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HISTORY
of
SALEHURST CHURCH

By
W. EDWARD MEADS

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[Photo by W. Edward Meads.]

The large rural parish of Salehurst comprises over six thousand acres and about five miles of the main road from London to Hastings (A21) lies within its boundaries. Salehurst Church is situated on the north side of the River Rother, about half a mile to the east of this main road, where it passes through the northern part of the village of Robertsbridge, at the foot of Silver Hill.

Salehurst was a village in Norman times and in Domesday (1086) it is recorded that there was a church there. Nearly a century or so after Domesday came the building of Robert's Bridge (probably about 1170), over the River Rother, to accommodate what was, presumably, even then, some kind of important roadway from north to south. The Abbey of Robertsbridge was founded shortly afterwards (in 1176), on the south side of the river, and there grew up the village of this name, which ever since seems to have been the most populated part of the parish. Robertsbridge is, therefore, a hamlet in the parish of Salehurst and the parish church of the latter has always served both.

A history of the parish of Salehurst was written by Mr. Leonard J. Hodson, and published by him, under this title, in 1914. This work contains details of the parish and also some account of Salehurst Church, together with a ground plan copied from the one now hanging in the church, which was drawn by Mr. John E. Ray, whose assistance with regard to this church is therein

acknowledged by the author. The present writer is equally indebted to Mr. Ray for his valuable assistance, not only in regard to this church, but in regard to nearly all the others in this series.

As Salehurst was one of the prebends of the original foundation of the Collegiate Church of St. Mary-in-the-Castle, Hastings, a fairly detailed account of its history and also of the architecture of the church is given in Dawson's "Hastings Castle" (Vol. 11, Ch. V. p. 402 and sequel). Salehurst parish and church are also referred to—in their usual abbreviated form—by both Horsfield and Lower in their works on Sussex, but neither are of much use from an architectural point of view.

HISTORY

As is so often the case, documentary history of Salehurst Church is extremely slight, but the brief reference "there is a church and 16 acres of meadow" in Domesday shows that some church existed there at that time. Of that church, whether Saxon or Norman, nothing further is known, and no remains of it whatever apparently exist now, though it may have been—and probably was—on the site of the present one.

The architectural history of the present church is not easy to analyse, for, like so many churches, it has been altered and restored from time to time. A history of the manor and advowson may, however, throw some light on the

architecture, as it is found that alterations or enlargements of churches frequently followed a change of ownership.

At the time of the Domesday survey the manor and church of Salehurst belonged to Reinbert, the predecessor of the Etchingham family, who were the leading landowners in this part for centuries afterwards. Reinbert gave the church of Salehurst (together with those of several other places) to the Collegiate Church of St. Mary-in-the-Castle, Hastings (Dawson II, p. 402). His successor, William de Etchingham, in the 13th century transferred the advowson of Salehurst, Udimore and Mountfield to Peter de Ros, who regranted them to him in 1309. This grant was confirmed by a Royal Charter (Robertsbridge Deeds No. 292-3). These adverse grants led to the Dean and Chapter of St. Mary's, Hastings, asserting their right, which led to an agreement in 1313. This, however, did not end the dispute, which was settled in 1332 by the prebend of Salehurst in the College of Hastings being appropriated to the Abbey of Robertsbridge, the Abbots of which thereupon became canons of the Collegiate Church of Hastings and appointed the vicars of Salehurst.

Whatever church existed at Salehurst in Norman times, the earliest parts of the existing structure—of which the chancel is the most intact—appear to be of later Early English date—say about 1220-40—and it seems that this church was entirely built, or rebuilt, in this period. Early in the following century—in 1309 (see Robertsbridge Charters, Nos. 291-295)—the advowson of Salehurst Church passed to the Abbot of Robertsbridge, and it was probably due to the patronage of this important abbey that a considerable part of Salehurst Church was rebuilt later—about 1330-40—in Decorated style. The difficulty is to determine what was done at this time, and it is suggested here, for reasons given later, that the then existing simple Early English nave, with its one south aisle, was lengthened westward, the south aisle rebuilt and the north aisle and west tower added. Later in the same century—about 1350-60—the north-east chapel was added, and some years later, as the Decorated style was merging into Perpendicular—about 1370-80—the west porch was added in front of the tower, and the top of the tower added or rebuilt. This seems to be, approximately, the medieval history of the architectural evolution of this church, which examination will show presents several problems.

After the Reformation this church, like so many others, appears to have been very neglected and allowed to fall into a state of disrepair. In modern times considerable restorations have been

carried out, most of this work being done in 1861 (see Hodson, pp. 37-38), and at this time some of the clerestory windows of the nave were altered to their present unusual form. Some idea of the condition of the church towards the close of the eighteenth century—and therefore evidence of the alterations made to these clerestory windows—can be obtained from the drawing in the Burrell MSS. and other sources. The vestry on the south side of the chancel is a modern addition.

PLAN AND DIMENSIONS

Mr. Ray's ground plan of Salehurst Church is at present hanging in the tower space, and an examination of it will show that it presents some unusual features. The lay-out generally is rectangularly symmetrical, but the nave is unusually long in proportion, and the nave aisles are prolonged westward to line with the west front of the tower, the latter being thus, as it were, built inside the church and not exterior to it. This is an unusual feature, which is found also at Sandhurst and New Romney, in Kent, and at Bexhill, in Sussex—the last being a modern rebuilding, but probably a resumption of its original plan

The exterior dimensions of the various parts of Salehurst Church are approximately as follows. The nave is about 84 feet long by 31 feet wide, it has north and south aisles co-terminous with it at its east end (only), the former being about 11 feet wide and the latter 10 feet wide, both being prolonged to line with the west wall of the tower. At the west end of the nave is the tower, which is practically a square of 21 feet, being thus about 5 feet narrower than the nave on both north and south sides. The later-added west porch is almost square, being about 12 feet from east to west, and 13 feet from north to south.

The rectangular chancel is about 40 feet long by 22 feet wide and, although oriented in the same line as the nave, its axis is about one foot northward of that of the nave. In the angle formed by the east wall of the north aisle and the north wall of the chancel is a chapel, approximately 15 feet square; while in the middle of the south wall of the chancel a modern vestry has been added, about 14 feet long by 11 feet wide. Covering the south doorway of the south aisle is an ancient and interesting timber porch.

In elevation the long nave is covered by a single-span roof, below which are clerestory lights in the nave walls on both the north and south sides. The aisles are covered by lean-to roofs at a much lower level than that of the nave,

and these are prolonged westward with the aisles to abut against the north and south walls of the tower. The chancel is covered by a single-span roof at a lower level than that of the nave, and the chapel now has its own span roof, running parallel with that of the chancel, but probably this chapel originally had a flat roof. The tower may have been heightened when it was altered—probably when the porch was built, towards the end of the fourteenth century—and it now rises considerably above the ridge of the nave roof, and forms the most conspicuous feature of the exterior of the church. It has a flat roof, surrounded by a battlemented parapet. The roof of the west porch is also a flat battlemented one, and thus leaves exposed the large window in the west wall of the tower.

The exterior walls are built of sandstone blocks, and these vary considerably in different parts of the church, in shape and size and colour, as usual, the older work being distinguishable by the irregularity of its stones and the absence of coursing. The interior walls of the church are more uniform, being nearly all worked sandstone of a light colour. The only conspicuous old timber work connected with this building appears to be the porch attached to the south aisle, since the roofs all seem to be modern work, or mainly so. The roofs of the nave and chancel are covered with modern tiles, while the lean-to roofs of the aisles have slates. The roofs of the tower and the stone-built west porch are flat leaded ones.

EXTERIOR

In examining the exterior of Salehurst Church there are certain problems connected with the western front which it is advisable to consider as a whole. This examination can therefore be conveniently commenced with the north wall of the north aisle, and it may be noted forthwith that the north and south aisles are, on their exteriors, very similar in most respects and correspond fairly closely, both being work of later Decorated date.

The north wall of the north aisle is divided into seven bays by six small shallow buttresses along its length, together with a clasping buttress at its west end, which will be considered with the west end, and a larger buttress at its east end, which will be considered later. The six buttresses are short, in conformity with the low aisle wall, and each has a single sloping top and a base; there being five bays of approximately equal length, with a longer one at the west end and a still longer one at the east end. The western bay consists of

a blank wall; the next two bays each contain a window; the next bay has a north doorway; and the remaining three bays each contain a window. These aisle windows have rectangular frames and all are of similar size and form. They consist of two main lights, each with an ogee cinquefoiled head, the mullion being prolonged vertically to the top of the frame. The head of each main light is extended upwards to the top of the frame as a supra-mullion, on each side of which is a slightly oblique inverted pear-shaped supra-light, trefoiled. In each window, therefore, there are two main lights and four supra-lights. The tracery is heavy, the frame plainly chamfered, and there is no drip-moulding above. These windows—the form of which is repeated in the south aisle—are rather interesting examples of the rectangular shape which came into use late in the Decorated period. In motif, though not in size and elaboration, they may be compared with those in Etchingham Church, which are known to have been in course of erection in 1363, and are, therefore, nearly contemporary; while the historical connection between the two churches has been mentioned previously. The north doorway is of small size and simple form, with a pointed head, built in two orders, both hollow chamfered, with single pyramidal stops to the two orders below.

Above the lean-to roof of this aisle are five clerestory windows in the nave wall. The present form of these windows is unusual, the middle one being triple lancets, the end ones being double lancets, and the ones in between single lancets. All these lights are of plain form, but they vary in height, and all are of somewhat broad lancet shape. Judging from a drawing in the Burrell MSS., these windows were altered in 1861, since that drawing shows them in different forms. The question of these clerestory lights and the alterations made to them in 1861 will be better discussed later in the interior, but they are one of the problems of this building because they are—or rather were before 1861—similar to two in the west end of the aisles, and also those in the chancel, which seem to be of Early English date. There is a date 1281 in Arabic numerals on the western jamb of the eastern window on the south side, but, although this date is known to have been there for at least a century past, it must not be supposed that it was cut at that date because Arabic numerals did not become common till long afterwards.

At the east end of this north aisle is a larger buttress—to withstand the thrust of the chancel arch and the arch-

way of the chapel inside, with which it is in line—and beyond it is the Wigsall Chapel, the north wall of which is in line with the north wall of the aisle. This chapel is probably slightly later in date than the building of the aisle, and differs from it both in masonry and mouldings. In the north wall of the chapel is a fairly large window, with an obtusely-pointed head, having two main lights, each with an elongated pointed trefoiled head, and above and between them a trefoiled triangular light with its base horizontal and a pierced spandrel below it. The north-east corner of this chapel is supported by an oblique angle buttress which has a sloping top and a plinth, the last a feature not seen on the rest of the chapel. This buttress appears to be bonded into the chapel and coeval with it, and, if so, is an early example of an angle buttress—though the stone-built west porch, which is probably contemporary, also has angle buttresses. In the east wall of the chapel is a fairly large window with an obtusely-pointed head, without a drip moulding above it, having three main trefoiled lights and symmetrical reticular supra-tracery, consisting of two quatrefoils and then one quatrefoil, with double pierced spandrels on each side. The whole of the tracery in this window is covered with shallow parallel line moulding in a manner which is unusual and differs from any other window in this church. The masonry of this chapel differs somewhat from that of the north aisle in that the stone blocks are smaller and of a different kind. This seems to show that the two are not coeval, but their other features tend to the conclusion that their dates of building are not far apart.

The chancel is of later Early English date and retains the characteristics of its period almost intact. It may be noted that the north wall of the chancel—and also its south wall—is built of darker coloured sandstone blocks of irregular shape, without coursing or plinth, all characteristics of earlier work. In its north wall are two Early English lancets, quite plain and with a shallow chamfer on the exterior and somewhat short and broad, denoting a later date in this period. In this north wall, quite close against the east wall of the chapel, is a small priests' doorway of simple character, with a plain pointed head of almost obtuse triangular form. This doorway may be coeval with the chancel, but priests' doorways to a chancel are not an early feature. This doorway may have been inserted after the vicarage was ordained. The north-east corner of the chancel is supported by rather slight double right-angle buttresses which have one offset and a plinth, but appear to be integral with the chancel. These, like the north wall,

have been repaired at their bases with bricks and the top of the wall has been rebuilt, probably when the roof was restored in modern times. In the east end wall is a large window, with an obtusely-pointed head, which appears to be fourteenth century Decorated work, at any rate as far as the tracery is concerned. It consists of three main lights, with long cinquefoiled heads, the mullions being prolonged upwards and interlaced in such a manner as to form two quatrefoiled supra-lights between the heads of the three main ones and one of similar shape above. The containing frame of this window is somewhat recessed and there is no drip moulding above it. The gable above this window appears to have been partly or entirely rebuilt. It is not easy to ascertain what has been done in this east end wall of the chancel, which has been more altered and restored than the side walls, but it seems probable that when this chancel was built in the Early English period there was a triplet of lancets in the east end wall.

The south-east corner of the chancel retains its Early English eastward buttress—which is similar to the two on the north-east corner—but the southward one has been replaced by, or incorporated in, a much larger one which is built somewhat askew and probably dates with the enlarged buttress at the east end of the south aisle in the Decorated period. About half of the south wall of the chancel is now covered by the modern vestry and eastward of this the Early English single light window, corresponding to the one on the north side, is still in situ, though it has been restored. It is probable that a similar corresponding second window was destroyed when the vestry was built. Westward of the vestry is a fairly large rectangular window of Perpendicular pattern and probably inserted about the middle of the fifteenth century. This consists of two lights only, each with low cinquefoiled heads and the mullion running through blocked spandrels, the whole surmounted by a compound rectangular drip moulding.

From the appearance of the surface it may be surmised that the gabled end of the nave, above the chancel roof, has been rebuilt or at least refaced, and the two little rectangular lights in it, one on each side of the ridge, have also been restored. This modern work has been carried down a little way in the angle between the chancel and the south aisle, but the shallow eastward buttress which resists the thrust of the south arcade appears to be Early English work, contemporary with the chancel and, therefore, some evidence in support of the suggestion that there was a south aisle in the thirteenth century. The outer

walls of the south aisle, like those of the north aisle, are of Decorated character and it may be concluded that they were entirely rebuilt in the fourteenth century. In the east end wall of the south aisle is a rectangular window, which corresponds in motif with those previously described in the north aisle, but is of three lights instead of two. The wall above this window is carried up considerably higher than the present roof of the aisle and is supported by a large southward buttress with two offsets and a gabled top. It may be that at one time this eastern end of the aisle formed a chapel having a higher roof than it has at present and thus may explain the presence of a corbel set in the south wall of the nave, which can be seen in the interior of the aisle.

chamfer. This south doorway is covered by an ancient wooden porch which may be, in regard to its main timbers, contemporary with the doorway and, therefore, of fourteenth century Decorated date. It corresponds fairly closely and may be compared with the south porch of Etchingam Church and also with that at Mountfield Church. The front consists of heavy side uprights, of arched form, and mortised into a hipped cross beam carrying a king-post; this being connected with the south aisle by timber joists. It is covered by a pent roof which has been restored and the whole rests on a low stone base, which was probably not the original arrangement, but was inserted when the base of the timber work decayed. This porch—together with the two others men-



NAVE TAKEN FROM WEST DOOR

Apart from the features in its east end wall, the south aisle corresponds generally with the north aisle, though the buttresses, although corresponding in position and in relation to the windows, are of slightly different form. Here on the south side the windows are of what may be termed Etchingam pattern similar to the north ones, but there is an extra one—making six—in the south wall in the westernmost bay. The south doorway, too, is opposite the north one and corresponds generally in size and form, the only difference being that the inner order is worked in the form of wave moulding instead of a hollow

tioned—are interesting examples of medieval timber porches, which probably were once common in this part of the country

All the west end features of this church are better considered together, because, as such they present some of the problems of analysing the architectural history of the building as a whole. As previously mentioned, the west ends of both the north and south aisles line with the west wall of the tower, and in the west end wall of each aisle is a rather small plain single-light window of short and fairly

broad lancet form, similar to the Early English windows in the chancel, and also to the unrestored clerestory windows of the nave. From these features, therefore, several questions arise. Was the Early English church as long as the present one (excluding the added west porch), and, if so, is the lower part of the tower, and are the west ends of the aisles parts of this Early English work still in situ? An affirmative answer is somewhat supported by the partial quarter-engaged buttresses on the outer corners of the tower and by somewhat similar small ones on the outer corners of both aisles. Further than this, the question arises, Are the clerestories (excluding the alterations to some of them done in 1861) Early English work, while the arcades, or, at least, the north arcade, in the nave, are later? This latter question will be considered again in the interior. A further examination of the west end as a whole, more particularly the interior of the tower space, however, supports the suggestion that this church was lengthened westward in the fourteenth century in Decorated style, and that certain parts of the west end of the earlier Early English building, including the two windows in the aisles previously referred to, and also parts of the west doorway, were moved westward and re-used in the Decorated work. This question will be reconsidered as the respective parts are examined.

The tower is high and without an offset, though it seems evident that it is not all of one period. The outer angles are supported by double right-angle buttresses, built in two stages, which are half filled between in such a way as to simulate the appearance of quarter-engaged buttresses, and this applies, though in a lesser degree, to the lower parts of the north and south buttresses, which support the inner, or eastern, angles of the tower, and which are also in two stages. All these prominent buttresses extend rather more than half way up the tower, and above them are shallow pilaster-like buttresses extending towards the top, before reaching which, however, the angles are rounded off. This rounded-off form is also carried out in the battlemented parapet, which surrounds the roof, and it can be suggested that, when the top portion of the tower was built, it may have been intended to erect corner pinnacles after the style of such churches as Tenterden and Bolney. Within the heavy prominent buttresses of the north-west corner of the tower is a stone-built newel stairway which extends only so far as these buttresses and gives access to the ringing chamber, being lighted by two slits in its course.

In the west wall of the tower is a doorway, now covered by the later stone porch, and this doorway forms another

of the problems in this church. It has a semi-circular head, which is deeply moulded in two orders, each consisting of a filleted pointed bowtel between two undercut hollows. The inner order runs all round both jambs and head, but the outer order is supported by rounded jamb-shafts of Early English shape, with annular caps and bases, the latter of water-holding form. Above the arch is a heavy drip-moulding, which is angular in section and terminates in the tucked-in curled stops, which are characteristic of fourteenth century work in eastern Sussex. This doorway, therefore, has a semi-circular head, which is a Norman feature; deeply cut filleted bowtel mouldings and round jamb-shafts, which are Early English features; and an angular drip-moulding with curled stops, which is a Decorated feature.

The most feasible solution of this problem seems to be that this doorway was taken down and rebuilt when—as is here suggested—the church was lengthened westward in Decorated times and that, for this reason, it contains features of earlier dates. Such a reconstruction of an earlier doorway is seen in the west doorway of the tower at Battle Church, where the earlier Early English west doorway of the nave was moved westward when the Perpendicular tower was built (see No. 10 in this series).

The square stone-built west porch was probably the latest addition to the church of medieval date, and as it shows features of the transition from the Decorated to the Perpendicular style, it may be dated about 1370-80. Its outer corners are supported by oblique angle buttresses, built in two stages, with a high plinth, the narrow upper stage having a horizontal gabled top of Decorated character. The open entrance archway has semi-octagonal responds, with shallow bases and caps of late Decorated form, and the obtusely pointed arch is in two orders. Above the apex of this arch is an image-niche, which is moulded and recessed with a cinque-foiled pointed head, and the drip-moulding which surmounts the arch of the doorway is raised at the top to include this niche. The flat top of the porch is surrounded by a battlemented parapet, and the top of this niche impinges on the cornice below this parapet. The porch is vaulted in ribbed quadripartite form, the ribs being supported in each corner on semi-octagonal moulded corbels, and those in the inner corners impinge on, and cut into, the curled stops of the drip-moulding of the west doorway. On the west front of this porch there are two small shields on each side of the niche, cut on the stonework. These are each now carved with a coat of arms, and reading from north to south they are the arms of the families of

Peckham, possibly Eselyng, Echingham and Culpepper, all of which seem to have had some connection with this church.

Immediately above the porch, in the west wall of the tower, is a large, though somewhat short, window of unusual design. It consists of five somewhat narrow lights of varying heights, each with an elongated trefoiled head, all being contained within, and extending up to, an obtusely pointed containing arch, the spandrels between the heads being pierced and plain. This window is not easy to date in itself, but it appears to belong more to the Decorated than the Early English period, and as it appears to be integral with the tower it may be considered as a fourteenth century window and coeval with the tower. Above this large window is a small one with a pointed head, and above this again there is now a round clock face, placed over and obliterating a small single light. This light is repeated on the other sides of the tower, and has a pointed trefoiled head surmounted by a rectangular hip-moulding with horizontal stops. Towards the top of the tower is a double louvre opening, each opening having a pointed head and the two being surmounted by a rectangular drip-moulding with horizontal stops. This feature, like the previous, is repeated on all the three other sides of the tower, its height above the ridge of the nave roof allowing for both. On both the north and the south side the lower single-light window is repeated in similar form.

INTERIOR

An examination of the interior of Salehurst Church can be commenced by entering the west doorway of the tower and dealing first with the tower space. This entrance doorway is covered inside by a modern wooden vestibule which need not be considered further.

The tower space communicates on the north and south sides with the north and south extensions of the nave aisles respectively by large archways of equal size which are integral with the building of the tower itself. This space also communicates with the nave by an archway which is somewhat higher and differs in details from the other two, but also appears to be integral. Each of these three arches is supported on semi-octagonal responds, with simple bevelled bases, but the capitals vary in a rather unusual manner, the west cap of the north archway corresponding with the two caps of the south archway, while the east cap of the north archway corresponds to those of the archway connecting with the nave. The three former caps are slightly more elaborately

moulded than the three latter ones, but all six appear to be, like the archways, Decorated work of the fourteenth century and coeval with one another. The north and south arches are, however, built in three orders, while that towards the nave has only two, each order in all these being plainly bevelled. This evidence goes to show that the whole of this lower portion of the tower is work of the Decorated period and therefore supports the suggestion here put forward that this church was lengthened westward and the tower built in the fourteenth century. The plain interior of the large and somewhat unusual five-light window in the west wall of the tower, previously mentioned, appears also to be of Decorated date, and it may be noted that this window is almost as wide as the tower space, its jambs abutting close on to the cross walls. This space is ceiled above by the flat wooden floor of the bell-ringing chamber, which is approached by a stone newel-stairway built in the thickness of the walls and buttresses of the north-west corner. The small plain doorway giving access to this stairway has, however, a shouldered arch. On the north side, as seen from the aisle extension, there is a horizontal weathering running just above the apex of the north arch, which shows that the north aisle roof formerly extended over this archway at a slightly lower level than the present one, and, although the corresponding weathering is not apparent on the south side, the archway indicates that this south aisle also extended westward to the present position when the tower was built. In the west end walls of these two aisles are the two single-light lancet windows previously referred to, which may be of Decorated date but may have been moved to their present position when the church was lengthened. In the south aisle of the tower there is a Decorated window in the south wall similar to those in the nave aisles, but this western portion which extends alongside the tower on both north and south sides is now screened off by a solid wooden partition painted to look like a wall, while the archway to the nave is completely closed by a large glass and wood screen.

The long nave communicates with its north and south aisles by an arcade of six bays on each side, these arcades, in a general way, being symmetrically built, with the pillars opposite one another, giving an appearance of similarity. A more careful examination of these arcades will, however, show some important and interesting differences, not only between the north and south arcades but also between the different parts of the same arcade. The general features in which these arcades are similar are

that the pillars are octagonal, each having a base and capital, each arcade terminating at the west end in a semi-octagonal respond set right back on the tower wall, but at the east end each respond is offset by an abutment wall. The arches are obtusely pointed, of two orders, both being plainly chamfered.

The details of these arcades can best be examined by taking the south arcade first and excluding the westernmost bay. In the other five bays the following details may be noted. The abaci of the capitals are square-edged in elevation and each has a quirk on its face, except the westernmost free pillar, which is plain; while the abacus and capital of each are formed of separate stones. In the arches the inner order is considerably smaller than the outer one and is built of stones laid in a form of upright and horizontal work, two stones being longitudinal to the soffit and the next one transverse, right round the arch. The comparatively short caps have rather shallow mouldings with a nearly vertical unornamented bell, while the bases consist of a plain double bevel. If the westernmost bay of this south arcade and the westernmost free pillar are next examined, the following points may be noticed. The arch is formed of symmetrical transverse stones—similar, it will be seen later, to the north arcade—and its apex is somewhat higher than the others. The west respond has a cap and base which differs from the others in having a rounded abacus of Decorated form and in this also it resembles the north arcade. If this westernmost free pillar is examined it will be seen that there is definite evidence of a vertical joint on both its north and south aspects, and also in the cap, the western half of the latter being somewhat irregular and unsymmetrical. Further than this, the bases of both this free pillar and the west respond are higher, while the caps of both are at a lower level than those of the rest of the arcade. Finally, it will be seen that the clerestory window over this westernmost bay is not symmetrically placed over the arch, and its head extends slightly higher than those of the other clerestory windows. This cumulative evidence supports the suggestion here put forward that the nave was lengthened by one bay and the tower and western portions of the church built at a later date than the erection of, at any rate, the south arcade.

The north arcade can be next examined. Here the bases are moulded in an ogee form above the vertical pedestal. The caps are shallow—being about 9 inches high overall as against 12 inches on the south side—and are formed from one block of stone instead of two, while the arches have a some-

what wider inner order which is formed of stones placed symmetrically transverse to the soffit. The capitals generally have abaci of rounded form in elevation, with a distinctly hollowed though plain bell, but this does not apply to the easternmost free pillar and the eastern respond, which somewhat simulate the caps of the eastern bay on the south side. This slight difference in the easternmost bay of this north arcade seems to indicate that it is older than the other bays, and it is possible that before the erection of this north aisle there was a single bay north chapel in this position, perhaps a predecessor to the Culpepper chapel now existing further east. In regard to the west end bay of this north arcade, it may be noted that in both the western free pillar and the respond the bases are higher than the others and the capitals at a lower level; while the clerestory above it corresponds with the irregularities of the one opposite on the south side. These differences seem to indicate that this western bay is somewhat later than the others which may have been erected before the extension of the church westward was carried out.

The clerestory windows in the nave walls were so altered and restored in 1861 that they present another problem of this church, and such old drawings, etc., of this church as exist are not very definite. At present these clerestory windows have a triple lancet in the middle, a single light on each side of that, and the end ones are double lights. It is difficult to discover whether all these windows were originally single light ones, as seems probable, or whether some were double lights. It seems fairly certain, however, that the middle triple light is an innovation of 1861, while for the rest, the single lights appear to be original and the outer double ones do not. The lights of each window are contained under a single segmental rear arch, the walls being splayed inwards from the lights. The two double windows at the ends have less divergent splays than the single light ones and give the suggestion that two lights have been placed under the one original rear arch by cutting away the splays. The triple window in the middle appears to be entirely modern but, if so, the rear arch of the original has been well imitated. As it stands this clerestory fenestration is unusual.

Towards the east end of the north wall of the nave is the open upper doorway of the rood-loft stairs, which is of plain character, but has a four-centred head and, therefore, appears to be of later date than this wall. The only other evidence of the rood-loft remaining is an offset below this doorway and a

corresponding one on the south side, with a corbel below it on which the roof-loft probably rested. The chancel arch is high and wide and the plain obtusely pointed arch, of two orders, both chamfered, seems to date from the Decorated period; but the jambs with their caps and bases are modern work, with the mixed features of different styles.

The nave aisles appear to have been entirely rebuilt in Decorated times and the window arches are of single segmental form, while the interiors of the north and south doorways are plain and characterless. There is distinct evidence that the east end of the south aisle was formerly a chapel. In the south wall there is a piscina of the Decorated period with a cusped trefoiled head, while on both the east and south aspects of the eastern-most pillar of the arcade are inserted stone blocks, which show that this last bay was once screened off from both the nave and the rest of this aisle, the screens being morticed into this pillar. In the abutment wall high up above the left-hand side of the position of this chapel altar there is a stone corbel. This seems to support the suggestion previously made that this chapel may have had a separate span roof and thus explains the raising of the Decorated buttress which was noted on the exterior. This south chapel may have had its counterpart on the north side as previously suggested, before the Culpepper chapel was built.

The chancel is approached from the nave by a single step under the chancel arch, and the sanctuary is raised upon two more steps. In the western part of the north wall is a fairly large single archway communicating with the Culpepper chapel, but this is now mostly occupied by the organ. This archway consists of semi-octagonal responds, with bases and caps all of late Decorated form and was probably cut through this north wall when the chapel was erected at the end of the Decorated period. The single-light window in the north wall of the chancel and also the one opposite on the south side have very plain interiors, splayed all round and without a rear-arch. When this chancel was restored and the vestry on the south side added, these two windows were covered with white colouring so that any further details of their structure are now obscured. The east end window—which was described on the exterior—has no marked features internally, the jambs being plainly splayed. On each side of this window is a large shallow recess with ogee heads, crocheted in Decorated form, but these appear to be modern insertions as also may be the Decorated form of string running horizontally under this window. On the south side of the chancel the wall has

been cut through to form an entrance to the modern vestry, and an ancient window and the sedilia were, presumably, destroyed in the process. Just west of this modern doorway is the interior of the inserted rectangular Perpendicular window.

In the south wall just eastward of the vestry doorway and at a considerable distance from the east wall, is a very plain and simple piscina, which consists of a plainly chamfered opening with a pointed head and a base which appears to have been restored and has no projection the drain being in a very plain basin. This piscina is probably coeval with the chancel. On the opposite side, just within the altar rail on the north side, is a small recess with a moulded cinquefoiled head and a flat base, bevelled at the edge. This recess is about the same size as the piscina, but more elaborate, and its purpose is not obvious. It was not an aumbry, as the moulding would prevent the use of a door to close it; it may possibly have been an Easter Sepulchre shrine. Both the piscina and the recess now have their sills only about one foot above floor level, and this shows that the floor of the chancel or the sanctuary has been raised.

The existing chapel, northward of the chancel, was evidently built to accommodate a tomb to a member of the important and ubiquitous family of Culpeppers. It communicates with the north aisle by a plain pointed archway, which now dies into the wall on the north side but on the south side rests on an interesting carved corbel. This corbel has been damaged, but appears to represent a cowed head—possibly a monk of the neighbouring abbey—with both arms carved and holding an animal. Just inside this arch, attached to the north wall of this chapel, is a large and somewhat elaborate tomb in Decorated style. The tomb itself has a flat rectangular top, below which the front of the tomb is divided up into arched panels. Above it is a rather low wall-canopy, ornamented with crockets and formerly terminating above in a finial, the latter now destroyed. At each end of the tomb is an upright pilaster, but the western one has been almost entirely destroyed and this end of the canopy roughly repaired. The evidence that this chapel was built to accommodate this tomb is that the north window—previously mentioned on the exterior—is considerably out of the centre towards the east and it seems clear that this was done deliberately to accommodate the tomb. This chapel is now greatly occupied by the organ but there is a piscina with a trefoil head which has been much damaged in the south-east corner.

The roofs of all these parts of the church appear to be modern. The nave

roof is an open timber one of seven-cant form; the chancel roof is a boarded timber one of semi-waggon form, while the aisles have lean-to roofs of plain character. The chapel has a separate span roof plastered inside the rafters, but from its appearance it can be considered modern and probably the original roof of this chapel was flat.

The principal non-architectural feature in this church is the large, heavy font, which stands in the tower space. This is illustrated and referred to in S.A.C. xlv, p. 33, in an article on "Fonts in Sussex Churches," by J. Lewis André, F.S.A., and also in Hodson, p. 42. The heavy bowl is plain and cup-shaped, and rests on a plain round pedestal below which is a round bevelled plinth resting on a large square base block. The inter-

esting feature about this font is the chain of four salamanders around the plinth, two of the salamanders being represented as eating the tails of the other two. Both the date of this font and the significance of the salamanders are matters of conjecture mentioned in the two references given above.

Beside the Culpepper tomb already mentioned in the north chapel, there is a table tomb in the south aisle of the nave under a window. The front of this tomb carries three quatrefoil panels with blank shields for arms. At present it is nearly hidden by the pews. There are many monumental inscriptions in this church a considerable number on slabs on the floor under the tower. A detailed list of these is given in Hodson, p. 50 and sequel.