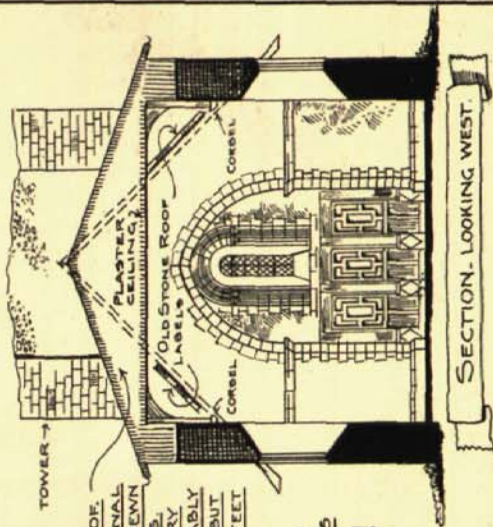
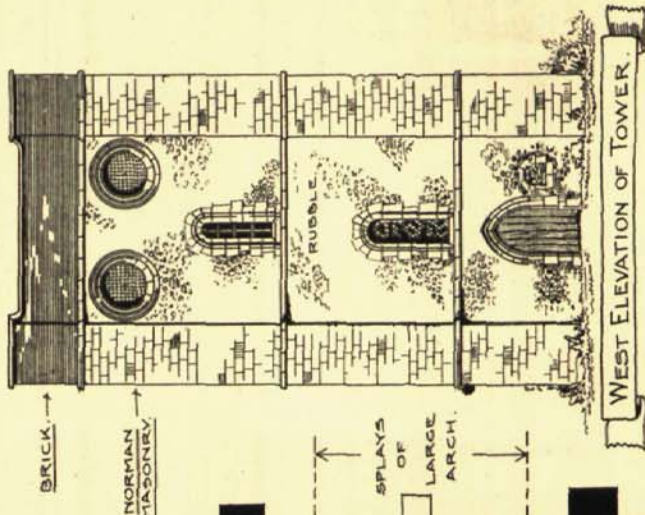
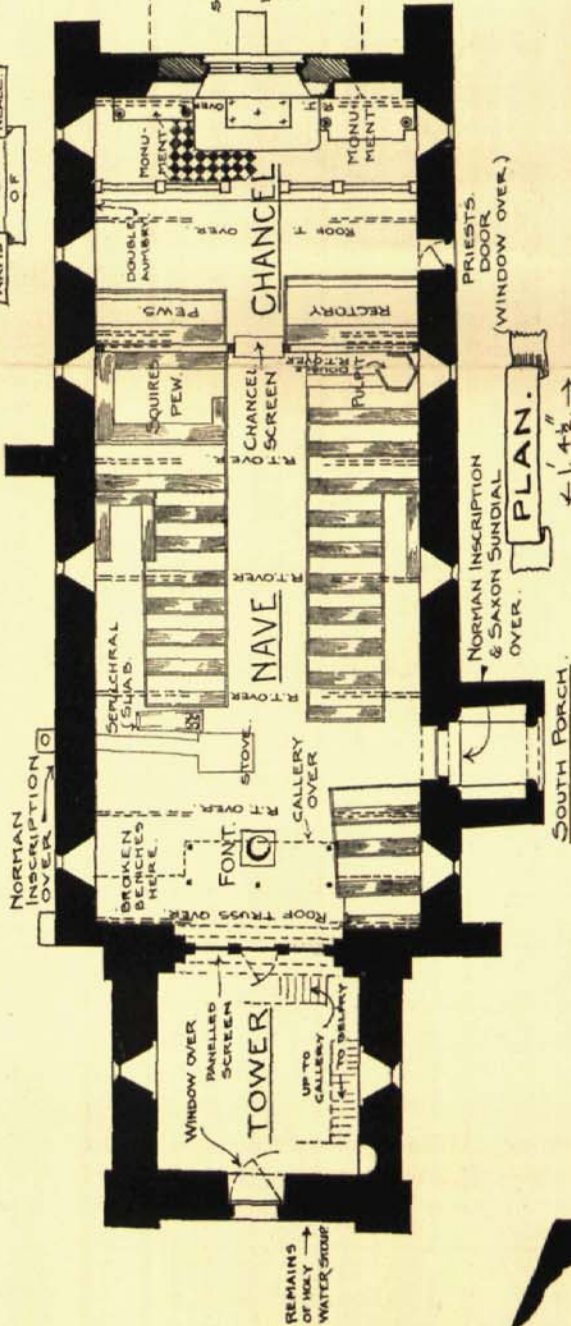
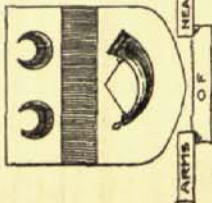


WARNFORD CHURCH HANTS.

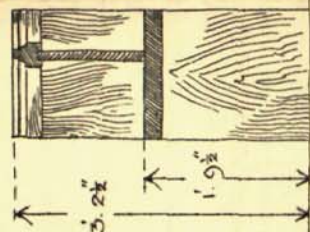
10 5 0 10 20 30 40 50 FEET.

SCALE FOR PLAN, ELEVATION AND SECTION.



MODERN ROOF. SLOPE OF ORIGINAL NORMAN ROOF SHOWN BY DOTTED LINES. THE 13TH CENTURY ROOF WAS PROBABLY VERY SIMILAR BUT RAISED 3 OR 4 FEET HIGHER.

PORTION OF WALL RAISED WHEN PRESENT WINDOWS WERE FORMED SHOWN THUS —



INSIDE JAMB OF WINDOW OVER WEST DOOR SHEWING POINTED BOWTELL.

SCALE OF INCHES. 0 3 6 9 12

N.C. 31.11.18.19.14. MEND & DELT 1904.

SOME NOTES ON WARNFORD CHURCH.

By N. C. H. NISBETT, A.R.I.B.A.

Having recently had an opportunity of taking measurements and other notes at Warnford, it occurred to the writer that a plan of this very interesting church, together with some remarks suggested by an examination of the building might prove a suitable contribution to the Proceedings of the Society.

The present building is remarkable from the fact that although not of earlier date than the twelfth century, there are built into the walls two inscriptions, apparently of the same age as the church, which record the rebuilding of the edifice by Adam de Port, as the successor of a building founded by Wilfrid.

It was hoped that accurate copies of these inscriptions might have been included among the drawings to illustrate this paper but, as it is probable that there will be greater facilities for preparing these later, it is proposed to postpone further reference to them until this has been done.

Above the tablet bearing the inscription in the south porch, is a circular sundial built into the wall. From the manner in which the divisions upon it are arranged it is generally regarded as of Saxon workmanship. In this connection it should be mentioned that a very similar sundial is still to be seen in the south wall of the undoubtedly Saxon church at Corhampton, about three miles south of Warnford, and in the same valley of the Meon river. Tradition has also linked the name of Wilfrid with the *frith stool*, still to be seen at Corhampton.

The connection of the Northumbrian prelate with these two Hampshire churches is not improbable, in fact it is in full agreement with the account of Wilfrid's movements as chronicled in Bede's History.

We are there told that in the year 678 there was a dissension between King Egfrid of Northumbria and Bishop Wilfrid, who was driven from his see, and two other bishops substituted in his stead. Being expelled from his bishopric he went to Rome and on his return to Britain visited the province of the South Saxons, where Ethelwalch reigned. He was a godson of Wulfere, King of Mercia, a friend of Wilfrid's, and had received from his royal sponsor the gift of the two provinces of Meonwara and Isle of Wight, which had apparently been taken from Wessex.

The first named is evidently that part of Hampshire still known as the Meon Valley, and the fact that the inhabitants of both the "provinces" named were of Jutish origin may perhaps explain why they were coupled together. At any rate both were easily accessible from the western part of the South Saxon realm, where Wilfrid appears to have established himself, first at Bosanham (the modern Bosham) and later at Selsey, both near Chichester.

The present church at Bosham (visited by the Society in July, 1903), retains several Saxon features, and some remains of the Roman building upon the site of which it stands, but it was probably erected subsequent to the period of Wilfrid's sojourn here, as its fine western tower is a late feature which has led Professor Baldwin Brown to consider some time after the year 1000 to be the approximate date of its erection.

As the plan at Bosham evidently consisted of western tower, nave and chancel, and the existing church at Warnford indicates a similar plan, it appears to suggest that when the latter was rebuilt in the twelfth century, the original plan may have been retained.

Although the Norman tower at Warnford now has a western door, this is clearly an insertion, probably late in the thirteenth century, as the lower part of the Norman

window above it has been blocked up and the original string-course below it cut off in order to permit of the construction of the arch over the door. The tower at Bosham still has no external doorway and the lowest windows are of Norman date, and at some height from the ground, so that in Saxon times there were probably no openings nearer to the ground than about twenty feet. This seems to suggest that it might have been used as a place of refuge, and its situation, within a stone's throw of the old quay at which sea-going vessels still discharge their cargoes, strengthens this supposition.

At Warnford the tower has Norman buttresses, or more correctly angle piers, built with carefully squared and coursed stone from the Isle of Wight, while the intermediate walling is of rubble formed with the local flint, and probably some proportion of hard chalk.

Internally the tower communicates with the nave by means of a fine pointed arch of Norman Transitional date. It is very plain and has merely a chamfered impost moulding, but it will be seen from the drawings that it is of ample width and height. The external openings are arranged in three storeys and appear to be all of Norman date, except those on the east side where the wall has been rebuilt in brickwork.

The west window of the lower tier, is enriched internally by angle shafts in the recessed jambs, and it will be noticed on the drawing that one pair of these is of the peculiar pointed section which characterizes some of the Transitional work of the end of the twelfth century. The large circular openings of the highest tier are not very common in small country churches, but are to be met with in the Norman central tower at East Meon, within a few miles of Warnford. Upon the eastern face of the tower and visible from the nave, are portions of the stone "label," or weather course which indicates the position of the original roof gable. These apparently insignificant features become of great interest when we proceed to examine the nave.

Entering by the South Porch we pass under the tablet which tells of the rebuilding of Wilfrid's church by Adam de Port. The doorway itself evidently belongs to the end of the twelfth century, and may well be the actual door of the church rebuilt by this Norman baron, but on looking round inside the building no windows or other features of that period can be seen. The present windows in the north and south walls are "lancets," dating probably from the early part of the thirteenth century. It seems therefore that another rebuilding must have taken place and that only the lower part of the walls were retained. It is in connection with this subject that the lines of the original roof upon the face of the tower give some valuable assistance, for if these are extended to reach the outside of the present walls, it is found that the roof to which they belonged would cut off the tops of the existing windows, while the outside eaves would be considerably below them (as may be seen by reference to the Section).

Were it not for this it might be supposed that the work commenced in the latter part of the twelfth century was not completed and that the windows owe their later style to the fact that the upper parts of the walls were finished only in the following century. The existence of the old roof "label" contradicts this theory.

It may be well here to consider the possible date of the work done by Adam de Port. This baron was the great grandson of Hugh de Port, the principal Hampshire landowner in the time of William the Conqueror. We know that he confirmed grants made by his father, John de Port, to the Priory at Sherborne, in the north of the county, but in the year 1172 he was outlawed for an attempt upon the life of Henry II. He then retired to Scotland where he was received by William the Lion, and was present when that King was captured at Alnwick, two years later, but escaped to Scotland. It appears to be uncertain whether he regained possession of his Hampshire property before his death in 1213, or whether he remained an exile in Scotland. The property however was not alienated from the family as we find his son William in possession of it. It was this William

who first assumed the name of St. John, by which the family was so well known in later times.

The subject of the roof cannot be entirely dismissed without remarking that the present roof, although probably constructed with many of the old timbers, does not represent the appearance which the church had in the thirteenth or fourteenth centuries. It is most likely that when the walls were raised and the present windows inserted, a roof very similar in shape to the Norman one was formed at a rather higher level. The existing stone corbels in the walls probably belong to this period. This however became decayed, and, about the sixteenth or seventeenth century the rotten ends of the rafters were cut off and the present roof constructed. It seems evident that the walls were again raised slightly, most likely in order to obtain sufficient height for the plaster ceiling to be above the top of the east window, which was managed in a somewhat clumsy fashion. This roof was of flat pitch and covered with lead, but this, most unfortunately, was removed at the beginning of the nineteenth century and slates substituted, and as the slope is quite insufficient for such a covering the weather has not been at all effectually kept out of the church.

The positions of the present roof trusses are shewn upon the plan and under each is a pair of the thirteenth century corbels.

It will be seen that above the chancel screen a double roof truss is placed, and as there are original corbels under each portion, it seems to suggest that this arrangement was due to a desire to accentuate the division of the roof between the nave and chancel, and this of course implies that at the time this was done there was no chancel extending beyond the present building.

The existence of the Priest's door in its present position, where it is obviously contemporary with the lancet window above it, also seems to support the same arrangement.

Nothing can be definitely determined until excavations have been made, and remains of old foundations traced, but

an examination of the east wall presents some features which would not be irreconcilable with the existence of a chancel arch in the position of the present east window.

Should this latter supposition prove to be correct, we must then admit that the stone corbels are not now in their original positions, since the regular distances at which they are placed will not allow of the theory that an additional pair was added subsequently, when it was required to use the east end of the nave as the chancel.

The east wall now claims attention. The present window has tracery which indicates a date at least as late as the middle of the fourteenth century, and, as it is placed within the "splays" of an arch, which would require a window about twice the size of the present one to fit it, there appears to be some ground for doubting whether this window is in its original position.

It may be asked, is not the large arch the remains of the chancel arch itself into which the present window, brought perhaps from the old chancel, has been moved, when the chancel was pulled down or had become ruined? The answer appears to be, that although the position may be that of a chancel arch the present "splays" seem more likely to have belonged to a larger window, as portions of the inner or "rear-arch" which was usually constructed over the internal window openings can still be seen near the top of the splays. It is still possible, however, that the chancel having become ruined, the chancel arch was removed and a large east window inserted. This would imply that the roof of the chancel had disappeared and the walls become ruined, but it might be possible for the original east window to have remained fairly intact in the end wall, and to have been subsequently removed and re-used in its present position. This however must be regarded as conjecture only.

It is quite clear that the present arrangement existed early in the seventeenth century, as the lower part of the splay of the larger arch was filled up to a sufficient height to

allow of the two monuments of the Neale family being erected against the flat wall thus formed.

Two small heraldic escutcheons in the glass of the east window bear the arms of the Neale family, and are the only coloured glass in the church.

The monuments are worthy of more detailed attention than can be given in this paper. They are of alabaster in the style of Classic Renaissance which was very evident in such memorials in the reigns of Queen Elizabeth and her successor. The smaller one, dated 1610, stands upon the north side and consists simply of a base upon which stand two detached Corinthian columns supporting the cornice. Above the latter are placed several ornaments very similar to those upon the monument of "Good Queen Bess," in Westminster Abbey. These were decorated with the armorial bearings of the Neale family, but are now in a somewhat dilapidated state. The larger tomb is on the south side and has an arch deeply recessed into the wall, under a flat alabaster canopy which appears to have lacked sufficient support as originally constructed, as the addition of iron straps, &c., has not been enough to keep the canopy from cracking in several places.

Three life size effigies of the founder and two wives are in good preservation, as are also the smaller figures representing their children.

This monument is said to be very similar to that erected in Wickham church, to the memory of William Uvedale, who died in 1615, but the writer has had no opportunity of comparing them in detail.

Two helmets, now preserved in the church were probably displayed above some of the tombs in the church, but although they appear to date from the sixteenth or seventeenth centuries the writer has no evidence that they were connected with the family of Neale.

It is different when the existing bells are examined, since two of them, dated 1635, have upon them small shields bearing the arms of Neale.

The following list of the bells with copies of the "legends" and dates are of some interest:—

	Aprox. Weight.	
Tenor, 12 cwt.		PRAYSE THE LORD. I.W. 1603.
No. 5. 9 "		PRAYSE THE LORD. I.W. 1600.
" 4. 7 "		PRAYSE GOD. I.W. 1598.
" 3. 6 "		THO: CULLE QUI OBT 4 MAII 1599. I.W.
" 2. 4½ "		FEARE GOD. I.D. 1635.
Treble 3½ "		LOVE GOD. I.D. 1635.

Both the treble and 2nd have upon the body of the bell small shields bearing the arms of Neale, which from the remains of colour upon the tombs appear to be Argent: a fesse Gules, between two crescents in chief and a bugle horn in base of the second. The initials I.D. and I.W. may refer to the bell founder. The tenor and 3rd bell are badly cracked. The character of the legends savours somewhat of Puritan selection, and as the family of Neale eventually settled in America, it is of interest to know the mottoes on the bells given by them to their parish church.

After this digression we must return to the east end of the church where there remain still a few items to claim attention. On the north side is a double aumbry, or pair of lockers, and on the same side inside the communion rails is also an oak altar table, which is apparently of seventeenth century date. There is no piscina visible, but possibly this may have been hidden or destroyed when the monuments were erected, or, if a chancel existed eastward of the present building there may never have been one in the existing part of the church.

There are remains of three seats which appear to have been stalls affixed either to the wall or to a chancel screen. The existing screen consists of a lower portion formed of oak panelling about five feet high, and of Jacobean workmanship. This is surmounted by rather crude turned oak balusters supporting a cornice, the frieze of which has some low relief carving upon it, but it is very inferior to that on the lower

portion. The cornice has been somewhat hardly used, as deal mouldings of the Georgian period have been added and parts have been painted, while to many of the balusters large hat pegs with brass roses have been fixed. It is evident that the cornice was at one time surmounted with small obelisks and other features, but these have all disappeared with the exception of the base of one or two of the obelisks which have the usual lozenge shaped decoration upon them. Immediately inside the chancel are two large enclosed pews belonging to the rectory, and on the north side of the nave and also adjoining the screen is a large square pew, the oak panelling of which appears to belong to the middle of the eighteenth century. The remainder of the seating consists to a large extent of old oak benches, probably dating from the fifteenth century, but hardly recognisable from the manner in which they have been altered and raised by means of deal additions to their height.

The arrangement of the existing seating is indicated upon the plan as a record in case it should be altered, as even an archæologist can hardly wish it to be retained in the interests of those who use the church.

The font is of Purbeck marble or similar stone, square in shape, and supported upon a central and four smaller angle shafts. Nearly all the latter are more or less broken and the font itself slightly cracked.

There are traces of some ornamental carving upon the sides of the font which stands in the position indicated upon the plan.

Most likely there was originally a door on the north side, opposite the south door, and although there are no remains of it now visible the following facts seem to strengthen the supposition. Of the two early inscriptions referred to, one is placed over the south door and the other over the position presumably occupied by a north door at the time it was fixed. The smoke flue of the somewhat primitive heating stove is carried through the wall immediately under the inscription,

as though it had been selected as affording the readiest means of passing through the wall, which may have been blocked up after the flue had been constructed. It was of course usual in Norman churches to place a second door opposite the principal one, which is generally on the south side.

It is hoped that the foregoing notes may be of some assistance to those interested in the old churches of the county; as this church at Warnford has had practically nothing done to it for about a hundred years, it is of more interest than might at first be imagined.

The writer is fully alive to the imperfections of the paper with regard to family history, but hopes some other member will be able and willing to supply the deficiency.
