each course being composed of two stones, whilst the new have but one drum to each course. The new aisles were made higher and wider, and had lean-to roofs with open framing, the corbels for which can still be seen in the spandrels of the arches. The new windows were of flowing decorated tracery, and much larger than their predecessors. The space formerly under the tower arch was now included in the chancel, to which the transepts formed side chapels.

The fact that this church was consecrated in 1329 does not quite prove that the rebuilding was then complete, for in 1349 came that terrible visitation—the Black Death—which, in many places, put a stop to church building, and very likely did so at



WAKEFIELD CHURCH, *c.* 1410.



WAKEFIELD CHURCH, *c.* 1470.

Wakefield. We find that work stopped by the Black Death was never begun again in some places and remains unfinished to this day. At Wakefield the check lasted for seventy years. The church consecrated in 1329 had no steeple. At that time towers were not so common amongst parish churches as they came to be later, but most of the larger ones had them, or were having them built in the first quarter of the fifteenth century; and the people of Wakefield, who knew that their church once had a tower, began to think of giving it one again, as their neighbours at Rotherham were doing, and so appealed to the burgesses for help. The Archbishop of York issued a monition on the 14th June, 1409, inciting the faithful by the alluring gifts of indulgences to contribute to the work, and compelling others by ecclesiastical censures to make a reasonable contribution to the assessment. This clearly shows the date of the new tower (plan 9), which was built on new ground about ten feet from the west end of the church, where work might be carried on without interfering with the use of the main building. The work went on slowly, for we know that it was not completed in 1420; union with the nave was effected by taking down the west front of the latter and adding a bay to each nave arcade, thus lengthening both nave and aisles. The tower arch opening into the nave closely resembles the arches of the nave of Winchester Cathedral, built by William of Wykeham, 1394-1410. When the tower was completed it was crowned by a spire, the highest in Yorkshire.

The addition of the tower and spire may be looked upon as the completion of the rebuilding begun early in the fourteenth century. Towards the middle of the fifteenth century clerestories were built above the nave arcades, and then the chancel, which had only been erected about one hundred and fifty years before, was taken down, and a new one with a clerestory and flat panelled roof (plan 10), similar, but more ornate, to the one in the nave, was rebuilt from the ground. Aisles were added to this chancel and carried out as far as the north and south walls of the transepts, although the first plan was to extend them some feet short of the east end of the chancel. The transeptal plan was thus lost, for the east walls of the transepts were taken down along with the gabled roofs. The end walls, north and south, were remodelled, and what had formerly been transepts,

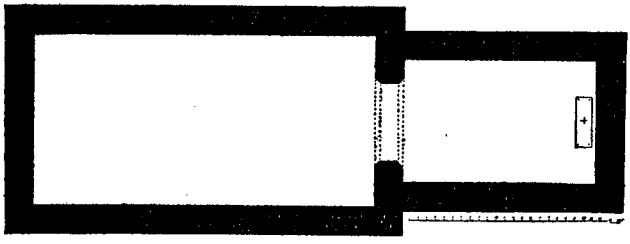
and later short aisles of the chancel, were placed under one flat roof with the eastward extension in which they became merged. Then the nave aisles were widened and their lean-to roofs gave way to the present flat panelled ceilings.

We now finally lose the three arms of the cross to the east end, which had endured in the plan through all its changes, and in their place we get a noble chancel with a clerestory and side aisles running right through to the east. Finally north and south porches were built, that on the north side having an upper storey. By the end of the fifteenth century Wakefield Church had obtained the form and dimensions which it showed prior to the recent cathedral extensions at the east end, and became, in the main, a great town church in the perpendicular style of architecture. To sum up : of the twelfth century addition to the Norman church we have the bases and part of the shafts of two of the pillars on the north side of the nave; of the thirteenth century aisle we have the bases and shafts of the pillars on the south side of the nave; of the great fourteenth century rebuilding there remains the chancel arch and the nave arcades (except the earlier parts of those just mentioned). All the rest, that is, all which gave its form to the present building, is of the fifteenth century.

To turn now to the growth of a village church, taking East Hagbourne in Berkshire as our example. There is no mention of any church there in Domesday Book, although this is no evidence that one did not exist, for, as Mr. J. H. Round says, 'it is well recognised, however, that the mention of churches in the survey is only incidental and is generally due to the existence of taxable glebe.' (V.C.H., Berkshire, Vol. I, p. 300.)

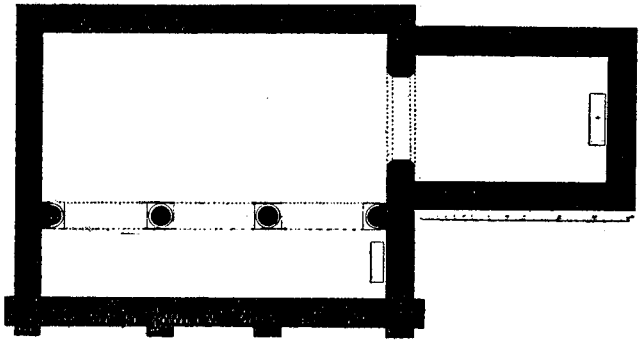
In the time of Edward the Confessor his chancellor, Rainbald the priest, held Hagbourne, and it is certain that during his lifetime there was a church there, either founded by him or at an earlier period. He died in 1133, and at his death Henry the First granted all his estates to his newly founded abbey of Cirencester, included among which was the church and village of Hacheburne, the chapel of West Hacheburne and the tithes thereof. The church there mentioned (plan 11) was probably one built or rebuilt by Rainbald in the first quarter of the twelfth century and consisted of a nave and chancel, with a chancel arch of a round headed type similar to the one now at Long Witten-

ham, a neighbouring parish. This nave was forty-four feet long by nineteen feet wide, the chancel twenty-two feet long by fifteen feet wide. It was a typical Norman church for a small village.



EAST HAGBOURNE CHURCH, *c.* 1100.

The first enlargement that was made was the building of an aisle (plan 12) in about the year 1190, and this was placed on

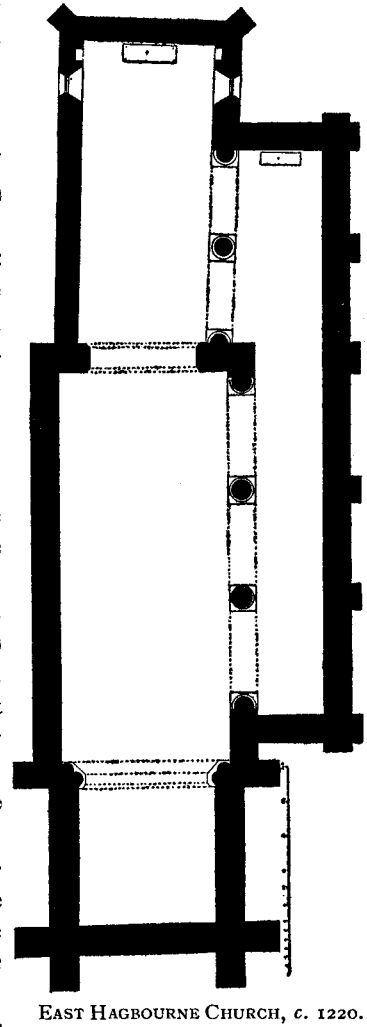


EAST HAGBOURNE CHURCH, *c.* 1190.

the south side of the nave, contrary to the usual plan of the first aisle being added on the north side. The reason for this was, I think, that the village lies on the north and east sides of the church; the main entrance is on the north side nearest to the houses, as also is the main path, on either side of which the dead were laid to rest; and our ancestors preferred to enlarge on the side not used for burials, for they disliked disturbing graves, although when necessary they did not hesitate to build over them.

In order not to interfere with the services of the church, the side and end walls of the new aisle were first erected, and were divided up into bays by external buttresses. The lean-to roof

was then added, and the final stage was reached by the opening-up of the new aisle to the nave. This the builders proceeded to effect by breaking through the south wall of the nave opposite each of the new buttresses, leaving a block in the foundation of the wall to serve as a footing for each pier which they built up, the masonry of the wall being gradually removed as each pillar rose in height. The arches were made in the same way, the wall being removed gradually until the two sides of each arch met at the keystone; finally the masses of wall which remained beneath each arch were broken down, and thus the nave and aisle were thrown into one, showing an arcade of three bays with cylindrical piers and semi-cylindrical responds, on square bases, with griffes at their angles. The arches are pointed, of two square-edged orders, the whole being characteristic of Transitional Norman work. This narrow aisle, only eight feet in width, extended the whole length of the nave.



EAST HAGBOURNE CHURCH, *c.* 1220.

The next additions to the church were commenced some thirty years later, *circa* 1220, and completely altered the plan of the church, which was lengthened both eastwards and westwards. The alterations must have been done by the wealthy patron, the abbey of Cirencester, as a small village could not have carried them out.

The first work to be undertaken was the erection of an aisle or chapel on the south side of the chancel (plan 13), carried out the same width as the nave aisle, and its eastern end in line with the

east end of the chancel. The south side of the chancel was pierced by an arcade of two bays, with a cylindrical pier and semi-cylindrical responds with square bases. The capitals of the central pillar and east respond are sculptured with rich conventional foliage similar to those at Long Wittenham and Steventon; the capital of the west respond is a plain bell. The arches are pointed and of two chamfered orders. A small corbel-head above the central capital shows that originally there was a hood mould over these arches. The wall between the new aisle of the chancel and the nave aisle was pierced so as to make communication between them.

The early progress of Gothic art in parish churches was marked by a general lengthening of chancels. This may be clearly seen at Iffley near Oxford, Avening in Gloucester, and at East Hagbourne, where chancels of the twelfth century were extended in the thirteenth by an eastern bay. From the end of the twelfth century the normal chancel of the parish church had a length which is from a half to two-thirds of the length of the nave, and where the shorter chancels existed extension eastward took place to secure room for the altar and the quire stalls, which were then coming into fashion, for which the small rectangular chancel offered a very restricted space.

This was what took place at Hagbourne, following immediately upon the addition of the south chancel aisle; the chancel was lengthened one bay, about twelve feet, to the east, and had angle buttresses externally. Single lancet windows were placed in the north and south walls of the sanctuary, and probably a triple lancet in the east wall. In the south wall is a piscina with a quatrefoil basin and trefoil head, in the north wall a square aumbry. At this time also the early twelfth century Norman chancel arch was taken down and gave way to a wider, more lofty, acutely pointed arch of two plain chamfered orders, springing from fluted corbels, surmounted by a large grotesque carving of a lion's head with wide open mouth on the north side and three curious female masks on the south side, all of rude workmanship.

The axis of the chancel is not in line with that of the nave, but has a slight south deviation. One is sometimes told that this symbolizes the bend of our Lord's head upon the cross, but this is pure imagination; those who do imagine it confound the

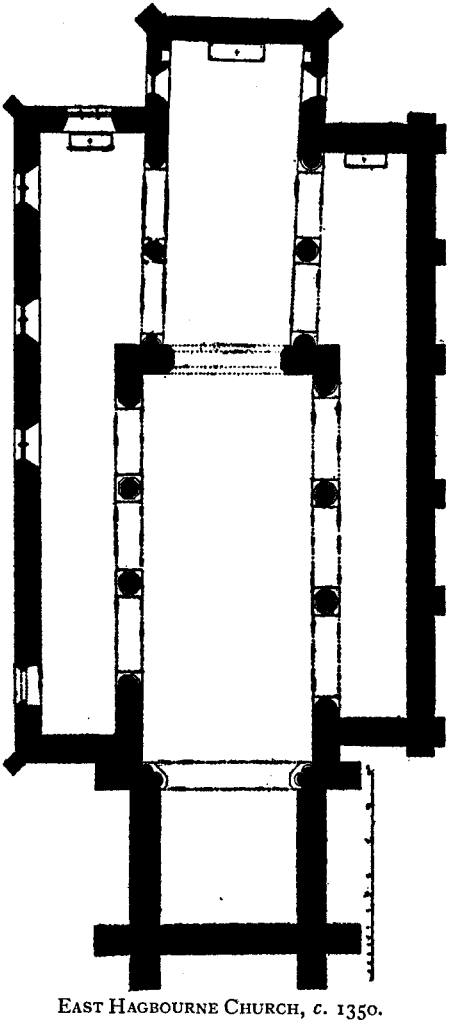
cross plan of the church between the cross itself and the Body nailed upon it. Another popular delusion is that the orientation of the chancel followed the direction in which the sun rose on the morning of the dedication of the church to its patronal saint. We must remember that when chancels were rebuilt the nave was screened off from the new work, so that services might continue uninterruptedly. Unless very careful measurements were taken, the new east walls might not be built quite parallel to the chancel arch, the side walls would be set out at right angles to the east wall—thus when the new chapel was joined to the church its axis would be out of line with the nave. Doubtless also an original defect was sometimes exaggerated.

This lengthening of the chancel of the church was quickly followed by the erection of a tower, which was built to the west of and a short distance from the existing nave. A tower was a very costly work and took many years to build; thus it was placed outside of and away from the church, that it might be constructed at leisure without interfering with the main building and the services carried on therein. When the tower was finished it was united with the church by taking down the west end of the nave and joining up the nave arcades, which thus form eastern buttresses to the tower. The arch between the nave and tower was a lofty one of two orders, the outer chamifered and the inner moulded with a bold fillèted roll, with piers of three clustered shafts on semi-octagonal bases.

Lengthening of a church at its west end to meet a new tower was a common thing in the Middle Ages; examples occur, as we have seen at Wakefield, also at Grantham, Bubwith in Yorkshire, Caunton in Nottinghamshire, Oundle in Northamptonshire and many other places.

The building of this tower completed the work undertaken between the years 1220-1250 by the abbey of Cirencester, and the church had rest for nearly one hundred years, when, owing to the growing population, it became necessary to add a north aisle (plan 14). The addition of aisles was partly for increasing congregations, but more particularly for ceremonial processions and especially to get an altar at the east end. The various popular devotions which came into being in the Middle Ages, and their ritual requirements, led to the multiplication of secondary altars, which before the addition of aisles to a church were

placed against the chancel screen. The addition of aisles and the removal of these altars to their east ends would gain space in the body of the church and add to the general convenience. William Hereward was abbot of Cirencester from 1334 to 1350; he had a manor house with a park near to the village, and claimed gallows and the assize of bread and beer at East Hagbourne. It was during the early part of his abbacy that this work was carried out.



EAST HAGBOURNE CHURCH, *c.* 1350.

The new aisle was made the full length of the church, twelve feet wide in the chancel, but only nine feet wide in the nave (the chancel itself being much narrower than the nave) so that the outer wall might be continuous and unbroken. The twelfth century north walls of the chancel and nave were pierced with two arches in the chancel and three in the nave. The spacing of the arcade upon the south side was disregarded, the piers of the two arcades are not opposite to each other and the discrepancy increases as the new arcade advances westwards. The piers are octagonal columns with moulded hollow capitals and chamfered bases; the arches are of two orders, the inner chamfered and the outer moulded

with a sunk quarter-round. Hood moulds existed above the arcades, but are now destroyed, only the corbel heads supporting them remaining to tell the tale. The windows are of flowing tracery of two lights in the north wall and of three in the east wall of the chancel aisle. The doorway is of good workmanship and contains the original door with its old hinges and sanctuary knocker.

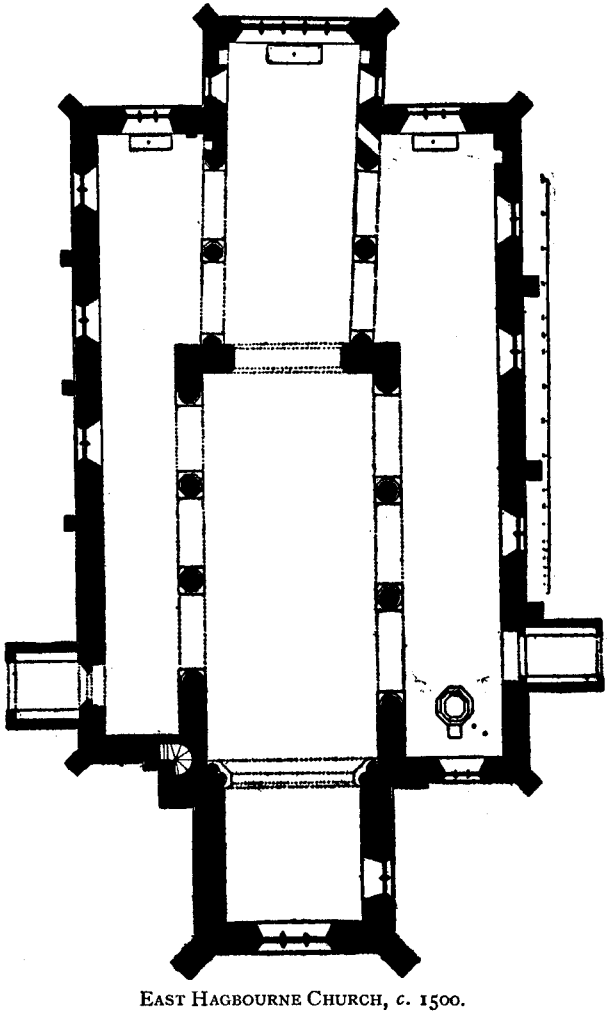
In the south wall near the altar is a piscina with a straight-sided cinquefoiled head with crockets above the segmental moulding and a projecting octagonal basin resting on a bracket, formed as a crowned head. Above the piscina is carved in relief a cross standing upon a crescent with a ten-pointed star over each arm of the cross. Some have thought that this symbol represents an anchor, and that this may have been a chapel dedicated to St. Clement; but if so, why the ten-pointed star above each stock of the anchor?

Towards the end of the thirteenth century and onwards to the Reformation the foundation of chantries in parish churches became a common thing. Individual benefactors sought to secure their own salvation and that of their relatives by endowing an altar in their parish church, or by leaving lands to one or more priests who should say mass daily for the good estate of the donor during his life and for his soul after death. The rich wool stapler returned thanks for his wealth by founding a chantry in his church or one of its chapels, or built a new church as at Newbury, rebuilt by Jack of Winchcombe; or a tower, as at Great Ponton in Lincolnshire, where Ellys, a wool stapler of Calais, sending his gold home in chests marked 'Calais sand,' which his wife, disappointed with what purported to be the contents, placed in the cellar; on his return he built the fine tower to his village church as a thank-offering, and inscribed upon it his motto, 'Think and thank God for all'; or the church of Fairford in Gloucestershire, practically rebuilt by John Tame at the end of the fifteenth century, and embellished with twenty-eight windows of perhaps the finest glass in England.

Wealthy trade guilds maintained their own chaplains in the various parish churches, and established chantries by royal licence. A chantry, however, is a service, not the building in which it is held. It was usually founded at one of the lesser

altars of the church, and frequently led to the widening of an existing aisle or the addition of a new one.

The former scheme took place at Hagbourne (plan 15). Late in the fourteenth or early in the fifteenth century John York,



EAST HAGBOURNE CHURCH, *c.* 1500.

who had married Clarice (widow first of Richard de Windsor, lord of West Hagbourne, and then of Helming Leget, after her first husband's death in 1367), became lord of the manor of

West Hagbourne in right of his wife, widened the aisles of both nave and chancel, embracing the whole south side of the church, which he surrounded with new walls and a flat panelled roof, on the completion of which the old walls and lean-to roof were removed. The aisle was lighted by three two-light windows of perpendicular design in the south wall, and by three-light windows in the east and west walls. A new south doorway with mouldings continuous down the jambs was constructed, which still contains its original door. In the south wall of the chancel aisle near its east end is a piscina with projecting basin, the canopy formed of half the tracery of the head of a fourteenth century two-light window, which is of good workmanship, and so was re-used to serve as the canopy of the piscina for the subsidiary altar. The octagonal font is of the same date as the aisle, and bears the arms of Windsor and York. This addition must have been undertaken quite at the commencement of the fifteenth century, or possibly in the last few years of the fourteenth, for the inscription on the brass of Clarice records that 'she was the wife of John York, who caused this chapel to be made, and died 24th March, 1403'; the brass to his memory, dated 1413, calls him 'founder of this aisle,' so that we are able within a very few years to date this work. Doubtless he founded a chantry in his chapel. Chantry chapels are the earliest form of family pews in parish churches. When a family built or appropriated part of a church for the purpose of a chantry it was customary to surround it with screens, and in Hagbourne Church this was done. The grooves on the capitals of the piers show where these screens were fixed to separate the chapel from the chancel, and the enclosure so made was occupied as a pew by the family of the founder.

The removal of the altar further east by the extension of the aisle so placed it that the celebrating priest could not see what was taking place at the high altar if his mass happened to coincide with a service there. To obviate this difficulty a squint, or oblong opening, was pierced through the western end of the south chancel wall, which projected into the church and permitted a view of the high altar from this chapel. The squint was also for the convenience of the occupants of these pews, or 'closets,' as they were called. Their use as pews survived the

suppression of the chantries, and continues in some churches to the present day.

Some fifty years or so later, between 1450 and 1470, but whether from necessity or choice we know not, it was decided to rebuild the tower; at any rate, the thirteenth century tower disappeared and in its place rose a massive structure of a rich green-coloured stone. The new tower was built on the foundations of the older one, and is of two stages, with angle buttresses at the west end. A portion of the south-east buttress of the old tower may still be seen incorporated in the fifteenth century west wall of the south aisle, showing that when the latter was built the original tower was standing. The west buttresses are divided into three stages by set-offs, the highest stages stopping short below the level of the belfry windows.

In the first storey on the west side is a large pointed three-light window with a cusped head of tracery and a hood mould springing from corbels, the one on the south side a female head supporting a shield bearing a crescent on a chief, and on the north side a monk's (?) head carrying a shield much weather worn, but which appears to bear four birds' heads couped and counter-charged (neither of these coats can I identify). Above the apex of the hood mould is carved a man's head.

On the south side is a square-headed window of two lights, and in the north and west walls small trefoil lights with square heads to light the ringing chamber. The belfry storey has on each side a large pointed two-light window, the head of which is filled in with a circle. The tower is embattled and has at its north-east corner an octagonal stair turret crowned with a conical cap.

This tower opens into the nave by a lofty pointed arch of two orders formed largely out of the older arch; the thirteenth century roll-and-hollow hood mouldings were re-used on each side, and probably the chamfered outer order is the original one built up with the new work. Of the three clustered shafts of thirteenth century date only the middle shafts remain. Those on the east side were cut away a short distance above the base in the remodelling, and those on the west side were built into the north and south walls of the tower, which had thicker walls than the earlier one. The original bases were kept on either

side. When a nave had been lengthened and its west window removed to the tower it was found that the church was darkened; the widening of the aisles and the increased distance of their windows from the nave also contributed to this effect. To remedy this, clerestories with broad windows were built above the nave arcades, and this was the next growth of Hagbourne church. With the increase of height the old high-pitched roof was abandoned in favour of one with a lower pitch. In some cases this was due to the rotting of the old roof-timbers at the ends next the wall plates. These rotten ends were sawn off and the sound shortened beams re-used to form a roof of lower pitch.

The new roofs of the chancel and nave were of open timber work, that in the chancel plain with king posts and moulded tie-beams, the roof of the nave more richly decorated. On the east side of the centre tie-beam is carved a hound chasing a stag, and on the west side a hound catching a stag. On the cornice of this roof are shields with the following devices, representing various degrees of men: on the north side from east to west (1) a mitre for an abbot, (2) a pruned tree for a gardener, (3) a millrind for a miller, (4) a square for a carpenter; and on the south side, a two-headed eagle for an emperor, a crozier for a bishop, an orb for a king, and a pair of compasses for a mason.

Next, the triple lancet window was removed from the east end of the chancel, and a large perpendicular window, entirely filling the wall, was inserted, the tracery of which consists of five cinque-foiled lights with vertical tracery within a depressed four centered head; beneath the external sill is a large moulded string course terminating at either end in a lozenge with concave sides, a very unusual form of ornamentation.

Probably the last important work of construction was the addition of a sanctus bell-cote, which was built on to the east parapet of the tower some years after the construction of the latter. It is formed of four square pillars supporting an octagonal pyramidal roof terminating in a finial with crocketted pinnacles at its angles. The original bell, having a stamped fleur-de-lis ornamental band around it, still remains in daily use. It is believed that there are only one or two other sanctus bell-cotes in England in a similar position to this one. North and south porches were added to the aisle doors, as protection to the door-

ways which they covered. The lower portions were built of stone and the upper of wood, having side benches on which worshippers could rest.

Of the twelfth century church only the external quoins with the adjoining walls of the north-east and south-east angles of the nave and the western ends of the arcade walls remain; of the late twelfth century church the south nave arcade is still in existence; of the thirteenth century church the eastern part of the chancel and its south arcade, also portions of the tower arch, which were re-used; of the fourteenth century church the whole of the north aisle of both nave and chancel. The rest of the church is of fifteenth century date, with brick buttresses added to the north aisle in the seventeenth century or later.

Fortunately East Hagbourne church has not suffered much from restoration. A certain amount of work was done in 1860; the old high pews and the galleries under and in front of the tower and one in the north aisle were pulled down and the church was reseated.

We have now followed the story of these two churches from their earliest date to about the sixteenth century. The story does not stop there, but thenceforth it is to be read chiefly in written records. But the fabrics, too, have still something to tell. How at the Reformation the subsidiary altars were removed and the images cast out; how some over-zealous ones, when in Queen Elizabeth's reign the order came for the removal of rood lofts, took them away by cutting through the posts of the screens, leaving nothing but the handrails. How each generation has altered the churches to suit its idea of the seemly performance of the services. How the people are once again obtaining their rights in these churches, and how men give of their substance to adorn and preserve them. Surely a chapter which tells of these things is an important one in the history of these churches. The antiquary may regret that some things which might have been kept have been lost, but the Churchman sees in it the proof that the old churches are still young. The story will go on, much will yet be done, and we only ask that they who do it will not wipe out the old records to make way for the new.