

Archæologia Cantiana.

PLANS OF, AND BRIEF ARCHITECTURAL NOTES ON, KENT CHURCHES.

PART I. KINGSTON, EYNESFORD, EASTBRIDGE AND ORPINGTON.

BY F. C. ELLISTON-ERWOOD, F.S.A.

A WISH has often been expressed that the volumes of *Archæologia Cantiana* might contain a complete series of plans of Kent churches. Contributions towards this have already been made in numerous cases, and these plans, accompanied by more or less detailed surveys of the architectural features of the buildings, and accounts of their growth, are an important contribution to the study of our parish churches. For many years now I have measured, as opportunity arose, ecclesiastical and other medieval buildings and have prepared plans, mainly for my own use, to show the various stages of their development. These, I venture to think, may be of some value to students, and I therefore propose, with the concurrence of the Editor, to publish in the next few volumes of our Transactions, a selection of these, accompanied by such brief notes (not by any means complete monographs on the selected buildings) that may tend to render the plans more intelligible, or may explain my theories if they are at variance with already published accounts. They may thus serve to make a visit to any particular church more instructive, and I might add here that I have no objection to any of these plans being used by incumbents and others as a basis of information that may be displayed in the church, or in any guide or handbook.

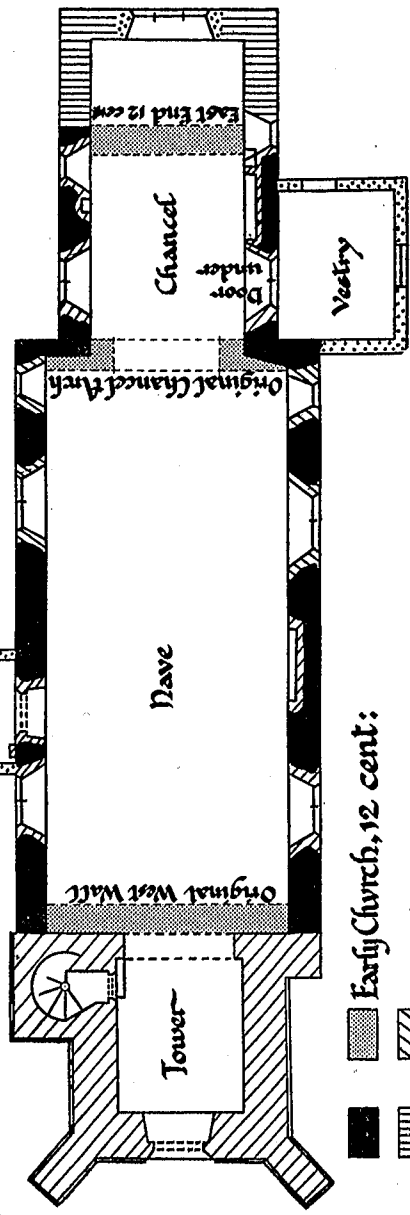
The plans are all dated and give the results of my examination at that time. Recent happenings may have resulted in changes and there may have been structural alterations, but as it is improbable that I shall be able to revisit many of these churches, it will rest with other and more recent students to modify and correct them as circumstances require, and as their knowledge guides them. All the plans are reproduced to a common scale, i.e. 16 feet to one inch.

THE CHURCH OF ST. GILES, KINGSTON. (Plan 1.)

In its plan this building is of the very simplest character, with a plain un-aisled nave, chancel and western tower, with a modern porch and vestry. At first sight it is not a church likely to attract many

S: Giles, Kingston, Kent.

Scale.

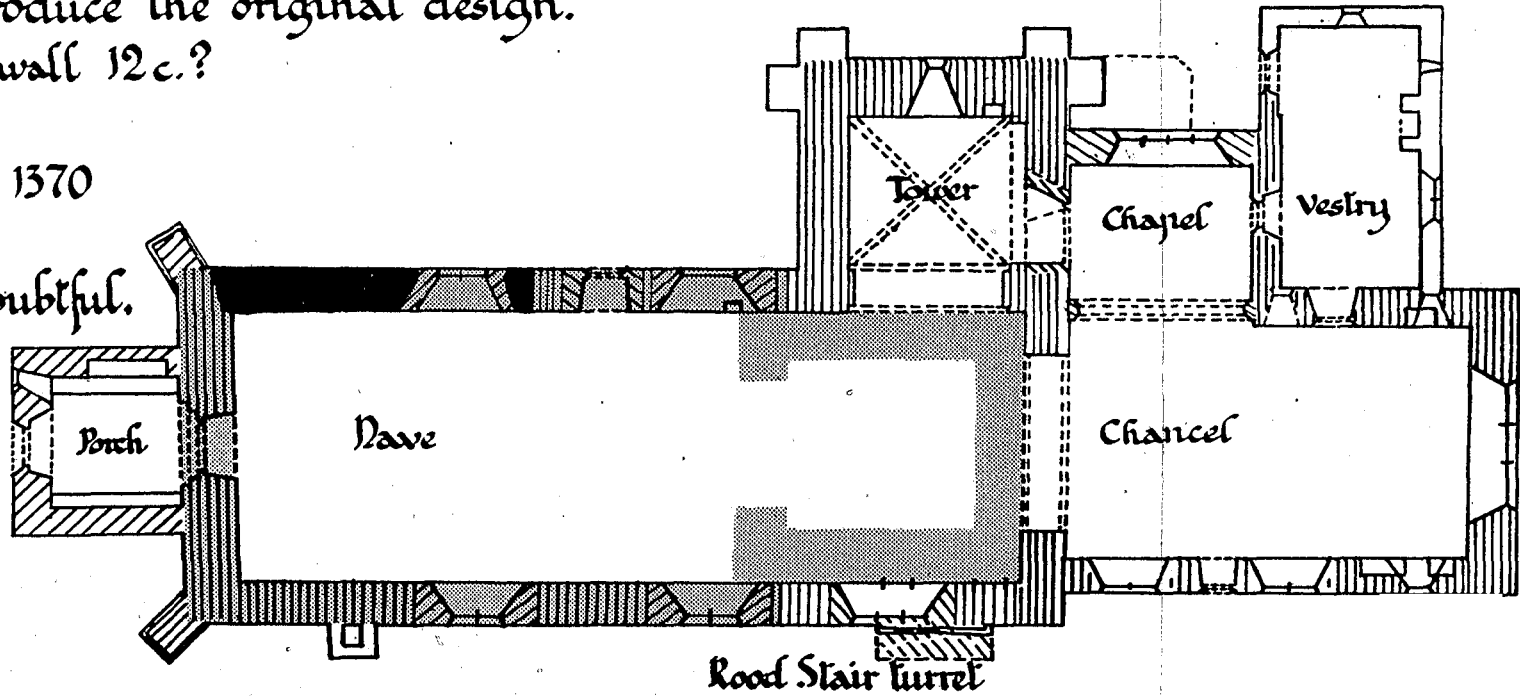


- -
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- Early Church, 12 cent: }
 13 and 14 cent: } Additions and Insertions.
 15 cent: and Modern }

Orpington, Kent. All Saints.

The lint suggests a plan for the 12c. church.
 Windows & Doors are dated on the presumption
 that they reproduce the original design.

- Original wall 12c.?
- ▨ 13c.
- ▧ 14c. circ: 1370
- ▩ 15c.
- mod: & doubtful.



Scale. 10 20 30 40 50 feet

F.C. Elliston - Erwood, F.S.A. mens et deli, mcmxlv.

visitors, as practically every indication of an early origin save its plan, is obliterated.

One detail that can be seen is, however, of some importance : it is the change in the character of the walling of the north chancel wall some 9 feet 6 inches from the east end. Though this break is not apparent on the corresponding south wall, it is enough, I think, to imply an extension of the chancel, and will supply the justification for the small chancel with a later addition on my plan. It can likewise be observed that the tower is built up against the nave with a straight joint. The chancel opening (there is no chancel arch) and the walling on either side of it are obviously the ruin of an earlier chancel arch, which I have restored as twelfth century. These alterations must have taken place before or when the low-side window in the north-east corner of the nave was inserted. This is of fourteenth century date and, like many of its kind, not easy to explain. There may have been a small altar in this angle. Wills mention a chapel of Our Lady, and this and the corresponding position on the south side, are the only possible sites for secondary altars.

The tower is a good example of 15th C. date, with a massive stair turret, and a west door with molded jambs and arch, the latter enclosed in a square head with spandrels containing quatrefoils and knots. In the upper stage is a good three-light window of the same period. A plinth runs round the tower, stopping at its junction with the old work, where a straight joint marks the union.

The north porch (modern) covers a door, also of Perpendicular date, with a mutilated inscription in the spandrels :

“ Pray for the soules of . . . Thomas . . . and Alys his wyf ”

There is no mention, in Leland Duncan's *Testamenta Cantiana*, of any bequest that might shed light on this inscription. There is a damaged holy water stock to the right of the entrance. An aumbry in the north chancel wall, a fifteenth century piscina with a four-lobed basin opposite, and an arched recess with a bench made from an old tomb slab, are the main fittings in the chancel. This last feature may have been a sedile, though the north-west window has its sill extended downwards to form a bench for a like purpose. The window opposite is blocked by the modern vestry, but the original tracery is intact. The roof is of the king post type with four-way wind braces to each post, and over the chancel are two carved angels that may be original and derived from the early church. The niche in the nave is the remnant of the old south door, now blocked. There is some authority for this in Petrie's drawing of the church.

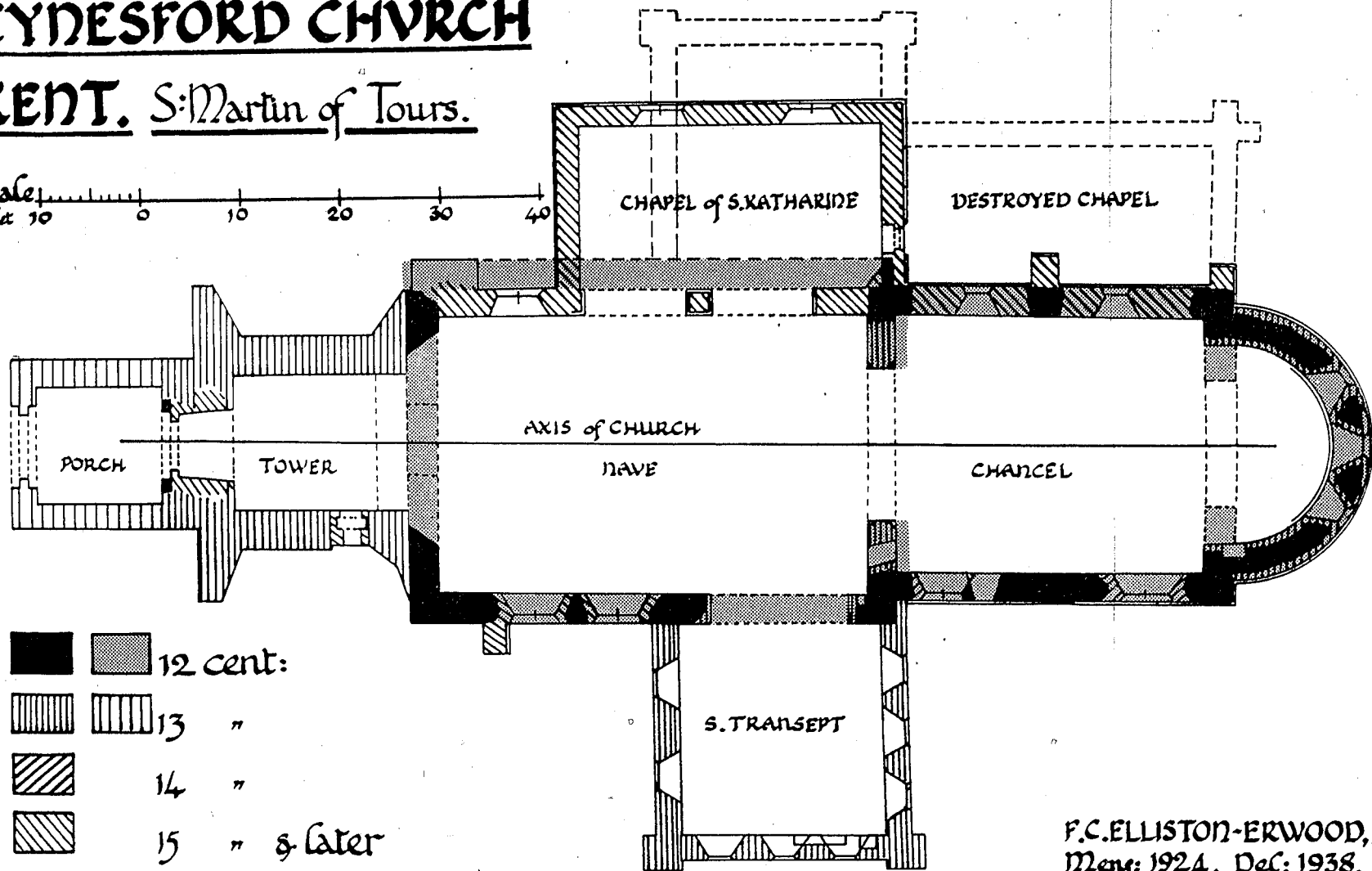
FURTHER NOTES ON ST. MARTIN, EYNESFORD. (Plan 2.)

The church of St. Martin, Eynesford, has received considerable attention in the pages of *Arch. Cant.* from the learned pens. of the late

EYNESFORD CHVRCH

KENT. S:Martin of Tours.

Scale
feet 10 0 10 20 30 40



F.C. ELLISTON-ERWOOD, F.S.A.
May: 1924. Dec: 1938.

PLAN 2.

Canon Scott Robertson (Vol. XVI) and the Rev. Canon G. M. Livett (Vol. XLVI), the latter illustrating his paper with a plan drawn with all his wonted skill and accuracy. It might therefore appear that there was nothing further to say, but the story of the growth of the building is such an involved and complicated one, and the reliably dated material so scanty, that there is yet another theory that may explain the unusual character of the building. That is the purpose of these notes, but, to obviate the possibility of the pages of our Journal being overburdened by the conflicting theories of differing individuals, I submitted these notes some years ago to Mr. Livett for his comments, to be added to my criticisms when they were printed. But owing to the poor state of his health, he felt unable to deal with the matter, and the regrettable continuance of his indisposition has further delayed any comments. So I print my notes and plan with a clear understanding that the last word on this puzzling church may not have been said.

My objections to Mr. Livett's scheme of growth are briefly :

- (1) The rebuilding of an apse in the thirteenth century is such an unusual occurrence that it immediately calls for careful examination of the evidence, being suspect from the beginning.
- (2) Even more unusual is, as is postulated in this case, the rebuilding of an apse on foundations that are partly new, and in part those of the old apse.
- (3) Livett's plan shows clearly that this is implied, as his thirteenth century apse is rebuilt eccentrically on the foundations of the earlier (twelfth century) structure.
- (4) His scheme of development is based on the axis of the *present* nave, and he aims to project a church with a chancel on the same alignment.
- (5) There is an objection similar to No. 3 in the matter of the rebuilding of the north chancel wall. Here also, according to his plan, the rebuilt wall is partly overlapping the earlier footings.
- (6) There is no evidence that the existing north nave wall is of twelfth century workmanship.
- (7) There are two chamfered projections at the west end of the nave. These are twice spoken of as diagonal buttresses (pp. 161 and 170) of the thirteenth century tower, and as such they are shown on the plan. But how can these be buttresses if between them and the tower east wall, is shown a piece of twelfth century masonry ?

As an alternative to these criticisms I suggest :

- (1) Existing north and south walls are *both* of twelfth century work.
- (2) The apse is twelfth century work, refaced entirely inside and out in the thirteenth century, when the " arch of triumph " was removed and the responds made good with re-used twelfth century stones. Windows were rebuilt larger in the new fashion.
- (3) This suggestion preserves the axis of the apse and the chancel and this is the same axis as that of the tower and the porch. No rebuilding is therefore necessary.
- (4) By postulating a new north wall to the nave, built just north of the existing wall and arcade (a perfectly normal and common proceeding in church enlargements), and allowing all other walls to stand, a nave is produced that aligns with everything else.
- (5) The present north wall of the church is fifteenth century and erected when the chapel of St. Katharine was built. This was done *inside* the church, thus reducing the width of the nave by the thickness of this wall.
- (6) The two projections at the end of the nave (Livett's " buttresses ") are, I suggest, the remains of the west wall of the original nave. It will be observed that the part on the south is wider than its fellow on the north by the thickness of a twelfth century wall, and though the opening between the fragments is later, the axis of tower, porch, chancel and apse exactly bisects it, clearly indicating some structural connection with the early church.
- (7) The thirteenth century tower appears to be built up against this fragment of the west wall.

I can anticipate some of the objections to my solution, by dealing with the matter of proportion in nave and chancel. Admittedly the nave is wide, as is the chancel when compared with its length, and comparison made with normal twelfth century churches. But how far are we to be bound by matters of proportion? The matter can only be dealt with by an average, and obviously there are many churches above the average, and equally, many below. Otherwise there would be no need for an average, and Eynesford is one of these abnormalities. A study of the plans given in Dr. Fairweather's little book on *Apsidal Aisleless Churches of Great Britain* (Wiles & Son Ltd., Colchester, 1933) will supply many other examples, and for a continental parallel, the

plan of the chapel of St. Julien, Petit Quevilly, near Rouen (see *Arch. Jour.*, XCV, 388) shows the proportion of width to length in the nave as 100 : 118, and in the chancel as 100 : 114. The corresponding figures for Eynesford are 100 : 142 and 100 : 113. The French example is thus even more abnormal than the Kentish one.

Further, I readily admit that there are not any architectural details *in situ* in chancel walls or apse that justify the dating of the twelfth century. But where else is an apse claimed in any thirteenth century parish church ?

THE RUINED CHURCH OF EASTBRIDGE, ROMNEY MARSH. (Plan 3.)

In *Arch. Cant.*, XXXVII I wrote a short survey of some of the churches on Romney Marsh, together with a number of plans. On p. 189 is a plan of the desecrated church of Eastbridge, drawn from measurements taken from the few standing walls, and the more doubtful evidence of suggestive trenches and hollows in the adjacent turf. This plan must now be scrapped in favour of a more accurate if not more illuminating one. It is the result of an excavation carried out by the then Vicar of Dymchurch, the Rev. Gordon Cuming, in 1933.¹

By the courtesy of our Treasurer, Mr. Charles Stokes, I was informed of this "dig" and was invited down to see the results and give my opinion. I measured the remains as disclosed by the spade, and made notes. Seemingly no other plan was made, though I am informed that the Rev. G. M. Livett also saw the excavations, made notes and likewise took some measurements, but these to my knowledge have not been published. I reproduce my plan with explanatory notes, but I am afraid that the solution to it all, escapes me yet. It is quite clear that there are enough twelfth century remains to make quite certain of a small normal church of the type already described in this paper, and that a later chancel, at a somewhat divergent angle to the nave, was added, as was the tower at the west end. But the strange angles in the walls, the straight joints hidden by later buttresses, the excessive footings, some of which do not appear to belong even to the twelfth century walls though they underlie them, and the tottering position of some of the larger fragments, make it fairly clear that some very serious disaster overcame the church. Maybe this was a landslide, though the ground is quite level hereabouts, or else a slipping of foundations in the rather unsubstantial marsh subsoil. Whatever may be the cause, it is yet to seek, and the story of the church yet to be elucidated.

THE CHURCH OF ALL SAINTS, ORPINGTON. (Plan 4.)

This church has been very fully described by Canon Scott Robertson in *Arch. Cant.*, XIII, 374 ff., though, as was so often the case with

¹ *Arch. Cant.*, XLVI, p. 212.

these early writers, no plan is given. These notes do not do much more than repair that omission.

The main difficulty in this church—a problem that the Canon either did not see, or did not want to see—lies in the fact that the north wall of the church is definitely of two dates. That in itself is not unusual—other examples have already been noted in this paper—but generally speaking, the break comes in the majority of instances in such a position that it is quite in order to use the evidence in re-constructing the usual type of early Norman church. But at Orpington the break occurs too far west for this to be accepted without question. But I fail to see how the evidence can be interpreted otherwise than as I have indicated. The western portion is obviously the older, and it retains in part some of its original early rendering, and I think it must be taken as the only surviving part of the twelfth century church. The other changes follow quite normally, though the position and vaulted ground stage of the tower make it rather unusual. There are manifest signs in this tower of fairly recent rebuilding in brick, and it may be that the great extent of newer work on this eastern part of the north wall, is due to the same disaster that overtook the tower.

The “Mural Pulpit” of the Canon is, I think, but the vestige of the rood stair, contrived in a projecting turret, that has since been removed, but not without leaving a tell-tale scar to indicate its position at the eastern extremity of the nave south wall.

The indications of an original round-headed window (op. cit., p. 374) are faintly visible, but without a ladder and a much closer examination, it is difficult either to confirm or reject this interpretation.

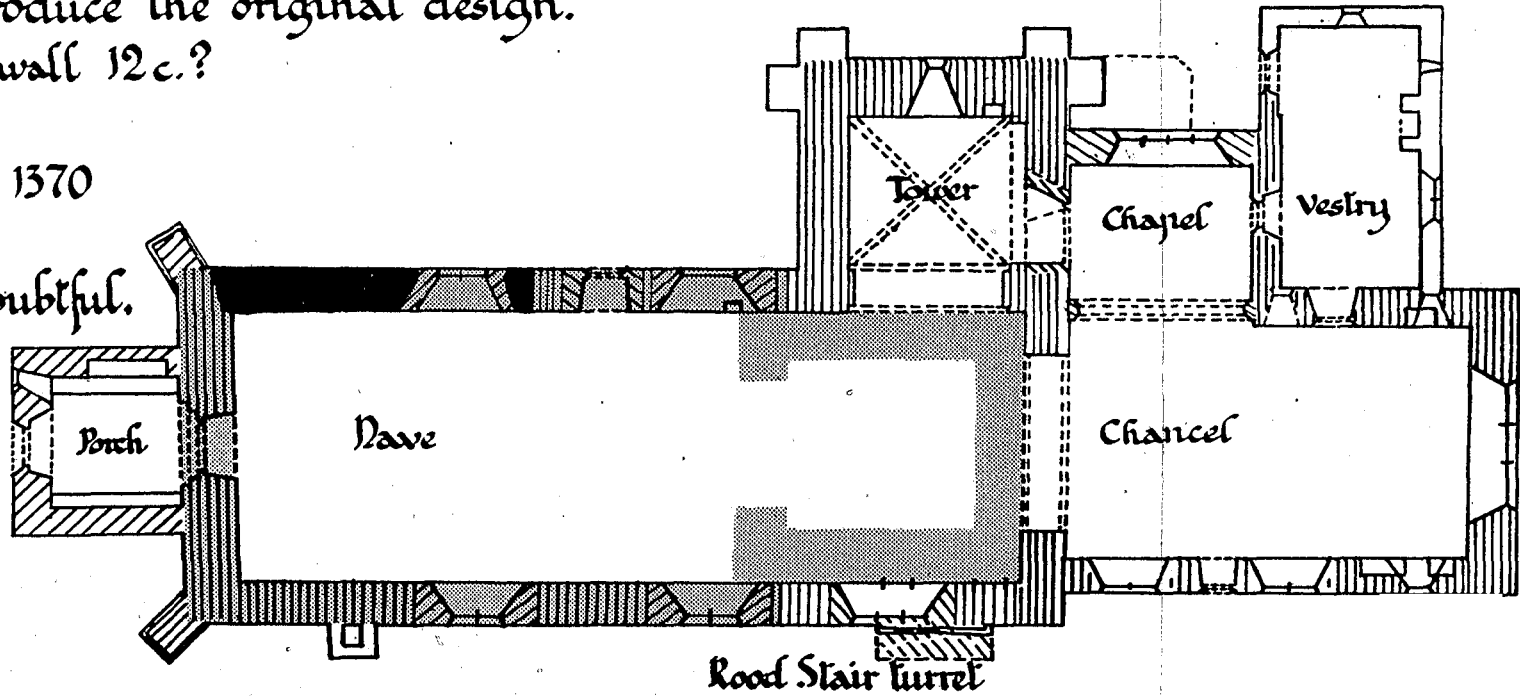
NOTE.

It is rather curious that at some time or other I have toyed with the idea that both Kingston and Orpington churches might have been pre-conquest. In each case this was based on a study of the proportions of Saxon Churches as given in Professor Baldwin Brown's second volume of *The Arts in Early England*. But further consideration has convinced me that this is not the case, and the possibility of adding two more churches to the pre-conquest list must be abandoned. But at first sight the tall heights and comparatively narrow widths of both churches are symptomatic of something earlier.

Orpington, Kent. All Saints.

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 Windows & Doors are dated on the presumption
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