

V.—SOME EARLY MASONRY IN NORTH NORTHUMBERLAND.

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It is now just over a century since Thomas Rickman visited Whittingham at the suggestion of William Twopenny, and described the pre-conquest work there in a paper read in January 1834 to the Society of Antiquaries of London.¹

The rev. John Hodgson may have been acquainted with Whittingham church, but Rickman was the first to isolate the *Saxon* style from the *Norman* work with which it had previously been confused, and his was the first published reference to Saxon masonry at Whittingham. So little has been added since 1834 to our knowledge of pre-conquest building in Northumberland, and so wide are the differences between dates estimated by various authors—not always with much practical training in the art of architecture—that it became necessary to study the subject afresh for the benefit of volume XIV of the Northumberland county history; Whittingham, among other ancient churches, being in the area it covers. The following notes embody the provisional results of this study.

Nothing new seems to have been said on the subject from 1834 till 1870, when the late F. R. Wilson published his *Churches of the Archdeaconry of Lindisfarne*. His account of Whittingham chronicles the destruction of part of the tower and most of the north side of the nave; at

¹ *Archæologia*, XXVI, 31.

Eglingham and Long Houghton he ascribes pre-conquest dates to the chancel arches; and at Kirknewton he describes the adoration panel, but not with much understanding of its significance. This is an indifferent record for half a century of research, a half century wherein many local churches had been "restored" and reconstructed. However, in 1893 our late member, Charles Clement Hodges, contributed to *The Reliquary*² a valuable series of articles on *The Pre-conquest Churches of Northumbria*, including Durham and Yorkshire. So far as north Northumberland is concerned, it records finds of carved stones at Norham, Wooler, Bamburgh, Lindisfarne, Rothbury, Alnmouth and Warkworth, but adds no fresh records of masonry except foundations of apsidal-ended choirs and quoins at Lindisfarne and Warkworth, and stonework said to exist at the east end of the nave of Bamburgh. For Whittingham, Hodges quotes Rickman's account, but adds his own discovery of the existence of the tower arch, only a small part of which was then visible. D. D. Dixon in *Whittingham Vale* quoted Rickman once more, noted the tower arch from his own observations, and added some particulars regarding the demolition of 1840; in his *Upper Coquetdale* he called attention to the diamond-broached stone at Alwinton church. The *County History of Northumberland*, vol. XI, deals with Kirknewton rather briefly; it does, however, give a photograph of the adoration panel. In 1903 appeared the late Baldwin Brown's epoch-making *Ecclesiastical Architecture in England from the Conversion of the Saxons to the Norman Conquest*, in which, taking as a basis Micklethwaite's paper in the *Archæological Journal* (vol. LIII), he made a serious attempt to sort out Saxon architecture, at any rate south of the Humber, into its successive phases. Its sole reference to north Northumberland was in a list of churches on page 341. "Whittingham, Northumberland C.3 (western tower)." "C.3" indicating the reign of Edward the Confessor; but its

² Vols. VII and VIII.

second edition made a reference to the tower arch there. Finally, in *Arch. Ael.*⁴ V, Hodges quoted Rickman on Whittingham once again, and gave a good account of the tower arch which had then been reopened.

The term *Saxon*, probably first used architecturally in the eighteenth century, is commonly applied to all buildings erected from the seventh century to 1066. It would be more scientific in Northumberland to restrict the use of the name to work done between the suppression of the kingship of Northumberland in 950 and the conquest of the central government in its turn by William I in 1066. Work done between the departure of the Romans and the Viking invasions might then be called either *Anglo-Roman* or, more patriotically but less correctly, *Anglian*, and the work carried out between the conversion of the Northmen by St. Cuthbert's monks in 882 and the final assertion of west Saxon supremacy in 950 might be called *Anglo-Danish*.

Let us briefly examine the periods when building, other than domestic architecture which seems to have been mostly of wood and about which it is difficult to get any definite information, was likely to be in progress in the district.

No trace of the pre-Anglian period remains in Northumberland except perhaps the "St. Ninian's" and "St. Brandon's" wells found near Roman roads at Whittingham and elsewhere. The attention now being paid by excavators to suburbs of Roman stations may, however, lead at any moment to the discovery of an early Christian oratory, and recent Scottish writers³ consider that Ninian's division of Pictland and the Borders into ecclesiastical districts was never entirely superseded, nor was Christianity in some form ever quite extinct.

The next period is that of the conversion of the Northumbrians by the eight years mission of archbishop Paulinus, and, if Bede's informants were reliable, it only

³ *Scot. Eccles. Soc. Trans.*, X, parts 2 and 3.

produced a few temporary wooden chapels and a stone cathedral church at York.

Then for about thirty years the church of Northumberland was controlled by Scots and Scottish-trained Englishmen from Ireland or Iona. To them also Bede denies credit for any masonwork. They built chapels of wood and wattle work and, after the battle of Heavenfield, they set up crosses to mark their preaching places. But it is possible that they built a few very simple stone churches.

After 664 the Scots were replaced by Englishmen such as Benedict, Wilfrid, and Cuthbert, acting at first under the instructions of a series of "Roman" (in the sense of citizenship) archbishops of Canterbury, of whom Theodore of Tarsus was the most notable. Theodore carved the dioceses of Deira and Bernicia out of the see of Northumbria, and a few years later subdivided Bernicia into two parts, with their episcopal seats at the monasteries of Lindisfarne and Hexham. Most of north Northumberland was in the former bishopric, but the territorial boundaries seem to have been rather indefinite. In fact a bishopric seems to have been a group of preaching stations or burial places rather than of parishes, and these seem to have been the successors of stations established by missionaries from Whithorn, Lindisfarne, or Hexham; or from the smaller missionary centres subordinate to them.

This fourth period is associated architecturally with the names of Benedict Biscop, Wilfrid and Acca, who, with the help of foreign carvers and imported works of art, effected a revolution in the decoration of churches and monasteries in the district. They were fortunate in that the "iconoclastic" persecution in Byzantium and the Saracenic invasion of the south of France and Spain dispersed into exile Greek scholars and both Greek and Gaulish artists to whom the English church was indebted for scholarship and skilled craftsmanship. The characteristic church of this time seems to have been a low rather narrow room with an archway at each end opening into

an adjunct or, as it was then called, *porticus*. Other *porticus* sometimes projected from the sides of the principal apartment, particularly on each side of a square area screened off at the east end of the nave, and later there was a tendency for these adjuncts to throw out *exedrae* of their own, so that, for instance, the western one might have openings pierced in its north and south walls, and chapels attached. The entrances were generally in one or other of the "porches." The walls were well built, faced with ashlar and provided with massive quoins at the angles. Windows, in keeping with the proportions of the building, were wide and low but few, and glass is said to have been used for windows as well as for ornaments. Carved and painted barge boards and ornamental ridges with metal finials may have lent picturesqueness to the otherwise plain and severe exteriors of the churches, but their interiors were fitted up with a luxury which no subsequent period has emulated. Screens of turned balusters, hangings of rich stuffs, ivory carvings and turned work, gold and silverwork, embroidery and painted decoration combined with rare woods, inlay and enamel to produce a richness of atmosphere which it is difficult for us to imagine. Nor were the monasteries, where were trained the clergy who ministered in these churches and taught the precepts of Vitruvius to the architects who adorned them,⁴ behindhand in the beauty of their furniture if we may believe the book illustrators of the period. There is also every reason to suppose that the laity, at any rate in the upper classes, lived lives and surrounded themselves with luxuries little if at all different from those of their predecessors during the Roman occupation.

Upon these refined, artistic, perhaps a trifle decadent inheritors of Roman culture and colonial art, addicted to strange ecstasies and strange sins, there descended the *Vikings* or *Danes*, a people who not merely had no feeling for beauty, but appear to have had an active dislike or

⁴ Granger's *Vitruvius*, I, xv-xvi.

conscientious objection to it! One must not take British accounts of them too literally, for we have a stock set of accusations which we have brought successively against all our enemies, and it is possible that the *Danes* were not so red as they are painted! They may even have had some so far undiscovered excuse for their conduct, like Disraeli's Albanians at Janina, who "revenged themselves on Tyranny by destroying Civilization." The architectural evidence is against them, and if Halfdan did not level *every* church in the district, at none of them save Whittingham does there remain *in situ* stonework which can be accepted as earlier than his time.

In 882 (after some complicated diplomacy on the part of the bishop of Lindisfarne, the abbot of *Luerchester*, king Alfred, and, last but not least, the ghost of St. Cuthbert) king Guthred or Cnut re-established Christianity as the state religion of Northumbria, and endowed the successors of St. Cuthbert with the entire county of Durham in addition to their possessions in Bernicia. Lindisfarne was abandoned by its bishop in favour of a new minster at Chester-le-Street, the bishopric of Hexham was finally abolished, and St. Cuthbert's monks found themselves in possession of all the churches between Tweed and Tees, besides many in the south of Scotland, and a great part of the land in that area.

The period which followed was one of prosperity for the church, but it was rudely interrupted by the disturbed conditions created by the attempt of the successors of Alfred to concentrate the government of England at Winchester, and by the inevitable northern reaction which led indirectly to the invasion of Sweyne and Canute's seizure of the crown.

It is clear from references by the chroniclers that a good deal of building went on during this period, and that there had even been some during the time of the Danish invasions. Archbishop Albert's thirty altar church at York was built late in the eighth century, and masons from

there may have been taken by Alcuin to work for Charlemagne at Aix-la-Chapelle.⁵ After the death of Charles it is probable that some of these returned to England and were responsible for work done during the ninth century, when bishop Ecgréd built Norham and other churches,⁶ and for at any rate keeping alive in Northumberland sufficient skill to take advantage of the better conditions after 882. We would expect the buildings of the time to have affinities with work done in Germany, to be ruder than their predecessors, and to be more defensible and less inflammable; the sizes of windows would be reduced and the heights of walls would be increased so that thatched roofs could be less easily set alight. Western towers might also be expected both for use as belfries and as watch-towers and places of refuge.

The last division of pre-conquest architecture in Northumberland roughly covers the first half of the eleventh century and the latter part of the tenth. It was a period of much political disturbance except in the reigns of Canute himself and Edward the Confessor, but during these reigns the country appears to have been prosperous, and the chroniclers make references to the building of churches, although mostly south of the Humber. Architecturally, the period might be divided into two halves; the first one, during which building work had some German character though less than has sometimes been asserted and was in fact a variety of early Romanesque, terminated with the marriage of Ethelred to Emma of Normandy, and was followed by an early Norman period in which Norman buildings of a very simple type were erected side by side with English Romanesque ones. All the work of this time was, as might be expected from its post-war character, exceedingly plain; little and rude ornament was used, and walls though

⁵ Granger, *op. cit.*, I, xvi: "Benedictine missionaries carried religion and architecture of the Roman form from England to Charlemagne." For York see A. W. Clapham, *English Romanesque Architecture before the Conquest*, p. 47.

⁶ Stevenson's *Simeon of Durham*, 653.

thicker were weaker than in the earlier periods.⁷ The Norman Conquest resulted in a final victory for Norman architecture (though this *Norman* architecture was developed almost as much in England as in Normandy) and was accompanied for a while by a change in methods of design and construction.

We may now examine in geographical order the surviving fragments of pre-conquest work in north Northumberland and try to fit them into possible periods.

I. DODDINGTON.

Doddington church had an early Norman nave about 16 ft. 3 in. by 34 ft. 6 in. internally, with an archway at each end. The western arch, opening into a tower or western annex, was destroyed in the thirteenth century except for a small part of the heavy chamfered impost which had returned as a string course along the east side of its responds. The eastern arch was destroyed in 1838 when the floor of the church was raised and the present arch was made, partly out of old materials. According to the rev. Wm. Procter⁸ it was only 10 feet in height. It was not at right angles to the nave, and it may, as suggested by Mr. Procter, have belonged to a choir of earlier date. It is probably safe to call it "eleventh century," if the present responds accurately reproduce their predecessors.

II. KIRKNEWTON.

The parish of Newton in Glendale is of historic interest from its connection with the mission of Paulinus to Northumberland.⁹ Here Edwin, one of the greatest of Northumbrian kings, had his hunting seat of Adgefrin,

⁷ Contemporary writers were, however, convinced that English architecture was making rapid advances.

⁸ *B.N.C. History*, VI, 153.

⁹ Bede, book II, chap. xiv.

now pronounced "Aad Yeaverin,"¹⁰ and, according to the Ordnance Survey, a massive stone wall with embedded wood posts at Old Yeavinger is probably part of his house: a small group of mounds higher up the hill-side may, however, be the real site. Here the archbishop was Edwin's guest, and made many converts whom he baptized in the Glen. Newton itself may be the new town which a later king is said to have founded. The church of St. Gregory stands in the village of Kirk Newton, some distance from both Yeavinger and the present farm-town of Newton. It has a modern nave with a twelfth-century¹¹ south chapel covered with a later barrel vault; its choir, also barrel vaulted, is separated from the nave by a wall pierced by a chancel arch of only six feet span. The depressed pointed arch itself is made up apparently of stones from the former nave arcade, placed in their present position when the choir was vaulted, but its plain square responds have chamfered imposts which do not mitre round their east and west sides. The masonry of the jambs looks like eleventh-century work, possibly pre-conquest. North of the chancel arch are two carved stones, on opposite sides of the wall. The eastward facing stone is carved with a diaper pattern which might be Norman but also resembles pre-conquest diaper work in its crispness: the stone on the west side bears a carving of the adoration of the magi and deserves more careful examination than it has so far received if one may judge by printed accounts of it! The photograph (plate XXI) reproduced, which has been specially taken, is believed to be the first really adequate published representation of this interesting fragment. The important points to note are: the differentiation between the faces of the magi, only one of whom is bearded; the absence of crowns, these are the three wise men not the "three kings of Cologne";

¹⁰ "R.D." in *Newcastle Journal*, 9th Jan., 1934.

¹¹ The pointed head of its piscina is modern, the fenestella was no doubt cubical originally, as at Bewick and Alnham.

the absence, on the part so far cleared of plaster, of any indication of the star of Bethlehem; the horseshoe-shaped haloes; the short tunics of the magi and the shape of the cups in which they bear their gifts; the way in which the legs and feet of the Virgin and Child are indicated and their gestures of benediction. By comparing these points with similar points on other monuments it should be possible to arrive at a date—if the other monuments can be definitely dated! All we can safely say at present is that in some features this carving has connections with such reputed eighth-century¹² work as the altar of Ratchis and the parapet of the baptistery of Callistus at Cividale, and the well-known Franks's casket;¹³ and on the other hand, like the lid of the casket, it has affinities with certain twelfth-century carvings. It is certainly not earlier than the eighth century, it has nothing in common with St. Cuthbert's coffin and the Auckland cross, but it is almost equally certain that it is not later than the early twelfth century.

It is uncertain whether the panel is *in situ*, but unlikely owing to the existence of the other fragment behind it; the point could only be settled by stripping the wall of its thick coat of plaster. The published statement that the panel was brought from the old nave in 1860 is quite inaccurate; it was sketched in its present position by John Hodgson¹⁴ more than a century ago. In judging its workmanship it must be remembered that it would be intended to be finished with gesso, in which the finer points of modelling would be brought out, and then coloured.¹⁵

¹² G. T. Rivoira, *Lombardic Architecture*, I, 102.

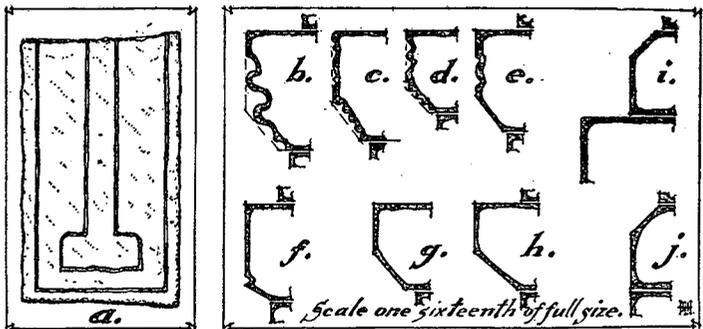
¹³ Baldwin Brown, *The Arts in Early England*, VI, part I.

¹⁴ Sketch in the possession of the N.C.H. Committee.

¹⁵ Compare the Herebericht monument at Monkwearmouth. C. C. Hodges, *op. cit.*, VII, 147.

III. CHILLINGHAM.

The oldest visible parts of Chillingham church are Norman in style and probably date from late in the eleventh or early in the twelfth century, but the north wall of the nave contains some large stones, rather irregularly arranged, which resemble the stones in the west gable of Bewick and seem to be re-used material from a pre-conquest church. The nave, like Bewick and Lilburn, is roughly a double square in plan and is set nearly due east and west. In the north-west buttress of the nave is a long stone resembling part of a cross-shaft, but similar long stones are found in similar buttresses at St. Andrew's church, Newcastle, and in the south aisle at Whittingham. Outside the west end lies a broken tombstone (fig. a)

*Comparative details*

- a. Broken slab at Chillingham. b-h. *Comparative details of impost stones.* b. Roman from Bremenium (Parker Brewis); c. and d. Simonburn and Bolam (C. C. Hodges); e. Whittingham (H. L. Hicks); f. eleventh-century Durham (R. W. Billings); g. Wareham (C. Lynam); h. Durham castle chapel (Perry and Henman). i. Typical Anglo-Roman plinth. j. Typical Norman plinth.

very rudely hewn and having a broad margin. It bears an incised tau which we know from a more perfect example at St. Andrew's, Newcastle, is really the base of a cross of the straight-lined type found in association with maltese

crosses and saltires on a number of monuments in the district. Hodges¹⁶ thought them "early and rare," but more information is needed on this subject.

IV. ILBERTON.

There are no remains of early masonry now visible at Ilderton, but the modern nave stands on the foundations of the ancient nave and its dimensions are worth noting, 18 ft. 9 in. by 49 ft., as they closely resemble those of Alnham and Whittingham. The responds of the thirteenth-century tower arch are plain, but do not look earlier than the arch. The axis of the church, like those of Kirknewton, Whittingham and Alnham, was approximately east north-east.

V. WEST LILBURN.

An illustrated account of the recently excavated remains of West Lilburn church will be found in *Arch. Ael.*⁴ X; its western gable seems to be of very early Norman work, and the saltire decoration on its chancel arch recalls the western entrance to Corbridge church tower. It may therefore be of interest to recall the history of Lilburn in the eleventh century. In the reign of Henry I, Lilburn was given by queen Matilda to Tynemouth priory; it had apparently been part of the lands of Arkle Moreal (this spelling is a compromise). Arkle, "a most valiant knight,"¹⁷ was keeper of Bamburgh castle and steward under earl Robert Mowbray, the last semi-independent earl of Northumberland. According to some accounts he was a "nephew" of Mowbray and great-nephew of Geoffrey bishop of Coutances, who according to some authorities also held the earldom,¹⁸ but it is unlikely that in that

¹⁶ *Op. cit.*, VII, 74, referring to a tombstone at Bolam.

¹⁷ Riley's *Annals of Roger de Hoveden*, 178.

¹⁸ Dugdale, *Baron*, I, 570, quoted in Stevenson's *Simeon of Durham*, 746n.

case he would have been given so English a name as Arkle.¹⁹

There is some evidence that certain townships in Northumberland were set aside for the king's support, and that a king such as Ceolwulph might give them to a monastery during his lifetime, but they would always be at the disposal of his successor.²⁰ Similarly it may be suggested that other lands were used for life by the king's steward or lieutenant, and that just as the earls succeeded to the kings' lands after 950, so their officers continued to hold Bewick and Lilburn. When Waltheof refounded Tynemouth²¹ he and his henchmen doubtless endowed it, as a cell of Durham, with lands attached to their official positions, and Robert Mowbray and his henchmen were quite entitled to regrant them and even to cut their connection with Durham and make Tynemouth a cell of St. Albans. Durham of course protested, but, equally of course, in vain. When William II abolished the earldom its endowments became personal possessions of the king, who gave lands and churches to whom he pleased; Henry I gave Lilburn to his queen, and she gave it, as above stated, to Tynemouth in perpetuity.²² The style of the remains at Lilburn points to the church having been built or rebuilt not later than the time of Arkle Moreal, and therefore before Mowbray's second and last rebellion. After Arkle was compelled to surrender Bamburgh in 1095 in order to save the eyes of his captive master,²³ he turned king's evidence, perhaps in order to benefit the earl by incriminating others, and his life and liberty were spared. The earl was condemned to imprisonment for life, and his private lands

¹⁹ *N.C.H.*, VIII, 248.

²⁰ This hypothesis conflicts with Simeon's reference to the lands as gifts, but Simeon wrote in the twelfth century and may have known nothing about the customs of the kingdom of Northumberland. Roger of Wendover insists almost too emphatically that Mowbray's grants were permanent.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 44.

²² *Ibid.*, 54.

²³ The incident seems to have attracted the attention of nearly all the chroniclers. See any of them under the year 1095.

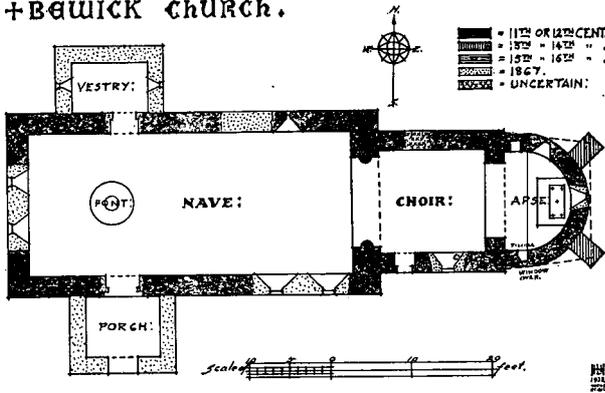
(clearly distinguished from lands of the earldom) with his young countess (life imprisonment being a ground for divorce) were given to another. Moreal "grew old in exile, poor and detested."²⁴

The nave of Lilburn averages about 15 ft. 6 in. by 32 ft. 9 in., and its axis is nearly due east and west.

VI. BEWICK.

Bewick with a nave 17 ft. 6 in. by 39 ft. 10 in., set nearly due east and west, is of slightly more advanced Norman architecture than Lilburn. Yet the carving of

+BEWICK CHURCH.



one of the capitals under its chancel arch is contemporary with the well-known capitals of the chapel built in Durham for bishop Walcher. The explanation may be that the

²⁴ Forester's *Ordericus Vitalis*, book VIII, chap. xxiii. Moreal had offended against the code of his age both by killing Malcolm Canmore, an anointed king, without another king being present to authorize the act, and by betraying his fellow conspirators. We may suspect that Malcolm's slave raids were not altogether unwelcome to the Norman kings as a means of weakening the unruly earldom, and there was also a feeling that the precise way in which Moreal had defeated Malcolm was "not cricket," though none of the chroniclers explain exactly why. It has been suspected that the king and his party were slain while peacefully returning from laying foundation stones at Durham and visiting William II at Gloucester, but this is "not proven."

Durham capitals, whose German²⁵ abaci are not in keeping with their decoration, were carved some time after erection, as happened in the crypt at Canterbury, or that the capitals had come from the episcopal palace burnt in 1069 and had been re-cut for Walcher's chapel. Our present interest is in the west gable, of which a detail (plate xx) is here reproduced. The upper part is modern, the part below the windows obviously contains much old stonework re-used, and it is in strong contrast to the regular Norman ashlar courses of the north and south walls, although these contain a few socketed kerb-stones from the same series as those in the gable. These kerb-stones were presumably the base of a choir screen in a pre-conquest church, unless they were brought from a Roman building on the line of the Devil's Causeway! The lower part of the gable is pre-Norman in style, and it will be noticed that the champfered Norman base of the south wall returns neatly at the corner and dies away on to the rough square base of the gable. That the lower centre part of the gable may be pre-conquest work *in situ*, is indicated by two vertical cracks where the north and south walls have settled owing to their foundations being less consolidated. On the other hand the orientation is either eleventh century or earliest Anglian, and the masonry seems too large to be very early; it resembles that of the second zone of Escombe. Part of the shaft of a plain early cross with triple-beaded angles is preserved in the church porch.

VII. EGLINGHAM.

The chancel arch of Eglingham church has been called Saxon,²⁶ and so it may have been until 1837, when it was rebuilt in its present form from designs by John Green. The fact that it was rebuilt suggests that it had been narrow, like Kirknewton and Alwinton, and the present

²⁵ Compare the crypt of Speyers cathedral. Rivoira, *op. cit.*, II, 317.

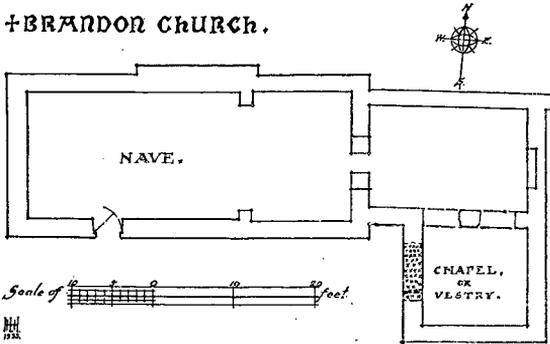
²⁶ F. R. Wilson, *op. cit.*, 82.

arch has plain chamfered imposts without returns; but the thin flat voussoirs of the arch resemble those of the very late arch of the south chapel at Alnham. So it may have been reconstructed once before. Built into the seventeenth century south wall of the choir, on the inside, a little east of the chancel arch respond, is a single block of stone with diamond broaching. This is certainly pre-conquest, if not Roman, and recalls the single similar stone of the choir at Alwinton and another inside the north wall of the tower of Ponteland church. In plan the chancel arch would suit an axis running north of east, but not by many degrees.

Eglingham was one of the *vills* granted to Lindisfarne priory by Ceolwulph when he became a monk,²⁷ but, as already stated, the grant may have been for his lifetime only.

VIII. BRANDON.

Points of interest in the plan of Brandon church, now almost level with the ground, are the two small responds on the north and south sides of the nave, recalling the



ends of the choir screen of the Saxon church at Brixworth, and the very narrow central opening below the threshold of the chancel arch. According to a statement in *Proceed-*

²⁷ Stevenson's *Simeon of Durham*, 649.

ings (3rd series, I, 132) a step was found here when the church was excavated, and if so, the inner opening may have been the sanctuary arch of a Celtic chapel, the sole survivor of its period in Northumberland. If there was no step above and if the inner opening is not below floor level, we have here the same terrace wall with a narrow central passage found also at Chillingham and formerly at Alwinton. The point is of so much importance that it would be worth while to carry out further excavations with a view to settling it. The nave, including the part east of the two responds, is 16 ft. by 40 ft., and oriented like Eglingham a few degrees north of east.

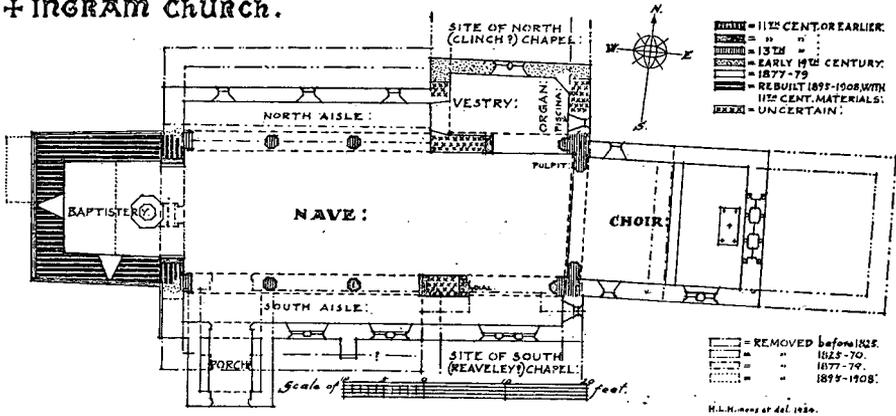
IX. INGRAM.

Although the greater part of Ingram church dates from the nineteenth century it still retains its mediaeval arcades together with archways at each end of the nave. The chancel arch is thirteenth-century work, but the western arch opening into the tower is earlier and may be pre-conquest. The tower itself has been usually described as late twelfth century or early thirteenth century on the strength of a drawing in Wilson's *Churches of Lindisfarne*, which shows a double champfered base. The existing base, however, is of a Roman or Anglian section, resembling that of the fort wall of Carrawburgh and the chancel of Wareham church, Dorset (fig. i, p. 168). It is possible that the base was altered when the tower was rebuilt stone by stone in the last decade of last century,²⁸ but the stones look ancient and, on grounds of economy, if for no other reason, an alteration is improbable. This base and the narrow windows which light the lower part of the tower, and which have no external champfers, make it almost certain that the tower was not built later than 1100, though its thick walls (3 ft. 6 in.) and regular courses of ashlar make it Norman rather than Anglian, and it

²⁸ *B.N.C. Hist.*, XX, 279.

must be remembered that Norman methods in architecture did not wait till 1066 to enter England. Tosti earl of Northumberland was a brother-in-law of William the Conqueror, and even before his time Norman ideas had been introduced by queen Emma, the mother of Edward the Confessor whose new church at Westminster was planned to be larger than any church then extant in Normandy.²⁹

† INGRAM CHURCH.



The eleventh-century tower had been built against and upon the gable, 2 ft. 9 in. thick, of a pre-existing church whose plan may well be represented by the existing nave which averages 15 ft. by 47 ft. 6 in. Presumably the tower arch was pierced when the tower was built, or later, though it is just possible that the tower was built within the walls of an earlier and larger western adjunct. The arch is of two flush orders of voussoirs,³⁰ and springs from a six-inch chamfered impost on plain responds. It has been much depressed by the weight of the tower; and the

²⁹ *Archæologia*, LXXXIII, 236.

³⁰ Arches with two flush orders are rare in mediæval work, but of various dates. One of the earliest post-Roman examples is over the west portal of the cathedral at Aix-la-Chapelle, c. 800; others are over the postern of Newcastle castle, the west entrance of Corbridge church, and the chancel arch at Longframlington.

responds, lacking the abutment of aisle walls, were thrust badly off the plumb. Indeed it is difficult to see how the arch stood at all before aisles were added to the nave, especially as the tower was not bonded to the gable. The upper part of the tower was rebuilt in the reign of Edward I. In planning the tower is of the Ovingham type,³¹ but with its long axis (internally) from east to west as at Ponteland.

It has been suggested that the heavy cavetto-moulded imposts of the nave arcade responds are pre-conquest material re-used, and it is of course possible that in the eleventh century the church already had aisles, or at any rate side chapels with arched openings to the nave. The church is oriented to east-north-east.

X. LONGHOUGHTON.

The nave of Longhoughton church has an early arch at each end, and these have sometimes been called pre-conquest.³² While that may be correct as a date, the style of the chancel arch³³ at least is definitely Norman, with its heavy Durham impost, mitred and returned, and its irregularly arranged voussoirs. It is clearly contemporary with Corsenside in Redesdale and not with Kirknewton or, to take better defined examples, Over

³¹ Early towers north of the Tees may be divided into two principal types distinguished as follows: *Corbridge type*, external dimensions of tower less than internal width of nave, longest axis east to west, walls not more than 2 ft. 7 in. thick, lowest storey entered from church and having originally no external openings except a small window high up on the west side, first floor may have a large bell-window or opening on its west side. *Ovingham type*, external dimensions of tower equal to or greater than internal width of nave, walls not less than 2 ft. 7 in. thick and may be as much as 4 ft. (Ponteland, where very little of the oldest period survives), longest axis usually north to south, lowest storey entered from church and having windows on west and south sides, ringers' chamber has always an important window on its south side, belfry has on each side a two-light window under a tympanum, and window heads may be of the "eyebrow arch" form, i.e. with intrados and extrados eccentric.

³² F. R. Wilson, *op. cit.*, 140.

³³ Illustrated in Methuen's *Little Guide to Northumberland*.

Denton in Cumberland or Restennet in Angus. The nave measures 16 ft. by 33 ft. internally (F. R. Wilson's measurements).

XI. BOLTON.

The modern church of Bolton stands approximately on the foundations of its predecessor and has a plain chancel arch with chamfered impostes and possibly of eleventh-century date. The nave is 19 ft. by 44 ft. (F. R. Wilson's measurements) and its axis runs slightly north of east.

XII. WHITTINGHAM.

From the days of St. Cuthbert to those of the Cheviot Legion the parish of Whittingham has been recognized as a convenient centre for gatherings of the people of Bernicia. It is almost certain that here Cuthbert was elected bishop of Hexham,³⁴ and that at this Whittingham Cuthred or Cnut was elected king of Northumberland,³⁵ while not far off was Oswy's Dune,³⁶ where a gold bangle was placed on the new king's arm and local chieftains swore fealty to him over the errant coffin of St. Cuthbert. Like its neighbours Eglington and Edlington, Whittingham was crown land, and passed from the kings to the earls of Northumberland; Robert Mowbray is said to have given its church to Tynemouth, and Henry I gave it to Carlisle after the earldom was abolished.

In spite of the destruction wrought in 1840 by the rev. Mr. Goodenough and his architect the late John Green³⁷ of Newcastle, there are still considerable remains of a pre-conquest church at Whittingham. Some large quoins, in courses about 20 in. high, remain at the

³⁴ Bede, *Eccles. Hist.*, chap. xxviii.

³⁵ Surtees Soc., LI, 143.

³⁶ Perhaps "Athelstan's Mount" near Roddam, or a spot on Dunmoor near the Cunion Crags. Doubtless there was a "king's stone," like that of Scone, at the place.

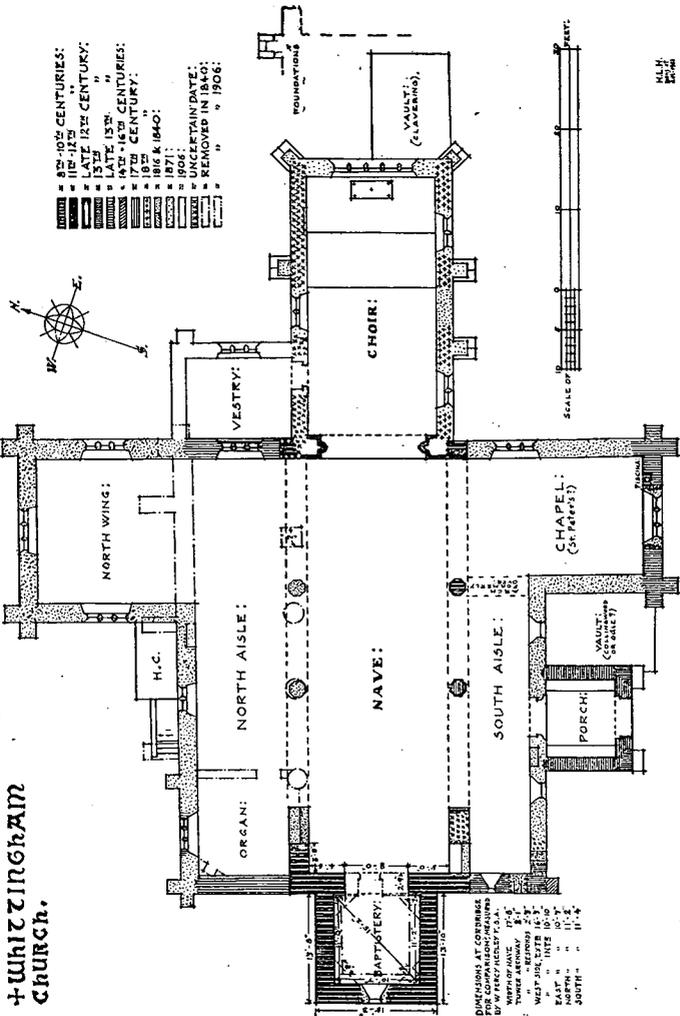
³⁷ Murray's *Handbook to Northumberland* (1873), 307.

south-east corner of the nave: at the north-east corner the quoins have been removed, but there is a straight joint representing the wall face. The nave seems to have been 51 ft. 8 in. long, 17 ft. 6 in. wide at the west end, and about 9 in. wider at the east, with walls about 2 ft. 6 in. thick. The north-west and south-west corners of the nave remain, and 3 ft. 8 in. of the north wall. This forms the respond of an arch, but it is not now possible to say whether this stood alone as the entrance to a single chapel as at Bradford-on-Avon or belonged to a series of arches for a row of chapels as at Jarrow, or an aisle as at Brixworth. The workmanship is inferior, recalling the tower arch at Warden, and the archway seems to be an insertion in the wall. It should be noted that the external corners of the nave have a $2\frac{1}{2}$ in. chamfered base, and that for a height of 10 ft. above the base at the north corner, and 6 ft. above that at the south, the quoins differ from those above them and from those at the east end of the church. These lower quoins are very regular, measuring 14 in. to 16 in. in height, 11 in. to 12 in. in depth, and 26 in. to 33 in. in length. The upper quoins are larger but less regular (plate xx).

The tower was, and the lower part of it still is, the most interesting part of the church and contains some of the oldest post-Roman masonry extant north of Corbridge. The tower measures 15 ft. 3 in. from north to south externally, and 10 ft. 7 in. internally at its west side; 13 ft. 8 in. in projection from the nave wall on the north side and 13 ft. 10 in. on the south; internally the north wall measures 11 ft. and the south 2 in. more³⁸ (see plan). In the east side of the tower is a great archway with a width of 8 ft. between its jambs or responds and a height

³⁸ The tower is not only of the Corbridge type, but its actual dimensions closely follow that model, as may be seen by the figures on the plan. The tower arch at Corbridge is said to have been made of 8 ft. 2 in. span to suit a set of Roman arch stones brought from Corstopitum; 8 ft. 2 in. is not a common dimension for a Roman arch in Northumberland, except in the "Type 2" milecastles which have gateways eight feet wide (information supplied by Mr. Parker Brewis).

+Whittringham Church.



DIMENSIONS AT CORNERS
FOR COMPARISON—MEASURED
BY W. BRAY-FIELD, F.S.A.
IN 1871.
TOWER ANCHORAGE 8' 11"
CHANCEL 15' 11"
NAVE 10' 0"
NORTH 11' 2"
SOUTH 11' 4"

PLAN
1871

of fully 17 ft. The responds (*Arch. Ael.*⁴ V, pl. xxviii) are built up of stone slabs set on edge and bonded after the Escombe fashion, and have imposts ornamented with a sunk beaded enrichment (fig. d). The responds are 2 in. thicker than the wall and arch above them, and the spring of the semi-circular arch is set back behind the face of each respond. The centre part of the arch dates from 1906, when it was re-opened, but the few ancient stones remaining show that the voussoirs were less massive than those of Corbridge. On the other hand, they had, according to Hodges,³⁹ an outer flush order or relieving arch above them with voussoirs 16 in. deep. If this exists it is now concealed by plaster on the nave side. The responds stand on chamfered plinths. The "moulded foot" referred to by Baldwin Brown is really a couple of hot-water pipes misunderstood from a photograph.

Externally the tower has a 2½ in. chamfered plinth,⁴⁰ similar to that of the west gable; this has the flat ledge characteristic of Roman and pre-Romanesque plinths (fig. f), and the tower above it does not exactly fit the plan below it; above the plinth one side of the tower is a few inches narrower than below. For about 6 ft. above this base the tower has regular quoins, similar to those of the gable corners above described, and ashlar courses two to the quoin and rather roughly dressed on their beds, in fact almost indistinguishable from Roman work. For a further 6 ft. of height the ashlar is similar but slightly more regular; the quoins, on the other hand, begin to be of a crude "long and short" form. That is to say, a block of stone is set on end and another laid horizontally like an ordinary quoin on top of it, but these horizontal blocks only tail in one direction into the wall and not in both

³⁹ *The Reliquary*, VII, 77. The description as "two rings of voussoirs" reads as if there were two orders, but Mr. Hodges may have referred to the fact that the arch blocks are not through stones, and those on the east side are about sixteen inches deep, while those on the west side are smaller.

⁴⁰ The existence of this base has been repeatedly denied, but *it does exist*.

directions as in the real "Saxon" long and short work. At a height of about 12 ft. from the ground a course of ashlar forming a sort of rude string course runs right round the tower and across the nave gable, and above this there is a distinct change in the character of the walling, larger stones being used, but with more irregularity. The quoins also become more of the normal character of long and short work, though rather irregular in form. The lower storey of the tower was lit by a rectangular opening 2 ft. high and 16 in. wide, set immediately above the string course already referred to. About 4 ft. above this window⁴¹ was the sill of the large semicircular-headed, through-arched opening found on the west front of some Anglian towers, for example Monkwearmouth. Its head was formed out of two stones, or of one stone which had become broken, its north jamb of a single upstart, and its south jamb of one upright block and one rybat. This opening, like the lower one, was destroyed in 1839-40. At a height of about 30 ft. above the base there was a further change in the character of the quoins, which became much more irregular, and at a height of 40 ft. were the belfry window-sills. The belfry windows on the north and south sides were plain arched openings, but on the east and west sides they were of two lights, the two semicircular heads in each case cut out of a single stone and the lights divided by a baluster with cap and base, square plinth and square impost block. If Rickman's drawing is accurate, it resembled one of the Roman balusters found at Housesteads rather than the Barton-on-Humber type of Saxon baluster. Above the heads of these windows there were three courses of later ashlar, and above that a plain parapet with weathered string course and coping. The total height from the base course to the top of the parapet seems to have been about 51 ft.

⁴¹ The description of parts now missing is taken from a lithograph of a geometrical drawing of the tower by Rickman and from his smaller view, reproduced on p. 186.

The tower is not exactly in the centre of the west gable, but seems to have been set off by the centre of the slightly wider east gable.

The long axis of Whittingham church runs to east-north-east.

The parts of Whittingham church above described seem to indicate the existence of a very early stone church represented by the lower part of the west end; the lengthening of this church⁴² and later the heightening of its western adjunct by the addition of the storey with the western opening; then a further heightening of the tower and, probably last of all, the insertion of the arch on the north side of the nave. The present tower archway seems to date from the second period of building, the upper part of its responds has been badly damaged by fire, and the irregular stones of the arch may have been inserted as part of a restoration after the fire, which may have destroyed a more massive set of voussoirs. There are documentary references to Whittingham in the seventh century, early in the eighth century, in the middle and at the end of the ninth century, and in the eleventh century. Is it possible that these five dates correspond with the five kinds of masonry above noted?

Lying in the churchyard is part of the shaft of an early cross with cable mouldings at the angles, but with no other ornaments to fix its date.

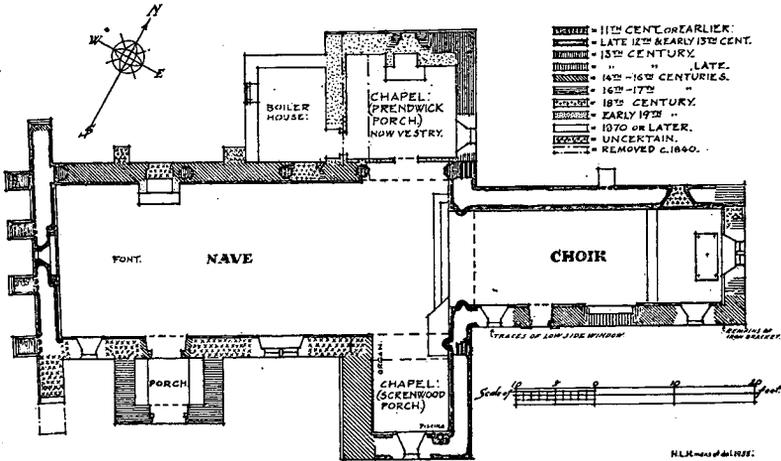
XIII. ALNHAM.

It seems to be impossible to find out anything about the pre-conquest history of Alnham, but we may guess that it was a place of importance from its geographical position at the Scottish entrance to Whittingham Vale and from the fact that its church was nearly as large as

⁴² The quoins at the east end of the church differ from the lowest quoins of the west front in dimensions, and from the upper western quoins in character.

that of Whittingham. The only early masonry remaining is at the north-east and south-east corners of the nave; here the big Anglian quoin stones, nearly 2 ft. high, can be proved to be early by the fact that the twelfth-century east wall of the south chapel abuts against them, also the gable of which they formed part overhung eastwards before the present choir was built, and its reconstructed and straightened upper part has a weather-table for the choir's

+ ALRHAM CHURCH.



former high-pitched roof. There may have been a tower at the west end, but the west gable was rebuilt late in the twelfth century: its foundations may have given way, the new gable in turn had to be heavily buttressed at a later date, and its upper part was again rebuilt in the seventeenth century.

The nave measures 19 ft. 3 in. by 49 ft. 6 in., and its axis runs rather north of east-north-east.

XIV. ALWINTON.

The modern church at Alwinton has an ancient choir built apparently in the early Norman period and perhaps

enlarged at later dates. Until 1850 it was separated from the nave by a plain arch on chamfered imposts,⁴³ mitred at the corners. As the choir floor was raised on a vault above the nave floor level, the threshold of the archway formed a terrace with a narrow flight of eleven steps in the middle of it, a similar plan to that at Chillingham, and perhaps, like Chillingham, a later alteration. The church is oriented to east-north-east. One stone at the south-east corner of the choir has diamond broaching similar to that on the stone at Eglington already referred to.

XV. HEPPLÉ.

The ruins of the old church on the Kirk Hill at West Hepple⁴⁴ cannot be dated without excavation, but that the building was very early, if not pre-conquest, is indicated by its font, now preserved in the new church in Hepple village. This font is certainly the oldest in Northumberland, and it is most unfortunate that it is not in better condition.⁴⁵ The bowl, which alone has survived, is decorated with arched niches containing figures with disproportionately large heads.⁴⁶ The arches, which have concentric extrados and intrados,⁴⁷ rest on attached columns in low relief with capitals, which look as if they may have been of Saxon trapezoidal outline.

⁴³ Hodgson, sketch books.

⁴⁴ Some particulars are preserved in the rev. John Hodgson's notebooks belonging to the society.

⁴⁵ It is tantalizing to know that in 1760 when the church was destroyed to provide materials for farm buildings, "both font and pedestal were in good preservation" (Mackenzie, *Northumberland*, II, 75).

⁴⁶ For an illustration see *Proceedings*, 2nd ser., IX, 246.

⁴⁷ This matter of outline in arched lintels to openings deserves attention as a means of dating certain pre-conquest churches. An arch cut out of one stone and having its intrados and extrados concentric, as in Roman work and some Anglian buildings, is very apt to break in the centre, and such breakage is still more likely if the arched opening is cut out of a square block of stone and has no more height above the opening than width on each side of it. To avoid this risk masons got into the way of cutting arched lintels out of high blocks of stone, as at Escombe, so that the height above the opening was much more than the

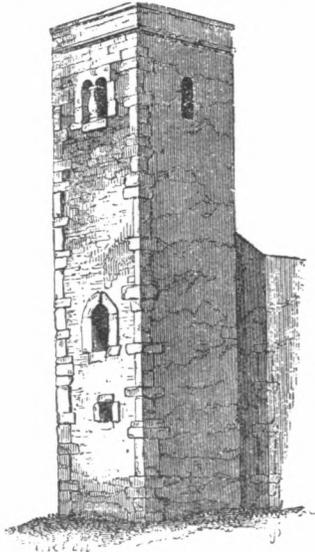
TYPES OF PLAN.

Examination of the plans of the above churches reveals two clearly marked types of plan in the district. The first type has a nave about three times as long as it is wide, with probably its eastern third screened off to form a choir. The orientation of this type is invariably within a few degrees of east-north-east. Secondly, a plan where the nave is only twice as long as it is broad, and is separated by a chancel arch from a square choir. In this type the orientation is generally east and west, or with the east end pointing slightly north or south of east. The first type contains all the examples which have pre-Norman work remaining *in situ*; the second type contains all the examples which have early Norman work *in situ* and pre-Norman stones re-used as building material. It should be noted that in the Tyne valley and in county Durham are certain churches of the three square plan whose orientation is nearly east and west. These, so far as I know, are all associated with the lives of Benedict Biscop and Wilfrid. The inference would appear to be that the east-north-east orientation is a British tradition, and that the more directly east and west line was favoured by successive reformers under Roman influence. Thus, the orientation approved

width on each side of it. They also cut away the corners of the outside of such a stone, producing the irregular form sometimes found, and from that it was only a step to the eyebrow arch or arch lintel with a curved extrados not concentric with the intrados, of which an extreme example is given in *Proceedings*³ I, p. 78, from Ulgham church. This eyebrow arch is represented on the lid of Franks's casket, and on the Benedictional of Æthelwold and the B.M. MS. Arundel 155, fo. 133 (H. W. C. Davis, *Mediaeval England*, 489 and 346). It is also perhaps indicated on certain coins of King Edward the elder, and no doubt by careful examination and comparison of manuscripts and coins it would be possible to arrive at some idea of its dating. It is so obviously a craftsman's invention rather than a draughtsman's that its existence in architecture must have preceded its appearance in the other arts. A graceful kind of eyebrow arch is found as a vault rib in early crypts, e.g. those at Durham castle and Speyers above referred to. Its purpose in these cases is to bring both ribs and groins compactly on to the abacus of a supporting pillar. See also Wharram le Street, Yorks, tower (*Archæologia*, LXXIII, pl. vi) for another kind of eccentric arch.

by Biscop and Wilfrid was probably also that of Dunstan and of the eleventh-century reformers such as Turgot. Dunstan is known to have held strong views on the subject of orientation, and on one occasion refused to consecrate a church until its alignment had been altered. Another explanation of the difference would be that the east-north-east churches were set off by a magnetic needle without allowance for its variation from true north, while the others were set by a line obtained by observation of sunrise and sunset.

I have to acknowledge my indebtedness to the following members of the society and others for help and valuable suggestions: the rev. R. F. Allgood, the rev. Gordon Baynham, Mr. C. H. Hunter Blair, Mr. P. Hunter Blair, Mr. Parker Brewis, Miss M. H. Dodds, the rev. C. H. Eckersley, Mr. W. P. Hedley, the rev. M. M. Piddocke, and the rev. T. Romans. I have also to thank Mr. W. P. Hedley for obtaining exact particulars of Corbridge church tower for comparison with Whittingham, and Mr. J. C. Neilan for photographing the carved stone at Kirk Newton.



Whittingham church tower, from Rickman's drawing.



FIG. 2. WEST END OF WHITTINGHAM CHURCH.



FIG. 1. WEST GABLE, BEWICK CHURCH.



STONE CARVING IN KIRKNEWTON CHURCH

