

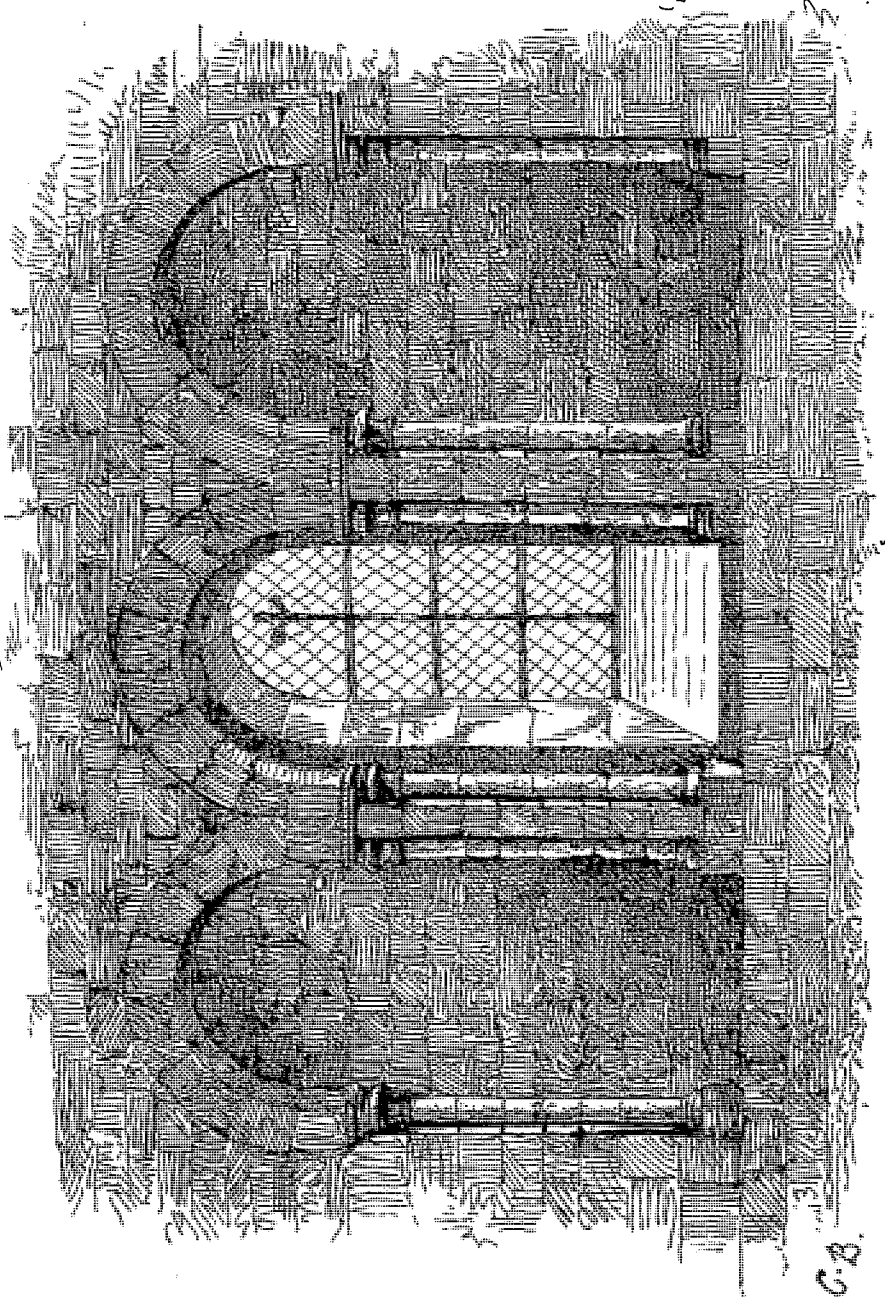
Archæologia Cantiana.

SOME ACCOUNT OF THE REMAINS OF THE PRIORY
OF ST. MARTIN'S, AND THE CHURCH OF ST. MAR-
TIN-LE-GRAND, AT DOVER.

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BEFORE I enter upon a description of the remains of this Priory, which I had undertaken to prepare for the meeting of the Kent Archæological Society, held at Dover in 1860, I feel it right to say a few words respecting the circumstances under which I have been enabled, though previously a stranger to this locality, to trace out the ground-plan of the church, and of some of the chief monastic buildings, so far as it could then be ascertained. It is desirable that I should state these particulars, even though perhaps somewhat more in detail than would usually be thought necessary, because as a great part of the site of this Priory has since been laid out in streets and covered with houses, and many of the then existing fragments of walls have been also swept away, for the erection of modern buildings, there will not be again the same opportunity for exploring these remains, or for testing the accuracy of the plan which I have laid down.

In the autumn of 1845 I happened to spend a few



ST MARTIN'S PRIORY. DOOR. A ROAD IN REFECTORY.

G.A.

days at Dover. I had on former occasions gone over the Castle, and seen those remarkable remains of buildings of great antiquity which are enclosed within its precincts, but I had never had an opportunity for examining the many other objects of archæological interest which exist in various parts of the town.

I soon found out the extensive remains of buildings of an early date near the entrance upon the Folkestone road, which I was informed were the ruins of St. Martin's Priory. The most prominent was an edifice, in the later Norman style, about 100 feet in length, and of corresponding elevation, now used as a barn for the adjoining farm premises. This is generally considered to have been the refectory of the Priory. In front of this was an area of considerable dimensions, enclosed on the east and south by modern walls, built on old foundations, and on the west by a wall, with the remains of arches, which clearly indicated the site of some of the principal monastic buildings. This, no doubt, was the court usually enclosed within cloisters. The ground on the east of this area, which has since been laid out in streets and rows of houses, was then a field, covered in many parts with scattered blocks of masonry, while here and there the foundations of walls were exposed, or might be detected by the turf, with which they were covered, rising above the surface. But it was very difficult to form any distinct idea of the character of the buildings which formerly occupied this site; it seemed, however, most probable that part of the Priory Church stood in this direction.

A row of houses was then being built at a little distance on the south of the area before referred to, and this had caused several interesting remains, apparently belonging to the nave of the church, to be exposed to view. I was told that it was intended in the following year to extend this line of houses over a great part

of the adjoining field. I made several inquiries in the town as to the character of the buildings which it was understood, by local tradition, had formerly existed on this spot, but I could obtain no satisfactory information. It seemed then to me very desirable that an effort should be made, while the ground was being excavated for the erection of these houses, to trace out the site of the chief part of these monastic buildings, so that some record of them might be preserved before they were entirely obliterated.

I accordingly determined to make the attempt at once, so far as I might then be able; and having got much useful information from the workmen as to the exact site, and description of the blocks of stone, which they had dug up in different parts for materials for building the adjoining houses, and having obtained permission from Mr. Coleman, the occupier of the farm, to open the ground in a few places where it might be required, I succeeded in the course of a few days in tracing out the foundations of a church of very considerable dimensions, with its nave and side aisles, the piers for supporting a central tower, the transepts, with double apsidal chapels, and what may be presumed to have been the chapter-house, adjoining the north transept. I was obliged to defer the investigation of the plan of the choir and the eastern portion of the church, till some future opportunity. In the meanwhile Mr. Ayers, who was building some of the adjoining houses, kindly offered to take notes and measurements of such parts as I might desire, while the ground was being opened for carrying on his works.

In the following summer I took an early opportunity for going again to Dover. I found that a considerable change had been already made in this locality. A roadway had been formed directly over the transepts and across the nave, since called Effingham Street, thus pre-

cluding any further researches in this part. But the new line of houses which had been commenced on the south side of what is now called Saxon Street, had caused a considerable portion of the foundations of the walls of the side aisle of the choir, and part of what I presume to have been the Lady Chapel, to be laid open. And in the following year, when I went again to Dover, this was completed by the excavations for the houses on the north side. During these repeated visits I had also opportunities for carefully examining and tracing out what remained of the other portions of the monastic buildings; and I have thus been enabled to prepare the accompanying ground-plan of the church, and the principal part of the adjoining buildings of this ancient Priory, which I have every reason to believe is correct in all the leading points, so far as could then be ascertained.

In regard to the history of the Priory of St. Martin, the circumstances under which it was founded, and the period when the greater part of the buildings were erected, I cannot do better than give a short abstract of what is stated in Dugdale's 'Monasticon' and Hasted's 'History of Kent,' for I have not been able to refer to any other sources for information.

The records connected with the establishment of this Priory carry us back to a very remote period in the history of the monastic institutions in this country. A church, or chapel, is said to have been built within the walls of the Castle, adjoining the Roman Pharos, as early as in the time of the Romans, for the use of that portion of the garrison, which had been converted to the Christian faith. However this may have been, it appears certain that a church existed within the precincts of the Castle, and that a college with twenty-two secular canons had been founded by Eadbald, the son and successor of Ethelbert, King of Kent, previous to

the year 640. Here the canons continued till the latter part of the seventh century, when, according to Tanner, about the year 696, Wictred, or Withred, King of Kent, finding the residence of a religious body within a military fortress inconvenient, removed them to a new locality in the valley beneath, in the town of Dover, where he had built for them the Church of St. Martin. This was most probably on the site of the ruins of St. Martin-le-Grand, which stand on the west side of the market-place, though the remains which are now to be seen evidently belong to a later date, showing that the church must have been rebuilt about the middle or end of the eleventh century. Some account of these remains, with a ground-plan of the eastern part and the apsidal chapels, will be given at the end of this paper.

The canons seem to have had the same franchises and privileges granted to them in their new locality, which they had enjoyed in the Castle. They were not to be subject to any prelate or ordinary, but only to the King: the church being esteemed, as before, the King's chapel, and subject to his peculiar jurisdiction alone. And it remained in nearly the same state at the time of the Conquest, except that, whereas in the reign of King Edward the Confessor the prebends belonging to it for the support of the canons, were held in common, in the reign of King William they were made separate to each canon, through the influence of Odo, Bishop of Baieux, who had been appointed Governor of the Castle of Dover.

Nothing further of this monastic establishment worthy of notice occurs, so far as I am aware, till the reign of King Henry I., who, being present at the new dedication of the Cathedral Church of Canterbury, in the year 1130, on a representation made to him by Archbishop Corboil, of the state of this collegiate church at Dover, granted it to him, and the Church of Christ in Canter-

bury, with all belonging to it, for the placing therein of canons regular of the Order of St. Augustine, the abbot of which should be appointed by a free canonical election of the chapter itself, subject to the Archbishop's confirmation; and the church was to be placed under the control and protection of the Archbishop.

In consequence of this grant, the Archbishop, who had found the canons guilty of great irregularities, turned out those who were then upon this foundation; and in order to prevent future grounds of complaint of misconduct, which might be promoted by their living in the middle of the town, which had spread round the monastery, he began in 1131 to lay the foundations of another collegiate church, without the walls of the town, which was called the "New Work," and which he dedicated to St. Mary and St. Martin, intending to add every building necessary for the accommodation of a society of canons from the Abbey of Merton. But this arrangement was vehemently opposed by the canons of the convent at Canterbury, who claimed a right to send monks from their own house, and constitute a prior over them. On the death of Archbishop Corboil, his successor, Archbishop Theobald, finished the buildings of the Priory at Dover, in the year 1139. But instead of regular canons, he established in it a society of monks of the Benedictine Order, from his own priory, with Asceline, sacrist of Christ Church, to be prior over them, making them subordinate to the Priory of Canterbury; and this being done by the Archbishop, with the consent of the chapter of his metropolitan church, was confirmed by Papal bulls. Continual dissensions arose as to their respective jurisdictions and privileges, but it was eventually settled, that it should be as a cell to the Priory of Christ Church, Canterbury, the two houses being independent of each other as to their revenues and expenditure, but the Priory of Canterbury having

the regulation and superintendence of St. Martin's, and supplying it from time to time with a prior and other members from their own foundation.

In this state it remained till its suppression in the 27th of Henry VIII., 1535, when, by the management of the King's commissioner, sent for that purpose, it was voluntarily surrendered, with all its lands, revenues, and possessions, by the prior and sixteen monks, into the King's hands. After its suppression, the King granted the site of the priory, with all the lands, possessions, and estates belonging to it, to the Archbishop of Canterbury and his successors, subject to certain payments and exceptions.

The date, then, of the foundation of this Priory, and of the erection of a considerable portion at least of the buildings, is clearly ascertained, viz. between the years 1131 and 1139. It appears also, from certain documents referred to in Dugdale's 'Monasticon,' that Archbishop Corboil was greatly assisted in his work by a grant from King Henry I. of a quarry at Caen, in Normandy, from which the stone was supplied for the earlier portions of the buildings. And this quarry is said to have been known for many years after by the name of the Quarry of St. Martin. The Caen stone dressings of the walls of the refectory are still generally in very good condition, though they have been exposed to the action of the atmosphere for upwards of seven hundred years; and the same kind of stone was found to have been extensively used in the remains of the church and the adjoining monastic buildings.

In regard to the more important subsequent additions to the buildings, of which any record has been preserved, it appears, on the authorities referred to by Dugdale, that the bakehouse and brewhouse were erected in 1231: the site however of these can only now be a matter of conjecture. A grant of £100 was made by King

Richard III., in augmentation of the buildings of the Priory. The gateway may probably have been erected about 1320. It appears also that the cloisters were rebuilt about the year 1484, as Hasted refers to a will proved in that year, in which a bequest of 13s. 4d. was left toward the making of "*The New Cloyster*" there.

I will now proceed to give some account of the remains of this Priory.

On the south side stands the gateway in the Early Decorated style, the lower part of which is in good preservation, leading into an area of very considerable dimensions, now chiefly occupied by a farmhouse, with the usual out-premises. At a little distance, on the right of the gateway, are the remains of the Priory Church, with its nave, transepts, choir, and Lady Chapel; on the north of the nave was an area about 110 feet square, now used as a stack-yard, with its modern boundary wall, built in part on the foundation of the walls of the church, which it is presumed was an open court, surrounded by a cloister. On the east side of this was the chapter-house, with a line of buildings extending a considerable way beyond the refectory, being no doubt used for what we may call the domestic purposes of the Priory. This is now covered by Effingham Street. On the north of this court was the refectory, still in most parts in good preservation, except where some portions of the walls have been taken down to put in the present barn-doors. On the west are traces of other buildings extending from the wall of the church beyond the end of the refectory. These may probably have been the dormitory, library, buttery, and other buildings usually placed on such a site. Behind the refectory may be traced the foundations of other buildings, and the remains of a wall, with one or more doorways, extending across the farmyard to a remarkable building at the back of the farmhouse, the use of which it is not easy to determine, but which I

will, for the present, venture to call the Strangers' Hall. On the left of the gateway are some buildings in the Early English style, now used as granaries, and probably originally constructed for that purpose. The whole of the premises belonging to the Priory seem to have covered a very large area, extending for some distance towards the street, which has been of late years made on the east side, and to have been surrounded by a wall, the greater part of which still remains. I was informed that the ground on the north-east side, at the end of Effingham Street, is described in old leases as the "Convent Garden." And as the names of localities are often handed down in this manner from a remote period, it is reasonable to suppose that this may have been the site of the garden of the Priory.

I propose to confine the remarks which I am about to offer, chiefly to the Church, the Refectory, and the Strangers' Hall.

The Church.—A great part of the foundations of the walls at the west end had been removed, but sufficient remained to mark the original termination of the church in this direction. The foundation of the wall on the north side of the nave is still entire, and the modern boundary wall is built upon it. The wall has been so much broken in one part, near the second arch from the west end, that it is probable there was a doorway on this side, leading into the church. The greater part of the foundations of the wall on the south side had been taken up, and the material used in erecting the adjoining houses, but the line could clearly be traced. The foundations of two of the pillars still remained, and the sites of some others were pointed out by the workmen, who had removed them for the sake of the Caen stone, so that there were sufficient data for laying down the ground-plan with general correctness. The dimensions of the base of the piers, and the spaces between them, corresponded

very nearly with those which were found still existing in the choir. So far as could be ascertained by the fragments which remained, the piers which supported the arches of the nave appear to have been blocks of masonry with small shafts at the angles, about 5 feet square. The length from the west door to the archway leading into the transept, seems to have been about 149 feet, the width of the centre portion about 30 feet, and of the side aisles about 15 feet, exclusive of the space occupied by the piers. The south aisle and a part of the centre of the nave are now enclosed within the boundary line of the gardens belonging to the adjoining houses. There is reason to believe, from the projecting masonry of the wall, and from the apparently greater size of the foundation of the pier near the west end, that towers may have stood on each side of the entrance into the nave. There seemed also to be some remains of the newel of a staircase in the north-west corner. These however were so uncertain that I have not marked them on the ground-plan. There were no remains to show whether the walls of the nave had pilasters, buttresses, and responds, like those of the choir.

The Transepts.—The bases of two of the piers which supported the central tower were still remaining, and the site of another was pointed out, from which the stone had been lately removed. They appear to have been about nine feet square.

The lower part of the walls of the double apsidal chapels in the north transept were found, when the earth was removed, to be still entire, so that the measurement could easily be taken. Those in the south transept had been in part removed, but sufficient remained to show clearly that they corresponded exactly with the others. The arches had been ornamented with small shafts. These apsidal chapels in the transepts are an interesting feature in the plan of this

church, as very few instances of them have been preserved in the Norman churches in this country. They closely resemble those in the eastern transept of Canterbury Cathedral, which was built only a few years before the date of this church, and from which they were probably copied. Similar apsidal chapels may also be seen in the remains of the Norman transept in York Minster, which were discovered a few years ago. According to the plan made by Mr. Ayers, when building the house which stands on the site of these chapels in the south transept, a doorway had existed in a somewhat unusual position in the adjoining outer wall, as shown in the ground-plan.

Effingham Street now passes over this part of the church and the adjoining chapter-house.

The Choir.—The greater part of the facing of the lower portion of the wall on the south aisle, externally, was found in such good condition, that the walls of the new houses on this side were built upon it. In fact, the plinth is in most parts left untouched, with the pilaster buttresses on the outside, and the responds in the inside, which served to point out the site of the pillars, as well as to show that the aisle had been vaulted. In the first bay were the remains of a stone bench, with an arcade resting upon it. The exterior of the wall of the north aisle, on which the boundary wall of the court in front of the houses on that side is built, has not, I believe, been laid open, but there can be no doubt that it would correspond with that on the south side. The facing of the interior had been entirely taken away on some previous occasion, except one small portion, which showed what was the width of the choir. There were no means for ascertaining whether a corresponding bench and arcade had existed on this side also.

There was every reason to believe that the pillars of the choir had been circular, resting on square bases;

for many fragments of Caen stone, cut into segments of circles, were dug up, which when put together seemed to fit the size of the bases. Responds, in half-circles, were also found. The side aisles were terminated by semicircular apses. The plan and dimensions of that in the north aisle could be clearly made out, and the greater part of the internal facing was entire. The inner stone-work had been taken away from that in the south aisle, but the excavations made on the outside, for the foundations of the adjoining houses, clearly showed that it had corresponded exactly with that on the north side. A similar termination of these side-aisles of the choir may be seen in Romsey church, Hants.

The extension of the choir eastward with a square termination is so unusual in Norman churches, that I was very anxious to examine its construction, and to ascertain whether it was part of the original design, or added at a subsequent period. But the ground in this direction could not then be opened. By the assistance, however, of Mr. Ayers, who kindly undertook to excavate and examine the construction of the walls as opportunities occurred in the course of his works, it was ascertained that there is every reason to believe it formed part of the original fabric; and it may probably have been the Lady Chapel, as the church was dedicated to St. Mary, as well as St. Martin.

If this has been correctly laid down, the eastern termination of this choir would correspond with that in the original design of the Trinity Chapel at the east end of Canterbury Cathedral, erected by Anselm about 1110, previous to the rebuilding of the present choir in 1175 to 1178, as shown by Professor Willis in his able description of that church.

It may be added, that several fragments of shafts of stalactite, or Bethesda marble, were found among the ruins of the church, such as may be seen in Canterbury

cathedral and in Hythe church; also a few glazed tiles, with patterns on them, which I was told had been laid in the pavement on wood ashes. Twenty-one silver coins were found in a hole in the outer facing of the wall of the south side of the choir, near the apse, some of the time of Henry I., and others of Henry II. I understood from the workman who discovered them, and who pointed out the place to me, that they were not laid in the foundation, but in a hole eight inches deep, about two feet above the base moulding, which was open, and that on putting in his hand he found them lying at the bottom. It would seem, then, that they had been concealed there at some period after this part of the church had been erected.

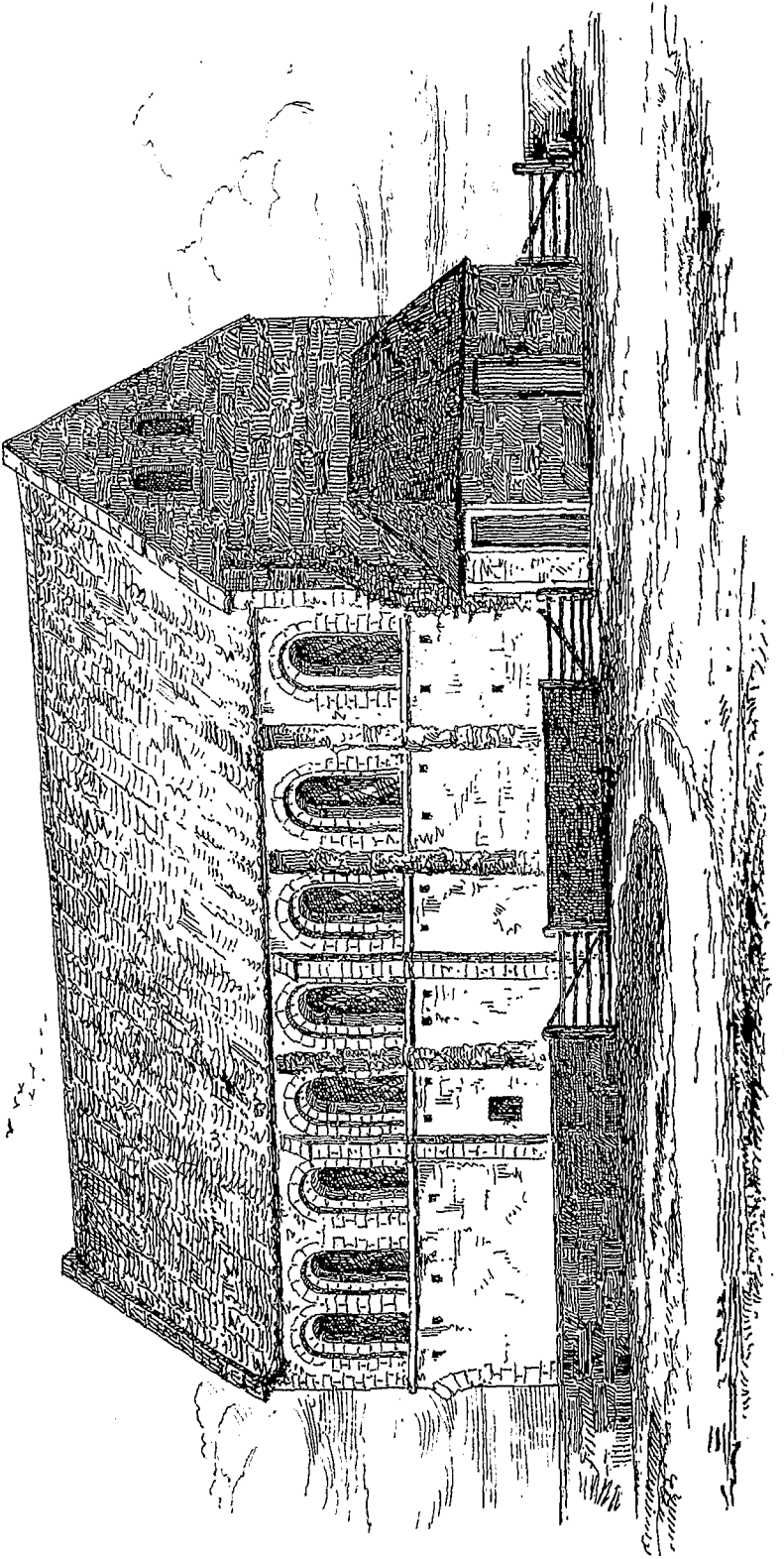
Chapter House.—This is in the same position as that at Canterbury, Norwich, and most other Norman conventual churches. The floor appeared to have been somewhat lower than that of the transept adjoining. The semicircular termination was clearly ascertained before it was destroyed to make room for the house, which has been built on part of this site. The external wall had pilasters, and some of the courses of stonework seemed to have been laid in a kind of pattern. There was no opportunity for ascertaining the exact position or dimensions of the doorway, which, it is presumed, was at the west end leading into a cloister, as that part is now covered by the street.

It is evident, then, from these remains which have been discovered, that the Priory Church, which formerly stood on this site, must have been an edifice of very imposing appearance, being about 280 feet in length internally, and 70 in width, with its side aisles, transepts, and central tower, and arches ornamented with shafts like those in the refectory. Whether towers may have been added at the west end cannot now perhaps be ascertained. In Hasted's 'History of Kent' there is a

print of the ruins of this church, as they appeared in 1799. But it is very difficult to connect them with the remains of the walls, which have been laid open. They are only a few fragments of walls of the eastern end of the church, with part of two tower arches, and they seem rather to belong to the ruins of the Church of St. Martin-le-Grand, near the market-place.

In regard to the buildings which stood on the east side of the court, between the chapter-house and refectory, it can now be only a matter of conjecture what may have been their designation. According to the usual arrangements in similar monastic institutions, the dormitory and library would be either on this side or the west, most probably on the latter. But this line of buildings, whatever may have been their original use, was of considerable length, as the foundations of two outer walls, about 29 feet apart, could be traced for about 140 feet from the chapter-house. There has obviously been a vaulted passage at the end of the refectory, and an apartment above of considerable size, the remains of which are still visible in the wall. At the north end of this line is another wall at right angles, extending about sixty feet, with projecting pilasters. This may possibly have been the prior's apartments, to which we know a small chapel was attached, and which are usually placed in some separate court, detached from the other monastic buildings; or it may have been the infirmary for sick brethren, which was a necessary part of all monastic establishments. That at Canterbury is in nearly the same position.

The Refectory.—This building no doubt owes its preservation to its having been converted into a barn. Notwithstanding the injury it has sustained, by making the modern doorways, and stripping some of the pilasters of their quoins, chiefly on the north side, for building purposes, it is still generally in very good condition, and the



ST. MARTIN'S PRIORY DOVER. - N.W. VIEW OF REFECTORY.

interior is very little altered. So far as I am aware, it is the oldest refectory remaining in England, still covered by a roof, which, though of later date, is apparently of nearly its original pitch. The annexed woodcut represents the north side, which is the most perfect.

The masonry is of flint, laid in alternate courses with ashlar. The pilaster buttresses, quoins, and heads and jambs to the windows, are of Caen stone. It has eight windows and six pilasters on the north, and the same number of windows, with seven pilasters, on the south side. The windows are plainly recessed, without head mouldings, and rest on a plain string course, with the upper angle chamfered off. The pilasters slightly project, and have no set-offs, except the string course.

The interior measures 100 feet by 27, and the walls, to the springing of the roof, are 26 feet high, and are plastered. It has evidently never been divided by a floor, but open to the roof, as at present. The lower part of the walls, to the height of about twelve feet, is entirely blank; but above this is a bold and lofty arcade, reaching up to nearly the spring of the roof, and carried along each of the four sides of the hall. The arches are quite plain and simply recessed, supported by shafts with plainly moulded capitals and bases. The two arches in this arcade on each side next the east end are pierced for windows, as if to give greater light for the high table; the others are pierced alternately for windows, which are deeply splayed. There are four arches at each end, but they are not pierced, as there were other buildings adjoining them. There are two small windows in the gable at the west end. At the east end, on the south side, is an aperture in the wall, divided by a stone slab, which no doubt was a locker or cupboard, where part of the plate belonging to the Priory was kept.

The original doorway was in the first bay on the

south-west side, but it has been blocked up on the outside, so that it is not easy at first sight to perceive the form of the arch, but in the inside it is quite perfect. There are traces also of an Early English doorway in the adjoining bay, which has also been walled up. Whether any other entrance may have existed on this side, where the present barn-doors have been inserted, cannot now be ascertained. A doorway seems also to have been made at the west end, now blocked up, which no doubt communicated with the kitchen and other offices usually adjoining the refectory at this part.

At the east end, where we may presume was the dais for the high table, there are traces of painting of a very early date on the wall under the arcade. It is apparently intended to represent our Lord and the Apostles at the Last Supper; but the colouring is so much decayed, that it is very difficult to make out the design satisfactorily. The position of thirteen figures, sitting, may be traced by a kind of nimbus round the head, which has been cut into the plaster. The centre figure is somewhat higher than the others, and the nimbus rather larger. This may be presumed to represent our Lord. The head of the figure sitting on the left leans towards it, very much in the same attitude as that in which St. John is represented in old paintings. The line of the table in front may clearly be traced, and some indistinct folds of drapery; while underneath may be seen the outline of the feet of some of the sitting figures, turned up. There are also some slight traces of ornament painted on one of the side walls. As this part of the building is usually filled with stacks of wheat, it rarely happens that this painting can be seen. But it well deserves a careful examination, as it is probably one of the oldest examples of this kind of decoration, used in the monastic refectories, existing in this country. I may observe that a fine specimen of paint-

ing, but of a later date, has recently been discovered in the *Guesten Hall* attached to the ancient monastic buildings belonging to the Cathedral of Worcester, and which formed a part of the old deanery. It should be noticed that the stone facing of one portion of the wall on the north side of the refectory is of a reddish tinge, such as may be seen in other buildings as the effect of fire.* It is obvious that a line of buildings has also been erected on the west side, extending from the nave of the church to a short distance below the refectory. A small projection in the wall of the church, and a corresponding one in the wall of the refectory, seemed to indicate the line of the front of this building; and on opening the ground at the upper end, the foundations of a wall were found. And it is most probable that the dormitory and library stood on this side. In regard to the library, wherever it may have been situated, I may mention, that a catalogue of the manuscripts which it contained, made by one of the monks in 1389, is in the Bodleian Library at Oxford. It is written on vellum leaves, and is in most parts in very good preservation. It contains the entry of a much larger number of volumes than is usually found in monastic libraries of that early date. The list embraces copies of Holy Writ, liturgical and devotional works, the fathers, schoolmen, classics, and many other works. This catalogue has been recently transcribed for Mr. Botfield, and will probably be printed with the other records of a similar nature which he has collected.

The Buttery, which is mentioned in the inventory of the goods found in the Priory at the time of its dissolution, referred to by Dugdale, as being "next to the

* Hasted states, from authorities to which he refers, that in the twenty-third year of King Edward I., 1295, the French landed at Dover, and burnt the greater part of the town and religious houses, among which was this Priory. It is probable that this may have caused the discolouring of the walls which we now see.

vawte where the monks do use to dine," was no doubt on this side, near the refectory; and the remains of walls which are left at the west end of the building, and on the north side, may have been connected with the kitchens or other offices. But this can now be only a matter of conjecture, founded on what is known of the usual arrangements in other monasteries.

The Cloisters.—I have ventured to assume, in the ground-plan, that cloisters had existed on at least three sides of this area, for we know that a "new cloister" was being built about the year 1484, from a legacy of 13s. 4d. being left in that year towards this work, as quoted in Dugdale's account; and such is the usual site in other priories. This seems to be confirmed, as regards the north side, by a line of holes under the string course below the windows of the refectory, which look as if they had been made for the purpose of fixing the framework of a roof. Similar holes may also be seen in the wall on the north side of the refectory, and may have been used for the same purpose of constructing a covered way to the adjoining buildings. There was no opportunity for opening the ground in this part, to see if there were any foundations of the walls of these cloisters remaining, for the whole of this area was occupied as a farmyard.

The Strangers' Hall.—We will now proceed to a remarkable building at the back of the farm-house, on the north side of the precincts of the Priory, which well deserves our notice. It is divided externally by buttresses into six bays, with a turret, as if for a bell, at the south-west angle, and there are doorways in third and sixth bay. The walls are chiefly of Kentish rag, with Caenstone dressings. The windows are pointed in the Early English style, with plain chamfers; but internally they have a semicircular arch. The middle portion of the outer wall at the west end projects considerably, with an

arch below, as if it had been intended for a recess for a fireplace. But it is difficult to assign a use for this, as the fireplace, which is a very wide one, is in the inside of this wall, and there is no appearance of any building having been added on the outside for which a fireplace would be wanted. Besides, there is only one flue in the chimney, which belongs to the fireplace within the building. Internally, the two eastern bays have been cut off some years ago to make offices for the adjoining farmhouse. The rest are now divided into pens for cattle, and other farming purposes. But it is clear that it must have been formerly one room about 85 feet long and 34 feet wide, including the side aisles, and open to the top of the roof. On the north side is a row of five arches, opening into what in some respects resembles the side aisle of a church; the space which is opposite to the present entrance had been originally filled up with a solid wall, with half pillars on each side, though now an opening has been made through it into an inner compartment. At the back of this wall, facing this inner chamber, there are the remains of a large fireplace, and a part of the chimney may be seen on the outside.

The shafts of the pillars are circular and of very good proportion, resting on square bases, with the angles cut off; and the capitals are a very elegant example of the Norman cushion-pattern. The abacus has the hollow chamfer and bead moulding which mark the later Norman style. The arches are slightly pointed, and have one sub-arch with a slight chamfer. These capitals and arches would form a beautiful model for a small church in the early transition style, and are well worthy of a careful study. I believe the same kind of capital may be seen in the Church of St. Margaret, at Cliffe, near Dover. But the question now arises, for what purpose was this edifice erected? And this it is not easy to answer. One point is however evident, that it was not de-

signed for ecclesiastical use as a chapel. The best suggestion that I can offer is, that it was the ancient *Aula Hospitum*, or hall for receiving strangers. There is reason to believe that the Benedictine monks who occupied this Priory, were required by the rules of their Order to provide food and lodging for a single night, not only for ordinary poor travellers, but also for a large number of pilgrims who used to pass through Dover on their way to and from France. And it may have been found desirable to place the building assigned for this purpose at some little distance from the rest of the Priory, in order to prevent strangers having access to the interior of the premises. This was the plan adopted for the Strangers' Hall at Canterbury, near the north gate. The Guesten Hall at Worcester also stands outside. In such case the compartment on the side of the main building with the fireplace, may have been required for the necessary arrangements. We know that these halls, as well as the refectories in the monasteries, were used not only for giving food to the poor, but also for supplying a sleeping place for travellers, as a kind of dormitory; and the side aisle may possibly have been intended for this purpose. If this suggestion of the Strangers' Hall is not admitted, the only other that I can submit is, that it may have been the infirmary, for the use of the monks; or the bakehouse and brewhouse, the *pistrinum* and *bracinum*, united under one roof. We know that buildings for these latter purposes connected with the ancient monasteries, were often constructed on a large scale; but the style of this building seems almost too early for the date, 1231, when we find, from a record quoted in Dugdale's 'Monasticon,' that a bakehouse and brewhouse for this Priory were built of stone and covered with lead.

The other remains of this Priory which are still left,—the gatehouse, in the Early Decorated style; the barns by the side of it, in the Early English style; and the

walls of a building near the guest-hall, of a much later date,—do not present any feature of special interest, and I therefore pass them over.

The whole of the buildings belonging to this Priory were evidently framed by Archbishop Corboil, on a somewhat grand scale, as if for a large monastic establishment, with ample endowments; but it appears never to have prospered, so far at least as regards its finances. In 1336, we find a petition was addressed to Edward III. for exemption from payment of tenths to the Crown, on the plea that their revenues were so much reduced, that they were not sufficient to maintain the priors and the monks. And in the Deed of Surrender of the Priory into the hands of Henry VIII. in 1535, previous to the dissolution, which is given at length in Hasted's History, they say that "considering the state of our house, and the small revenues belonging to it, and the great and heavy debt which oppresses and almost overwhelms us, and which can have no earthly remedy, we have by the King's permission, of whose foundation the said Priory now exists, consented that this Priory be totally annihilated, in spirituals as well as in temporals," etc. The revenues were valued at that time at £170. 14s. 11½*d.* clear, or £232. 1s. 5½*d.* gross annual income. There were then only sixteen monks in the Priory.

After the dissolution, a power was granted to use the materials of the buildings for the repair of the town gates and walls, as well as for erecting private houses.

I cannot close this part of my subject without expressing an earnest hope that in any extension of streets or buildings which may be contemplated on this site, some means may be taken for the preservation at least, if not for the restoration of the refectory. As I have before stated, I believe it to be the most perfect example of that kind of building in the Norman style remaining in England. The walls of flint and ashlar, with Caen-stone

dressings, are still generally in very good condition, though upwards of seven hundred years have passed since they were erected, and the injury which has been done in adapting it to its present use as a barn may easily be repaired. It would make a noble room for any public purpose for which such a hall might be required.

The history of St. Martin's Priory is so closely connected with that of St. Martin-le-Grand, which was founded, as I have before stated, about the year 696, in the town of Dover, that I may add a few observations on the remains of the church, which are still to be seen on that site.

There seems no reason to question the correctness of the tradition, which has uniformly pointed out the ruins of a church enclosed within a block of houses on the west side of the market-place, and so much hemmed in by buildings as scarcely to be noticed, as connected with this ancient monastery. But it seems very doubtful whether any portion of the present remains, though certainly of a very early date, belong to so remote a period as the end of the seventh century, as is usually supposed, and seems to be tacitly admitted by Hasted and other writers on the antiquities of Dover. These ruins are the remains of the Conventual Church, and are chiefly interesting as presenting a very early example of the introduction of projecting chapels round the eastern termination of the choir.

No record has been preserved, so far as I am aware, of any changes having been made, affecting the buildings of this monastery, during the period between its foundation and dissolution, about the year 1139; yet the construction of that portion which is left seems to show that the choir, at least, must have been rebuilt, probably very soon after the time of the Conquest. The style of architecture corresponds with what is familiar to

us as marking the early Norman period: the small chapels round the east end of the choir do not, I believe, occur in any remains of Anglo-Saxon churches, but correspond with what we find in all the early Norman churches in this country, as well as in France; and the walls are mostly faced with Caen stone, which I am not aware was ever brought over to England in any large quantities previous to the time of the Conquest. Now we know from the survey recorded in 'Domesday,' as quoted by Hasted, that soon after William the Conqueror had established himself in 1066, the greater part of the town of Dover was destroyed by fire; and as Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, had been appointed the Governor of the Castle, and appears to have endeavoured to promote the welfare of this monastery, by a re-arrangement in the distribution of its revenues, it seems not unreasonable to suppose that this conventual church may have been rebuilt about that period; and through his influence architects may have been employed for this work who brought over their designs from Normandy, as is said to have been the case with some of our other early Norman churches.

The remains of the church of St. Martin-le-Grand, as it was afterwards called, in contradistinction to the "New Worke" or St. Martin's Priory, are so scanty, and so mixed up with the adjoining houses, which have been built into them, that is not easy, at first sight, to make out to what parts of the fabric they belong. The accompanying ground-plan, however, which has been prepared after very careful examination and measurement of the several parts, so far as was practicable, will assist in tracing out satisfactorily what was the original design and arrangement of the choir and both the transepts. The nave has been for a long period used as a burial-ground for one of the adjoining parishes, and no part of the foundations of the walls has been of late years opened out, so far as I am aware, except a small por-

tion of the outer facing of the north wall, which now forms the side of a saw-pit. The parts in the plan marked with a darker shade, show the existing remains; those in outline supply such corresponding portions, as appear to be necessary for the construction, and symmetrical arrangement of the design.

The curved wall, of considerable height, blocked up by the buildings of a house by the side of the opening leading from the old market-place into the interior of these ruins, which is usually called a tower, is part of the central apsidal chapel, consisting of two stories, as may be seen by the remains of the vaulting which springs from the walls. A projecting building, of a similar shape covered with a modern roof, may be seen above the top of one of the houses on the south side, and a small fragment of a wall appears above the roof of a house on the north side. These indicate the remains of the two side chapels. A small portion of the outer wall of the north transept may be seen in Market Street.

In the interior, three of the arches on the north side of the choir are still standing in good preservation, with the triforium and some small remains of the clerestory over it. A considerable portion of the piers of the arch, which it is presumed supported the central tower, is also still left. The piers are solid blocks of flint rubble, with Caen stone dressings, about eight feet wide and six feet deep. The arches are semicircular, springing from a plain massive abacus, and are relieved by only one order, which is carried down the sides of the piers. The triforium is chiefly faced with Caen stone, and has the same kind of arches as below. The vaulting of a part of the north side aisle is left, made of solid pieces of tufa. It is evident that the projecting chapels were carried up into the triforium, from the remains of the vaulting in the central one, thus forming a double tier of chapels. In some instances windows have been inserted belonging

to a later period. Some portions of the outside walls of these side aisles may be seen from the courts of the adjoining houses, as is shown on the ground-plan. So far as could be ascertained, there were not any traces of projecting chapels in the transepts.

The remains of this church are interesting to the archæologist, as being one of the very few examples to be found in England of the three projecting chapels at the east end of the choir being left unaltered. In most cases, the central chapel was at some subsequent period removed, in order to add the Lady Chapel, or extend the choir. We have illustrations of this in Canterbury and Norwich Cathedrals, Westminster Abbey, and in some other smaller churches; but perhaps the best example is in Gloucester Cathedral, where the walls of the original central chapel may be seen in the crypt, below the entrance into the Lady Chapel, which was added about 1457; and the date of this part of the cathedral is, according to Britton's account, about the year 1090, which would probably be soon after the time when this church at Dover was built.

In the English churches we very rarely find that more than three of these chantry chapels have been placed at the east end; but in France there are often five, and sometimes as many as seven, as at Bayeux, St. Ouen at Rouen, and Amiens, but these usually belong to a later period, and most of them are still entire.

Another peculiar feature in this church is, that these chapels appear to have been constructed in the gallery of the triforium, as well as below. In this respect also it closely resembles the plan of Gloucester Cathedral, for there the triforium of the choir has its lateral chapels with their altars.

In regard to the history of this church after the suppression of the monastery, I may state, that it lost all its ancient privileges, and became a parish church, and con-

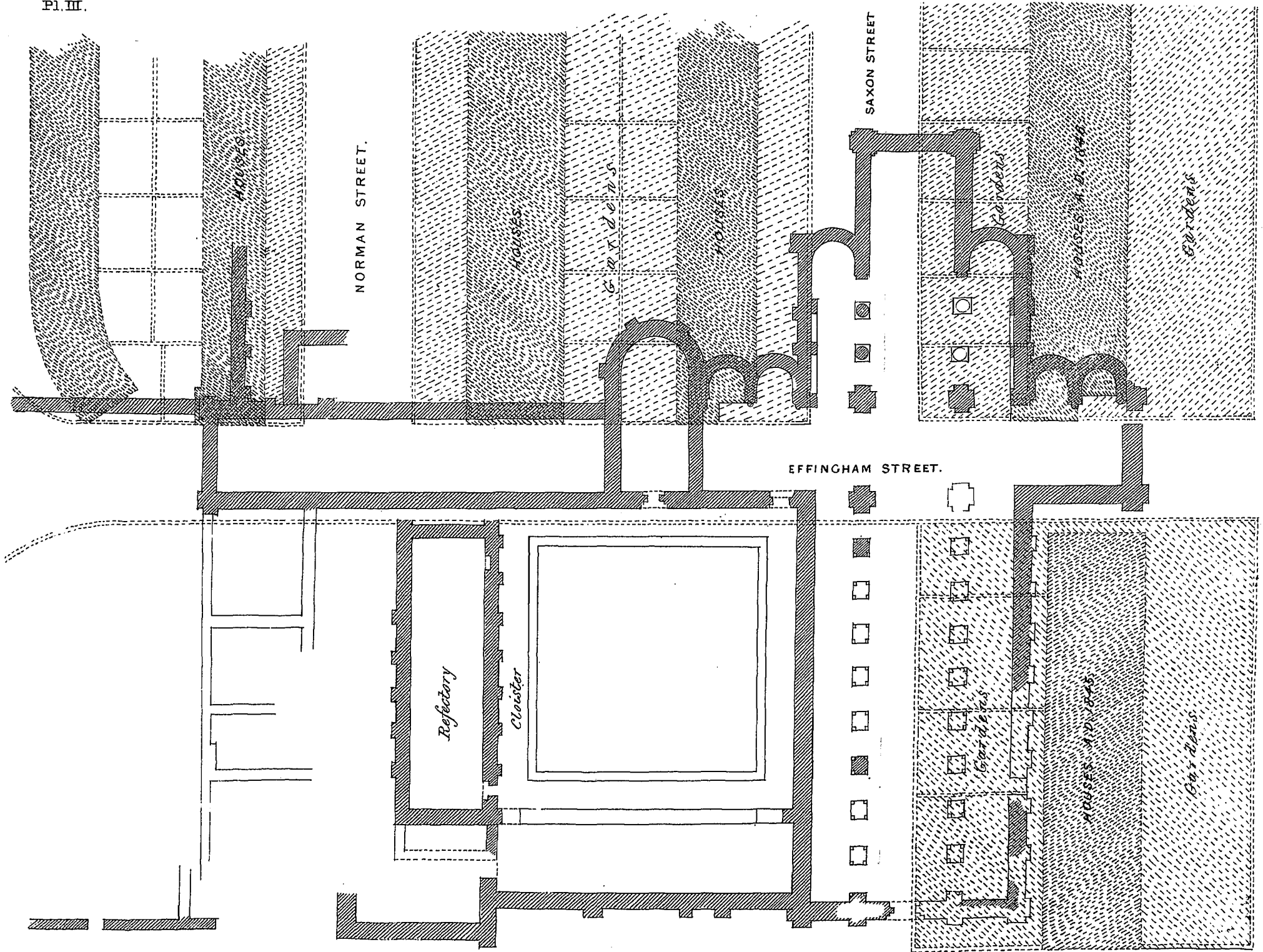
tinued so till the year 1528. It was most probably soon after desecrated, and the parish united to one of the adjoining parishes, for the fabric was taken down in 1536. I believe part of the wall of the south transept has been removed since this plan was prepared.

I have not attempted to enter fully into the history of these monastic establishments, or to give extracts from the various important documents which are referred to in Dugdale's 'Monasticon,' as this would much exceed my limits. I have confined my observations chiefly to what relates to the remains of the buildings; and these, I am well aware, are in some measure incomplete, as further investigation on several points is required, which I have not yet been able to effect. Sufficient however, I hope, has been accomplished to preserve a record of the general character both of St. Martin's Priory and of the Church which formerly occupied this site, before all vestiges of them shall be obliterated.

It only remains to express my regret, that circumstances have not allowed me to prepare this paper and the accompanying illustrations, in time to be inserted in the volume containing the account of the Meeting of the Kent Archæological Society, held at Dover last year, for which it was intended.

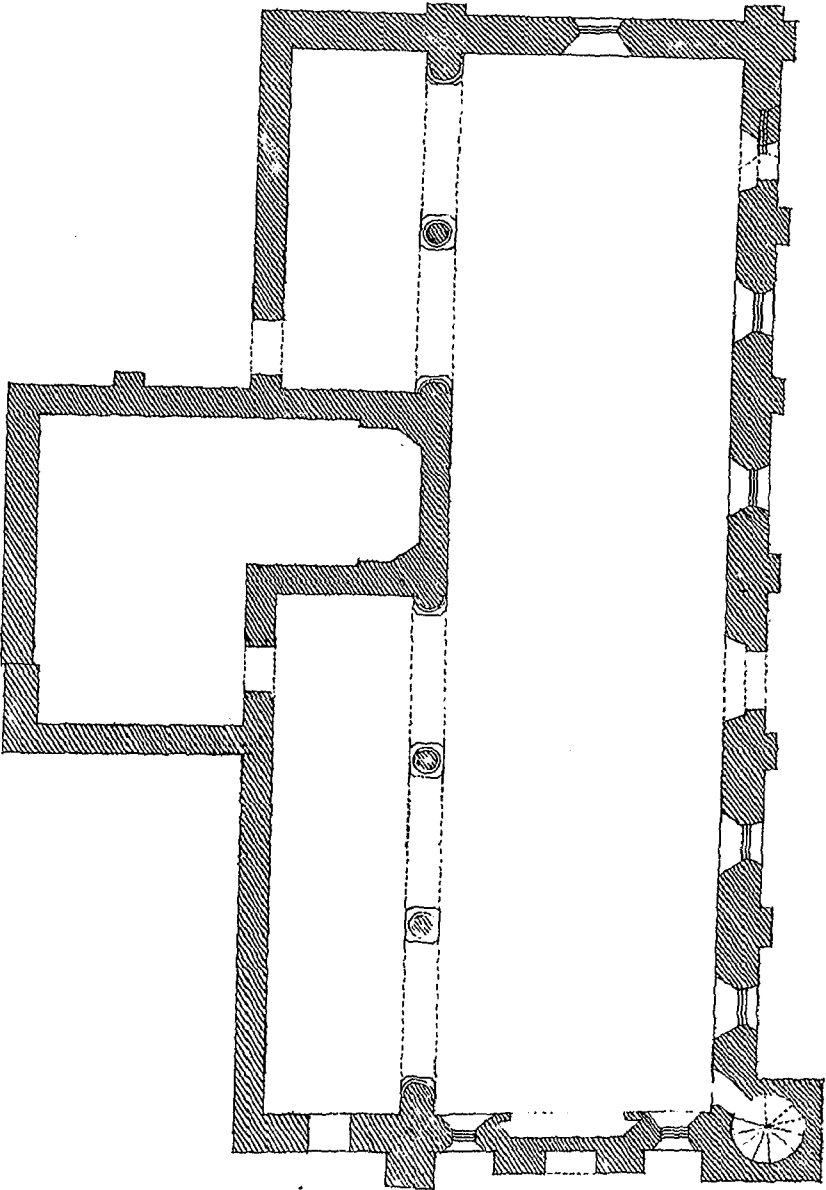
F. C. PLUMPTRE.

University College, Oxford.



GROUND PLAN OF ST MARTIN'S PRIORY DOVER.

10 5 0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100
Scale of Feet.

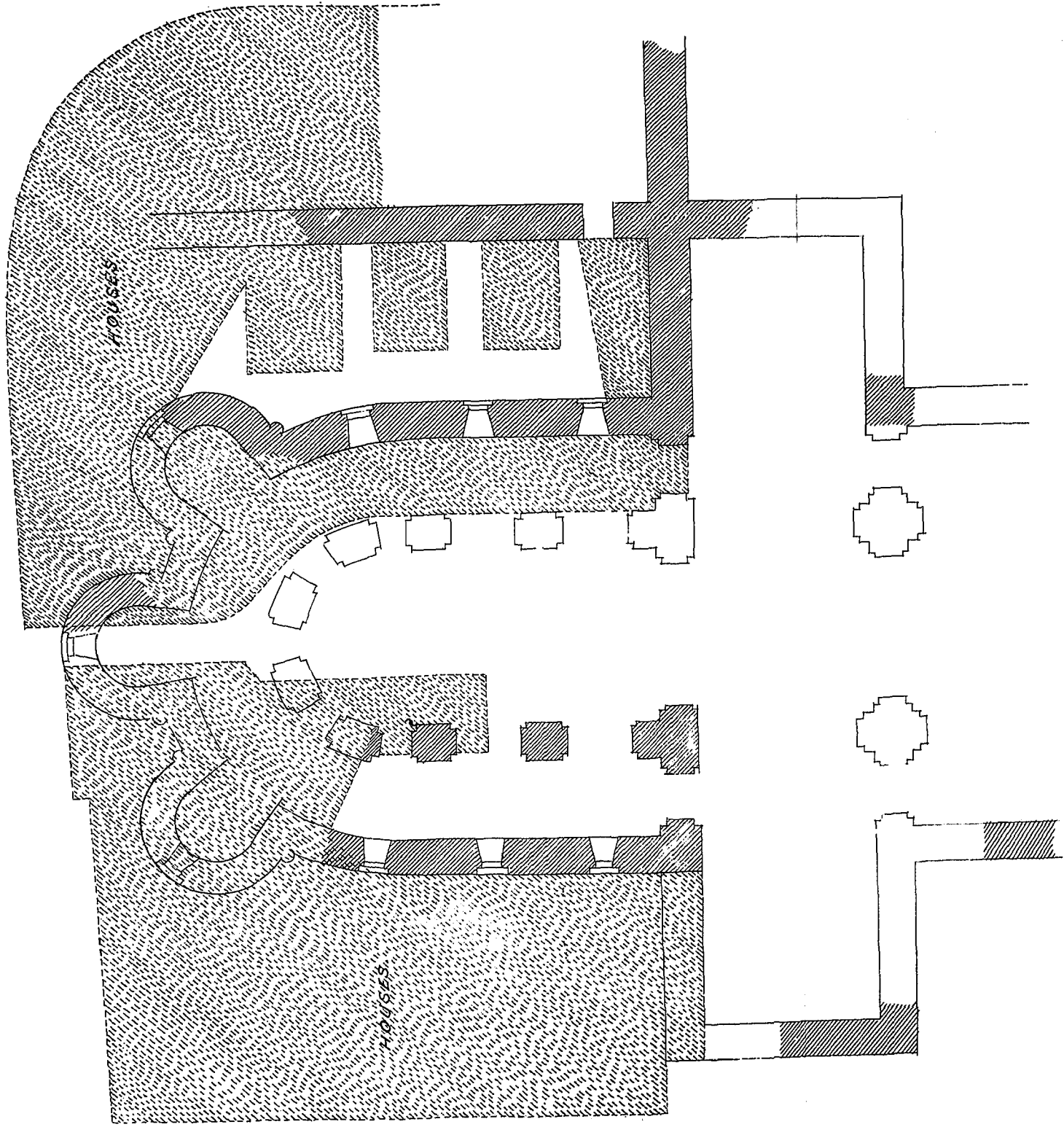


10 5 0 10 20 30 Feet.

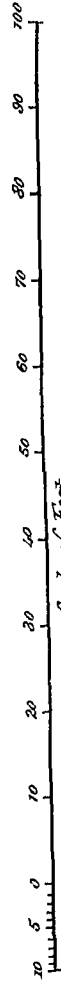
GUEST HALL, SAINT MARTIN'S PRIORY.

Nottingham's Rev.

MARKET PLACE.



MARKET STREET



ST. MARTIN-LE-GRAND. DOVER.