

COBHAM COLLEGIATE CHURCH.

BY AYMER VALLANCE.

THE church, the walls of which are partly of flint and partly of Kentish rag, dates almost exclusively from two main periods. The chancel, with the nave arcades, is thirteenth century work, while the nave aisles, the north porch and the western tower date from the foundation of the College in the latter part of the fourteenth century. The oldest detail remaining in the building is an arch, or rather about two-thirds of an arch, discovered in 1860 within the chancel, embedded in the west wall of the latter, to the south of the chancel-arch. But for the fact that it is slightly pointed at the apex, like a two-centred arch, this one, with its austere impost and its flat soffit, might have been assigned to the eleventh century. Altogether it presents a difficult problem. It is impossible to account for it in any way as an integral part of the scheme of the existing fabric.

The north porch forms the principal entrance. It comprises two stages. The lower one has a quadripartite vault of stone with plain and massive ribs. A medley of scraps of old glass may be seen in the little side-windows of the porch. The upper storey is a chamber approached through a doorway in the north aisle, and by a staircase in the re-entering angle between the west wall of the porch and the north wall of the aisle. The tower is engaged, its lowest storey opening with arches eastwards into the nave, and also northwards and southwards into the nave aisles. Externally, however, there are signs that the tower formerly stood free on its north and south sides, and that it became engaged subsequently by the westward prolongation of the aisles. The stair-turret is situated at the north-west angle of the tower.

It will be noticed that the nave, in proportion to the spacious quire, is relatively small. The nave has a

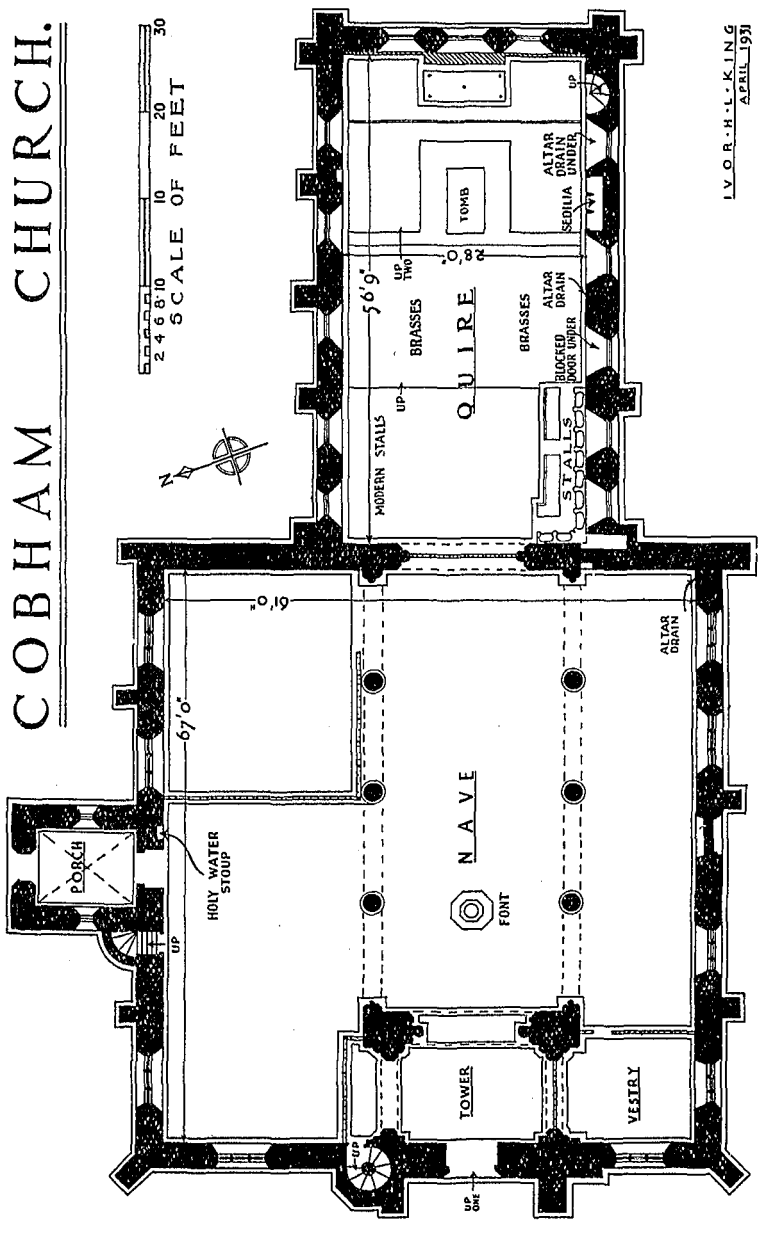
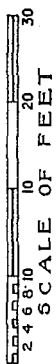
clerestory, a feature worthy of remark, since it is one of comparatively rare occurrence in Kent. In this instance it is masked from view externally by the high-pitched roofs of the aisles.

The font, which formerly stood in the middle of the nave (where it is shown in plans of 1847 and 1858) now stands at the west, under the tower. The late Dr. J. C. Cox and the late Dr. F. Grayling both describe it as "late Norman," though it might be more accurate to call it Transitional. Mr. V. J. B. Torr considers that it may even be as late as the thirteenth century. Anyhow, it is a notable landmark in the development of font-form, and exemplifies the earliest beginnings of the change from the square to the octagonal bowl. In the upper surface of the rim may be seen the remains of the lead bedding and iron staple or hook for fastening the cover, as ordered by ecclesiastical authority "*propter sortilegia*," i.e. as a precaution against the misuse of the hallowed baptismal water for the impious purposes of sorcery.

The east window of the chancel consists of a group of three lancets. The middle one, at the time when the well-known architect, G. G. Scott, undertook his "restoration" in 1860, was found to have been closed up. But Scott, very properly, caused it to be opened out, thus recovering the original design.

Previously to Scott's "restoration" there was a perceptible "thickening of the wall at the south-east corner of the chancel." In the progress of the operations "the workmen's attention was called at this spot to portions of sculptured figures laid bare by them, and, on proceeding to remove some considerable quantity of the added wall, they came upon a small internal staircase * * * which had been thus blocked up probably at the Reformation. * * * The chief interest" of the discovery "centres in the staircase," which, "consisting of about seven or eight steps * * * rising from the chancel floor, makes half a turn and comes to the face of the wall again to the west. There seems to be no sign in the masonry within of any work, at least of any

COBHAM CHURCH.



L. V. O. R. - H. L. - K. I. N. G
APRIL 1931

PLAN SHOWING THE POSITION OF THE FONT, SCREENS AND ALTAR STONE AS THEY WERE UNTIL 1860.

magnitude, having been connected with it, nor has it any communication with the exterior.”¹ Such is the contemporary account of the discovery of the newel-stair, which was assumed, perhaps too hastily, to have been provided to lead up to a gallery along the summit of the reredos. The purpose of this staircase, however, is by no means certain. In the first place, the steps mount up to such a height that any reredos of corresponding altitude must necessarily have blocked the east window, a scheme which would be quite at variance with the normal usage in this country. Moreover, the steps are situated at the extremity of the wall, in the south-east angle of the chancel, so that the reredos, to the top of which they are supposed to have led, must have stood right close against the east wall, instead of being removed at a certain distance from it, as are other instances of the kind, e.g., at Lesnes in Kent or Tunstead in Norfolk. I venture to suggest that these steps belonged to a night staircase, erected when the church became collegiate, for the convenience of the chaplains, to afford them access to their quire for the night offices. It is true this is an unusual position for a dormitory staircase, but where a building has been adapted to some purpose other than the original one (as is the case of the existing chancel of Cobham, which was not designed at the outset for any uses other than those of an ordinary parish church), anomalies are almost bound to arise. To my mind, then, there is no difficulty in believing that these steps at Cobham must have been introduced to form a night staircase, whence an overhead gangway, or bridge, clear of the procession path beneath, would connect the quire with the sleeping apartments of the chaplains.

With the sanction of Pope Urban V. the parochial Church was erected into a College by the generous foundation of John Lord Cobham in 1362. The founder “undertook to repair and decorate the church at his own expense, bestowing on it also service books, vestments and ecclesiastical furniture.”

¹ *The Ecclesiologist*, Vol. XXII, pp. 110-11 (1861).

Beyond the making of such alterations in the internal fittings as might have been necessary to adapt the parochial church for a collegiate body of priests, it does not appear that any other building operations were carried out for some eight years afterwards. The question is where did the chaplains reside meanwhile? For it is obvious that they must have had some habitation where they could live their community life, conveniently near to the church. One may, perhaps, conjecture that they might have used the ancient building, traditionally known as the Stone House, which abuts upon the churchyard wall on the east. Be that as it may, in 1370 the Master and Brethren of the College, desiring to erect suitable houses and buildings, equal in extent with the length of the Church, on the south side of the same, and on the site then occupied by the parish cemetery, applied to the Prior and Convent of Bermondsey, the owners of the advowson, for licence to build. The licence bears date 24th June, 1370¹; and was granted with the express proviso "that the procession way on the south side of the said Church, as is accustomed, may for ever in future be open and preserved or secured to the parishioners of the said Church and their successors, especially at the times of Matins, Mass and Vespers, and through the said buildings at the times aforesaid, so that the said way may not be impeded."

The College staff originally consisted of five priests. But a bull of Pope Urban VI, dated 8th March, 1387, approved the founder's desire to add two more priests, which, the endowment having been augmented accordingly at his expense, was effected by formal deed on 23rd March, 1388. At the time of the dissolution of the College there were eleven clergy on the foundation. The residential buildings of the College comprised a quadrangle, situated to the south of the Church, with a covered way of the nature of a cloister, or a bridge, to connect with the Church and enable the chaplains to pass to and fro for the divine office. The remains of the buildings, however, attached to the south wall of the Church are too fragmentary to show what was their original form. A

¹ See *Archæologia Cantiana*, Vol. II, pp. 223-4.

four-centred arch, evidently provided for the outdoor procession to pass through, when making its circuit of the exterior, remains in a wall which connects the south side of the quire with the range of domestic buildings parallel to the south side of the Church.

The doorway from the quadrangle "into the church," wrote John Thorpe in Volume I of *Bibliotheca Topographica Britannica*, 1782, "is still visible by the fair mouldings, though it is now stopped up."

At present there is only one entrance from the north to the college buildings, viz. at the north-west corner of the quadrangle. But there seems originally to have been a second entrance from the north-east, through part of the quadrangle now closed to free passage, and occupied by a room, or rooms, of the almshouse.

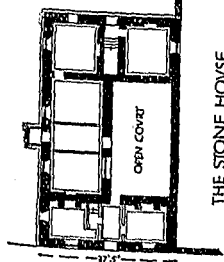
The slab of the mediæval high-altar, with its five incised crosses complete, is now embedded in the pavement at the south-east corner of the Chancel, and measures 9 ft. 3 in. long by about 3 ft. 6 in. wide. In 1847, according to *Instrumenta Ecclesiastica* (Cambridge Camden Society), the slab was lying underneath the modern Communion-table, and Francis Dollman's plan shows it in the same place in 1858. Presumably the mischievous removal to its present position took place at Scott's "restoration," two years later.

On the Chancel floor is a quantity of the original tiles in yellow and dark red, of late thirteenth-century work, but not such as to present any notable beauty nor variety of design.

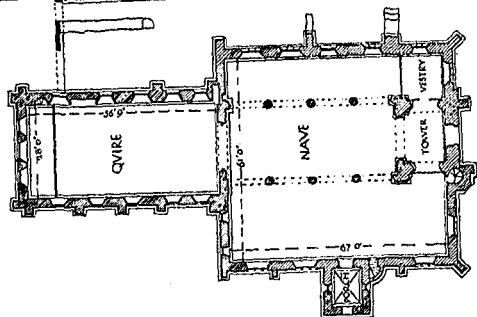
To west of the sedilia in the south wall of the chancel are the remains of an altar-drain under two arches, thirteenth century work. This is not *in situ*, but was placed here in 1888, having been found built up in the wall at the back of the late-Gothic altar-drain, and must have been that which served before the college was created, at which date more elaborate fittings were provided. The existing sedilia and the altar-drain are of rich late-Gothic design, contemporaneous with the collegiate foundation.

The altar-drain of the Collegiate Church is depicted on plate 158, Vol. II, of the *Glossary of Architecture* (1850),

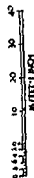
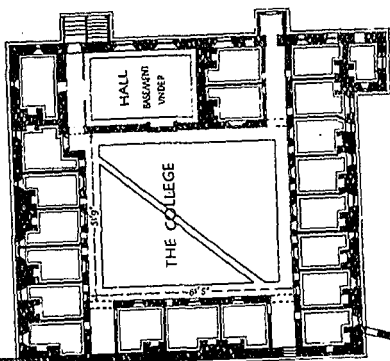
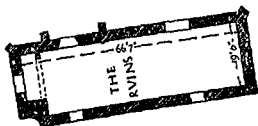
COBHAM CHURCH AND COLLEGE



THE STONE HOUSE



THE CHVRCHYARD



FOR EXPLANATION SEE

(ROCHESTER — MAIN ROAD — GRAVESEND) — (CANTERBURY — LONDON)

where, however, it is assigned to about 1490. There is an elevation of the sedilia in Brandon's *Analysis of Gothick Architecture*, Vol. II, plate 139 (1849).

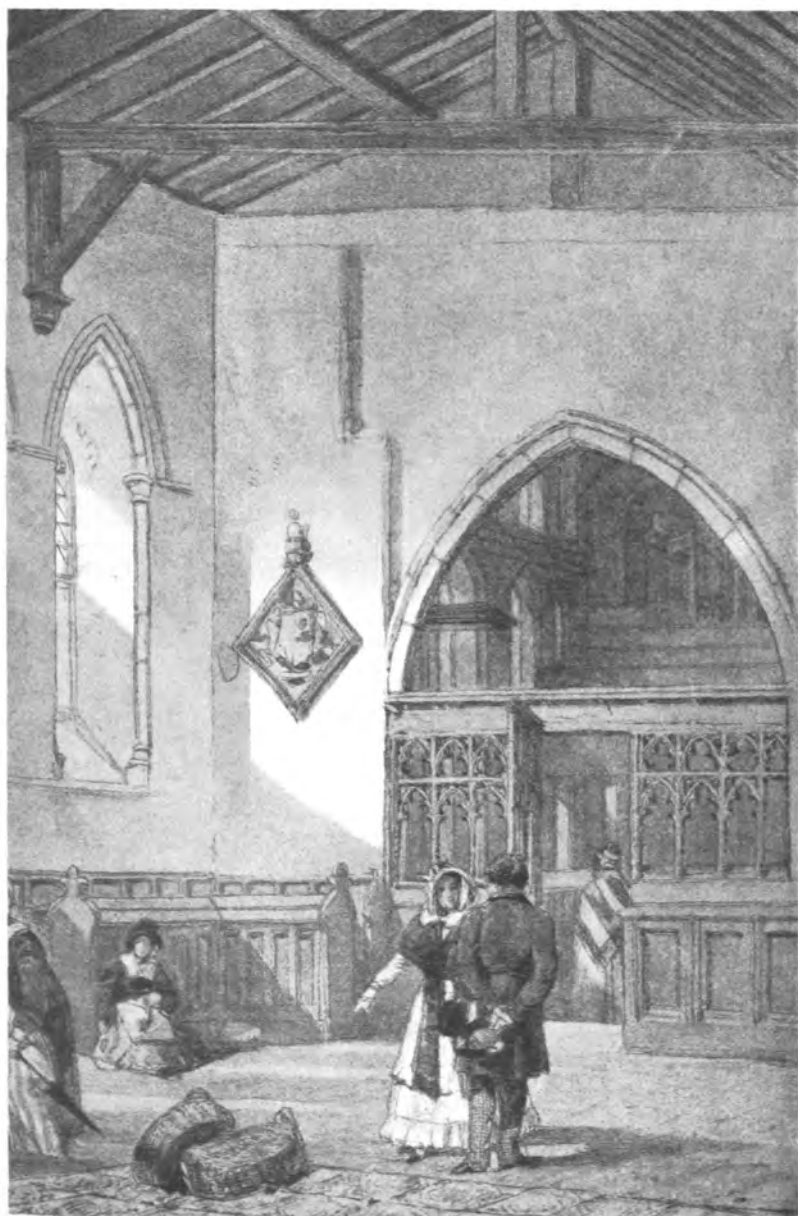
In the chancel hang four tilting helmets, two on each side wall. One of the helmets, on the north side, is surmounted by the Cobham crest, a Soldan's head wearing a gold wreath.

Mr. Torr kindly points out that the mural monument on the north side, the lettering of which is now so worn as almost to be obliterated, is that of Robert Holte, who died 13th September, 1503.

The canons' stalls within the quire were arranged, as usual, with returns. They still retain some of the original poppy-heads, but they are in no way remarkable, and there is but one poor pretence of a misericord. In *Remains of Ecclesiastical Woodwork*, by T. Talbot Bury (1847) details of the stalls are given. According to Dollman's plan in 1858, the stallwork on the south side of the quire (comprising ten seats, three of them forming return-stalls) alone survived; whence it follows that those now on the north side cannot be original.

The roodscreen is depicted as standing *in situ* in a lithograph after J. D. Harding, published in October, 1843. In *Instrumenta Ecclesiastica* (Cambridge Camden Society, 1847) plans of the Church are given, in which the roodscreen is shown standing immediately under the chancel-arch, and comprising three compartments or bays on either hand of the entrance, the latter having "double doors, furnished with a lock and bolt." When Sir Stephen Glynne visited Cobham church (before 1840) he noted¹ "a screen in the north aisle and another in the chancel arch." Dollman's plan, April, 1858, shows the rood screen *in situ*, a parclose enclosing the easternmost bay and the next bay of the nave's north aisle, a screen in each of the three arches of the tower and yet another screen between the westernmost bay and the next bay of the south aisle of the nave. In 1860 however, when the building underwent "restoration" at the hands of G. G. Scott, he demolished the old chancel-arch and substituted

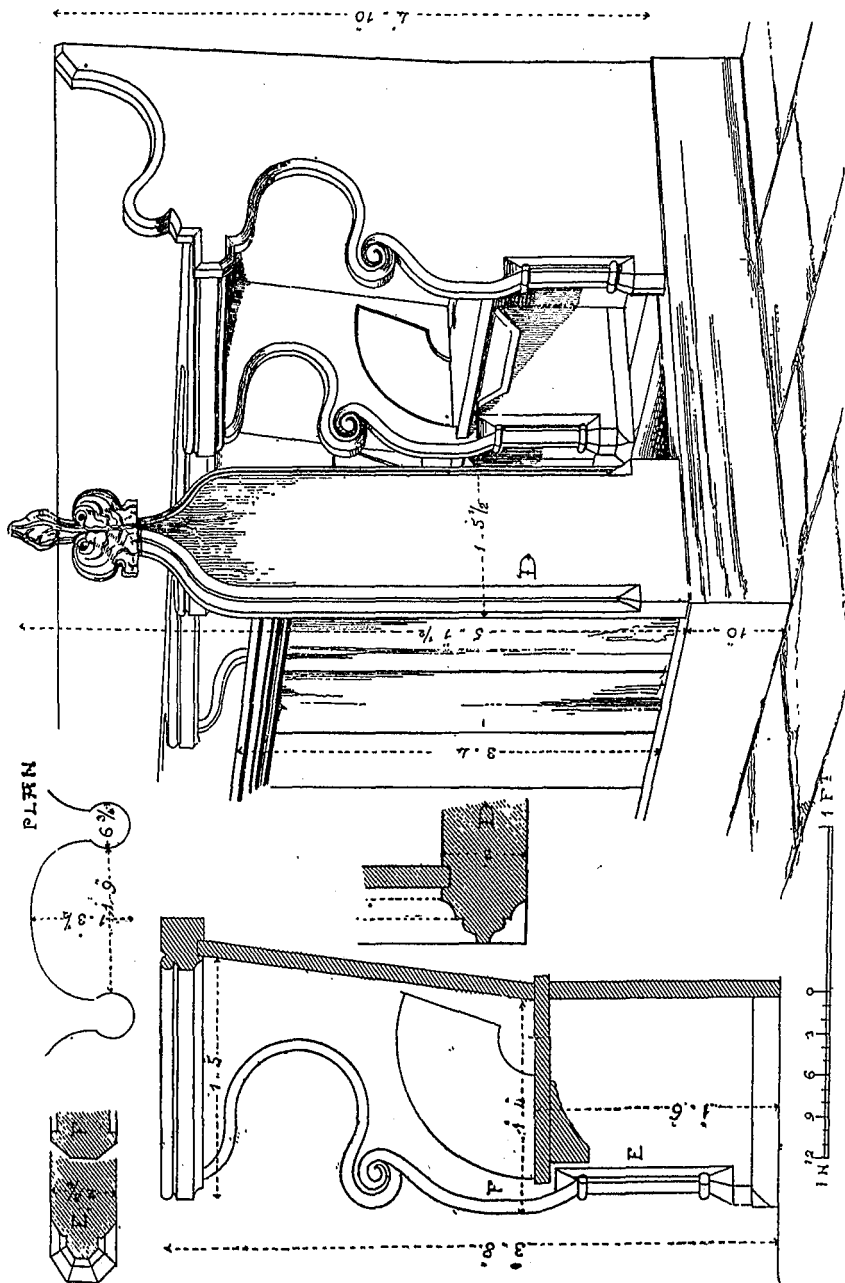
¹ *Notes on the Churches of Kent*, by Sir Stephen R. Glynne, p. 337. (1877).



COBHAM CHURCH, LOOKING SOUTH-WEST.

Within the quire, showing the rood-screen as it was until 1860.

From a lithotint by J. D. Harding, 1843.



COBHAM CHURCH. STALLS IN THE QUIRE.

Drawn by T. Talbot Bury, F.R.I.B.A. 1847.

a fresh arch of wider span. The change necessarily entailed the displacement of the old rood-screen, now rendered too short to occupy its original position. It was accordingly removed from its proper place, cut up and utilised to form a pen for a vestry in the western part of the church. At the same time the parclose of the north aisle was taken down and likewise transported to the west end. The transference unfortunately involved a considerable amount of altering and mutilation, especially to the rood-screen. All the screenwork is oak, and of rectangular construction, that is to say it never had vaulting. One screen, of an ordinary type of late-Gothic, occupies the arch between the tower and the north aisle of the nave; and a similar screen shuts off the westernmost bay of the south aisle of the nave; while other portions of screenwork are made up into cupboard and fitments against the west wall of the south aisle. Lastly, in the south aisle, against the south wall of the tower with its arch, there stand what appear to be the remains of the rood-screen. This particular screenwork is more elaborate in character than the rest, and comprises a pair of folding doors between three compartments on the west and two on the east. Thus it is obvious that one compartment is missing, having been cut off, no doubt, to shorten the screen and make it fit into its present position. The design is of an unusual variety of late Gothic; and the fenestration is so crowded with tracery as to suggest that the screen, before it was tampered with by the devastating hand of the "restorer," once formed part of a pulpitem with solid panels above the middle-rail, like the examples at Hexham, Manchester and Edington.

A quantity of sculptured fragments of statuary and tabernacle work, discovered when the staircase in the chancel was opened up in 1860-61, is preserved in a glass case at the west end of the nave's south aisle. The statuary, upon which considerable traces of colour and gilding were observed so lately as 1876,¹ comprises some heads and busts about three-quarters life size, and some mutilated figures of a smaller series, about two feet high, all of which

¹ *Archæologia Cantiana*, Vol. XI, p. 51.

have lost their emblems. They seem, however, to represent female saints, one of whom may perhaps be meant for St. Apollonia, though the pincers she appears to hold are too much broken for positive identification. All the statuary belongs approximately to the year 1370.

The chief glory of the church is its magnificent series of engraved brasses, or rather lattens, which, in spite of everything that they have undergone, still remain unrivalled by any other collection in Christendom. Yet, before bestowing unqualified admiration on these monuments it is well to bear in mind certain facts concerning them. It was hardly to be expected that they should come down to the nineteenth century unscathed by the wear and tear of ages; and it was altogether too much to hope that their conspicuous beauty, on the one hand, and on the other the sad state into which they had undoubtedly fallen, should escape the manipulation of the virtuoso, and his well-meant efforts to improve them by "restoration." The process dates so far back as 1840,¹ when a Mr. Charles Spence, of the Admiralty, began to renovate the mutilated portions. The engraved inscriptions were largely renewed by him, a manuscript in the Lansdowne collection, and a transcript in the College of Arms, furnishing, so it was alleged, a clue to the correct text. The work went on intermittently, its last phases being reached in 1865-6, when, through the liberality of Mr. F. C. Brooke, who furnished the funds, Mr. J. G. Waller, with the cordial approval of his friend, Mr. C. Roach Smith, brought the "restoration" to completion. Gaps in the inscriptions, as mentioned above, were supplied from manuscript evidence; what had been lost of the heraldry, and missing portions of the effigies, being replenished at the same time. In fact, so thorough was the renovation that, at this distance of time, it has become almost impossible to gauge its extent, and to distinguish with certainty between the authentic portions of the lattens and the counterfeit. Even the ledger stones were not spared. Some were patched and filled with mastic

¹ See *The Gentleman's Magazine*, 1866, pp. 652-4.

while others were entirely replaced by new ones. Part of this work was done under the the direction of the architect G. G. Scott, who also relaid and made good the pavement.

The engraved lattens are most of them fixed in the chancel floor ; some are in the nave's north aisle, and one only in the nave. They have been described and illustrated so often that it is unnecessary here to detail them further. They are valuable from many different points of view, whether as historical records of armour and costume, or whether for such details as their heraldry or their canopy work and accessory representations of the Holy Trinity and Saints. The oldest brass, that of Joan de Cobham, 1320, illustrates the early method of treating an inscription, in Lombardic letters, each silhouetted and let separately into the ledger stone, a more laborious process than that which developed later, when the inscription was engraved upon one continuous strip of metal. The latter also provides a far more effective framework than one composed of a series of disjointed letters. The brass, c. 1390, of John Lord Cobham, founder of the College, depicts him holding the church in his hands. This was the generous nobleman who co-operated with Sir Robert Knolles in building the new stone bridge over the Medway at Rochester, and who subsequently founded and built at his own cost the Chapel of the Holy Trinity near the end of the bridge on the east bank of the river. John Lord Cobham died in 1407.

In the middle of the chancel stands the tomb of George Lord Cobham, who died in 1558, with the recumbent effigies of himself and his wife. They were the parents of William Lord Cobham, the founder of the almshouses. The tomb, surrounded by statuettes of the deceased's family, was once an elaborate monument of its period, and is still remarkable for its display of heraldry, emblazoned in its proper tinctures. In 1782 John Thorpe described this tomb as being "miserably shattered and defaced by a huge beam of timber falling on it many years since from the roof of the chancel." The tomb, therefore, as it exists today, cannot but be to a great extent the result of

reconstruction. In 1840, wrote Mr. Charles Roach Smith, F.S.A. to *The Gentleman's Magazine*, "the alabaster tomb of Sir George Brook and Lady, which had been sadly defaced had all its fragments carefully put together; and the general architectural features, which had been lost by the destruction of the columns, were restored in plaster of Paris." Some twenty-five years later a "more complete restoration" was effected. "No part of the old work," continues Roach Smith, "has been tampered with; even the smallest fragment of heraldic colour has been preserved. The original arrangement of the crest on the table of the tomb, and of the small figures of the sons and daughters, has been preserved on the authority of the Lansdowne MS., 874; and every part of new work added is given from fragments carefully preserved in the repairs of 1840. The heraldry of this tomb probably exceeds in elaboration that of any other extant. Many of the small figures have forty-five coats-of-arms" (quarterings) "on their tabards; none have less than twelve; and the figures are fourteen in number. The mode in which this work has been executed is also peculiar. It is incised, and afterwards filled in with a resinous composition—a process of exceeding delicacy."

The refectory of the College still stands in the south range of the existing quadrangle. This hall is "a lofty and well-proportioned apartment, with a good open roof of three bays, consisting constructionally of principal rafters, a collar with arched braces under it (which last are supported on stone corbels) purlins, common rafters, arched wind-braces, and moulded wall-plate" (F. T. Dollman, 1861). The hall contains, on its north side, a handsome late-Gothic fireplace of stone, with corbelled hood, having the Cobham crest sculptured in one of the spandrels of the opening. The fireplace is illustrated and described in *Archæologia Cantiana* Vol. XVIII, pp. 447-450. It is clearly an insertion, subsequent to the erection of the hall, but its date is uncertain. It may even be as late as the foundation of the almshouses, although it follows a traditional outline and character. Probably this is an instance of a hall which

never had a central hearth ; for the cellar or undercroft beneath, instead of being vaulted in stone, has a flat ceiling of timber, forming the floor of the hall above, " oak posts supporting a central horizontal bearer on which the floor joists rest." The existing screen between the hall and the passage is not genuine, and ought to be abolished, because it gives the false impression that an ancient hall-screen might have been constructed with open fenestration, like a church screen. High in the north wall of the refectory is a Gothic window of two lights, which still retains its original wooden shutters on the inside. On the south side of the refectory is the entrance porch, a very picturesque feature.

Unlike most chantries and other foundations of its kind, Cobham College was not forcibly suppressed by the Crown, but the master and chaplains, foreseeing the ruin which threatened, voluntarily sold everything to George Lord Cobham in 1537. A confirmatory deed followed on 12th December, 1538. The practical effect of this grant was the utter dissolution of the college, and the disbanding of the chaplains. The residential buildings, thereby becoming untenanted, were allowed to fall into a dilapidated condition. But William Brooke Lord Cobham¹, dying in 1597, bequeathed £2000 and directed in his will² that his executors should re-edify the ruins and refound the extinct and desolated college as an almshouse for 20 aged poor. The work was to be carried out within four years at the latest, after his decease ; and towards it he had already provided 100,000 bricks. He further bequeathed for the purpose forty tons of timber from his estates. The executors were so prompt in fulfilling their trust that the work was finished on 29th September, 1598. It is generally supposed that the existing quadrangle and buildings (except

¹ It was to oblige this influential personage, so it is believed, that Shakespeare obsequiously suppressed the name of Sir John Oldcastle (which had figured in the original version of the play of "*Henry IV*") substituting for it the name of "*Falstaffe*," and thus, by making Sir John Fastolfe a drunken and dissolute buffoon, unjustly besmirching the memory of a brave and distinguished soldier and patriot.

² *Archæologia Cantiana*, Vol. XI, pp. 209-16.

of course the dining hall and the ruins of the old kitchen beyond to the south-east) are of this date. But it will be noticed that the walls of the quadrangle are of stone, and its door-ways two-centred arches, neither of which circumstances seems to support the assumption. Moreover the building was completed in so short a time that it could scarcely have been built afresh from the ground. It is more probable that the old walls were retained, and that a new roof and new chimneys were added, the bricks named in Lord Cobham's will supplying the chimneys, and the timber new flooring and the rafters of the roof.

In *Instrumenta Ecclesiastica*, published in 1847 by the Cambridge Camden Society, are three plans of Cobham : Plate 6 the chancel, Plate 11 the nave, and Plate 12 the quadrangle, with the domestic buildings of the former college.

Also in *Examples of Ancient Domestic Architecture*, by Francis T. Dollman, architect (1858) there is a ground plan of the church and college together (Plate 39) and a sheet of details of the college (Plate 40). Articles on "Cobham College" and "Cobham and its Manors" were contributed by Mr. A. A. Arnold, F.S.A. to *Archæologia Cantiana* Vol. XXVII.

APPENDIX I.

COBHAM, INVENTORY OF CHURCH GOODS, 1479.

Translated from the original Latin, printed in John Thorpe's *Registrum Roffense* (1769) pp. 239-41.

INDENTURE OF THE BOOKS, VESTMENTS AND ORNAMENTS OF THE COLLEGE OF COBHAM.

This indenture made between the Submaster of the College of Cobham of the one part and the sacristans of the same College of the other part, of the books, vestments and other ornaments of the same College committed to the custody of the said sacristans on the feast of the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in the year of the Lord fourteen hundred and seventy-nine.

BOOKS.

- First, six large Antiphoners ;
 Two small Antiphoners, worn and old ;
 Two other Antiphoners, namely, one temporal (I.) and another of saints ; six Breviaries with note (II.) ; one book of collects ; one book of lessons.
 Three psalters, one of the lessons of the seasons, one of the lessons for saints' days, one ordinal (III.)
 Seven graduals ; with one small gradual with versicles, worn ; and one old gradual, worn.
 Four missals, of which one is in Chalke Church.
 One small missal for the altar of Blessed Mary.
 Two texts of the Gospels ;
 One text of the Epistles ;
 Eight Processionals ; one manual containing the office of holy days ; one martyrology.
 One book in four parts containing the seven Penitential Psalms with the Litany, *Placebo* (IV.) and *Dirge*.
 One book treating of difficult words throughout the entire lectionary and Missal, and one Pye ; with the *Gesta Romanorum* (V.)

Ornaments (*Jocalia*) (VI.)

- First, One vessel (VII.), silver gilt, for daily use for containing the sacrament of the altar.
 Item three silver chalices. Two wooden crosses harnessed (VIII.) with silver ; one cross of copper gilt.
 One instrument of the pax of silver gilt.
 Item a cup (IX.) of copper gilt for carrying the sacrament of the altar.
 Three copper thuribles, and one incense boat of copper.
 Two basins of copper gilt.
 Four old basins.
 Four cruets.
 Two brass candlesticks.
 One instrument of the pax, of copper.
 Five iron chairs (X.) for the quire with an iron lectern of the same suit.

Two candlesticks of latten for tallow (XI.) candles.

One flagon for wine.

One bucket of latten for holy water.

Vestments and Copes (XII.)

First, one cope of red cloth of gold, tufted (XIII.)

Item one chasuble, two tunicles, two amices, of white cloth of gold (XIV.) (with a pattern) of chestnuts.

Item seven copes, one chasuble, two tunicles, two stoles, three fanons (XV.) of white cloth of gold, with three albs and three amices of the same suit.

Item five copes, one chasuble, two tunicles, two stoles, three fanons, with three albs and three amices of red cloth of gold.

Item eleven copes of red cloth of gold belonging to the same suit.

Item one cope, one chasuble, two tunicles, two stoles, three fanons, three albs and three amices of red cloth of gold, named "Courteney" (XVI.).

Item one principal cope of red cloth of gold, three copes, one chasuble, two tunicles, three amices of red cloth of gold, called "Dragons," with two copes of red silk for rulers of the choir, belonging to the same suit.

Item two copes, one chasuble, two tunicles, two stoles, three fanons, three albs, with three amices of red cloth of gold, called "Dogs," with two copes of red silk for rulers of the choir, belonging to the same suit.

Item one cope, one chasuble, two tunicles, two stoles, two fanons with one alb and three amices of red cloth of gold, called "Crowns," with two copes of red silk cloth for rulers of the choir, belonging to the same suit.

Item one cope of blue cloth of gold, with two copes of indigo colour belonging to it.

Item one cope, one chasuble, two tunicles, two stoles, two fanons, three albs and three amices of blue silk damask, with four copes of blue sarcenet (XVII.) for rulers of the choir, belonging to the same suit.

Item three copes, one chasuble, two tunicles, two stoles, three fanons, three albs, and three amices of white silk cloth, checkered.

- Item two copes, one chasuble, two tunicles, two stoles, three fanons, three albs and three amices of white silk cloth, called "Roses," with two copes of white silk for rulers of the choir, belonging to the same.
- Item one cope, one chasuble, two tunicles, two stoles, three fanons, three albs, and three amices of red cloth of gold embroidered with the arms of Cobham.
- Item three copes, one chasuble, two tunicles, two stoles, three fanons, three albs, and three amices of green silk cloth for Sundays.
- Item two worn copes of silk checkered, with one chasuble, two tunicles, two stoles, three fanons, one alb and three amices of the same suit.

Vestments for ordinary wear.

- First, four copes with a complete vestment set of variegated silk, with apparels, amices, stoles and fanons of a different suit.
- Item a complete vestment set of green silk with gryphons.
- Item a complete vestment set of yellow.
- Item four copes of red woollen, with a complete vestment set of the same, excepting one alb.
- Item a complete vestment set of purple colour, wanting a tunicle, with apparels of another suit.
- Item a white vestment for Lent, a complete vestment set of white for commemorations of Saint Mary, and a white vestment for the commemoration of St. Mary Magdalene.
- Item a complete vestment set of white for ferial days.

Gold cloths of silk and linen.

- First, two gold hangings, of which one is of blue shade, the other red.
- Item two old hangings of red silk.
- Item a hanging of red cloth of gold for the (Easter) Sepulchre.
- Item a white silk hanging for the sepulchre, with a frontal of black velvet.
- Item one flat canopy of taffeta (XVIII.) striped green and red.
- Item one frontal of green for the sepulchre.
- Item two silken cloths, striped, for a canopy, with two cloths with wavy bands belonging to the same.

- Item two cloths of red gold, lined, (*duplicati*) (XIX.) for the high altar.
- Item one cloth of gold with blue lining and with crowns.
- Item a silk cloth, striped white and red, with two riddels (XX.) of the same suit.
- Item two cloths of linen painted with various images.
- Item one linen cloth of blue embroidered with the Crucifixion, and another linen cloth, lined, of black, with a cross, for the high altar.
- Item six altar cloths with their frontals and seven others without frontals, with two worn ones.
- Item one red cloth of gold for the lectern, with two cloths of blue belonging to the same.
- Item two frontals, without towels, one black with gold stars, the other of needlework, coloured green and purple.
- Item a linen cloth painted with various images, for the presbytery, with three cushions of blue velvet and two of black cloth of gold.
- Item two carpets of tapestry, checkered, with three of blue colour.
- Item five iron chairs for the choir, with an iron lectern of the same suit. (XXI.)
- Item a linen veil for Lent, with a cloth for the Rood.
- Item six banners, with one pennon and thirteen little pennons, for the quire.
- Item two white silk cloths with two red crosses each, for Lent.
- Item three variegated cushions, for everyday use, belonging to the presbytery.
- Item one small cushion of green silk.
- Item seven surplices for the clergy, with two rochets for the sacristans, and seven for the choristers.

Sudaries and Napkins.

- First, one napkin or sudary of gold variegated, with two sudaries of the same suit.
- Item three other small sudaries of silk.
- Item one sudary variegated.
- Item a sudary of fine cambric (*sinon*).

Item seven towels of diaper.

Item two damaged towels of diaper of reynes (XXII.), and two other damaged towels like sudaries.

Item five small towels for the altars.

Item three girdles (XXIII.), one green and two red.

Item three albs without apparels (XXIV.) for the washing of the altars.

Ornaments for the Altar of Saint Mary.

First, one vestment of green damask.

Item a vestment of white silk.

Item another vestment of green for everyday use.

Item a white vestment of silk for Lent.

Item another white vestment for weekdays in Lent.

Item two cloths of white silk for the altar, painted with scenes of the Passion of Christ, with two silk riddels for Lent.

Item two white linen cloths painted with various images, with riddels and one frontal of white cloth of gold belonging to the same.

Item two riddels of silk with red and green stripes, with one frontal of white silk belonging to the same.

Item two riddels of red for every day, with an old frontal belonging to the same.

Ornaments for the altar of the Holy Trinity.

First, a vestment of green damask.

Item another green vestment of silk.

Item a vestment of bord Alexander (XXV.) for everyday use.

Item a white vestment for Lent.

Item two linen cloths of red, with two riddels painted with divers figures, with one frontal of red belonging to the same.

Item two riddels of silk with red and green stripes, with one frontal of green belonging to the same.

Item two linen cloths of white painted with the Passion of Christ, with two riddels belonging to the same, for Lent.

Item two riddels of red, with a red frontal for everyday use.

(From the manuscript on membrane in the possession of Bonham Hayes of Cobham, November 7th, 1719.)

Bonham Hayes used to live at Owletts, Cobham. There is a Bonham Hayes Charity in Cobham, some particulars of which are posted in the church on the wall.

The transcriber, as was natural at his date, the early years of the eighteenth century, has fallen, through want of understanding, into some mistakes in the mediæval Latin. It would have been well, therefore, had it been possible to check his version with the original text; but thus far, unfortunately, the original, if indeed it still exists, has not been traced.

A question that inevitably suggests itself after the perusal of so full a list of ornaments is where were all these things stored away when not in actual use? Those ornaments which belonged to the altar of the Holy Trinity, or to that of the Blessed Virgin, would be kept in coffers or presses adjacent to the respective altars. But there would still remain a very large quantity of vestments, cloths and hangings, &c belonging to the high altar and the quire—objects for the storage and safe custody of which no inconsiderable space must have been needed. No mention of a vestry occurs, but it is practically certain that a special chamber, in or adjoining the church, must have been set apart for the purpose.

The Cobham inventory, which should be compared with that of Maidstone church in 1548 (*Arch. Cant.* XXII, pp. 29-33) is of special interest as that of an important Church of collegiate rank. For there were not many such in Kent. Wingham, Wye and Ashford were others, and the Chantry at Bredgar also was reckoned as a College. The Cobham inventory can scarcely be considered complete. Indeed it presents some remarkable omissions. It makes no mention of such familiar items as Corporas Cases, Holy Oil Stocks, and sacring bells. Neither does it include reliquaries, herse-cloth, red-painted cross of wood for Lent, nor almuces for the the Canons or Chaplains. In the following notes it has not been thought necessary to repeat explanations of such terms as Processional, Pye and Streamer, previously given in connection with the Cranbrook Inventory in *Arch. Cant.* Vol. XLI.

NOTES.

I.—A *Temporal* is the Proper of the Seasons; “the lessons from Advent to Trinity.” (Dr. J. C. Cox.)

II.—*With note*, i.e., accompanied by the musical notation.

III.—*Ordinal*, or “collection of rubrical directions.” (Dr. J. C. Cox.)
 “A book of directions or liturgical regulations for the conduct of church services throughout the year.” (Prof. A. Hamilton-Thompson.)

IV.—*Placebo* and *Dirge*, the services for the Dead, commencing with Vespers, of which the first Antiphon begins *Placebo Domino in regione Vivorum*. Next morning the solemn Mass for the dead was preceded by matins and lauds, the first antiphon beginning *Dirige Domine Deus meus in conspectu tuo viam meam*. "*Dirige*," abbreviated in common usage into "*dirge*," came to be applied, as now, to any lament, whether in the form of a religious service or not.

V.—The *Gesta Romanorum* was the most popular story book of the Middle Ages. Its writer or compiler is unknown. It is believed to date back at least to the latter part of the thirteenth century. It consists of a number of mythical tales, each, on the model of the *Bestiary*, having a spiritual or moral application attached. The tales have for the most part no connection with Classic Rome. In fact they are drawn mainly from Oriental sources, though some are of Italian or German origin. They afforded edifying anecdotes for enlarging upon in sermons, and hence many of them are mere outline sketches. There is considerable variation in the manuscripts, both in subject-matter and in numbers; the smallest collection consisting of 102, the largest 181 stories. The latter collection, known as the vulgate, was printed at Cologne. The *Gesta Romanorum* was first printed at Utrecht between 1472 and 1475. If the volume, which existed at Cobham in 1479, was not in manuscript, it must have been one of those printed on the Continent; for the earliest English printed version did not appear until 1510-15, when it was produced by Wynkyn de Worde from his London press. A convenient modern edition in English is that of Bohn's Antiquarian Library, the preface to which version is dated 1876.

VI.—*Jocalia*. It is obvious that "*Jewels*" is an inadequate translation for a term which includes no gems, but a number of latten, copper and even iron objects. Perhaps "*ornaments*" is the most suitable word for conveying the comprehensive meaning intended.

VII. and IX.—For *cuppa*, the vessel for containing the sacrament of the altar, the nearest equivalent appears to be ciborium; while the cup for carrying the sacrament of the altar would either be a pyx, or a monstrance.

VIII.—Professor Hamilton Thompson ingeniously suggests that the word printed *hervesitat* is most likely a misreading for *hernesiate*, harnessed, mounted or bound with silver. Thus might the laminated wooden cross from West Farleigh (*Arch. Cant.*, XL, pp. 49-52) have been described, although in that instance a baser metal is used. The schedule of goods, looted in 1450 by Jack Cade and his followers, and ultimately seized on behalf of the Crown, comprises several items of articles "*harneysed*" or "*harneysid with silver*" (*Sussex Archæological Collections*, Vol. XVIII, p. 32, 1866).

X.—The iron chairs and lectern would be X-shaped frames of iron, with leather or canvas, or some other strong and pliable material stretched from side to side or from front to back. They were made to fold for portability's sake, that they might be taken up, moved and set down again where and when required.

The Inventory, *circa* 1496-7, of the church furniture belonging to St. Mary-at-Hill, London, records the existence there of two "cheyres of Iron for Rector Coris." A folding lectern of iron, from San Esteban, Burgos, is illustrated on p. 50 of G. E. Street's *Gothic Architecture in Spain* (1865). Two more examples, one French, the other Belgian, both of the fifteenth century, are illustrated on p. 99 of *Decorative Ironwork* by Charles Ffoulkes, B.Litt., F.S.A. (1913). See below, Note XXI.

XI.—Church candles were more usually made of bees' wax. At St. Mary-at-Hill, as is shown by the Inventory of 1496-7, there were four latten candlesticks "with branches for Talough candell."

XII.—It will be noted that copes, not being sacrificial vestments, are named apart and in a separate category. Of sacrificial vestments the chasuble is the principal one, but the term "vestment" is collective, and comprises the whole set of robes worn by the celebrant as well as by his two assistant ministers, acting respectively as deacon and sub-deacon, at High Mass.

XIII.—Professor Hamilton-Thompson conjectures that the doubtful word *tuffy* may be the equivalent of the French *touffu*, i.e., tufted. It probably means a surface enriched by raised loops of gold thread, a treatment familiar enough in certain Italian tissues from the looms of Florence. It occurs, for example, in the Dunstable pall and in that of the Vintners' Company, and in the famous cope, made to the order of Henry VII, bequeathed by him to Westminster Abbey and now preserved at Stonyhurst College. It was exhibited at the Italian Exhibition at Burlington House in the early part of 1930, and again at the Mediæval Exhibition at the Victoria and Albert Museum later in the same year.

XIV.—Red, white, blue or black cloth of gold appears to be identical with lamé of the present day, and signifies a gold fabric, shot with red or white, etc., as the case may be. The effect of the metallic surface alternating with colour in the folds is very rich and sumptuous.

XV.—The term "Fanon" is now virtually obsolete, having been superseded by Maniple. This is a vestment which is said to have been in origin a napkin or handkerchief, but in course of time has become a strip of silk, fringed at the ends, and shaped like a stole, only much shorter, worn over the left wrist by the celebrant, the deacon and sub-deacon at mass.

XVI.—It seems that, among the many sets of copes and vestments belonging to the College, some were known, for convenience, by the most prominent device displayed upon them. Thus one was "Courteney" as having Archbishop Courteney's arms, probably as donor; in the same way that another set bore the arms of Cobham. Another set was called "Dragon," another "Dogs," (perhaps because it was embroidered or brocaded with talbots) and so on.

XVII.—*Sarcenet*.—"A very fine and soft silken stuff, both plain and twilled, *** imported from the Levant." (Sir William St. John Hope and E. G. C. F. Atchley.)

XVIII.—*Taffeta*. "A plain woven silk" of some thickness, "imported from Persia." (Hope and Atchley.)

XIX.—*Duplicati*, lined, the same as the French *doublé*; i.e., having *doublure*, lining.

XX.—Whenever riddels are mentioned it is always in pairs, because there would necessarily be two, to hang one at each end of the altar. Riddel is, of course, the same as the French *rideau*.

XXI.—This item is the same as one which has already occurred under the head of *Jocalia*. It appears to be a repetition of the same, misplaced in error among textiles. See above, Note X.

XXII.—*Diaper of Reynes*. A figured textile, supposed to have been manufactured at Rennes, in Brittany.

XXIII.—Girdles. In the ordinary way the girdle would, like the alb, be white, and would be comprehended with the alb itself. Only in the unusual case of the girdles being coloured, as here, do they receive express mention.

XXIV.—Apparels, being of the nature of enrichments, are absent from the albs designed to be worn by the ministers engaged in the penitential ceremony of washing the altars on Maundy Thursday.

XXV.—There is no uniformity in the spelling of "*Bord Alisaundre*," which means "apparently a striped cloth that took its name from Alexandria." (Sir W. St. John Hope.)

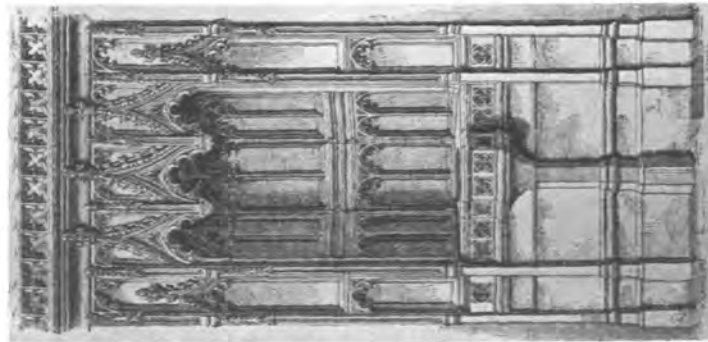
APPENDIX II.

THE SEDILIA AND ALTAR-DRAINS.

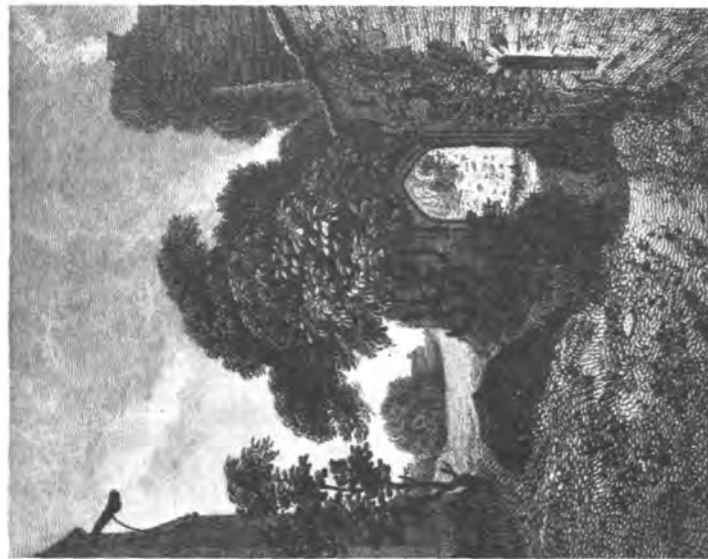
BY V. J. B. TORR.

Although the parish church of Cobham was erected into a college in the latter part of the 14th-century, no attempt was made then, nor later, to rebuild its 13th-century chancel, the dimensions of which were amply sufficient to allow of the more elaborate ritual of the new foundation. These long chancels of the 13th-century, though plentiful in East Kent, are rarer in the western part of the county, and Cobham has few rivals other than such outstanding examples as Stone and the quire of Rochester Cathedral. But, unlike Wingham, new sedilia and piscina were provided: the late J. G. Waller¹ described them as "of great beauty of design," and correctly assigned them to the second half of the 14th-century. It may be that some interval elapsed after the foundation of the college before the new sedilia were executed, but they are hardly later than about the end of the reign of Edward III; and quite probably were undertaken

¹ *Arch. Cant.*, XI, 50.



Altar-drain in the college quire ;
from Parker's *Glossary of Architecture*,
Vol. II, Part II.



Archway across the procession path between the quire
and the quadrangle of the College, looking east ; from
the *Antiquarian Itinerary*, Vol. IV, 1816.

shortly after 1362.¹ The sedilia canopies are very similar in character to those of many of the splendid brasses on the chancel floor, of the later 14th-century ; and it must be remembered that architectural design was invariably ahead of that of the ancillary arts like brasses and woodwork. Brasses, indeed, at any period show comparatively simple architectural forms, a conservatism paralleled by the depiction of the low mitre in the 14th-century, when it had in actual use undergone a further development.

Cobham sedilia and piscina, being of fine design and having suffered practically no restoration, may fairly claim the first place for interest in the Kentish collegiate group (and indeed rank high among those of the whole county), even though those at Maidstone may appear at first sight more imposing. Their details will be considered presently.

The sedilia, three in number and on the same level, occupy the space between the fourth and fifth windows from the west on the south side of the chancel, while the imposing piscina niche to the east of them is immediately beneath the fifth window. I see no reason to doubt that this was the position of any earlier sedilia, and it is probable that the beautiful 13th-century double drain, discovered walled-up in 1860, and subsequently reinserted in its present place to the west of the sedilia, was merely built over when the new piscina was made to match the sedilia. Even fine work of an earlier date was not uncommonly obliterated without scruple by later mediæval masons ; as may be seen in Chillenden's treatment in Canterbury cloister of the lovely 13th-century doorway into the Martyrdom, and of the mural arcade in the north alley.

The material of both sedilia and piscina is Kentish ragstone, presenting, as always in internal work, a pleasing appearance.

The 13th-century mural arcade and sedilia in the neighbouring chancel of Cooling having been recently defaced by thickly-applied whitewash, it is greatly to be hoped that no such vandalism may occur at Cobham.

The rich character of the Cobham sedilia and piscina was remarked upon so far back as the year 1793, in a paper read to

¹ The canopies of these sedilia have a distinct similarity to the mutilated canopy over the monument in the chancel of Ash-next-Sandwich, ascribed to Sir John de Leverick, which may be dated to at least *circa* 1360. Further similarity may be noted between the Cobham canopies and the recumbent ones on the Westminster tombs of Edward III and his wife (*ob.* 1377 and 1369).

the Society of Antiquaries,¹ and they have been illustrated by the Brandons in 1849, while further drawings may be found in B. Mus. Add. MS. 32,359, under "Cobham."

Like most contemporary examples, the three sedilia at Cobham are on the same level, and indeed are but a single stone bench divided into three, at the front only, by the buttressed shafts supporting the canopies. The varying levels of sedilia depended chiefly upon the whim of the designer, and though graduation is commoner in the earlier examples, this was by no means always the case, e.g., at Biddenden in this county, where the three 13th-century seats are on the same level. The attempt which has been made to prove that when the same level occurs the officiating Eucharistic ministers were all in priestly orders but that when the seats were graduated the two subordinates to the celebrant were actually in those orders signified by their liturgical titles, is both arbitrary and unsupported by any even probable evidence. Several lines of argument, which considerations of space must preclude in this place, can be used to demonstrate the unsoundness of a theory which has been put forward too often

In the present state of our knowledge, all that can safely be asserted is that, contrary to modern Roman use, in mediæval England the celebrant occupied not the central, but the eastern-most sedile. Apart from other evidence,² this may be proved by the sedilia themselves, which, in case of graduations, invariably have the eastern seat the highest, and (as at Westbere, near Canterbury) sometimes also distinguished by greater ornamentation.

The bench of the Cobham sedilia has a projecting top edge, chamfered off beneath, and a similarly projecting base, chamfered above. The responds and dividing shafts of the three recesses (or more properly, of the one recess, since these divisions are not carried back to the wall) are enriched with slender buttresses set diagonally, in the manner of those depicted in the brass

¹ *Archæologia*, XI, pp. 373-4.

² The valuable little illustrated work, *Das Boecken van der Missen* (Antwerp, 1507), fol. f. viii. *verso*, shows that the English use obtained in Flanders also; the celebrant is in the eastern seat, next the deacon, during the singing of the Epistle.—Rock, *Church of our Fathers* (ed. Hart and Frere, 1905) reproduces this woodcut on p. 336, vol. i., and a note on the preceding page states that the English custom further obtained in France and among the Dominican friars. Several of the woodcuts in this Flemish book show cushions in the (probably) wooden seats, when the ministers have arisen.

canopy-work on the chancel floor, and rise to the level of the finials of the three canopies, these shafts themselves ending in crocketed and finialled pinnacles. The canopies are identical with one another, sub-cusped cinquefoiled arches bearing pediments rising acutely to elegant finials, the sides of the pediments crocketed and their centres adorned with a quatrefoil. There is nothing in Kentish sedilia design quite analogous to this beautiful conception, the more satisfying as being almost wholly original work. The backs of the recesses bear modern decoration in colour upon the plaster.

The structure to the east of these sedilia, enshrining the piscina and presenting the general appearance of a kind of tabernacle, is probably the largest and most imposing in the county, and need fear comparison with but few in England. It is made of ragstone ashlar carried to the ground level. The traceried heads of the upper row of internal panels might suggest that this is a later work than the sedilia, but I regard it as much more probably contemporary: three new sedilia of so fine a design would in all likelihood be provided with a new piscina, a conjecture which seems confirmed by the early Perpendicular character of the delicate canopy work above the niche. The previous E.E. piscina was probably superseded by the present one somewhere about the year 1370.

The depression containing the altar-drain has a projection carried upon a small shaft upon a deep base, the whole of semi-octagonal design and somewhat resembling a little font. A band of quatrefoils runs round the projecting bowl and is carried along on either side of it horizontally. The back of the large niche in which the drain is set is ornamented with cinquefoiled panelling upon the three faces of the recess, giving the effect of a blind oriel window; instead of the credence shelf which might be expected, there is a broad moulded transom following the line of the panelling. Above the niche are three little cinquefoiled canopies of great charm, each crocketed and finialled and enclosing a trefoil; these are divided and flanked by little pinnacles, the central pair being the taller. The ceiling of the niche, under these canopies, is ribbed to imitate vaulting, as frequently occurs in Perpendicular work. The sides of the structure, on either side of the niche, are bounded by slender buttresses, enclosing trefoiled panels at the sides of the niche, and ending in tiny canopies and in pinnacles ranging with those just mentioned,

the recesses behind this line of canopy and pinnacle "spire" work over the niche having cinquefoiled panel heads, only the two end ones being trefoiled. If in this and a few other details the illustration from a drawing by W. Caveler, facing p. 156, does not quite accurately depict the altar-drain in its present state, the difference is, most probably, to be accounted for by the fact that, since the drawing was made the altar-drain itself has been "restored." Thus, the existing Tudor-flower cresting, which now crowns the whole, and which could scarcely have been introduced so early as 1370, is after all only an addition of the 19th-century. This of course explains why the cresting does not figure in Caveler's drawing.

The superseded piscina, now inserted in the wall west of the sedilia, has a double drain, without projections, enclosed in two trefoiled moulded arches having shafts with caps and bases, and a hoodmould much damaged, its central portion and western end having been wholly broken away. Extensive remains of colour-work, chiefly red and blue, may be seen upon the whole, which is a handsome specimen of its period, the earlier 13th-century, and is undoubtedly contemporary with the chancel itself.

NOTE.—Special acknowledgments are due to Professor A. Hamilton Thompson, D.Litt., F.S.A. for his invaluable elucidation of some obscure and difficult points in the Latin of the Inventory, and for details concerning the service-books mentioned; to Mr. V. J. B. Torr for his Appendix on the Sedilia, on which subject he is an expert; to Mr. Ivor H. L. King for his two admirable plans; and to Mr. Francis H. Day, F.S.A., Mr. P. T. Baker, Clerk to the Presidents of the College, and Mrs. Walter Marsh for useful help in various ways.