

AN ARCHITECTURAL ACCOUNT OF WEST SHERBORNE (PAMBER) PRIORY CHURCH, HAMPSHIRE.

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The Priory of West Sherborne, now known as Pamber Priory, is situated in the northern part of Hampshire, about five miles to the north of Basingstoke, just to the west of the main road running through Tadley and Aldermaston to Pangbourne and Wallingford. It stands close to the brook or bourne which flows on through Beaupaire, the former residence of the Brocas family, Sherfield Green, and Stratfield Saye, and joins the river Loddon below Swallowfield. The site is very pretty and secluded, and the beautiful fragment of the Priory Church is too little known. To an active pedestrian, it may easily be visited in conjunction with the Churches of Wootton St. Lawrence, Sherborne St. John, Monk Sherborne and Bramley, all of considerable architectural interest, starting from Basingstoke and finishing up at Bramley Station.

The history of the Priory has been collated in an able article by Miss Florence Davidson, and published in Vol. vii. p. 101 of our Papers and Proceedings. It will therefore be only necessary to repeat that the Priory was founded in the reign of Henry I. early in the 12th century by Henry de Port, a Baron of the Exchequer, son of the great Chief Justiciar, Hugh de Port, and endowed with the tithes and much land in Basing, Bramley and West Sherborne, and elsewhere, as a cell or Monastery subordinate to the Abbey of St. Vigor or Victor at Cerasy or Cerisy le Forêt,

in Normandy. Of this important religious foundation, the noble Church (Figs. 1 and 2) and some of the domestic buildings still remain. The Church is a fine specimen of Norman work of the Normandy type, cruciform with central tower and low spire and eastern apse of rather late 12th century date, with several windows inserted at a later period. Some good early 14th century work still remains (Fig. 3) in the domestic buildings. These grants were confirmed and augmented by his son John and his grandson Adam, and again by William, son of Adam, who adopted the name of St. John in place of that of de Port. Many other grants of property were made at various times, and we find the Priory at an early period in possession of the Churches and tithes of Aldermaston, Padworth, Sulhamstead Banister, Shaw, and St. Frideswides, Wallingford, Berkshire, and Lavington, Wiltshire, and duly presenting to the several incumbencies as vacancies occurred. In the case of Aldermaston, we know that the Church and tithe were granted to the Priory by Richard Achard, the second of that family to possess the Parish and Manor. The Monks appear to have kept the whole of the tithe and to have appointed one of their own number to fulfil the duties of Vicar, and it is still a tradition that it was the custom of the Lord of the Manor to provide a palfrey to bring the officiating Monk over on Sunday to carry out his duties, and to convey him back to the Priory at the conclusion of the services. It has also been alleged that there was a chamber above the inner chancel roof, where he stayed during the day. As a result of the greed of the Monks, when the Priory was dissolved and its revenues seized by Henry V., the whole of the tithe was lost to Aldermaston, and after one or two intermediate owners, Eton College and the Domus Dei at Southampton, came into the possession of Queen's College, Oxford. In the Reign of Queen Elizabeth, they were leased for five hundred years by Mr. William Forster, the then Lord of the Manor, and were bought outright by Mr. William Congreve, the owner of the estate, in the early years of the 19th century, and are now held by the owner of Aldermaston Court. It is in consequence of the alienation of the tithe that Aldermaston, though

a large parish, has the distinction of being one of the few "donatives or peculiars" remaining in the country.

In the *Archæological Journal* for 1898, Vol. LV., page 395, is set out a List of Institutions to the Vicarage of Aldermaston, otherwise Aldremenston, otherwise Aldermanston, otherwise Aldermyston, otherwise Aldermaston.

The first recorded presentation by the Prior and Convent of Sherborne, is in February, 1297-8, when Willus de Appelby was appointed. In July, 1302, Thomas de Appelby is instituted on the resignation of Willus de Appelby, and in October, 1336, an exchange is effected by Thomas de Appelby and Petrus Pax. Then we learn that in January, 1343-4, the King exercised the right of Patronage "owing to the Priory of Sherborne being in his hands owing to war with France," and the same privilege was exercised by the King in 1344, 1347, 1348, 1349, 1351, 1353, and as all the changes except one were due to resignation or exchange, this can hardly have been a very attractive benefice. In 1361 the Prior and Convent present for the last time, as three times, twice in 1393 and once in 1395, King Richard II., and three times viz.: in 1400, 1401 and 1411 King Henry IV. exercised the right of Patronus." After the dissolution King Henry V. presented in 1420, and King Henry VI. in 1425 and 1449. Then we find the Custos of the Hospital of St. Julian called *Domus Dei* at Southampton and the Chaplains and Brethren thereof exercising the privilege in 1488, 1499, 1502 and 1504. Next in 1509 and 1523 the Provost of Queen's College, Oxford, acts as Patron, and in 1533 we find him dealing with the "*Proprietarios Prioratus quondam alienigenarum de Shirburn Monachorum.*" In 1574, and since that date the presentations have been made by the Squire of Aldermaston or his representative.

These details corroborate the vicissitudes of the property of the Priory both before and after its suppression by King Henry V. in 1417.

In a Record of the Parish of Padworth and its inhabitants, compiled chiefly from original documents by the late Miss Mary

Sharp, we have a list of the Rectors contained in the Bishop's Register of Institutions at Salisbury which begins at the date 1300 and records the fact that the nomination to the living of Padworth was then made by the Prior and religious men of the Convent of Schyrebourn, to whom an annual pension was payable from its revenues of £1 6s. 8d. Thomas de Cumb. was the first presentee, but only remained till 1304 when he exchanged with John de Cumb. Resignations and exchanges took place in 1314, 1320, 1322, 1333, 1357-8 and 1361, under the Patronage of the Convent and Monks. "One cannot fail to notice" (remarks Miss Sharp) "the very short time during which each Rector stayed in the parish. They were celibates, possibly Monks, and in that case might have been moved about by order of their superiors, and even if it were not so, house moving was not to them the serious business that it is to their modern representatives."

King Richard II. presented the next four Rectors, viz.: in 1375, 1378-9, and twice in 1382. At this time and in 1392-3 the Patronage seems to have been vested in the Prior of St. John of Jerusalem, who appointed an Irishman named John Kilcale. Henry IV. presented twice, Henry V. three, and Henry VI. no less than eleven times, there being one interval when Edward IV. presented. The Hospital of St. Julian was the Patron in 1488, but Henry VII. made the next presentation in 1495. There is a gap in the record till 1559 when Queen Elizabeth presented, and we do not know how it was, that the nomination to the Rectory did not go with the other emoluments of the Priory to Queen's College, Oxford, but continued to be in the gift, as it still is, of the Crown. Miss Sharp gives a very full account of the incidents which led up to the passing of the Act of 1475, and which differs somewhat from that given by Miss Davidson, and may be set out here.

"Priories thus connected with foreign Monastic Houses were called Alien Priories¹ and of these, more than a hundred are said to have existed in England during the first few centuries after the Conquest. When Manors or tythes in England were

¹ Account of Alien Priories,—Dr. Ducarel.

given by the conquerors to monastic establishments in Normandy, the Monks, in order to secure the services of faithful stewards for their revenues, erected buildings on their English property and sent over some of their number with a Prior as superior, to reside there to collect the rents and to transmit them, wholly or in part, to the Mother House.

"The existence of such a source of wealth was a great temptation to the English monarchs whenever a war with France broke out, and accordingly we find that the revenues of Alien Priories were seized by Edward I., Edward III., Richard II. and Edward (? Henry) IV. in succession, though sometimes restored in time of peace. The Priories were finally dissolved by Act of Parliament in the reign of Henry V. and all their estates vested in the Crown.

"To do these kings justice, however, it must be added that the confiscated funds were often spent for religious or educational uses. Thus Sherborne Priory was given by Henry VI. to Eton College on condition that a chaplain should be maintained there to perform certain religious services, such as masses for the souls of the founder and others. Then followed the long civil wars and during this period of disorder it seems that this condition was not properly observed for, in Edward IV's reign, complaints were made against the conduct of the Provost and Fellows of Eton who were said to have carried off all the jewels, riches and ornaments and the charters from the Priory and, worse still, that they had allowed *horses and carles to goo uppon the sepultures of Cristen people in gret nombre buried in the Chirch there whereof moo than XXX sumtyme were worshipfull Barons, Knyghtes and Squyers*, also that they had discontinued the prayers for the founder, Henry du Port, and his family.¹

"In answer to this complaint an Act of Parliament was passed in 1475 enacting that those who received the profits should *sufficiently repaire maintene and kepe the Chirche of the said Prioury with the closure of the Cemitorie thereof* and should provide *Belles, Bookes, Brede, Wyne and lightes with all*

¹ History of Eton, Sir H. Maxwell Lyte.

maner honourmentes and other things convenient and *behossul* for the accomplishment of divine service; that they should also keep a yearly obite and solemn dirge on the first day of January with five masses to be said on the second day and that immediately after the masses there should be distributed in alms to the poor people of the neighbourhood the sum of 23^s & 4^d in lawful English money, that they might pray especially for the souls of the sovereign and of the *most noble Prince Richard Duke of York his father*, also of the Queen and their son *our noble prince and of all their noble progeny*. Also for the souls of Henry Poorte and other benefactors buried in the church.²

"But whether because the Provost and Fellows of Eton did not properly obey these behests, or for some other reason, the property was soon afterwards taken away from them and bestowed on the Hospital of St. Julian, called the House of God, at Southampton, and it is, to this day, enjoyed by the Provost and Fellows of Queen's College, Oxford, as Masters of that Hospital. The old *Maison Dieu* or House of God was founded by Gervase le Riche, a burgher of Southampton, towards the end of the XIIth Century. In 1343 it was given to Queen's Hall, after which it was enriched by Edward IV. with the endowment of Sherborne Priory. The old buildings were burnt during one of the frequent raids of the French, and though afterwards rebuilt were finally demolished in 1861. The Chapel was modernised and only the Chancel arch of the older structure remains.

"These various vicissitudes through which the Priory of Sherborne passed can be traced to a certain extent in the records of the presentations to the living of Padworth."

No doubt the presentations to Shaw, Sulhamstead Banister, Bramley and Monk Sherborne will confirm the vicissitudes of the Priory during the 14th and 15th century. In the History of Basingstoke, by F. J. Baigent and J. E. Millard, reference is made on pages 10 and 11 to the foundation of Sherborne Priory and the grant to it of the tithes of Basing and the Free Chapel of St. Michael and the lands of the old Castle at Basing, and on

(2) Rolls of Parliament, Vol. VI., p. 143. Part XIV., Edward IV.

pages 184 in response to a claim on behalf of the Priory, it is stated "The jury say that John de St. John gave in perpetual alms a certain wood in Bromlegh (Bramley) which is called Le Parke, to the Prior and convent of Schyreburne, which contains twenty acres of land, and this in the time of King Henry, the father of the present King," Edward I.

Again on page 656 is set out from a deed in the muniment room at Magdalen College the award of Walter Abbot of Hyde, Walter Prior of St. Swithun's and Richard Dean of Winchester, in pursuance of a Bull addressed to them by Pope Gregory IX., dated at the Lateran, 12 kalends of May in the 5th year of his pontificate (21st April, 1231), between Philip de Lucy, Rector of Basingstoke, and the Prior and Convent of Sireburne, respecting the tithes of certain cultivated lands within the Parish.

In the valuable work by the late Capt. Montagu Burrows, M.A., F.S.A., on the family of Brocas of Beaurepaire and Roche Court, on page 149, a brief mention of the Priory of Monks Sherborne is given, and in the Brocas deeds, we find several notices of the active part played by the Priors in the district, viz. : (1) on page 375, between 1235 and 1240, William was witness to a grant of land at Sherborne St. John made by Robert St. John to Bartholomew Peche.

(2) page 381, in 1387 an indenture between Sir Bernard Brocas, Ingelram, Prior of Shireborne, and Robert Atte More, concerning lands at Shireborne St. John.

(3) page 384 in a Quit claim from Richard Tylare, of West Schyrborne and Alice his wife, etc., to Oliver Brocas for land in that place in 1398. Ingelram is mentioned as "nuper Prioris Ecclesie Beate Marie de Schyrborne, Mon."

(4) p.p. 386-7, in a grant by William Brocas to Oliver Brocas of rent of land in Schyrborne St. John in 1406, "quod cum Wil^{us} quondam Prior de Schyrborne Monachorum in Com Suth^{ria} et ejusdem loci Conventus remiserint, etc." Ingelram is again mentioned here.

(5) p. 401 in a grant by Bernard Brocas "clericus" to Henry, Duke of Lancaster, and Sir Bernard Brocas, Knight, of Beaure-

paire Manor and other lands in Schirborne St. John, etc., in 1355 among the rents resolute (or paid) is the entry: "To the Prior of Schirebourne rent in arrear o. 73. 4."

In the History of the Vyne by Chaloner W. Chute, on page 12 is a short reference to the foundation of the Priory and the allocation of its property after its suppression, and on page 13 is set out the deed of foundation of the Chantry chapel at the Vyne in the reign of Henry II. Here it is mentioned that "Robertus Decanus de Shireburn" permitted William Fitz-Adam and his heirs to build a chapel within the parish of the Church of St. Andrew, Shireburn, and the said Robert was to provide the Chaplain. It is suggested that the "Dean" was the senior dean of the adjacent Priory, which probably exercised the same rights at Monk Sherborne, as have been recorded in the case of Aldermaston. And lastly the Priory has been duly noted in the Victorian History of Hampshire. Its history is recorded in Vol. II. p. 226, and its architectural details are very fully described in Vol. IV. p.p. 236-8 and 433-5.

When the task of compiling this paper was undertaken, it was in ignorance of the fact that so much had previously been written, and it is to be feared that this is a work of supererogation, and that little, if anything, will have been added to the information already recorded on this subject. It is however hoped that the numerous illustrations will commend this article to those who have not been able personally to visit this interesting spot.

There can be no doubt from the evidence of the structure itself, and the numerous monumental remains still surviving, of the prosperity of the Priory in the 13th century, and it is singular that its revenues should have been so seriously depleted in the 14th century. It was amply endowed with land, tithes, and other temporalities, and was, as has been pointed out, to a certain extent independent of the great abbey at Cerisy. No doubt it was affected by the "black death," but more by the feeling engendered against France, owing to our constant wars with that country, and this was of course the cause of its premature dissolution early in the fifteenth century.

It is, however, a matter of congratulation that it was not completely destroyed, but that the present beautiful chancel was preserved, partly as a chantry, and partly to provide a parochial Church for that part of Pamber within the mother parish of Monk Sherborne. The Priory Church (Fig. 4) dedicated to St. Mary and St. John the Baptist must have been an imposing structure, as it consisted of a nave, central tower, transepts and choir with Chantry Chapels opening north and south at the west end. The approximate internal measurements are as follows:—

	E. & W.	N. & S.
The Nave	93ft. ¹	by 22ft. 8in.
Tower space	29ft.	by 24ft. 3in.
Choir	62ft.	by 23ft.

thus giving a total length of about 184 feet.

A short account, dealing chiefly with the sepulchral slabs appears in Vol. II., p. 136 of our proceedings, by our esteemed member, Dr. S. Andrews, as a "reminder of a Club Excursion in the autumn of 1890." We are here told that in February, 1891, some excavations had laid bare the foundations of the north transept proving it to have extended northwards about 17 feet beyond the existing buttress, giving an extreme internal measurement of 25 feet, a wall of flint and rubble 3ft. 9in. thick having been exposed. Of this grand Church, full of noble monuments, as we learn from the Act passed in 1475 for its due preservation, only the central tower and choir now remain. These were carefully restored by the late Sir Gilbert Scott in 1843, and though we may mourn for those portions which have been destroyed, we can be thankful for the beautiful work which has been preserved. Part of the south wall of the nave remains composed of small flints with ashlar quoins, and jambs to the doorways. The tower and choir are composed of large flints and ashlar, mainly clunch, rather roughly bonded together, and especially on the north side of the choir retaining the roughcast,

¹ This is the full length of the south wall. In the ground plan in the Victorian History, the west wall of the nave is delineated considerably to the east of the western termination of this wall.

with which it was probably all overlaid. Some slight alterations have recently been made, the four sepulchral stones originally on the floor within the chancel rails, being now placed upright, two each respectively, against the north and south walls.

No remains of the Priory buildings are now above ground. These stood on the south side, and much might be recovered by judicious excavations, which it is hoped may some day be undertaken.

The original Church consisted of a long and narrow Norman nave, central tower north and south transepts, and probably a small apsidal choir, and of this the lower part of the south nave wall and tower remain. Early in the 13th century the increasing wealth of the Priory justified the erection of the present spacious Chancel, which we may date at about the year 1220. During the 14th century larger windows were inserted either in the transepts or nave, and portions of one of these are incorporated in the buttress on the south side of the tower.

Let us now commence our description of the Church in the interior of the Chancel (Fig. 5), which from its height and the severe simplicity of its main details furnishes us with an admirable example of the Early English or first pointed period of architecture. In the east wall are three very large and beautifully proportioned lancet lights, the central one being loftier than that on either side. They have a continuous hoodmould resting on bosses carved with elegant conventional foliage on each side of the head of the central light, and have a keel shaped moulding in a hollow round the head and down the jambs of each light, which is otherwise plain. On the north and south sides (Fig. 6) are four lancets, not nearly so lofty, but each with the keelshaped moulding in a hollow round head and down jambs. Along the east, north and south walls below the windows runs a bold stringcourse with the roll moulding enriched with a fillet band. This terminates west against the eastern arch of the chantries now destroyed. Filling up the western portion of the Chancel wall both on north and south are two low segmental headed arches (Fig. 7), those on north having an engaged roll with fillet band in a hollow, those on south

the keel shaped moulding. They are supported on a plain chamfered abacus and a low central column almost walled up on the south side, but still remaining clear of the north wall, with chamfered edge on each face. These are now walled up, but they formerly opened out into small chantry chapels and the arches are still visible in the exterior wall. Within the east on south has been inserted an oblong low side window now blocked up. This was no doubt brought from the exterior wall, and suggests the probability that certain relics were preserved in this chantry, which could be seen from the outside. Above them on each side are two plain circular window openings (Fig. 8). Within the arched recesses are plain coffins or cists with crosses on the lids, and in the west on south the fine wooden cross legged effigy, to all of which we shall refer later on. On the north side near the east end is a large plain square aumbrey (Fig. 9), and facing it in the south wall a beautiful piscina (Fig. 10), with rounded trefoil headed canopy having the undercut hoodmould, one subsidiary and a bold angle roll moulding to the canopy, which is supported on engaged half-round shafts with well moulded capitals and bases and undercut abacus. It has a large quatrefoil shaped basin, and a stone shelf at the back. A very poor modern screen, in which some of the ancient oak screen is incorporated divides off the two eastern bays. Some of the benches are also old, and the ends seem to be either portions of the old screen, the supports for the upper canopy work having been cut away, or the bench ends bereft of the poppy heads. There is a segmental headed doorway on the south side of the Chancel, below the third lancet from the east end. The roof is of solid timber, open, and wagon-shaped, and very good. Three of the tie beams and one more over the east tower arch which formerly strengthened it, still remain. On the north wall between the screen and the chantry arches are considerable remains of mural painting (Fig. 11). At the east end is a very beautiful consecration cross. A circular border with zigzag band and red inner and outer line, encloses a Maltese Cross with remains of red colouring. On each space between the arms is a red eight-rayed star. This no doubt dates

from the early 13th century. The painting to the west of it seems to be later. Here we have parts of five angels with outspread wings outlined in red. The most perfect is the west but one, which is looking and pointing with raised hand towards the east. More perhaps could be discovered, though the plaster is in a bad state. Within a wooden case fixed on to the wall adjoining are preserved two large prayer books of date 1715, with very richly stamped leather covers in crimson and gold, in excellent preservation. At the west end near the north-east tower arch is a large stone mortar or perhaps the old Norman font (Fig. 12) with massive circular bowl, having curious strips attached to the north and south, and a lip or bracket projecting from the rim on the east and west sides. It has a late Georgian cover. It is supported on portions of early coffin lids a foliated capital and other fragments. It appears to have been discarded in favour of a much later font of the Tudor period (Fig. 13), which stands on the south side in front of the western of the two chantry arches. It is rather small, of stone with octagonal bowl on a slender stem. It has the Tudor rose carved on the north-west face, an inverted shield within a quatrefoil on north face, and varied roses and foliage with one exception within quatrefoils on the other six sides. On the west side of the stem within an oblong panel is carved a trefoil. On two sides of the font are two massive pieces of timber, apparently parts of a former roof. There are also on the floor between the font and the chantry arch some fragments of encaustic tiles collected together and arranged in an oblong design. Within the lowside window opening in the east chantry arch is placed a small and early holy water stoup (Fig. 14).

One of the most remarkable features in connection with this Church is the large number of sepulchral slabs with sculptured crosses still existing. Evidently even in 1475 they were deemed to be of special sanctity and of sufficient importance for an Act of Parliament to be passed to ensure their preservation and protection. As stated they have been described by Dr. Andrews in Vol. II., p. 136 of our proceedings, but as their number seems to have increased since that paper was published and all may not

have an opportunity of referring to it, it will perhaps not to be considered a work of supererogation to communicate the result of the fresh notes just taken.

On the occasion of a first visit to the Church in 1885, four of the finest examples occupied spaces on the floor within the communion rails, two on each side of the holy table. These have now been raised and placed on end respectively against the north and south walls. There is a similarity in design and no very great difference in date, perhaps 50 years, between the earliest and the latest. At least five of them date from the latter part of the 12th and the rest from the first half of the 13th century. This expression of opinion does not coincide with the note (on page 139) by the Editor, who considers them all to belong to the 13th or beginning of the 14th century. In this same article on page 139 it is stated: "It may be observed that no such stones are found at Padworth in Berks, which was under the rule of Pamber Priory, and would lead to the inference that the latter was the place of interment for the community." This remark would similarly apply to Aldermaston, and the other Churches in the neighbourhood which were equally under the rule of this community, and it also naturally follows that the majority of the Monks would be interred in or near their own Priory Church. Most of the larger slabs covered the remains of the Monks, possibly of some of the Priors, who were no doubt buried in the large stone cists beneath the floor with the sculptured lids showing above the level of the pavement. Almost all the lids are of dark grey Purbeck marble, and have the sides and ends bevilled off, some with single and others with a double groove. Although costly memorials, in no instance is there any name or date to form a clue as to their identification. The most interesting of the series is the western one of the two (Fig. 15) placed against the south wall (Fig. 16). This has a rather peculiar head with a section of about three parts of a circle between each arm of the cross. On either side of the stem are three large leaves, and supporting it the Agnus Dei with the foreleg upraised, as we find in so many examples of the Norman period. Round the verge

is the following quaint inscription in rhyming leonine verses making up two hexameter lines (See frontispiece). It starts from what would have been the south-western point, eastwards, along the east end, back up the north and finishing on the west side, and may be read thus :

+ SIQVIERISQVICRANSIERISSCAPERCE
GEPC
ORA + SVMQVOOERISFVERAMQVEQVOOESPR
OMEPRECORORA

It will be noticed that the carver was not a good latin scholar, as he made three mistakes in the inscription, the OO, twice repeated must be OD in each case, and as pointed out by Dr. Andrews an "H" has improperly been interpolated before the last word. In six instances one letter has been cut within another to gain room, and this is, it is believed, not an uncommon practice in similar inscriptions. It may therefore be set out as follows :—

Siquis eris qui transieris sta perlege plora +

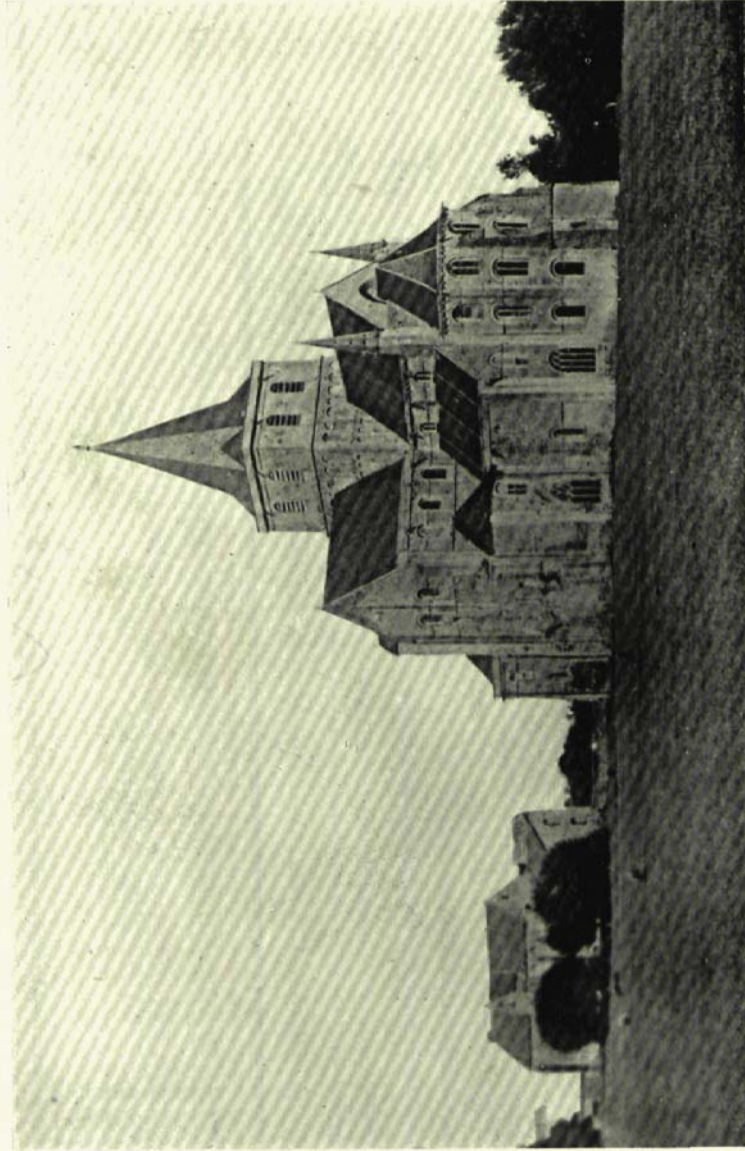
Sum quod eris fueranique quod es pro me precor (h) ora. +
and may be translated thus :—

"Whosoever thou art that passest by, stop, read through,
lament.

I am what thou wilt be, and I had been what thou art, for me,
I beseech thee, pray."

This is an early example, probably late 12th century, of that moral doctrine, which in later times is found in Mural Paintings of the subject of the Three Kings living and Three Kings dead, of which a good example has been found at the Church of Hurstbourne Tarrant in this County and elsewhere, and this was certainly a popular morality during the middle ages. The numerous examples of monuments and brasses with cadaver effigies and emaciated figures was intended to convey the same lesson, which as a "memento mori" has been continued up to the present time. This slab is 6ft. 1 1/2 ins. in length, by 1ft. 11 ins. in breadth at the top diminishing to 1ft. 1 ins. at the bottom. The coffin lid adjoining it is rather longer, 6ft. 5 ins., and deeper and with double bevilled edge. It has a cross flory on a stem supported on a

THE ABBEY OF CERISY.

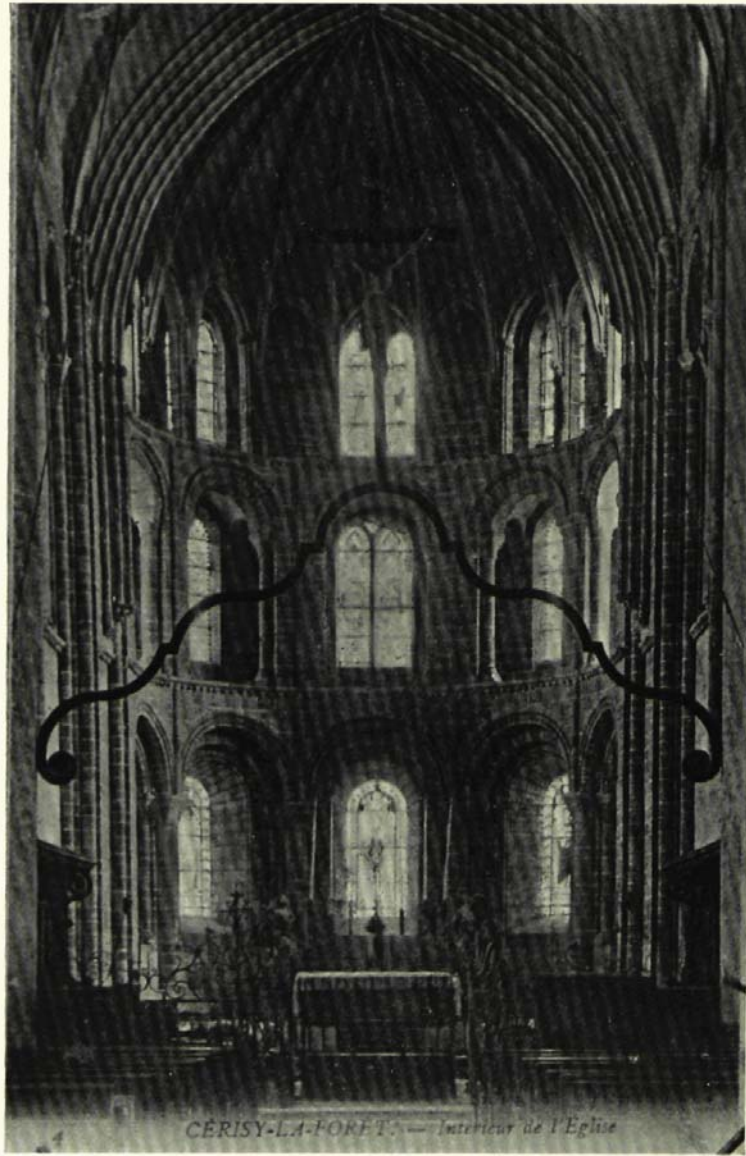


Walton Adams & Sons, Reading.

The Church from the South East.

Fig. 1.

THE ABBEY CHURCH, CERISY.

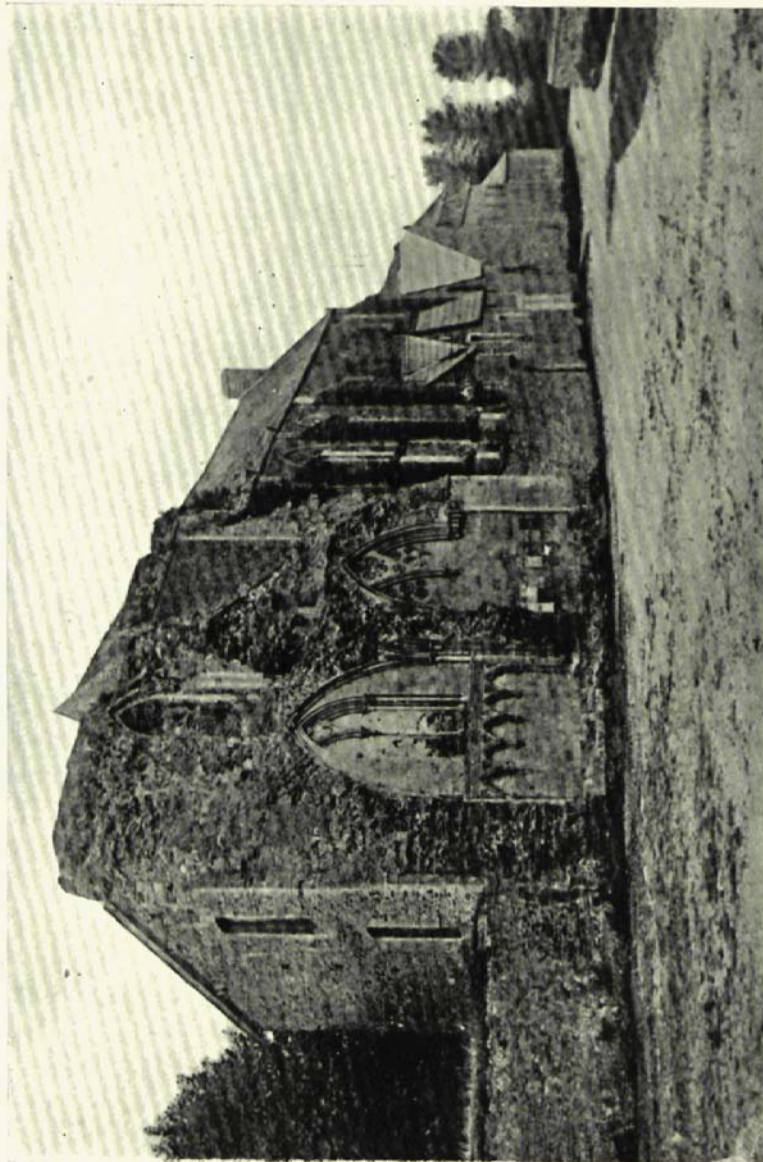


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Fig. 2.

The Choir.

THE ABBEY OF CERISY.

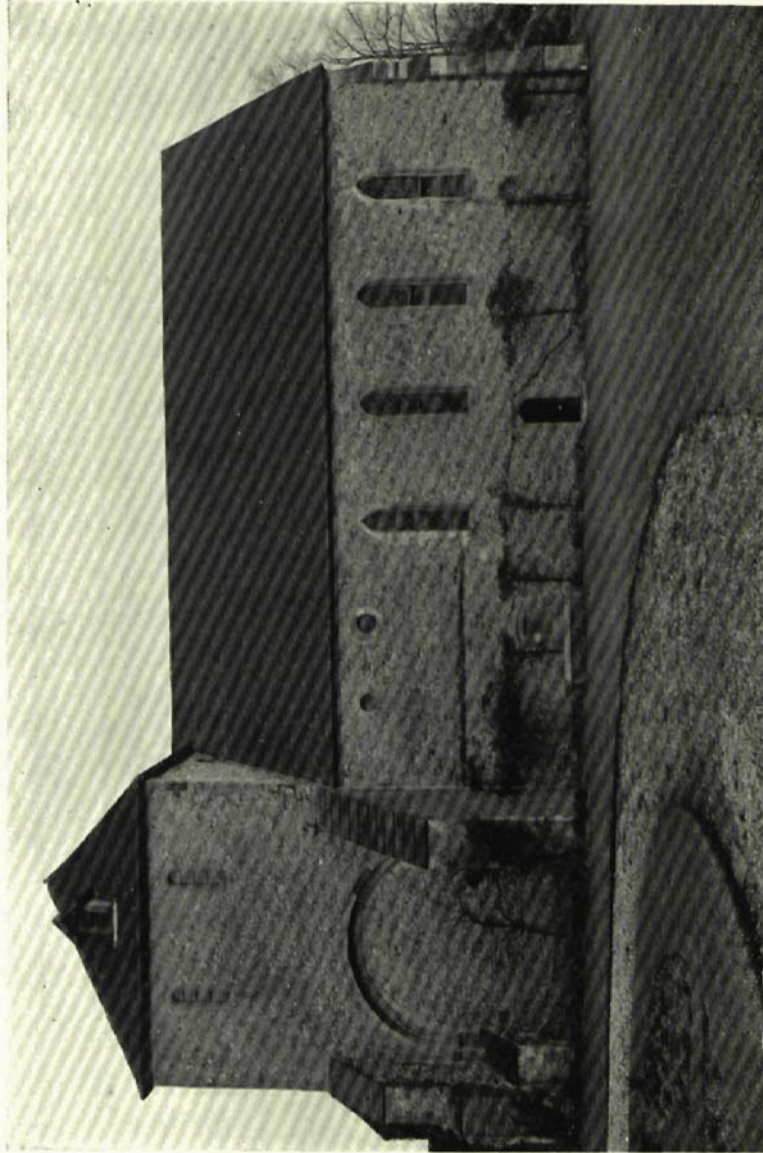


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Remains of Domestic Buildings.

Fig. 3.

SHERBORNE PRIORY CHURCH.

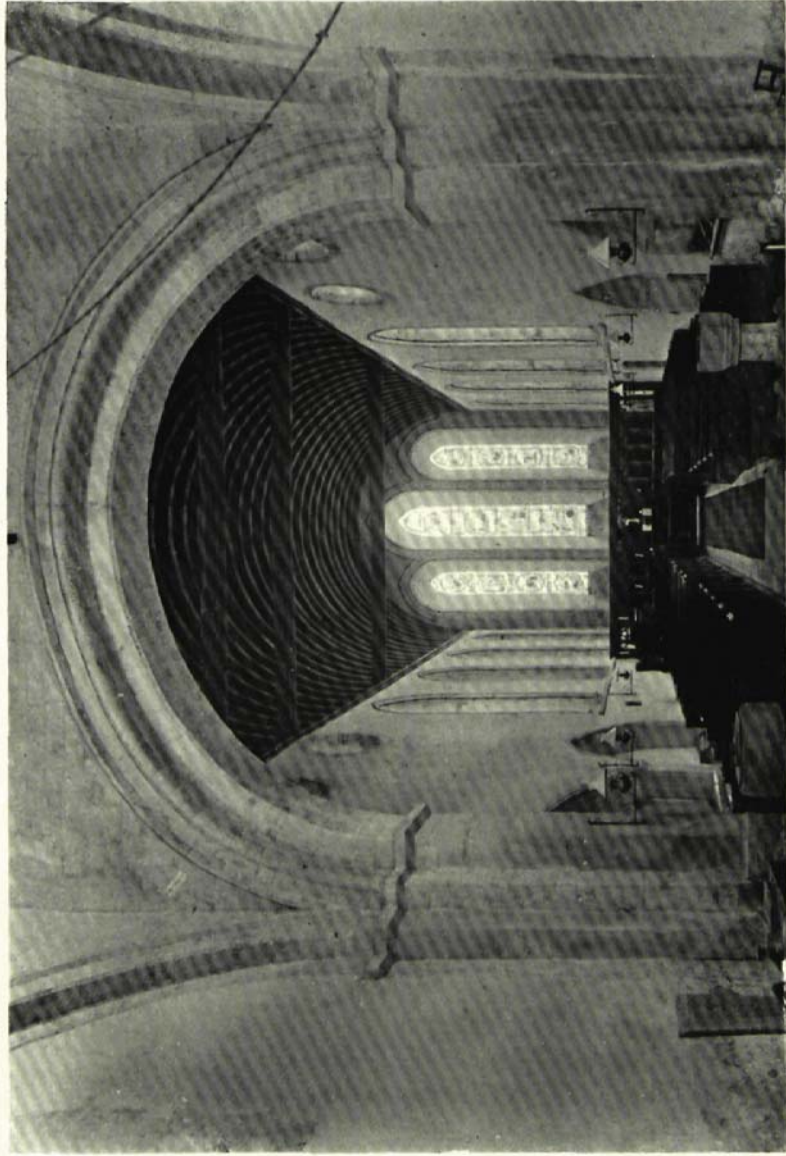


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From the South.

Fig. 4.

SHERBORNE PRIORY CHURCH.

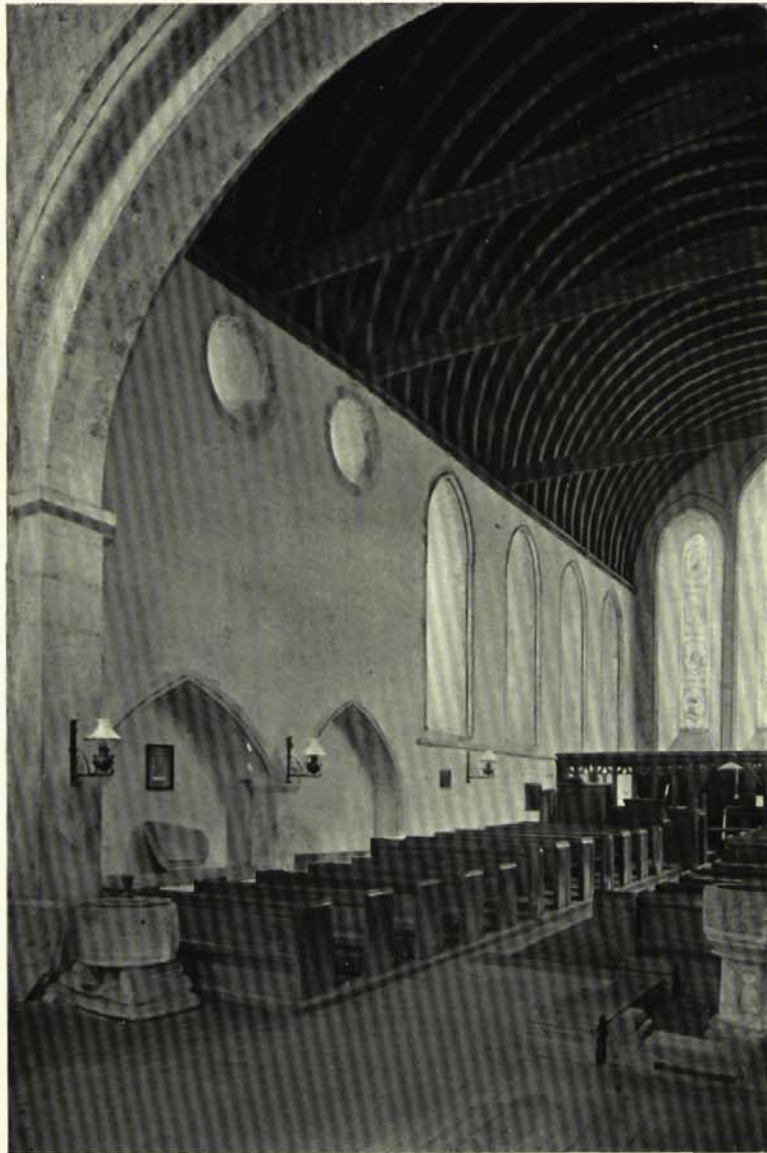


Walton Adams & Sons, Reading.

Interior looking East.

Fig. 5

SHERBORNE PRIORY CHURCH.



Walton Adams & Sons, Reading.

Fig. 6.

North Side of Choir.

SHERBORNE PRIORY CHURCH.



Walton Adams & Sons, Reading.

Fig. 7.

Interior looking West.

SHERBORNE PRIORY CHURCH.

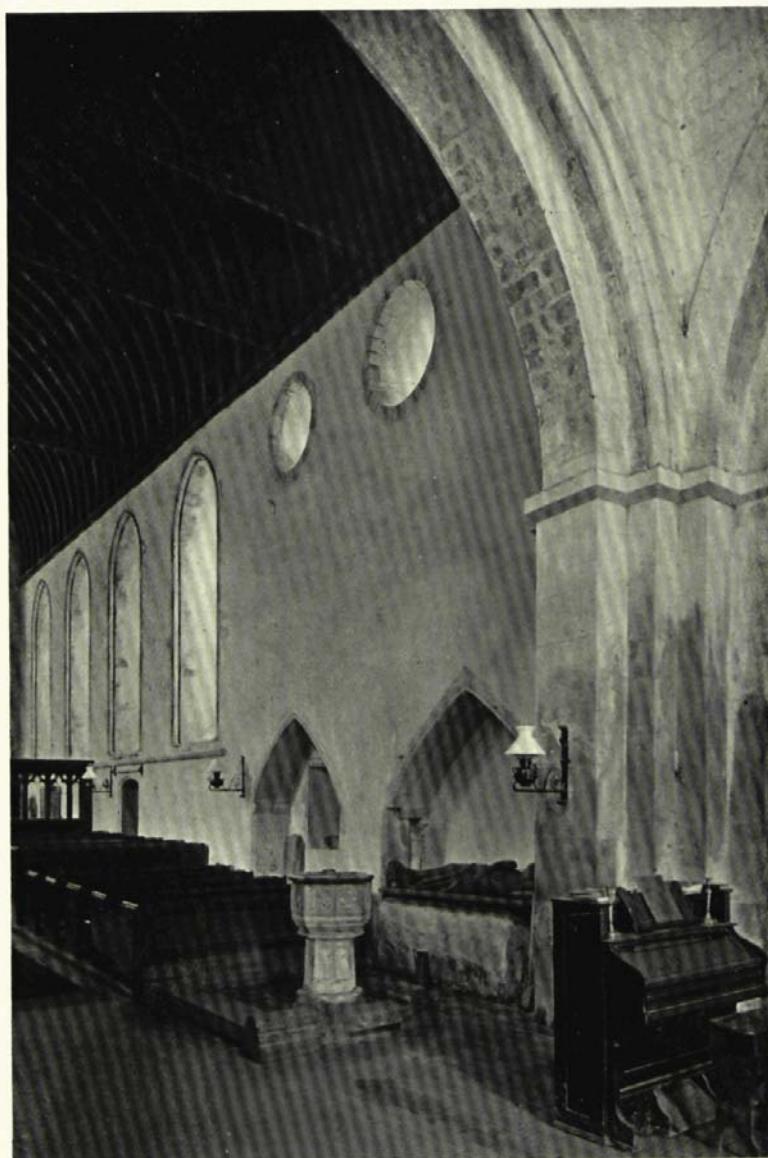
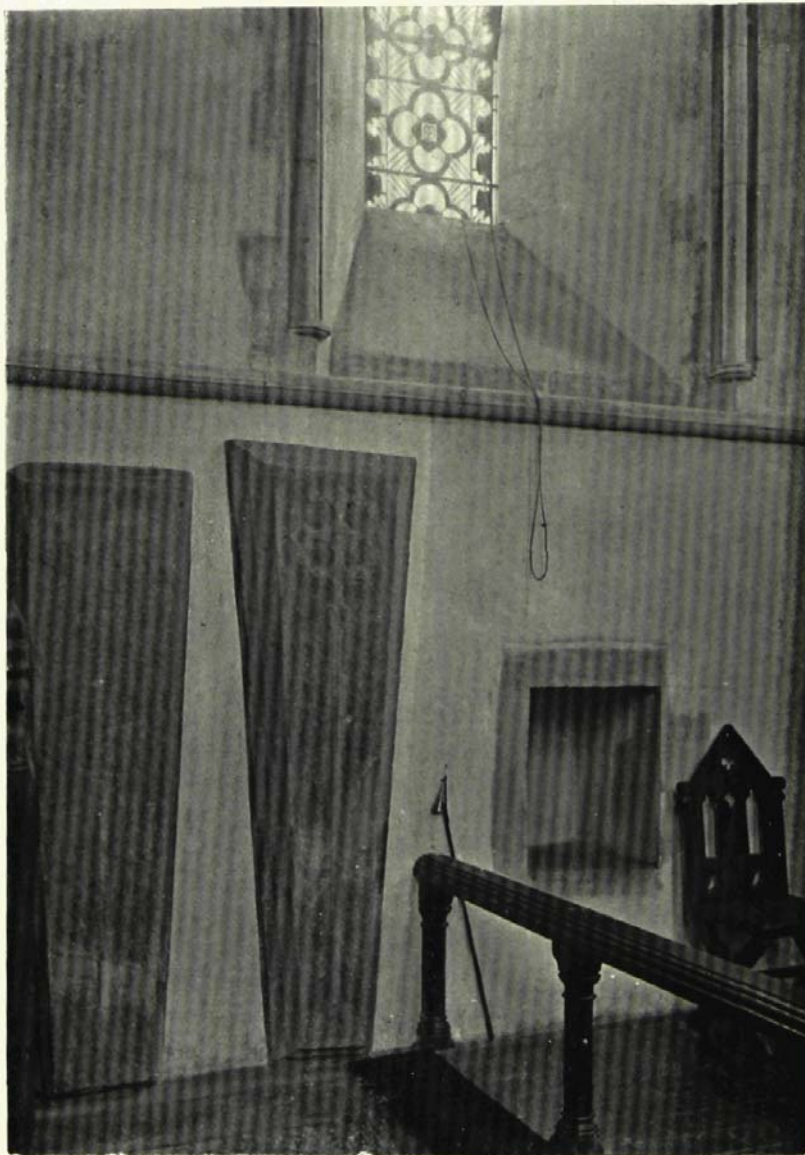


Fig. 8.

Walton Adams & Sons, Reading
South Side of Choir.

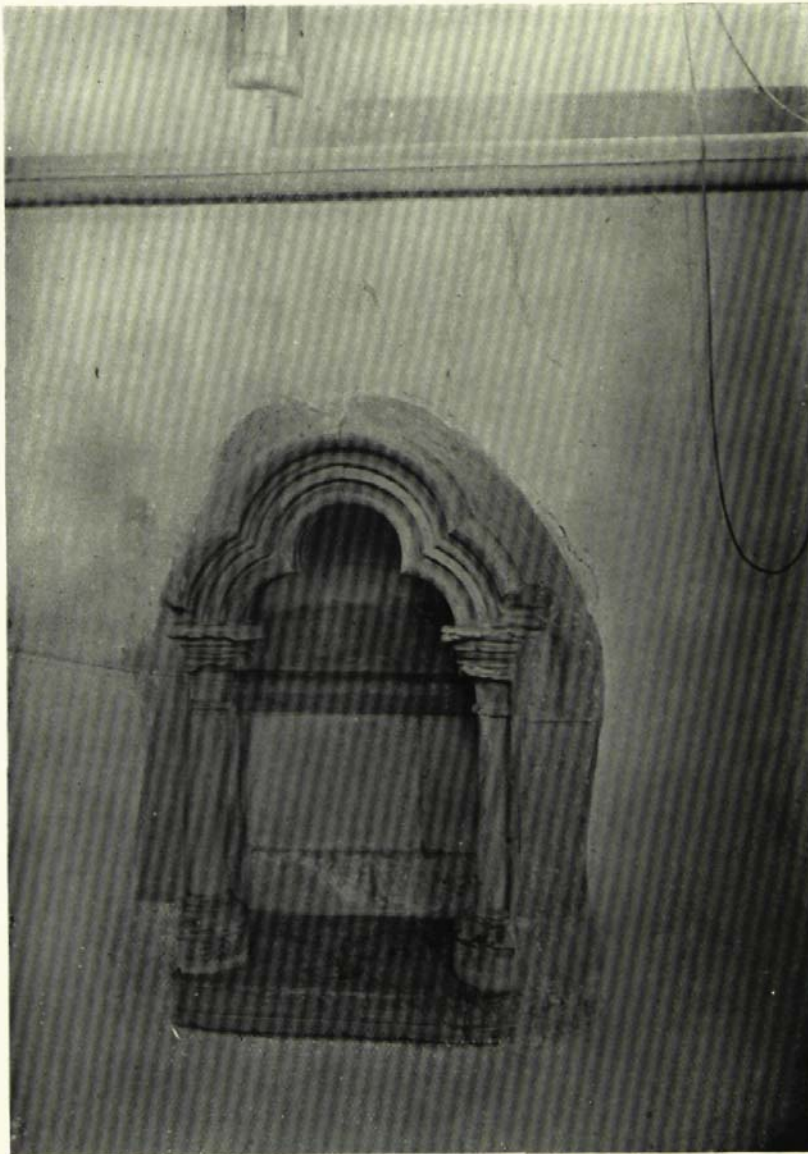
SHERBORNE PRIORY CHURCH.



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Fig. 9. Aumbrey and Cross Coffin Lids, North Side of Choir.

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Fig. 10.

Piscina, South Wall of Choir.

SHERBORNE PRIORY CHURCH.

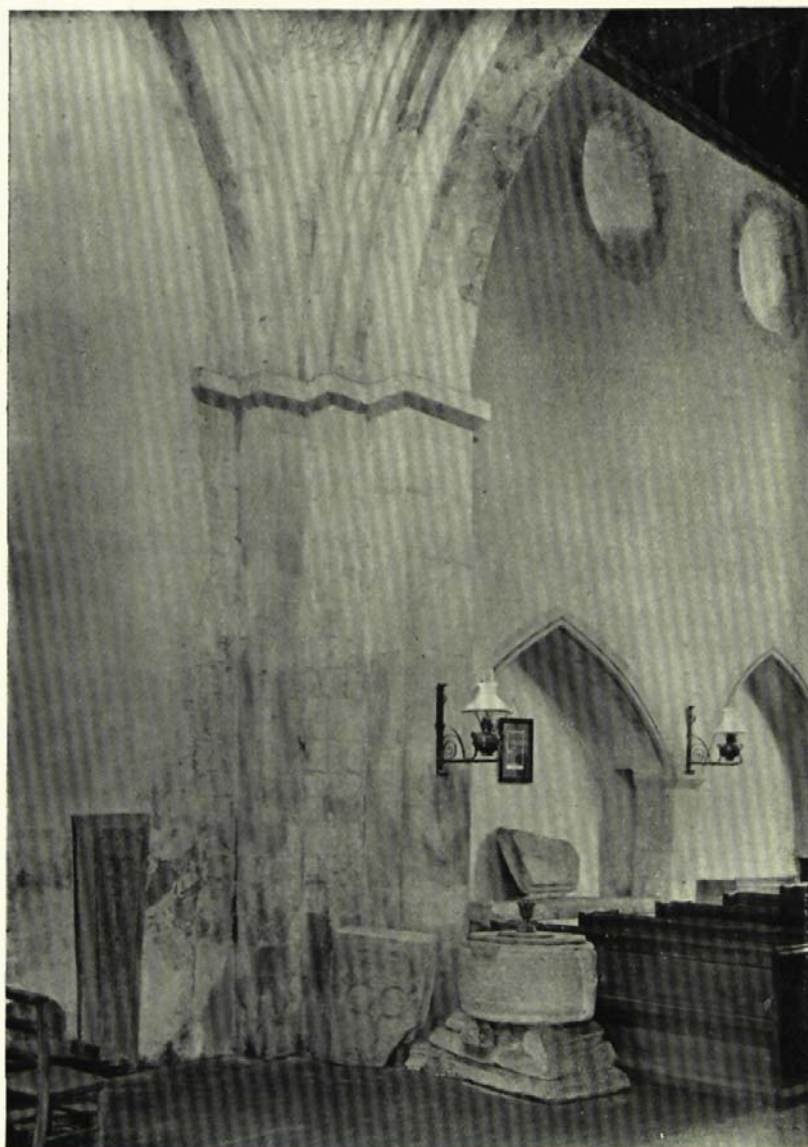


William Adams & Sons Reading

Mural Painting and Consecration Cross, North Wall of Choir.

Fig. 11.

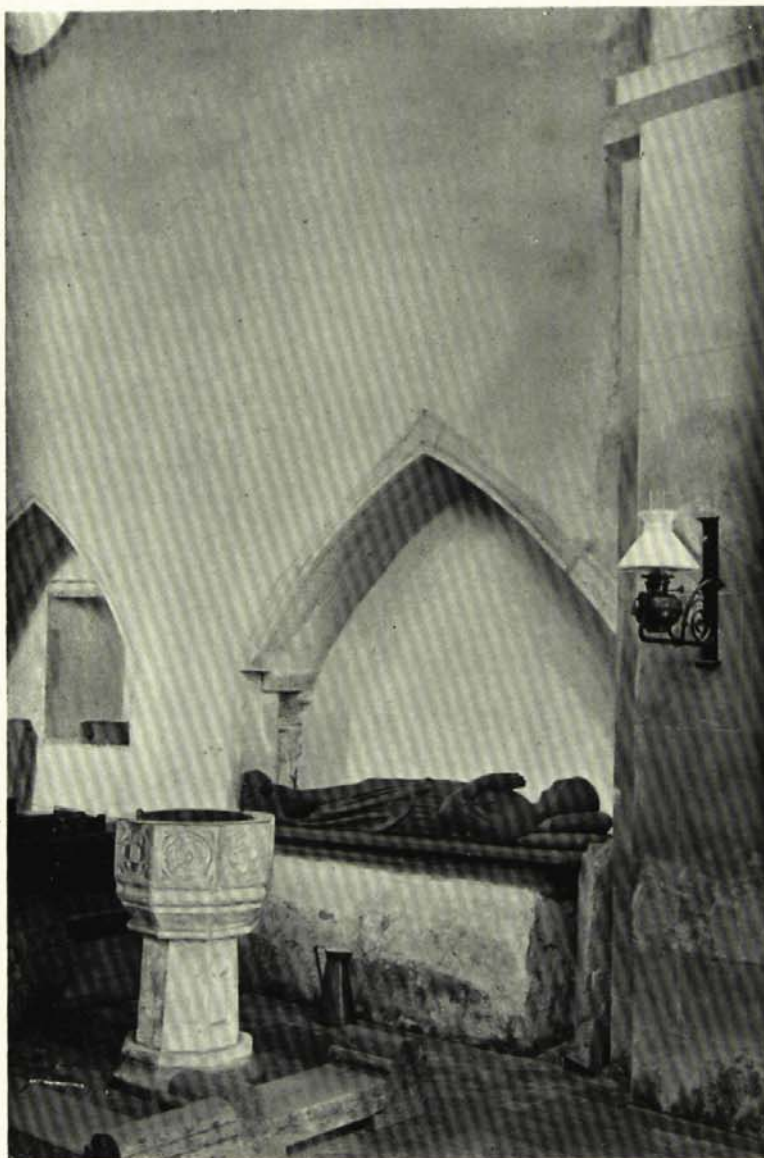
SHERBORNE PRIORY CHURCH.



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Fig. 12. Ancient (p) Font and Chantry Arches, North Side of Choir.

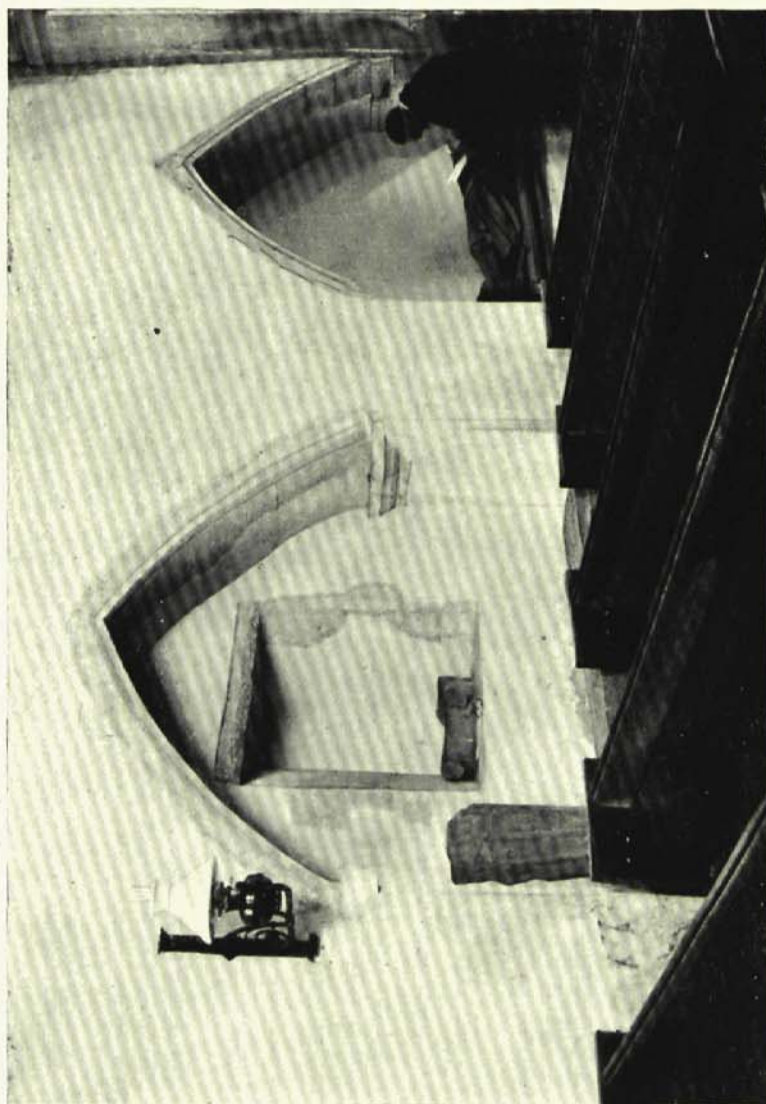
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Fig. 13. Font and Chantry Arches, South Side of Choir.

SHERBORNE PRIORY CHURCH.

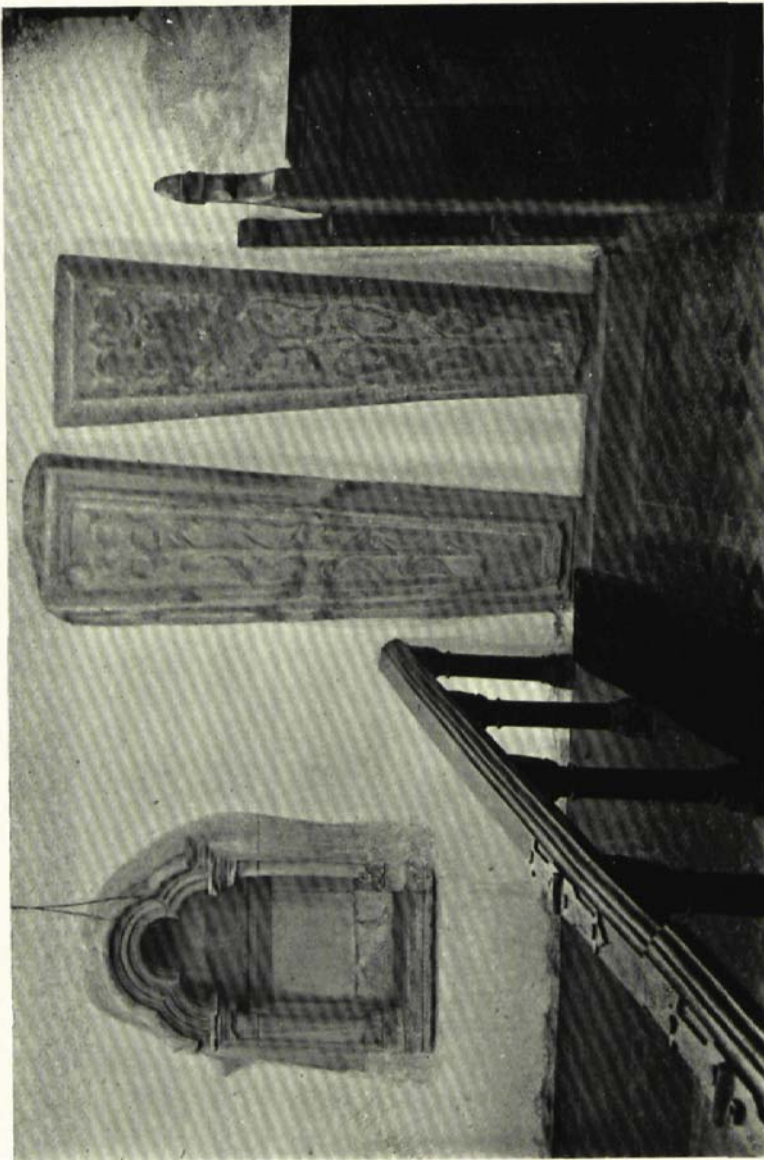


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Chantry Arches, South Side of Choir.

Fig. 14.

SHERBORNE PRIORY CHURCH.



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Piscina and Cross Coffin Lids, South Wall of Choir.

Fig. 15.

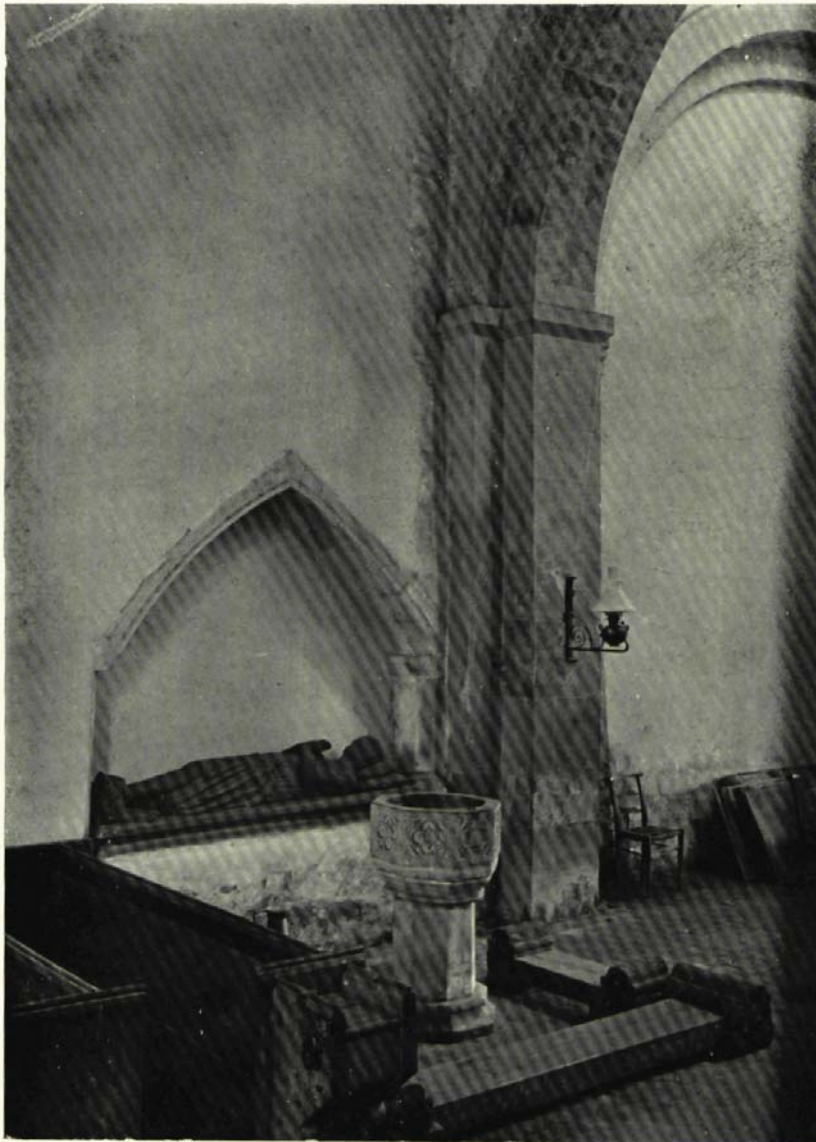
SHERBORNE PRIORY CHURCH.



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Fig. 16. Cross Coffin Lid with Inscription, South Wall of Choir.

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Fig. 17.

Font and Cross-Legged Effigy.

SHERBORNE PRIORY CHURCH.



Walter Adams & Sons, Reading.

Effigy of John de Port.

Fig. 18.

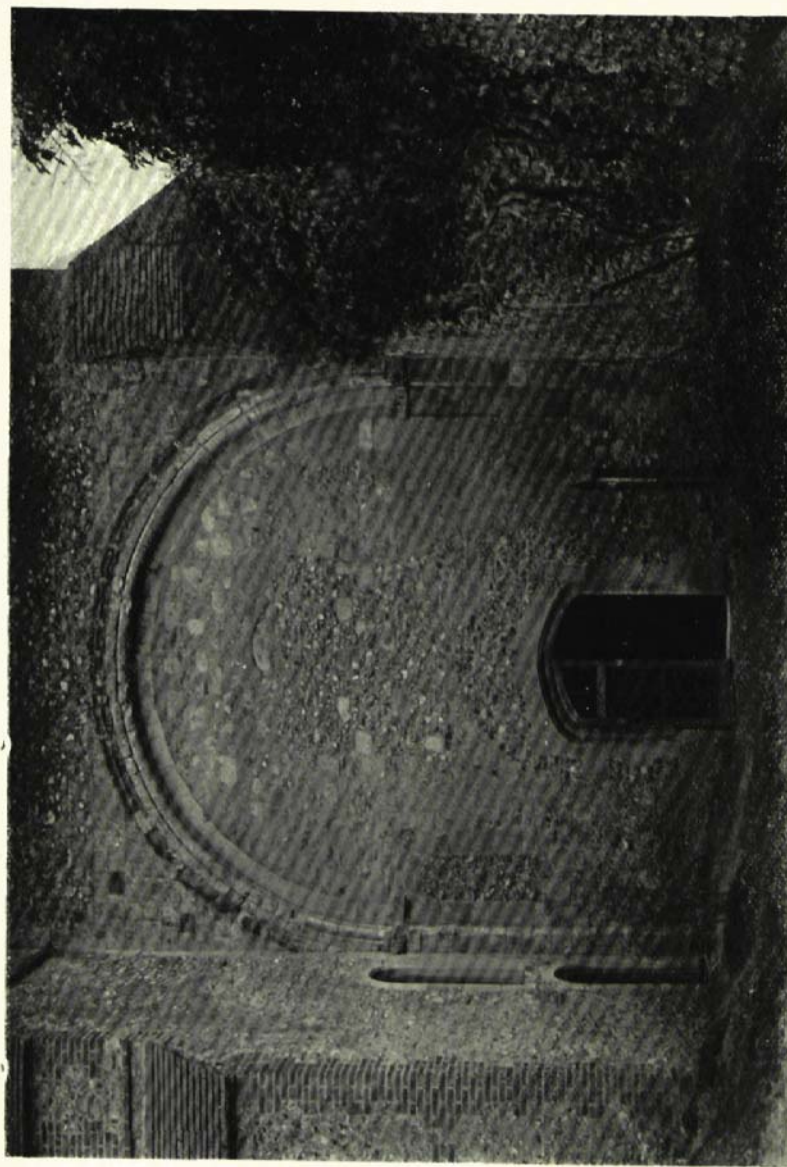
SHERBORNE PRIORY CHURCH.



Fig 19.

Walton Adams & Sons, Reading.
Interior of Tower.

SHERBORNE PRIORY CHURCH.



Walton Adams & Sons, Reading
West Tower Arch.

Fig. 20.

SHERBORNE PRIORY CHURCH.



Fig. 21.

Interior and Upper Windows of Tower.

Walton Adams & Sons, Reading

SHERBORNE PRIORY CHURCH.

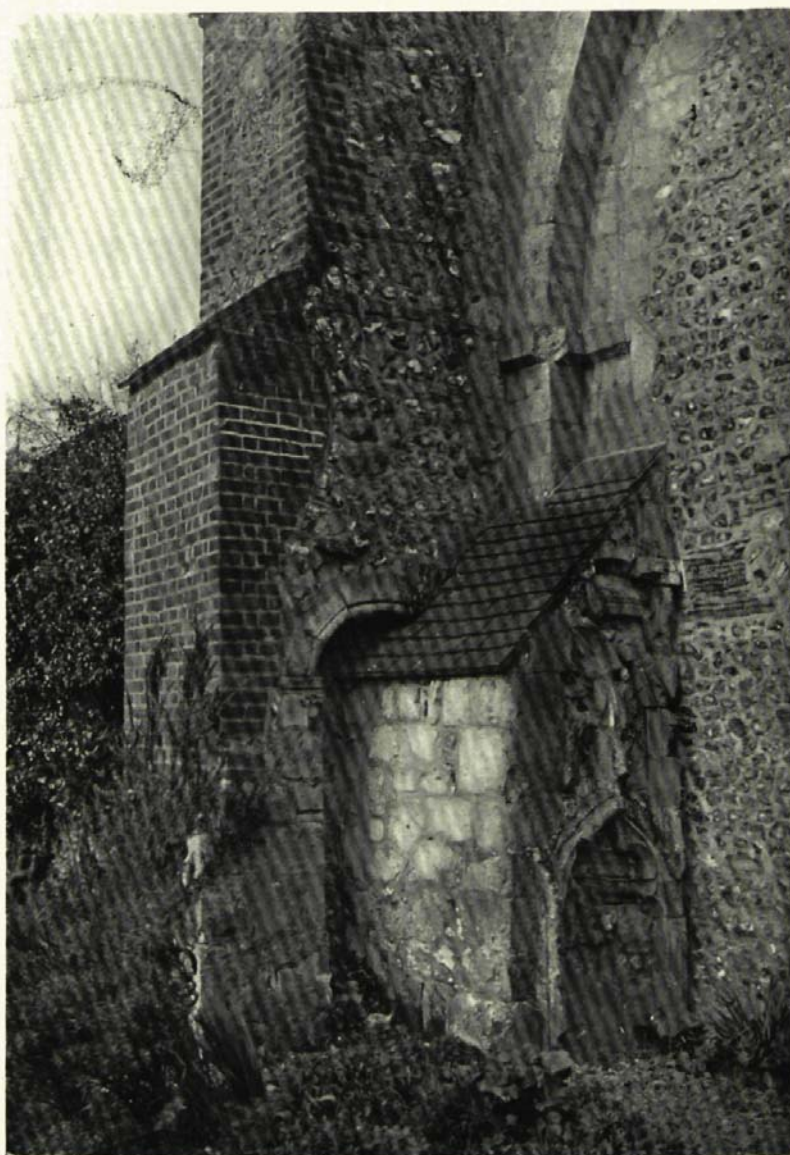


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Fig. 22.

The Tower.

SHERBORNE PRIORY CHURCH.



Walton Adams & Sons, Reading.

Fig. 23.

Various Fragments, South Side of Tower.

SHERBORNE PRIORY CHURCH.



W. H. B. ADAMS & SONS, LTD.

From the North East.

Fig 24.

plain base. There are five leaves on one side and four on the other side of the stem. It is of much the same date as that adjoining it, and may be assigned to the latter part of the twelfth century. Set up against the north wall of the Chancel, and recently moved from the adjoining floor are two more coffin lids (Fig. 9) with cross flory on plain stem and calvary. The eastern one has a double bevilled verge and is somewhat larger, 6ft. 7in., than that to the west of it, 6ft. 3in. Both these date from the early 13th century. Of the other coffin lids the two earliest are placed within the east on south chantry arch and against the north tower wall respectively. Both are of small size, the first named 2ft. 4ins., the second 4ft. 9ins., and have the battle axe pattern forming the Maltese Cross in the head and are certainly of 12th century date. The head of another slab with cross similar to the slab with the inscription, and 2 feet across, is placed against the wall near the Norman mortar or font, which itself rests on portions of other coffin lids. Within the chantry arches on the north side are preserved parts of three other coffin lids, and within each arch is a large stone chest or coffin the east with patriarchal cross on the lid 6ft. 10ins. in length, and the west with floriated cross 7ft. 4ins. long, the largest of the series. Within the recesses on the south side are two more stone cists or coffins with crosses on the lid, the eastern one 6ft. 4ins. long enriched with a very good early cross flory in excellent preservation, the western one being now concealed by the fine wooden effigy which has subsequently found a resting place there. Half of another large slab is preserved here. All these are composed of grey, probably of Purbeck marble, and are apparently not later than the early part of the 13th century. May they not commemorate some of the Priors and Monks as well as those benefactors referred to in the Act of 1475, who contributed towards the building of the Choir, and otherwise augmented the revenues of the Priory in its earlier and more prosperous days. In the western chantry arch on the south side of the nave is the very fine wooden cross legged effigy of a knight (Fig. 17), traditionally reputed to commemorate John de Port, the son of the founder, and who confirmed to the Priory the

endowments and privileges conferred upon it by his father. The effigy (Fig. 18) is 6ft. 9ins. in length and in good preservation. The knight is represented with a low rounded helmet, almost a bascinet, with camail, and head resting on two pillows. He wears the leather surcoat, has his hands clasped on his breast, the legs crossed right over left, and feet resting against a large lion. His mutilated sword, attached to a belt, is on his left side. There are no remains of link or chain mail, but it is probable that the effigy was formerly either painted or overlaid with enamel or some other material, and that in this way the details of the armour were portrayed. The figure lies on a flat wooden slab, the whole being carved out of one solid block of wood. The date of the effigy is very much later than the benefactor it is alleged to represent, and has been assigned by one of our leading authorities to about the year 1320, or early in the 14th century.

There are several large ledger stones on the chancel floor, one a blue stone to Samuell Wheat, 1703, and Susanna his wife, 1691, a second to John Wheat, 1706, and a third with the inscription illegible. Within the Chancel rails are two more, that on north with the following epitaph:—

Here sleepeth

Mr. James Tyrrel

son of the Rev^d. Mr. Rich^d.

Tyrrel Rector of Ewhurst

and Barbara his wife

Who departed September

the 2nd 1742. Aged 26.

I am not dead but asleep.

A Power Divine these sleeping atoms can
awake, unite and raise me up again.

That on north side:

Infra dormit Barbara pia

fidelis et dilecta Uxor

Richardi Tyrrell

Rectoris de Euhurst

Prudens familiae Moderatrix

1749.

On the north wall of the Chancel is a brass plate, with the following inscription :

IN THE NAME OF GOD AMEN.
 I THOMAS SYMPSON OF SHERBORN ST JOHN IN THE COUNTY OF
 SOUTHTON MOVED BY THE GRACE OF GOD DOE GIVE BY MY LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT UNTO THE POOR
 OF SIX PARISHES THE SUM OF FIFTEEN POUNDS YEARLY & EVERY YEAR SOE LONG AS THE WORLD SHALL
 ENDURE TO BE HAD AND REC^d OUT OF MY LAND IN MUNK SHERBORN KNOWN BY THE NAME OF HILL HOUSE
 AND OUT OF MY LAND AT BAGEHURST LATE EDMUND HULCUPS TO BE EQUALLY DIVIDED IN EQUALL
 PORCONS THAT IS TO SAY A SIX PART BEING TWO POUNDS TEN SHILLINGS TO SHERHORN ST JOHN A SIX PART
 TO MUNK SHERBORN A SIX PART TO LAURANCE WOTTON A SIX PART TO BAGEHURST A SIX PART TO PAMBER
 AND A SIX PART TO TADLEY. I FURTHER DESIRE THE MINISTER OF EVERY PARISH HEREIN MENC^dONED TO TAKE
 UPON HIM TO BE A STEWARD OF THIS MY LAND TO LET & IMPROVE THE SAME. AND THAT THE MINISTER
 & THE CHURCH WARDENS SEE THE HALF OF THIS MONEY EQUALLY DIVIDED AT EVERY THE SAID PARISH
 CHURCH ON THE DAY OF ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE AND THOMAS A BECKET AND WHAT OVERPLUS
 SHALL HAPPEN OUT OF THIS MY LANDS MORE THAN FIFTEEN POUNDS PER ANNUM, I WILL & DESIRE THAT
 IT BE EQUALLY DIVIDED AMONGST THE POOREST OF MY KINDRED.

PAYABLE ONE YEAR AFTER MY DECEASE.

PUBLISHED IN Ye 26th YEARE OF THE RAIGNE OF KING CHARLES Ye and
 ANNO D 1674.

A similar plate with, it is believed, exactly the same inscription, is preserved in each of the Churches of the Parishes participating in the benefaction. It is singular that one of the dates for payment of the dole should be the day of Thomas a Becket (December 29th), a saint whose name had been expunged from the Calendar.

The tower (Fig. 19) is supported on four wide and rather low semicircular arches, and is no doubt a portion of the original Norman edifice. The west arch formerly opening to the nave, and the north and south to the transepts, are now blocked up, most probably at the suppression of the Priory and the demolition of these portions of the Church in 1415. The eastern arch is plain on its eastern face with two plain reveals on massive chamfered abacus and plain jambs, much renewed. On its west face, is a plain chamfered hoodmould and engaged roll to outer, and plain chamfered edge to inner, order. The hoodmould is continuous round the four arches. The north and south arches have the hoodmould and two plain chamfered orders on the interior, and two plain reveals without the hoodmould on the transept, sides. The western arch has on the east face a groove on the hoodmould, half round to outer, and plain chamfered inner, order. The west face is similar (Fig. 20) though the roll moulding is bolder. All the arches are supported on a massive chamfered abacus, and plain jambs. Within the northern arch has been inserted a plain lancet light, and within the western arch a large window, now blocked up. There is also a walled up semicircular arch, about 7 feet above the floor level, which seems to have communicated with the doorway in the turret leading to the belfry stage. Within this arch is preserved the circular rim of a holy water stoup, and a small portion of a cross coffin lid. Above the main arches on each side, are three widely splayed semicircular headed arches, (Fig. 21) the middle one blind, the outer with small semicircular window openings, all have a small roll in a hollow of the arch, supported on engaged shafts with early foliated capitals. These and the wooden ceiling, which may be partly old, have been opened out so as to be visible from the

ground. There are four bells, two the treble and the tenor recast, the former made in 1598 and recast in 1851, and the latter made in 1579 and recast in 1850. The second has a coin inscribed on it and the date 1579 and the following invocation "that has sent us thy holy word." The third has also a coin, the name of the bellfounder Joseph Carter, with his mark and date 1582, and inscription "O Lorde ever for thy holy name."

On the exterior (Fig. 22) on the north west side of the tower is a large buttress supporting a plain turret. On this is a semicircular arch formerly opening to a passage leading through to the north transept. Above this and about seven feet from the ground is a semicircular headed doorway, opening to a very good stone newel staircase leading up to the belfry stage. There are one or two small blocked windows. No doubt this could only have been approached by a ladder, and this arrangement made in consequence of the passage through to the transept, which gave access from the nave, without having to encroach on the more private part of the Church. The upper part of the tower has a conical roof covered with red tiles, and a dormer window on the north and south side.

As has been stated only the lower part of the south wall of the nave now remains. This wall extends 93 feet from the west tower arch, but in the measurements given in the Victorian County History, only 65 feet is allowed for the length of the nave, the remaining portion, it is alleged, having supported an annexe attached to the south west angle. The wall is much overgrown with ivy, but there are remains of a buttress and of two doorways opening from the former cloister court. The western has had a lofty arch recessed in two orders, but all the sculptured stones have been picked out. The eastern jamb of the eastern doorway remains with part of chamfered arch and foliated capital, of late Norman design. The foundations of the cross wall remain at the west end. Incorporated in a buttress on the south side of the tower, is part of a semicircular headed arch, with roll in the head and early foliated capital and late form of abacus, also some portions of a 15th century window, and other fragments (Fig. 23).

On both north and south sides of the Chancel the eavescourse of the roof of the Chantry Chapels is still visible on the exterior wall, as are also the segmental headed arches. The Chancel windows are comparatively plain (Fig. 24) with a rebate, and chamfered edge to outer moulding. There are low graduated buttresses at the east end. The roof is covered with red tiles. The outer south chancel doorway has been renewed. The walls are very thick, that of the nave is composed of large flints, those of the chancel of flint and rubble which seems to have been overlaid with roughcast some of which still remains.

Such is an attempt, perhaps not very successful, to illustrate the architectural features of this remnant of a once noble Priory Church, contributed as a small token of gratitude by the writer for the honour conferred upon him of being for two years the President of the Hampshire Field Club and Archæological Society.