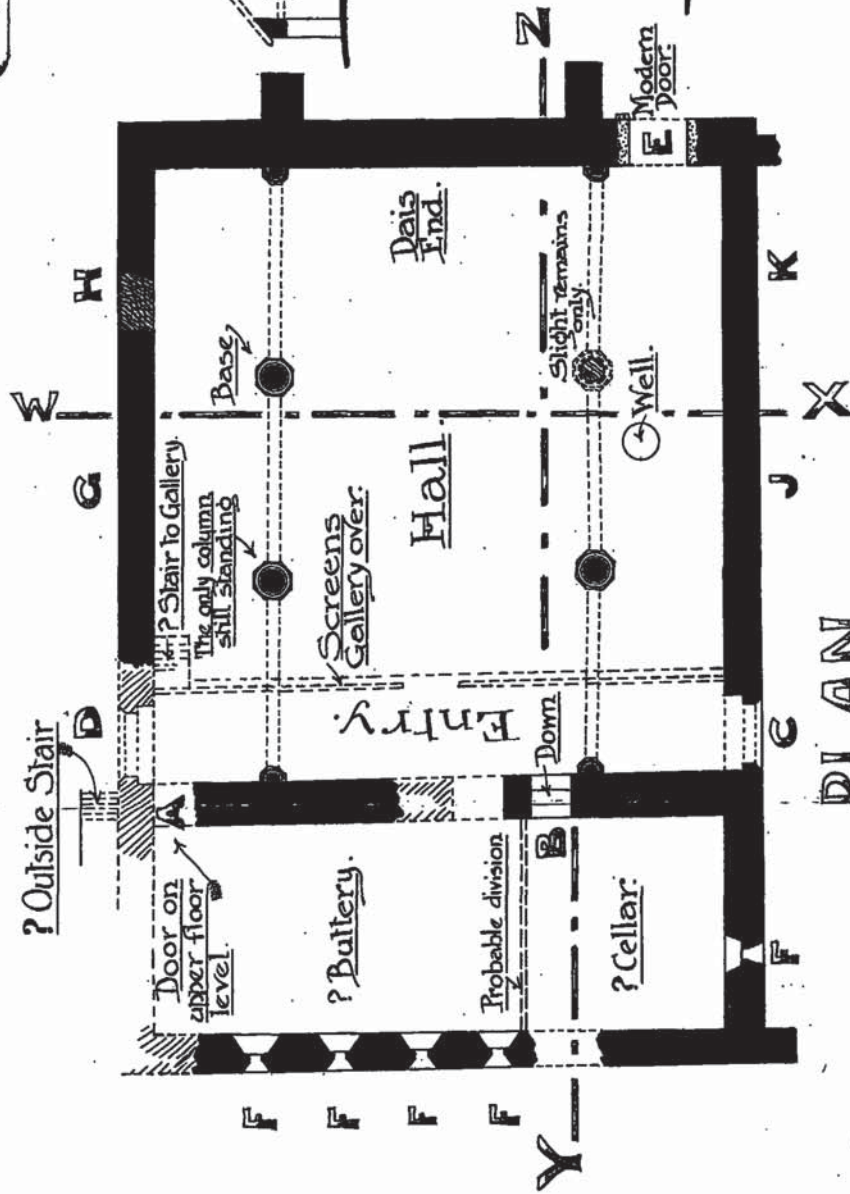
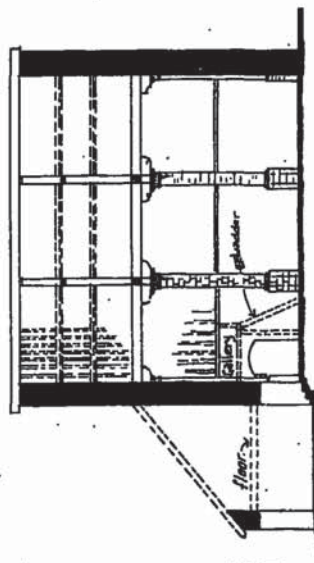
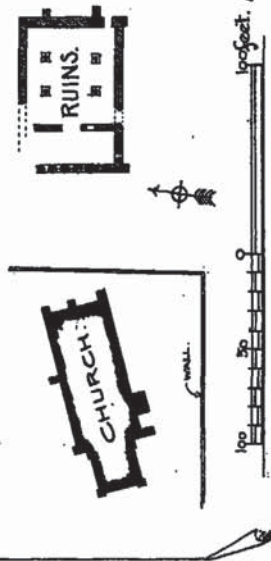


RUINS IN WARNFORD PARK. **An early Manor House of** *The St John family.*



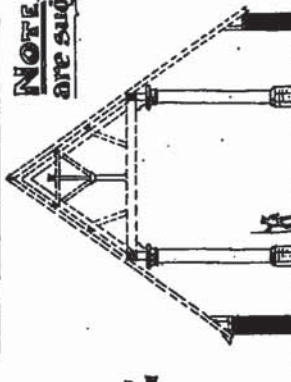
PLAN.

KEY PLAN SHEWING RELATIVE POSITION OF THE RUINS AND CHURCH.



Section X-Z.

NOTE The Sections are suggestive only.



Section W-X.



N.C.H. Nisbett. A.R.B.A. MENS & DELT. 1906.

NOTES ON A RUINED BUILDING IN WARNFORD PARK.

BY N. C. H. NISBETT, A.R.I.B.A.

A little to the eastward of Warnford Church, in the private grounds adjoining the churchyard, are some architectural remains of interest. In 1778 they were the subject of a paper submitted to the Society of Antiquaries by Henry Penruddocke Wyndham, in which the author sought to prove that these ruins were the remains of a Saxon Church erected by Wilfrid before the year 700 A.D. A plan and some details of the columns which accompany the paper are helpful in examining the existing remains, due allowance being made for the advance in the study of antiquities since the drawings were prepared.

At the time the paper was written the property belonged to John, 11th Earl of Clanricarde, and the building was protected by a rough wooden roof, the "modern" supports of which are referred to by the writer. He suggests, however, that "the original roof was probably vaulted diagonally, the arches might spring from column to column, and from the columns to the walls." This method of construction is hardly likely to have been used in a Saxon building, as the columns, one of which is still standing, were 25 feet high; and being only about 9 feet from the side walls, it is evident that there could not have been any arch or vault above them, but that they carried a horizontal beam on which the roof was supported, as indicated in the sketch section.

Some fairly accurate drawings of the details of these columns are given, not omitting the octagonal bases; but the author, being no doubt more conversant with the "proportions" of classic architecture than in fashion, discovers that, as the height

of the columns is about 8 times their diameter, they "therefore approach nearer to Roman architecture than to any other subsequently used." He, however, admits that the capitals are not strictly Roman, but thinks this may be owing to the caprice of the architect.

If we endeavour to learn something more reliable about the building, we shall find that the writer of 1778 can assist us, as he mentions that in a map of Hampshire, engraved by Norden about 1610, the building is marked as "a ruined place," and further states that among the deeds of earlier date in the possession of Lord Clanricarde, it is "conveyed" with the manor and present mansion by the title of "The Old House."

Referring to Domesday, we find that Hugh de Port held some of the land at Warnford of the Abbey of St. Peter, Winchester, and that Alward¹ and Retel (apparently his Saxon predecessors) held it of the Abbot, and could not remove. Hugh de Port held other land at Warnford (apparently of the King), as it is noted that Uluric and Olward held it "in parcenary" of King Edward, and had two halls.

Warnford is in the old country of the Meonwara, the Jutish settlers in the eastern part of Wessex, given to Ethelwalch, King of the South Saxons, by Wulphere of Mercia, a friend of Wilfrid. It was during Wilfrid's residence in Sussex that he undertook the mission to the Meon country, which resulted in the foundation of churches at Corhampton and Warnford. This, perhaps, explains the nature of the tenure by which Uluric and Olward held their land. Mr. Shore says: "The survival of this parage or parcenary custom was mainly in the old Jutish parts of the county." . . . "The manors in which this custom prevailed were each considered as one manor for the purpose of taxation, but were held jointly by more than one tenant, one of them being responsible for the payments."²

The next point of interest is the statement that these Saxon parceners had two halls. This was on that portion of the land held by Hugh de Port direct from the King; and since his

¹ Aylward is still a local name in the parish.

² "The Origin of the Anglo-Saxon Race," by T. W. Shore, p. 217.

great grandson, Adam de Port, rebuilt the Church, but was outlawed for an attempt on the life of Henry II., we may understand how it is that the ruins are still locally known, as they were at the end of the eighteenth century, as "King John's Palace." The outlawed baron was restored about 1180¹ and we find that his son and successor, William, dropped the name of de Port, and adopted instead that of his maternal grandmother, St. John, and in 1214—the year after his father's death—he gave 500 marks to the King (John) for livery of all the lands of Adam de Port, his father, and two years later (16 King John) he was Sheriff of the County of Southampton. The adoption of a new surname was probably owing to a desire to disconnect himself and his successors from the outlawry of his father, more particularly, perhaps, because the offence for which it was imposed might have suggested doubts as to the loyalty of the family.

There appears to be very little question that when Adam de Port began to rebuild the Church, the present tower was first erected against the west end of a small Saxon nave, about 12 feet narrower than the later one. The roof labels of the earlier Church may be seen on the east wall of the tower.¹ This work was probably completed before his outlawry and consequent exile. The remainder of the present Church may very well have been built after his return. The Saxon Church having been rebuilt, his successor may have turned his attention either to the rebuilding of one of the two halls mentioned in Domesday, or the erection of a new residence for himself, as the lord of an undivided manor.

The fact that the building was erected by the first baron that assumed the name of St. John, strengthened, perhaps, by the coincidence that he lived in the reign of King John, would easily account for the substitution of the King's name for that of a forgotten family.

Before we examine the evidences of the ruins themselves, it will be of interest to learn from another writer of the eighteenth century his views as to the building we are discussing. The Rev. Philip Griffin, who was rector of Warnford, wrote

¹ See Illustration H.F.C. Proceedings, Vol. V., Part I.

a letter (March 10th, 1784), which appears in Grose's "Antiquities," and refers to the account of the ruin given by the Rector's friend (Mr. Wyndham), to which allusion has already been made.

The Rector differs from Mr. Wyndham, and points out that the present Church tower is older than the nave, and also that the stone labels on the tower shew the position of the ancient roof. He wrote, of course, before the unsightly nineteenth century organ gallery had been erected, and when, no doubt, the traces of the walls which once abutted against the tower were plainer than at present. The recent removal of the organ gallery has again made it easier to trace the position of the early nave. The Rector also conjectures that the ruins are those of an ancient manor house of the St. John family.

On referring to the accompanying drawing, it will be seen that the present remains are those of a hall, about 50 feet square, the roof of which was supported by four columns. The position of these columns, which correspond with those dividing the nave and aisles of a church, probably suggested an ecclesiastical origin.²

The western portion, however, seems at once to dispel any such idea, as it was evidently in two storeys, the upper one being entered by a door, of which indications remain at A, while the lower part was reached by descending at B from the level of the hall floor. The remains of the door at C are evidently original, and it is probable, from what we know of early domestic plans, that there was also another opposite at D, and, in fact, one is shewn in that position in the plan which accompanied Mr. Wyndham's paper. The modern opening at E is not shewn, so has probably been made since his time.

The only remains of windows now visible are the five (FF) in the western portion. Mr. Wyndham's plan indicates openings, probably windows, at G, H, J, K, but the only trace of such now to be seen is at H, and this appears more like the jamb of a door, the worked stones of which have been removed,

² The Hall of Winchester Castle was at one time asserted to have been a Church, from the fact that the fine columns and arcades formed divisions similar to nave and aisles.

and the space filled in with flint rubble. It is possible that this may have been an insertion of later date, as in the fourteenth century a door in this position was not uncommon.

During the recent work of repair at the adjacent Church, undoubted evidence was found that materials from the ruins were used to raise the side walls when the flat roof was constructed, apparently about the seventeenth century. We learn from Mr. Wyndham's paper that the building was described as "a ruined place" in 1610, and among the worked stones recently found were several of a circular shape, which exactly corresponded with those forming the columns in the ruined hall; while others had been originally worked to form the "jambs" of door or window openings.

If the ruin was thus used, as was usual, as a quarry for worked stone, this will explain why windows shewn on a plan prepared more than a century ago cannot now be traced, especially when the local flint, so similar to the adjacent rubble walling, is used to fill in the places from which the better stone was taken.

It will be interesting to compare what remains with similar buildings of about the same date. The hall of Oakham Castle, Rutlandshire, was built by Walklin de Ferrers, between 1165 and 1191, and measures 65 feet by 43 feet. The hall at Warnford is 53 feet by 48. The details at Oakham shew rather more French influence than usual, but at Warnford they are such as we should expect to find in a building erected at the close of the twelfth or commencement of the thirteenth century. This almost suggests that Adam de Port himself may have commenced the building, especially as his son William does not appear to have made Warnford his residence.

Alexander Necham, Abbot of Cirencester (1213), tells us in his treatise *De Nominibus Utensilium*, that a good manor house should possess:—A hall, or public room; a chamber, or private room (sometimes this was provided for by the solar on an upper floor with an external stair); a kitchen, larder and sewery¹ (all at the entrance end of the hall); and lastly a cellar, often with an external door.²

¹ *Sewery*.—Serving room for the "sewer," the officer who set and removed the dishes, tasted them, etc. ² Kerr's "Gentleman's House," p. 18.

Henry III., who did so much at Winchester Castle, was a practical critic of architectural arrangements, at least so far as personal comfort was concerned, and we find him complaining that at one of his manors he had to go through a trap in the floor to reach the chapel from his chamber, and he therefore ordered a spiral stair to be made in the thickness of the wall. On another occasion, being at Rochester Castle, he noticed that the whole household had to pass through his private chamber to reach the chapel. In 1251 he built a house at Freemantle, which contained a hall, kitchen, King's chamber, and chapel and upper storey; also a Queen's chamber, and chapel and upper storey, and a cellar under the chapel.

It seems evident from the remains at Warnford that, in addition to the Hall, which we have noticed was almost as large as that at Oakham Castle, there was at the west end a smaller block which contained one room, entered by the door at B. This appears to have been at a lower level than the hall, and may have been the cellar, where stores of a miscellaneous character were kept. The room next to it may have been the buttery, as the north-west angle was a favourite position for it.

There was also a room over this portion of the building, entered by a door at a higher level. It was usual for the rooms pertaining to the servants' department to be in this position, access to them being from the passage, or entry extending across the end of the hall opposite the "dais." This was known as "the screens," and formed a thoroughfare from the principal entrance to one opposite, which generally opened on a servants' court—an arrangement still met with in the halls of many Colleges and Inns of Court.

From the position of the door at C, close up to the end wall, there seems but little doubt that this was the servants' end of the house, although the position of the stone columns may make the exact arrangement of "the screens" less certain. Probably the screens formed a passage about six feet wide, and had a boarded ceiling at such a level as to form a kind of gallery, afterwards devoted to the use of the minstrels. If so, access to the room on the higher level may have been from this gallery (itself reached by some kind of

ladder) ; or a door, of which indications remain at A, may have given access to the gallery itself by means of a stair from the porch protecting the door at D. This space over what we have supposed to have been the buttery and cellar may have been only a kind of garret formed by the slope of the roof. Although not at the end at which we expect to find rooms devoted to the use of the lord or his family, it may have been an example of a room so used, although not so convenient as in the more usual later position behind the "dais."

We know from descriptions that the upper chamber, or *solar*, was often placed over the cellar. If this was the case at Warnford, it probably extended the full length of the Western Annexe. It must also be remembered that this private room was possibly a survival of a still earlier period when the women had a part allotted to them, not perhaps so much for extra privacy as from the fact that in the primitive household they did such work as the preparation of the food, &c., which was afterwards undertaken by servants. It is said that the Old Norse word *búr*—bower, meant buttery,¹ and the term "bower and hall" may have originally meant both the women's and men's portions of the house. If so, it is possible that "the Screens" or "Entry" are the survival of an intermediate chamber or common room at the entrance, to the right and left of which the apartments of the men and women were arranged. There are several remains of twelfth century manor houses which seem to prove this.

Although the hall and its immediate surroundings were built of stone, there would still be a considerable number of wooden structures, and it is probable that the kitchen was generally one of these. Much of the cooking was actually done in the open air. Yet from the danger of fire the kitchen was generally kept at some distance from the hall. There is no indication of its position at Warnford, and the present ruins are so surrounded by trees of considerable growth that it would probably be difficult to discover any traces of the less important buildings. The long period during which the building has been in a ruined state also increases the difficulty.

¹ See "The Evolution of the English House," p. 62, by S. O. Addy, M.A.

There is a well in the hall behind the line of the columns on the south side, but without a more thorough investigation than can at present be made it is impossible to say whether this well is as old as the hall or not. It would have been quite as easy to obtain water among the outbuildings, and therefore it seems unlikely that a well would have been sunk in the position shewn while the building was occupied; nor does it seem probable that an existing well would have been deliberately enclosed. It seems more likely that the well was sunk later, when the building was more or less fallen from its first estate.

The period at which this building was probably erected was a very interesting one in the history of domestic architecture in England. Many of the castles built during the anarchy which reigned while Stephen and Matilda strove for the Kingdom had been either destroyed by Henry II., or at least deprived of their military character. The barons, therefore, who were large landowners, as we know the de Ports were, would have several manors on which there was no castle, but where a building of some sort must have been erected to accommodate their resident steward. The monasteries had similar buildings, known as Granges. The barons would probably continue to live principally in their castles on the more important estates, but, inasmuch as all landowners were obliged to visit their scattered possessions in order to consume the contents of the barns which they had no other convenient means of disposing of, the manor houses became gradually more and more adapted as places of temporary residence for their owners.

It was this system that led to a certain uniformity in the planning of the various houses visited, and some of the more expensive fittings made for the additional comfort of one building were so arranged as to be interchangeable. This was the case with the early glazed lights for the windows (*vitruæ*), which were carried from one house to another. The openings must, therefore, have been of similar size and shape. It was the custom to use glass only in the upper lights, and to have wooden shutters to the lower portions which were opened to admit both light and air.

The inconvenience of this arrangement is illustrated by an order of Henry III. which requires that glass be substituted for the wooden shutters, "that the chamber may not be so windy,"¹ and at another time the same monarch hints at the unsatisfactory nature of the wooden shutters by an order "for closing the windows better than usual." It is obvious that the windows referred to were not of the small pattern required when defence against attack was the principal thing to be thought of, and so by degrees the baron and his family came to prefer the comfort of the simpler buildings. This led to another development, for while some families were content with the manor house as they found it, there were others who still found it necessary to have some regard for defence. In consequence of this, we find about the middle of the thirteenth century that a great number of royal licenses were granted to "crenellate" or fortify manor houses.

The Hall at Warnford was not of the fortified type, but probably a somewhat early example of a domestic building which, from the importance and position of its owner as the largest landowner in Hampshire, required a spacious Hall, the ruins of which as here described are now all that remain of this home of the family of St. John.

During the recent work of repair to the Church at Warnford two sepulchral slabs were found—one very similar to some illustrated in a paper by Dr. Andrews on "The Sepulchral Slabs at Monk Sherborne," also a possession of the St. John family;² the other, found beneath a later stone pavement, was of a somewhat rougher pattern.

The writer begs to express his indebtedness to Colonel Woods, on whose property the ruins stand, for permission to examine and measure the present remains of ancient architecture here described.

¹ Traill's "Social England," vol. I., p. 539.

² H.F.C. Proceedings, vol. II., p. 135.