

THE HOSPITAL OF ST. MARY OF OS-
PRINGE, COMMONLY CALLED MAISON
DIEU.

BY CHARLES H. DRAKE.

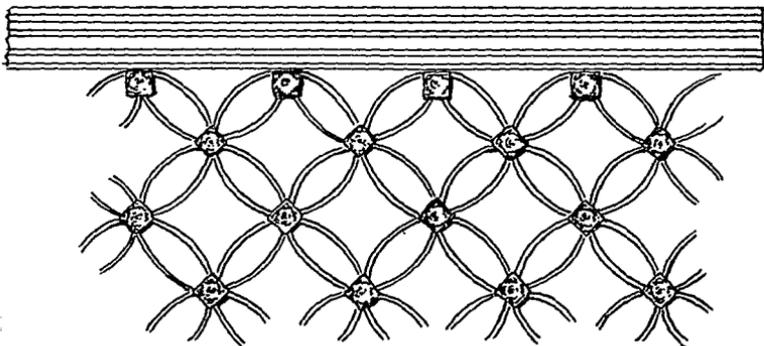
IN 1922 the old building on the south side of Ospringe Street, at the western side of Water Lane, was found, owing to defective drainage, to be unfit for human habitation, and in order to save it from demolition the parishioners of Ospringe, with considerable enterprise and the help of neighbours and others, including the Kent Archæological Society and the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, raised the sum required to purchase the property.

It has been vested in trustees, who, as soon as the place was vacated, cleared it of débris and removed a wooden partition which has exposed to view the whole of the fine plaster ceiling, portion of which is shown in the accompanying drawing.

[Attention must be drawn to the treatment of this ceiling ornament. It consists of two simple units, viz., first quadrants, which, repeated, form in the aggregate a diaper pattern of interlaced circles, and, secondly, a little square stamp, displaying a rose. This rose is introduced differently in the several parts of the composition. In the main portion of the ceiling the rose stamp is set diagonally at the intersection of the circles, whereas at the outer edges its position is changed and it is set square, to correspond with the line of the enclosing border moulding—an ingenious device which, without being obtrusive, yet adds considerably to the versatility and charm of the decoration.—Ed.]

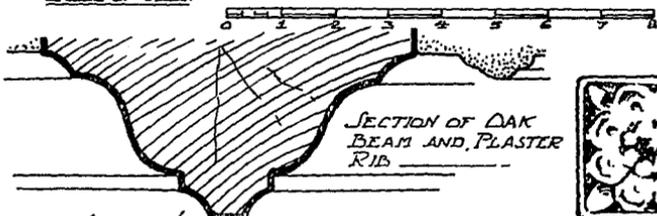
In the course of the clearing away the rubbish a stone chimney-piece was uncovered, together with two panels above it (see illustration).

The upper portion of the building is of much later date



ELEVATION OF CEILING.

Scale of Feet.



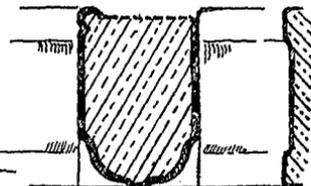
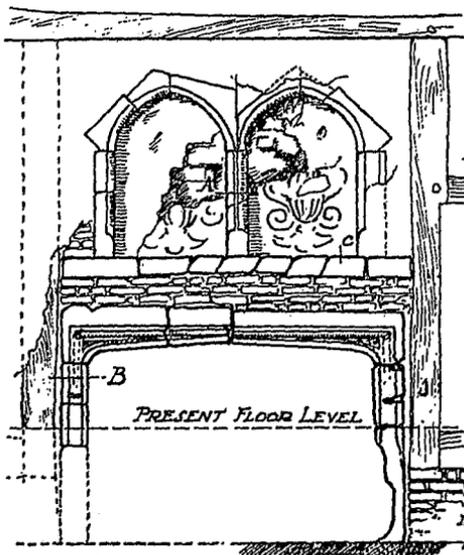
SECTION OF OAK BEAM AND PLASTER RIB



DETAIL OF PLASTER ROSE

Scale of Inches.

A.H.H.



SECTION AT A.



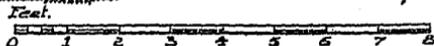
SECTION AT B

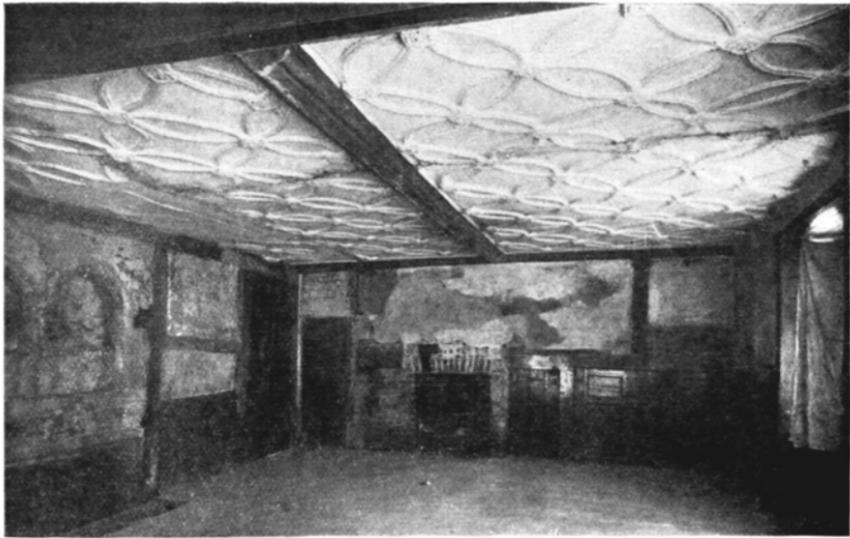
SECTION AT C



Scale of ELEVATION: Feet.

A.H.H.





MAISON DIEU, OSPRINGE.

Two views showing ornamental plaster ceiling.
Note the fireplace in the left hand side of the upper view.

than the Hospital; it was probably added in the latter part of the sixteenth century, and at the same time the fireplace was inserted. The opening is 5 ft. 6 in. wide and 3 ft. 11 in. high from the original floor level, which is much lower than the present wood floor. The bead moulding which originally ran round the whole has been hacked away from both jambs. Two horizontal hollows shown in the drawing may have been used for holding a spit.

The two panels above the fireplace are still later insertions; they are mostly of a brownish sandstone, and some of the material is re-used. Both recesses were originally decorated, and much colouring remains; the ground-work is grey, and in each panel was painted a vase filled with flowers and foliage—the colour of these is a shaded blue-outlined in black.

The recesses are 7 in. deep, and the bottoms are hollowed out to form a shallow channel 5 in. wide and about $\frac{3}{8}$ in. deep. There are some good timbers in the building, and the roof has an octagonal king-post.

The present shop fronts were inserted in 1895 in place of the original walling shown in Vol. XXX., p. 60. It is hoped that later on funds may be forthcoming for the restoration of the building to the appearance it formerly bore. The thirteenth-century door case was rescued by the writer after its removal, and has been carefully preserved. It is now stored on the premises awaiting a return to its old position or as near thereto as may be found possible.

A great deal needs to be spent upon the building to put it in a sound and fit condition. The roof has been repaired only where absolutely necessary, but a thorough overhauling and retiling is required.

The lower room has been cleared and partitioned off from the shop, which for the present is let by itself. The upper apartment has been cleaned and repaired and fitted with benches and cases, and has been utilised as a museum for the large and exceptionally interesting collection of Roman pottery and other articles from the recently-excavated cemeteries in the parish and near neighbourhood.

Already a large number of visitors have been attracted to the place, the key of which can readily be obtained on any week-day during reasonable hours.

My sincere thanks are due to Mr. A. H. Horsfield for the time and care he has spent in making the excellent drawings which accompany this paper.

The following notes have come into my hands (for the most part through the kindness of Mr. Arthur Hussey) since the publication of my *History of the Hospital* in Vol. XXX., to which they will serve as a supplement:—

On the 12th March 1239 (23 Henry III.), at Westminster. Inspeximus reciting a deed of sale (dated February 1239) between the Hospital of St. Thomas of Estbridge (Canterbury) on the one part and the brethren of St. Mary's Hospital, Ospringe, on the other part.*

Edward III. on 18 February 1329-30 granted a pardon to the Master and Brethren of the Hospital of Osprenge, for acquiring in mortmain:—

Lands in Wodnesbergh from Nicholas Pawel, and from Margery, widow of Richard Pawel.

Lands in Osprenge from Adam le Brewere, son of Roger le Sekersteyn, and from Hugh de Smaldane.

A yearly rent of a quarter and three bushels of barley in Osprenge from Adam de Estdane.

Land in Osprenge from Roger Logespeye. And entering thereon without licence:—by reason whereof the lands which are held in gavelkind have been taken into the King's hands. Release of the same to them to hold as of the yearly value of 20s., in part satisfaction of a licence from the late King, for them to acquire land and rents to the yearly value of 100s.†

5 August, 6 Edward III. (1332-3), at Canterbury. Licence in mortmain to the Hospital of Osprenge.‡

* C. H. Cooper MS., *Life of Lady Margaret Beaufort*, p. 170.

† Calendar of Pat. Rolls, 4 Edw. III., vol. 1327—30, p. 494.

‡ Cooper, p. 165.

22 February, 7 Edward III. (1333-4), at Westminster. Letters Patent granting pardon to the Hospital.*

24 September 1334. Ratification at the request of the Master and Brethren of the Hospital of Osprenge, of the Letters Patent dated 16 February, 4 Edward III. (1329-30), being a grant on the death of Robert le Messenger of Newenton who at the request of Edward II. had been granted sustenance for life from their house, that they should be quit of such sustenance for the future.†

Pope Clement VI. on 29 August 1344 gave indult to John de Lenham, rector (*sic*) of the House of God, Hosprenge, in the diocese of Canterbury, that he might choose his confessor, who shall give him, being penitent, plenary remission at the hour of death.‡

17 September 1342. Release to the Master and Brethren of the Hospital of St. Mary, Ospreng, of the foundation of the King's progenitors, from Fifteenths and Ninths of sheaves, lambs, fleeces and the wools lately granted to the King by the commonalty of the realm, as it has been testified to the King that without such relief the hospitality, chantries and other works of piety cannot be maintained.§

9 May, 23 Edward III. (1349), at Westminster. Pardon granted to Gunnora Hokyng of Ospringe.|| On the first day of the following January Gunnora was "made over" to John Drylonde, *temp.* Thome Newenham, Mag. Hosp.¶

Abstract of writ dated 16 April, 38 Edward III. (1364), to S. (Simon Langham), Archbishop of Canterbury:—

Whereas Henry III. gave (*inter alia*) by charter to the Hospital of St. Mary of Ospringe all the land which was of Alexander de Gloucester in Wingham, which land Henry III. had to assign to anyone he pleased by the gift and grant of Alexander; and whereas we are informed by Thomas, the master of the Hospital, that although the Hospital has

* Cooper, p. 165.

† Cal. of Pat. Rolls, 8 Edw. III., vol. 1334—8, p. 30.

‡ Cal. of Papal Letters, vol. 3, p. 179.

§ Cal. of Patent Rolls, 16 Edw. III., vol. 1340—3, p. 516.

|| Cooper, p. 166.

¶ *Ibid.*

held the said land from the time of its foundation in frankalmoign without doing any service to the Archbishop or his predecessors, yet you, by the tenants and bailiffs of your said town (? manor), have chosen the said master, reeve or bailiff to raise and collect the moneys and customary dues from your said manor (of Wingham), and compelled him by heavy distrains to assume the said office. We, considering the Hospital to have been founded by our great-grandfather of his charitable piety for the souls of himself, his predecessors and heirs, and that the Hospital ought to be quit of any such charges, command you to revoke the election and to desist from any similar election in the future, and if any reasonable cause exists against so doing, to make immediate return thereof into Chancery.

The Return—unsigned and undated:—

Thomas, Master of the Hospital of St. Mary of Ospringe, holds the tenements referred to in the writ, which, before its acquisition by the Hospital, were held of the Archbishop in right of his church by fealty and diverse services and customary dues, viz.: ploughing a certain portion of the Archbishop's land in his manor of Wingham, making malt, carting corn and other of the Archbishop's victuals from the manor of Canterbury, reaping a certain portion of corn by service of being bedel of the manor when chosen, and by rent and suit at the Archbishop's three-weekly (Manor) Court. The tenants are wont to choose a reeve at the Court next after Michaelmas each year.*

Thomas the Master would seem to be Thomas de Newenhams, 1349 . . . , who was still in office in 1364.

25 July 2 Richard II. (1378). Charter of Inspeximus reciting two former charters relating to the Hospital of Ospringe.†

28 July 1382. Grant to John Lonyn, chaplain, that he may be one of the King's Chaplains on a vacancy in the Hospital of Hospringe.‡

* Chancery Miscellanea, Bundle 20, File 41, Nos. 15 and 16. (P.R.O.)

† Cooper, p. 167.

‡ Cal. Pat. Rolls, 5 Rich. II., vol. 1381—85, p. 156.

The King (Richard II.) was at Ospringe on 22 January 1383-4.*

Paul de Dunton, who was Master of the Hospital in the latter part of Edward III.'s reign, and who resigned the office, would seem to be the Paul de Dunton who was Vicar of Crundale in July 1379, when he exchanged with Edmund Bingham to Brede in Sussex.†

30 January, 8 Richard II. (1385). Inspeximus of Charter of 1378, confirming and enlarging the same.‡

20 October 1401. Inspeximus and confirmation of a writing indented of John Carleton the Master, and the brethren of the House of God or Hospital of St. Mary, Osprenge, 10 May, 20 Richard II. (1397), granting for life to Sir Philip Wem, Rector of the Church of Crundale in Kent, a chamber situated by the gate of the garden of the hospital on the west side, and a corody. He shall have each week at the bakehouse 14 white loaves and 7 black loaves, and at the brewhouse 7 gallons of the best ale and 3½ gallons of the second ale, also flesh and fish and pottage daily, with a pittance at the kitchen twice daily, as the two senior Brethren of the Hospital have. Also a livery of woollen cloth yearly as good as the best brother of the Hospital has; and the Master and Brethren shall carry to his chamber two cartloads of their wood called "loif" or stombyl in the summer time for his fuel; and he shall have 6 lbs. of candles yearly for his chamber; and they shall repair the chamber and keep it "wynthyt" and water tight. He and his servants shall have free ingress and egress at the chamber, the kitchen, brewhouse, and bakehouse; and after his death his executors shall have free ingress and egress at his chamber for 40 days, for the disposal of his goods; and if he shall die within the time of an obligation of a certain sum of money to be paid at divers feasts to the Master and Brethren, these shall be excluded from the money thus in arrears after any feast after his death.

* Cal. Pat. Rolls, 5 Rich. II., vol. 1381—85, p. 365.

† Cal. of Pat. Rolls, 9 Rich. II., vol. 1377—81, p. 377.

‡ Cooper, p. 168.

Witnesses: Stephen atte Feld, John Breware, Godfrey Terry, John atte Lese, Thomas Poteman, William Durant, William Chapman.*

10 December 1405. Inspeximus and confirmation to Robert Penfold of Romene and Alice his wife, of a writing of John Cranebourne the Master, and the Brethren of the Hospital of the House of God at Osprenge, dated the Vigil of Michaelmas (*i.e.*, 28 Sept.), 3 Henry IV. (1402), to which the seal of the said John and the common seal of the House are appended: granting to them for life a yearly rent of £4 6s. 8d. from the manor of Downecourt; provided that if Alice survive Robert and marry again, the rent shall cease.†

8 April 1407. Commission to the Prior of Christ Church, Canterbury (Thomas de Chillenden, 1391—1411), on information that in the Hospital of St. Mary of Osprenge, Kent, which is of the foundation of the King's progenitors, and of the King's patronage, and so is exempt from all ordinary jurisdiction except that of the Chancellor; there are many great defects both in the houses and other buildings, also in the books, vestments, jewels and other ornaments, through the negligence of the Master or Warden and the brethren and their ministers; and its lands, possessions and goods have been dissipated and divine service and other works of piety there diminished; and because the King's kinsman, Thomas (Arundel), Archbishop of Canterbury, the Chancellor, to whom the visitation of the King's Hospitals pertains, is so occupied on divers urgent business concerning the King and the state of the realm, that he cannot visit it in person, so the Prior is to visit the Hospital and reform the defects, and certify thereon to the King in Chancery.‡

12 March 1410-11. Inspeximus and confirmation to William Darell, of a writing of John Cranebourne, Master, and the Brethren of the House of God, Osprenge, dated 1 August, 8 Henry IV. (1407), granting to him for life a yearly rent of 10 marcs (£6 13s. 4d.) from their lands in the

* Cal. of Pat. Rolls, 3 Henry IV., vol. 1401—5 p. 7.

† *Ibid.*, 7 Henry IV., vol. 1405—8, p. 108.

‡ *Ibid.*, 8 Henry IV., vol. 1405—8, p. 354.

parish of Osprenge, with power of distraint. For 20s. paid in the Hanaper.*

John Freningham of the parish of St. Andrew in Canterbury, who was a butcher and became a Freeman of that city in 1442, and was one of those pardoned, 7 July 1450, for having sided with John Cade. He became Mayor of Canterbury for the official years 1461-2 and 1467-8. By his will, dated 2 May and proved 12 August 1475, he gave: To the Hospital or Mesondue of Ospringe 6s. 8d.†

Stephen Randolff of Minster in Sheppey, by will proved 29 July 1485, gave: To the Master of the Domus Dei of Ospringe 60 ewes, now in the hands of Stephen Chirche, and the ferme (or rent) of the same 33s. 4d. due at next Michaelmas, for the ferme de Borstall (in Sheppey) to pray for my soul.‡

* Cal. of Pat. Rolls, 12 Henry IV., vol. 1408—18, p. 282.

† Archdeaconry Wills, vol. 2, 17.

‡ *Ibid.*, vol. 4, 2.