EXCAVATIONS AT ST. AUSTIN’S ABBEY, CANTERBURY.

BY W. H. ST. JOHN HOPE, M.A.

I.—THE CHAPEL OF ST. PANCRAS.

The superior attractions of the cathedral church of Canterbury and of the monastic buildings adjoining it have led to the remains of the Abbey of St. Austin without the walls not receiving the attention they deserve at the hands of Churchmen and antiquaries. Yet it is to this site that we must turn for some of the most important evidence of early church building in this country, dating from the first days of the new mission introduced by Austin in 597.

For the story of these early buildings we are indebted in the first place to the Ecclesiastical History of the Venerable Bæda, who mentions four churches in or near the city of Canterbury. Two of these Bæda states were already in existence when Austin came to Britain. “There was,” he says, “near the same city on the east a church anciently built in honour of St. Martin while the Romans still dwelt in Britain, in which the Queen (Bertha), whom we have before said was a Christian, had been wont to pray. In this (church) therefore they themselves (i.e. Austin and his companions) also began to meet, to sing, to pray, to say masses, to preach, and to baptize, until the King (Æthelbert) having been converted to the Faith, they received greater licence to preach everywhere, and to build and restore churches.” We are next told by Bæda that “when Austin received the episcopal seat in the royal city (as we have before said), he recovered therein by the King’s assistance a church which he had learned was built in that same place by the ancient labour of Roman believers, and
he hallowed it in the name of the Holy Saviour our God
and Lord Jesus Christ, and established in the same place a
habitation for himself and his successors. Moreover,” Ælfric
goes on to say, “he made also a monastery not far from the
same city towards the east, in which, by his persuasion,
Æthelbert built from the foundations and enriched with
divers gifts the church of the blessed apostles Peter and
Paul, in which the bodies both of Austin himself and of
all the bishops of Durovernum, as well as of the Kings of
Kent, could be placed.”

The fourth church is only mentioned incidentally by Ælfric
in the account of a fire at Canterbury during the episcopate
of Mellitus, the third bishop from Austin, who was a
sufferer from the gout and died in 624. On the occasion of
this fire, Ælfric says “no small part of the city had already
been devastated, and the raging flame was advancing
towards the bishop’s house, when the bishop, trusting in the
divine aid when the human failed, ordered himself to be
carried to meet the raging masses of fire flying hither and
thither. There was in the same place where the attack of
the flames raged most fiercely a church (martyrium) of the
blessed Four Crowned ones. The bishop being carried
there by the hands of his servants, he an infirm man began
to avert by praying the danger which a strong band of brave
men had not been able to by much labour.”

Of these four churches we are now concerned only with
the third, that of St. Peter and St. Paul without the walls.

The foundation of it outside the city is a curious survival
of the Roman tradition forbidding intramural interments,
which were not allowed in the cathedral church of Canter-
bury until the consecration of archbishop Cuthbert in 740.

Although we have no such architectural description of it
as Eadmer’s account of Christchurch, the fact of the abbey
of St. Peter and St. Paul being the burial place of kings,
archbishops, and abbots has preserved many notices of it
in the records of their places of sepulture. From these we
learn that it had its high altar towards the east, and on each
side of its nave a porticus or chapel, in the northern of which
Austin and his five immediate successors were buried. As
we are told there was not room for any more, this *porticus* cannot have been very large. In the southern chapel were buried Queen Bertha, King Æthelbert, and bishop Letard, as well as King Eadbald and some of his successors.

To the east of the church of St. Peter and St. Paul, and separated from it by the monks' cemetery, was a second church or chapel built in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary by Eadbald the son of Æthelbert, in expiation of his sins. The date of this church must fall between Æthelbert's death in 616 and 618, when the second abbot John was buried in it.

For this account and the later history of the abbey we are chiefly indebted to one of the monks, William Thorn by name, who wrote a chronicle of it from its foundation down to 1397.

The two churches of St. Peter and St. Paul and of Our Lady appear to have stood until about 1059, when the then abbot Wulfric, being desirous of making more room for shrines and relics, pulled down the east front of the abbey church and the western part of Our Lady's chapel, and having purged the cemetery between them, began to connect the two by new building. But the work was stopped by Wulfric's death in 1059, and remained unfinished until after the election of abbot Scotland in 1070. Scotland decided to pull down Wulfrie's work and to build upon the whole of the site of Our Lady's chapel. He accordingly translated the relics of all who had been buried in it and constructed in the same place a crypt to the Blessed Virgin, over which were erected the shrines of Austin and his fellows.

Abbot Scotland, who died in 1087, is said to have finished the new work from the above-said oratory of the Virgin as far as the porch of St. Austin, in which he rested of old time.

The abbey church was completed by Wydo, Scotland's successor, and so far as we at present know, continued down to the Suppression.

The monastic buildings stood to the north of the church, with the outer court and principal gatehouse to the west, and the infirmary and its adjuncts on the east.

To the south of the abbey lay the lay-folk's cemetery, as at Christchurch, and entered like that by its own gatehouse.
At the east end of the cemetery, and in a direct line with Æthelbert's church of St. Peter and St. Paul and Eadbald's chapel of the Blessed Virgin, was a third building of equally early date, the chapel of St. Pancras, which forms the subject of this paper.

On the Suppression of the Abbey of St. Austin, as it had come to be called, on 30th July 1538, the site and precinct were reserved for the King, who proceeded to pull down the great church and to convert the abbot's lodging and other buildings into a residence for himself.* But this afterwards shared the fate of the church, and by the middle of the seventeenth century, if we may judge by old engravings, the church of St. Peter and St. Paul and the monastic buildings had been reduced almost to their present fragmentary condition. The buildings in the outer court adjoining the great gate had been converted into a house, which was for some time the residence of the Wotton family. But the whole site gradually became more and more degraded, and Hasted, in his History of Kent, published in 1799, says: "So little is the veneration paid at this time to the remains of this once sacred habitation, that the principal apartments adjoining the gate-way, are converted into an ale-house; the gate-way itself into a brew-house, the steam of which has defaced the beautiful paintings over it; the great court-yard is turned into a bowling green; the chapel and isle of the church on the north side, into a fives court; and the great room over the gate, into a cock-pit."† In 1845 this portion of the precinct, which formed the old outer court, was bought by the late Mr. A. J. B. Beresford-Hope, F.S.A., and given by him for the site of a missionary college. This College of St. Augustine was thereupon established in the remaining buildings, to which new ones were added for the accommodation of the students. The sites of the cloister and frater, and of the kitchen and kitchenyard to the north of them, have since been included in the College property.

* The priories of Dartford and Rochester were similarly treated, apparently to form, with the palace at St. Austin's, a series of posting houses for the King's use between London and Dover.
† Vol. iv. 662, note 3.
The lay-folk's cemetery had previously been sold by Sir Edward Hales, bart., the then owner, for the site of the Kent and Canterbury Hospital, which was begun in 1791 and opened in 1793. The present hospital, which is the old one with additional wings, fortunately stands clear of any old buildings, immediately to the south of the nave of the abbey church. The ruins of the nave and the greater part of its site are within the hospital grounds. East of the hospital is a square, flat-topped mound, now covered with large trees, on which formerly stood the abbey belfry.

The rest of the site of the monastery is represented by a field of about three acres, till lately occupied as a farm-yard, lying to the north of the hospital and east of the college. The buildings that once almost covered it have all been swept away, and only a few fragments of rubble walling and the irregularities of the surface remain to tell of their existence.

They included the central tower, the north and south transepts, and all the eastern part of the abbey church, with its crypt and flanking chapels and the site of St. Austin's shrine; the chapter-house (where most of the abbots were buried) and other buildings extending northwards from the transept; and the monks' infirmary, an establishment of some size, with a great hall, chapel, etc. The ruins of the early Saxon chapel of St. Pancras are in the south-east corner.

Besides this chapel of St. Pancras, the field also covers the site of Eadbald's chapel of Our Lady, and of the eastern part of Æthelbert's church of St. Peter and St. Paul. The western part of this stood upon a triangular piece of ground already belonging to St. Augustine's College.

Various attempts have been made within recent years, but without effect, to rescue this historic site from its deplorable condition, and commit it to the safe keeping of some corporation representing the English Church which here had its very beginnings.

During the present year (1900), however, under the provisions of the will of a late owner, the field had to be sold. A strong effort was at once made to secure it, and through the
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GENERAL VIEW, LOOKING EAST.
exertions of the Rev. C. F. Routledge, F.S.A.; Hon. Canon of Canterbury, a sufficient guarantee fund was raised for the purpose. The property was eventually put up to auction, and has now passed into the hands of four Trustees, who are Lord Northbourne, Canon Routledge, Mr. F. Bennett-Goldney, and myself, on the understanding that the site shall first be carefully excavated for the remains of the abbey church and buildings, particularly of the three Saxon churches, and then finally transferred to St. Augustine's College.

Since the land did not actually come into our possession until 11th October, it was rather late to begin any excavation on a large scale, but as a considerable sum had already been given for excavation purposes, over and beyond the purchase money, it was decided to undertake the exploration of the chapel of St. Pancras.

The ruins of this had long been desecrated, and the greater part of the nave was covered by the wreck of a cottage, which was standing early in the last century. The area of the chancel had been excavated to a considerable depth and covered with chalk to form a comfortable bed for swine, who here lay sheltered by a roof of rough timber and hopbine. Another foul shelter of like construction abutted on the west end of the cottage.

A clearance having first been made of these and other objectionable features, the work of excavation was begun on Monday, 5th November, under the direction and supervision of Canon Routledge and myself, and continued until the end of the week. Owing to the direction of the wall dividing the properties, and to the fact that the cottage doorway was on the south side, the site of the cottage had passed into the possession of the Kent and Canterbury Hospital with the land sold by Sir Edward Hales. The chancel and north half of the nave of St. Pancras are therefore on our land, while the southern half of the nave belongs to the Hospital. The Hospital Committee, however, of which Canon Routledge is fortunately the Chairman, most kindly waived all objections, and we were accordingly able to demolish the cottage walls and make a complete clearance of everything encumbering
the site of the chapel. This has now been properly excavated down to the floor level, and for the first time we are able to speak definitely concerning the plan and architectural history of one of the oldest Saxon churches in this country.

As at first planned the chapel consisted of an apsidal chancel or presbytery, apparently about 26 feet long and 25 feet wide, and a nave 42 feet 7 inches long and 26 feet 7½ inches wide. In the intervening wall was a colonnade of four Roman columns. The two central were about 9 feet apart and carried an arch; the side openings were only 4 feet wide, and it is uncertain whether the columns carried arches or flat lintels. Of these columns the southernmost retains its base and a portion of the shaft, and is standing to a height of 3 feet. The next has gone, but the bed on which it stood is plainly visible, as well as a cast of the south side of the base and of the shaft above. On the north side the wall is ruined nearly to the floor, but we found in front of it fragments of a third shaft, and the upper portion of one retaining the half-round necking or astragal from which the capital rose. The diameter of the columns at the base was 16½ inches, which gives a probable height of 11 feet. Allowing 6 inches for the thickness of the impost this would give a total height for the central arch of about 15½ feet. The side openings if arched would be 13½ feet high. The columns were undoubtedly taken from some Roman building of a good period and carefully put together again. The remaining section for example consists of (a) the square base block, (b) the moulded base, and (c) the length of shaft rising from it. The fragment lately found of the upper part of a column shews a marked diminishing upwards to the astragal.

The chapel had a wide west doorway, at first 7 feet 8 inches across, but this was narrowed to 6 feet 6 inches after the walls had been carried up about 3 feet.* It was flanked by bold pilaster buttresses of 14½ inches projection, and there were pairs of like buttresses at the western corners of the nave and an intermediate one in the middle of each side wall. The chancel walls ran straight for 10 feet as far as a

* This doorway was further narrowed to 2 feet 7½ inches about 1120 by the insertion within it of another doorway with a stepped sill.
CANTERBURY.
BASE OF ROMAN COLUMN. ST. PANCRAS.
SECTION ONE HALF FULL SIZE.

DIAM. OF COLUMN 1 4/4"
similar buttress on each side, beyond which the apse began. The apse itself has been entirely destroyed to make room for a later square-ended chancel, with the exception of the small fragment on each side shewn on the Plan. As these sections are apparently without curvature, and there are no traces whatever of foundations for a considerable distance from the present east wall, the apse must have taken approximately the form indicated on the Plan. Some slight traces of walling were found on this line in the south-east angle, and it must also be noticed that an apse of similar form terminated the Saxon church at Rochester built by Ethelbert in 604.*

To this first simple plan of an apse and nave, in which the Rochester example also agrees with it, there have been added a western porch and north and south chapels. The porch was built up against the pilasters flanking the nave doorway, and was 9½ feet wide and 10½ feet projection internally. Its north wall is still standing to a height of over 11 feet, and retains the impost and springing of the western arch of entrance. This was 6 feet 4½ inches wide, and 7 feet 8½ inches high up to the impost, which was formed of two projecting courses of brickwork 4 inches thick. The arch was therefore about 11 feet in height. The side walls extended 16 inches beyond the entrance to form flanking pilasters or buttresses, like those on either side the nave doorway. North and south buttresses were also begun on the line of the arch, but they seem to have been abandoned in the building before they had been carried up far, and the finished portions cut away. The foundations or lowest courses of both remain.

Of the side chapels, or porches, as they should be called, only the lower portion of the southern is left, but the other certainly existed, for the blocked doorway into it may be seen, and the abuttal of its walls against the nave is plainly marked by the external plastering abruptly ceasing where the walls should come, and continuing beyond them.†

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* See the plan in Archæologia Cantiana, Vol. XVIII. 261.
† A foundation wall has since been uncovered on the line of its western wall, but there are no signs of corresponding foundations on the north and east sides.
The side porches were exactly similar in length and breadth to the western porch, and the surviving one had its side walls prolonged in the same way as buttresses. The absence of buttresses at right angles to these may shew that the western porch was begun before the others, and that its cross buttresses had then been abandoned.

The porches do not seem to have had any outer doorways, but were entered from the nave by openings 39 inches wide inserted when they were added. The insertion of these doorways necessitated the cutting away of the external buttresses at the same point. All the doorways run straight through the walls and have no rebates for doors, which must have been hung from wooden frames wedged into the openings.

At the same time as the porches were added the side openings of the colonnade between apse and nave were walled up with brick, perhaps because the central arch shewed signs of weakness. It will be seen from the Plan that at a much later period this same gable was strengthened by buttresses of some size and projection.

As the nave walls are now for the most part reduced to from 12 to 20 inches above the floor line, and in the south porch to 33 inches, it is difficult to say anything as to their upper works or window openings. We found large masses of fallen wall lying on the floor and outside the building, just as they had been thrown down at the destruction of the chapel after the Suppression. They have of course been left where found, but those outside have not yet been fully examined. The masses within the chapel shew no traces of windows, but they have furnished other unexpected evidence which goes far towards unravelling the story of the building.

The chapel was constructed throughout of Roman bricks, hardly any of which are whole, evidently taken from some destroyed Roman building, perhaps the same that furnished the columns. In two places, one on either side of the nave, the usual regularity of the courses is broken by a rude attempt at herring-bone work. Many of the bricks have the characteristic Roman pink mortar adhering to them, and lumps of the same mortar are also used here and there for
CANTERBURY—ST. PANCRAS.

PART OF ARCADE BETWEEN APSE AND NAVE, WITH ROMAN COLUMN.
building material. A fallen fragment of the east wall of the nave fortunately contains a segment of the chancel arch. This was turned entirely with brick, as were probably the other arched openings. The walls were faced with a fine white plaster, which may or may not be original, bearing traces of whitewash.

But an examination of the mortar yields the most valuable evidence. The standing portions of the nave and chancel are built throughout of a distinctive bright yellow mortar, which is also found in the fallen portions of the chancel and in the mass with the bit of chancel arch. The west and south porches, on the other hand, and the blocking of the colonnade, are built with a perfectly white mortar having a considerable mixture of clean gravel, the difference in colour and character being very marked.

Under ordinary circumstances such a difference would not only point to a distinct interval in time, but justify the conclusion that the porches, etc. had been added to an older building. Such a conclusion would also be strengthened by the fact that the fallen mass with the fragment of the chancel arch has the yellow mortar, as have two other masses lying in line with it. But the other pieces further west, which can only have fallen from the nave walls, since they lie upon its floor, and not from the porches, are clearly built with the white mortar. Further, an examination of the west wall where it joins the porch shews distinctly that for about three feet up the nave wall has the yellow mortar, and the porch the white; while above that point not only does the straight joint between nave and porch become a true bond, but the walls were both carried up with the white mortar alone. The evidence is therefore conclusive (i) that the chapel was first planned with an apse and nave only; (ii) that when they were begun, yellow mortar was used in their construction; (iii) that the apse was probably completed, together with the east end and perhaps the eastern parts of the side walls of the nave, all with the yellow mortar; (iv) that a pause occurred in the building when the west part had been carried only a few feet up; (v) that when the work was resumed the porches were added to the plan, the
weak east wall strengthened by walling up the side openings, and the chapel completed, all the new work being laid with the white mortar. There is of course nothing to indicate the length of the pause in the building or the cause of the change in the mortar, but the interval can hardly have been a long one.

The chapel no doubt had a wooden roof, and was paved with a floor of white cement, 6 inches thick. A good fragment of this remains against the north wall, with a surface coat of a pinkish colour, but this is so thin as to be readily scratched with a shovel and shew the white underneath. Upon this floor in medieval times was laid a pavement of tile pavers 4½ inches square, alternately yellow and black or dark green, portions of which remain here and there. Against the south wall is a low rubble bench table, which extends eastwards from the blocked door of the south porch into the angle and returns along the east wall as far as the chancel arch. This same corner of the chapel seems also to have been enclosed in later times as a chapel. Part of the western step of this remains, with a rebate for a tread of tiles, which were of an ornate character.

At some period late in the fourteenth century the apsidal chancel was taken down and replaced by a square-ended one 30 feet long and 20 feet wide, of two bays, and large buttresses were added to strengthen the eastern gable of the nave. A chamber, perhaps one of a series, with a fireplace and a western door, was added about the same time on the north. The new chancel had a large east window, the arch of which is left. In the south wall are a piscina and a four-centred arched recess for the sedilia, over which are traces of a window. There was also a window opposite, and probably others in the western bay. The floor has been entirely destroyed, through the area of the chapel having been excavated to a depth of nearly 3 feet to form a pig-sty.

The portion of the site of the chapel within the Hospital grounds was partly explored in 1881 by Canon Routledge,* who opened out the western porch, the western doorway and south wall of the nave, and the south porch with its altar,

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THE NAVE, LOOKING WEST, SHEWING PIECE OF FALLEN MASONRY WITH SEGMENT OF THE CHANCEL ARCH.
together with the fragment of the apsidal chancel wall further east. As will be seen from the Plan, this has been cut away for a length of 7 feet from the nave and a later wall built parallel with it on the south, apparently at the same time as the rebuilding of the chancel. The recess thus formed was a grave, probably of some benefactor to the new work, whose name has yet to be recovered.

The south porch was entered from the nave by a new doorway with marble step, inserted to the west of the old entrance, of the same date as the new chancel. Against the east wall is the block of an altar, 4 feet 6 inches long and 2 feet 3\(\frac{1}{2}\) inches wide. When first excavated by Mr. Routledge this had a tile floor on either side. In the south and west walls are two vertical chases about 2 feet 9 inches from the angle and 6 inches wide, extending upwards for 20 inches from the floor, apparently for the fixing of a wooden seat. It has been suggested\(^*\) that there were wooden steps here from an outer door at a higher level than the floor. But there are no traces of such a door, and drawings of the chapel made in 1722 and again in 1755, when the porch walls were standing to a height of 11 or 12 feet, show distinctly that there was no entrance on either side of the angle.

The north porch was perhaps taken away when the chancel was rebuilt, when both porch doorways were blocked and the new doorway made into the south porch.

In the angle formed by the west wall of the nave and the north wall of the western porch are the foundations of a chamber of medieval date, about 11 feet square, built up against the chapel. Its west wall is not parallel with the nave wall and seems to have continued further north. The chamber had plastered walls, and was paved with large tiles 9\(\frac{1}{2}\) inches square, but there is nothing to indicate its use. The entrance into it was probably on the north. In the west end of the north wall of the nave was a very narrow doorway with a descent of three steps into the chapel, which may have communicated with the chamber outside.

The chapel, or at any rate the nave of it, was roofed with thin red tiles at the time of its destruction.

\(^*\) *Archaeological Journal*, liii. 324.
From this architectural description of the chapel it is now time to turn to its written history.

Although the building, as its Plan shews, is of very ancient date, it is not mentioned by Bæda or any other early writer, and the oldest existing account seems to be that written towards the end of the fourteenth century by William Thorn, under the year 598:

"Moreover there was not far from that city towards the east about midway between the church of St. Martin and the city walls a temple or idol-place where King Æthelbert according to the custom of his people was wont to pray, and with his nobles to sacrifice to demons and not to God; which temple Austin purged from the defilements and impurities of the heathen, and having broken in pieces the idol that was in it, he changed it into a church and dedicated it in the name of St. Pancras the martyr, and this was the first church hallowed by Austin. There is still an altar in the south porch of the same church at which the same Austin was wont to celebrate, where the image of the King formerly stood. While Austin was celebrating mass on this altar for the first time, the devil, seeing that he was driven forth from the house which he had for so long time dwelled in, strove to utterly overthrow the aforesaid church, the marks of which thing are still visible on the outside of the east wall of the porch aforesaid."

This story of the beginning of St. Pancras is placed by the writer immediately after the account of the founding of Christchurch, but before that of the church of St. Peter and St. Paul. Seeing, however, that an interval of eight centuries separated the good monk from the incident he relates, we must be careful not to build too much upon his story, and we know far too little about pagan Saxon temples to justify us in accepting all that is said about Æthelbert and his idol-place. What the building actually shews is that some Roman structure supplied the materials, and such might as well have been without the walls as within the city. The plan of St. Pancras is beyond question not that of a temple, but of a Saxon church of very early type, having features in common with other early Kentish churches,
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THE SOUTH PORCH AND ITS ALTAR.
including St. Martin’s hard by, Rochester (founded 604), Lyminge (founded 633), and Reculver (c. 669), to which may be added those at Bradwell, Essex (c. 653), and South Elmham, Suffolk, which Mr. Micklethwaite thinks was built for Felix, first bishop of East Anglia 630 to 647.

The balance of evidence is therefore all in favour of St. Pancras being a church actually built by Austin, perhaps for use during the erection of the larger church of St. Peter and St. Paul, which was still unfinished at his death in 605, though founded in 598. But it will be safer for the present to suspend judgment on this and other points, since there is a possibility of the recovery before long of the plan of the church of St. Peter and St. Paul itself, and perhaps of that of Badbald’s chapel of St. Mary.

There are still two other interesting items about St. Pancras recorded by Thorn. One is that Thomas Ickham, who was sacrist as early as 1358 and died in 1391, *fecit capellam sancti Pancraei* at a cost of 100 marks. This large sum was apparently spent, not on rebuilding but re-roofing the chapel. We learn from the other notice that in the year 1361 “on the night of St. Maurus the abbot, such a storm of wind arose that trees were prostrated and roofs and belfries thrown down, so that it seemed as if the whole fabric of the world was falling. During the tempest a certain chaplain of holy conversation, clad in a hair shirt night and day, and wasting his body with vigils, fastings, and prayers, Ralph by name, hoping that the danger threatening all at the time would decline, sat himself down in the chancel of the chapel of St. Pancras, as in the safest place, inasmuch as the roof of the aforesaid chapel had been newly built. What more? A great beam having been thrown down by the madness of the wind upon the image of the Blessed Virgin, the aforesaid priest, while bending before the image at his prayers, was killed, the image remaining unhurt, and he was buried in the chapel aforesaid under a marble stone before the rood.”

Many of the wills of the fifteenth century proved in the Consistory Court at Canterbury contain bequests to or directions for burial in the chapel of St. Pancras, which
is usually described as "within the cemetery of the monastery of St. Austin outside the walls of the city of Canterbury," and the cemetery itself was also a favourite place of burial. One of these wills, that of Hamon Bele, dated 7th November 1492, contains a bequest of £3 6s. 8d. "ad reparacionem capelle Sancti Pancræci infra precinctum cimiterii Sancti Augustini ac ad reparacionem Capelle ubi Sanctus Augustinus primo celebravit missam in Anglia dicte Capelle Sancti Pancræci annexe." Bæda tells us that Austin and his companions first used St. Martin's church for their services, but here we see Thorn's account of what befell Austin when he first celebrated mass at the altar (primo missam celebraret) expanded into the statement that his first mass in England was said there. If a tale can thus grow in one century, we should be more than ever cautious in accepting without question a story eight centuries old.

It will be seen from the general Plan that the chapel of St. Pancras was really in the cemetery, and the wall which extends westward from the north side of the western porch is for the most part the medieval division between the cemetery of the monks east of their church, and of the lay-folk to the south, an arrangement which had its parallel in the neighbouring monastery of Christchurch.

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POSTSCRIPT.

Mr. Routledge has kindly furnished me with the following notes of some interesting discoveries made by him in the western porch:

"At a depth of 15 inches below the tiled pavement were discovered some stone coffins, in one of which was a perfect skeleton, in the others fragmentary bones. The body in each case has been laid on the bare earth, then built round with stones accurately following its shape, and covered with large chamfered slabs of what looks like Portland oolite.

"At the north-east corner of the porch, immediately against the west wall of the nave, was found a small leaden coffin, slightly over 2 feet in length, containing some detached
Chapel of St. Pancras, Canterbury.

- Saxon, as first planned and begun to be built.
- Saxon additions to plan whilst in building.
- 12th Century insertion.
- 14th & 15th century alterations and additions.

Scale of 20 feet

W.H. ST. JOHN HOPE, MENS. E. DEL. 1902.
CANTERBURY, ST. PANCRAS.

LEADEN PLATE AND CROSS FOUND IN THE WESTERN PORCH (⅓ LINEAR).
bones of an adult, evidently relics. The inscription was unfortunately broken in pieces by the strokes of a workman's pickaxe. The fragments (which are still in the possession of Canon Routledge) are so small that it has been impossible to decipher the inscription, but the word 'sacrum' is legible, together with portions of other words."

Near one grave, against the south wall, there have lately been found (1) a thin plate of lead, 7 inches long and 2½ inches wide, inscribed:

\[ \text{HIC IACET BENEDICT' SACERDOS SLE MARGARETE} \]

with ligulate and inscribed letters of the style of the twelfth century; and (2) a lead cross, 4½ inches wide, 4½ inches high, and ¾ inch thick, with a deeply cut transverse inscription in two lines:

\[ \text{+ BENEDICTVS | SACERDOS.} \]

For notices of the discovery of other examples of these "absolution crosses," as they have been termed in England and France, see *Archeologia*, xxxv. 298, xxxvi. 266, and xxxvii. 37, 38.

The lettering of Benedict's plate should be compared with that found in the grave of Archbishop Theobald in the cathedral church in 1787, engraved in *Archeologia*, vol. xv. pl. x.