

THE ANGLO-SAXON CHURCH AND SUNDIAL AT HANNINGTON

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INTRODUCTION

This paper discusses the historical evidence for the origins of the parish of Hannington in the late Saxon period. The surviving Anglo-Saxon fabric in the church is described, and an account is given of an Anglo-Saxon sundial discovered in 1970.

THE PARISH OF HANNINGTON

The village of Hannington lies in the highest part of the Hampshire Downs, close to the northern scarp of the chalk above the vale of Kingsclere. The village stands at a height of about 660 ft (200 m) above sea-level.

The earliest surviving reference to Hannington occurs in a charter of Cnut dated 1023 to his thegn Leofwine, son of Bonda. This charter confirms title to an estate of 7 hides at Hannington, which Leofwine had purchased from King Ethelred (978–1016). The charter survives in a twelfth-century copy in the *Codex Wintoniensis* and has been accepted by all authorities as authentic (Finberg 1964, no. 154; Sawyer 1968, no. 960).

In the Domesday Survey it is recorded that the Bishop of Winchester held an estate of 6½ hides and two-thirds of a virgate at Hannington for the support of the Old Minster; the estate had belonged to the Old Minster in the time of Edward the Confessor and had then been assessed at 7 hides. The Domesday entry also records the presence of a church. A separate entry in Domesday records a small estate of one hide at Hannington held by Lewin; before the Norman Conquest it was held by Estan in parage of King Edward. Although the parish later formed part of the hundred of Chuteley both of the Hannington estates are entered in Domesday under the hundreds of Kingsclere (Round, J H in Doubleday 1900, 467–8, 508).

The parish—as it appears in nineteenth-century maps before modern alterations—was small, covering an area of 2,044 acres (3.19

square miles). The boundaries of Hannington and of the adjacent parishes to the north and east were exceptionally fragmented and scattered (Fig. 1). The area contained many detached islands and interlocking peninsulas of territory belonging to adjoining parishes. Hannington itself lay in two main portions. The smaller northern portion of the parish contained the village and church; to the north-east of this area there were three small detached islands of the parish. In the larger southern portion the principal settlement was the hamlet of Ibworth. The Portway, the Roman road from Old Sarum to Silchester (7½ miles to the north-east), ran through one corner of the northern portion and through one of the small detached islands; in the Hannington area it does not, however, influence the parish boundaries.

Cnut's charter of 1023 included a survey in Anglo-Saxon of the bounds of the estate of Hannington. These bounds were discussed by Grundy (1926, 112–6), who was able to identify some of the boundary marks among modern field-names. It appears probable that the bounds corresponded, in broad outline at least, to the later parish with its two main separate portions. Grundy's boundary marks 1–15 seem to relate to the northern portion of the parish, while points 16–25 (which define a complete circuit) probably describe the southern portion. There is also evidence for a right of way belonging to the lands of Hannington between the two portions of the parish; Grundy considered that this right of way ran along the south-western boundary of the parish of Ewhurst. It should be stressed that Grundy was unable to identify many of the boundary marks in the charter, and it cannot be regarded as established that the bounds corresponded exactly to the later parish. Further research, coupled with detailed fieldwork, might solve at least some of the outstanding problems.

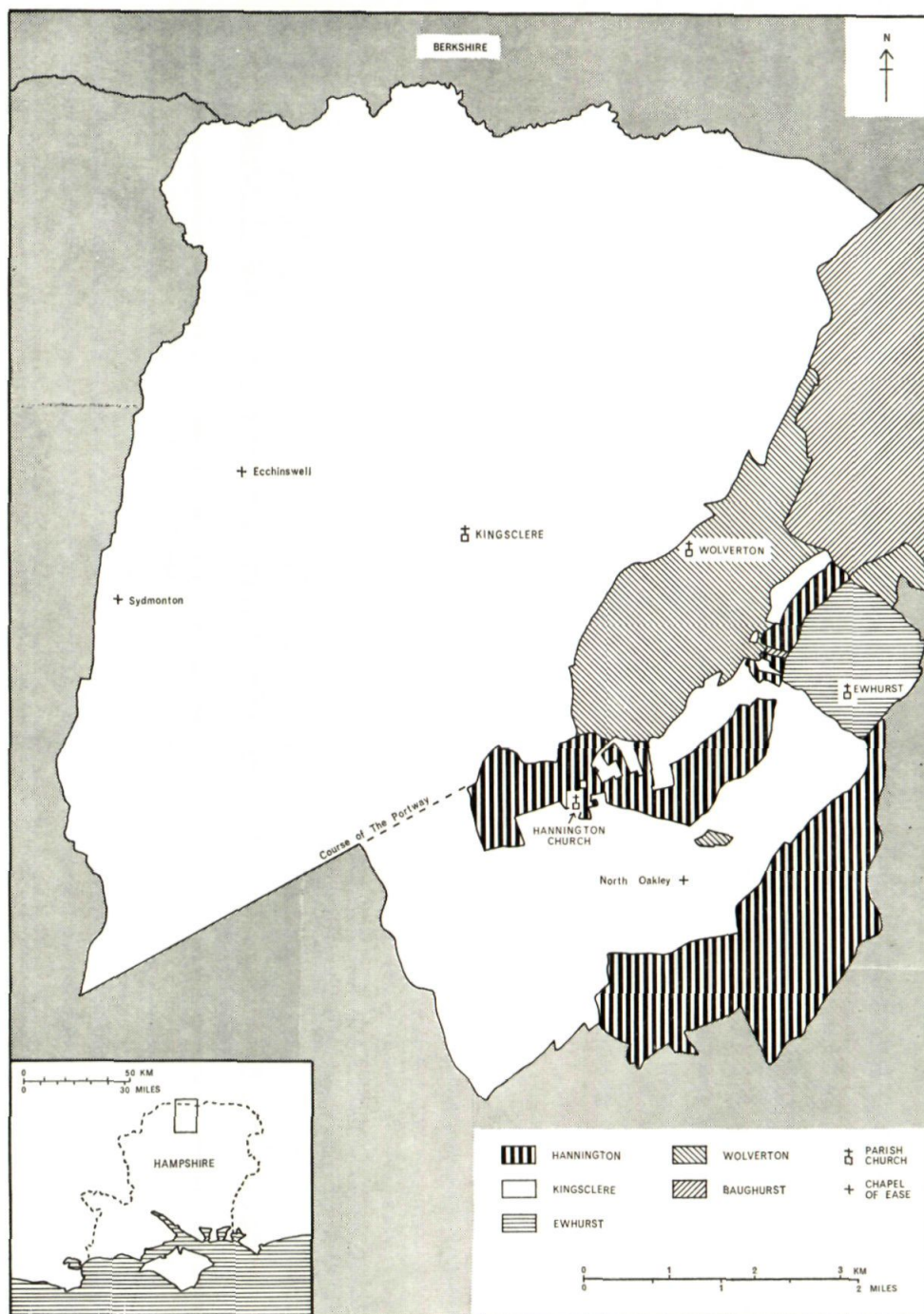


Fig. 1. Map to show nineteenth-century boundaries of Hannington, Kingsclere and other adjoining parishes (based on Ordnance Survey 6 in maps, 1st edition).

It will be seen from Fig. 1 that the northern portion of Hannington was almost surrounded by the parish of Kingsclere. The boundary between the northern portion of Hannington and Kingsclere is of particular interest in the area around the village of Hannington. On the south side the boundary followed a complex course through the village of Hannington itself, the southern part of which lay within the parish of Kingsclere. Indeed the parish boundary ran along the southern edge of the churchyard and Hannington Farm, which stands immediately to the south of the church, was in Kingsclere parish. In the northern part of the village of Hannington there was a small detached portion of Kingsclere, and along the northern edge of this part of the parish several tongues of Kingsclere jutted into Hannington.

The tortuous course of the boundary of Kingsclere in the area around Hannington is in marked contrast to the rest of the boundary of this large parish. Kingsclere stretched from the county boundary along the river Enborne in the north to the Portway and beyond into the chalk downland in the south. The parish covered a total area of 17,611 acres (27.52 square miles). Throughout the greater part of its length the ancient boundary of Kingsclere followed a regular course; much of the boundary ran along natural features such as streams, rivers and watersheds, while other parts of the boundary followed the course of roads and trackways. It is only in the Hannington area that the Kingsclere boundary followed an irregular course and that detached portions of the parish of Kingsclere were to be found.

Kingsclere was a large and important royal estate in the Anglo-Saxon period (Page 1911, 251). It has also been suggested that it was the site of a 'minster' church (Hase 1975, 320-3), though the evidence is not conclusive. The topographical evidence suggests that Hannington was originally a subsidiary settlement within the large royal estate of Kingsclere and that it subsequently attained independent status. The fragmented character of Hannington implies that the parish boundaries in this

region followed established and complex property divisions. A relatively advanced date in the Anglo-Saxon period appears probable. The reference in Cnut's charter of 1023 to Leofwine's acquisition of Hannington from King Ethelred may in fact represent the origin of Hannington as a separate estate, independent of Kingsclere. It seems likely that the parish of Wolverton, to the north of Hannington, was created out of Kingsclere in similar fashion.

It is uncertain when Hannington first acquired separate parochial rights. However it seems probable that the ecclesiastical parish of Hannington consisted solely of the seven hides of land which were held by Leofwine in 1023 and which had passed into the hands of the Old Minister before the Norman Conquest. The part of the village of Hannington which lay outside the parish is probably represented by the separate one-hide estate at Hannington recorded in the Domesday Survey; this one-hide estate appears to have become the medieval manor of Hannington Lancelevy in the parish of Kingsclere (Page 1911, 258).

THE CHURCH

The church of All Saints Hannington (Grid Ref. SU 539554) stands in the southern part of the village, lying between the village green to the east, Dickers Farm to the north, Manor Farm to the west and Hannington Farm to the south. The church consists of a nave with a south aisle and a north porch, and a chancel (Fig. 2). Above the west end of the nave there is a short wooden bell-turret with a shingled spire. The church is built of cut flints, and the south wall of the chancel and the east and south walls of the south aisle are rendered. A full description of the church is to be found in the *Victoria County History* (Page 1911, 229-30).

The Anglo-Saxon origin of the church is established by the long-and-short work which survives in the north-east quoin of the nave. The original nave was probably aisleless, but towards the end of the twelfth century a two-bay south arcade was added. There is no evidence for the form of the original chancel,

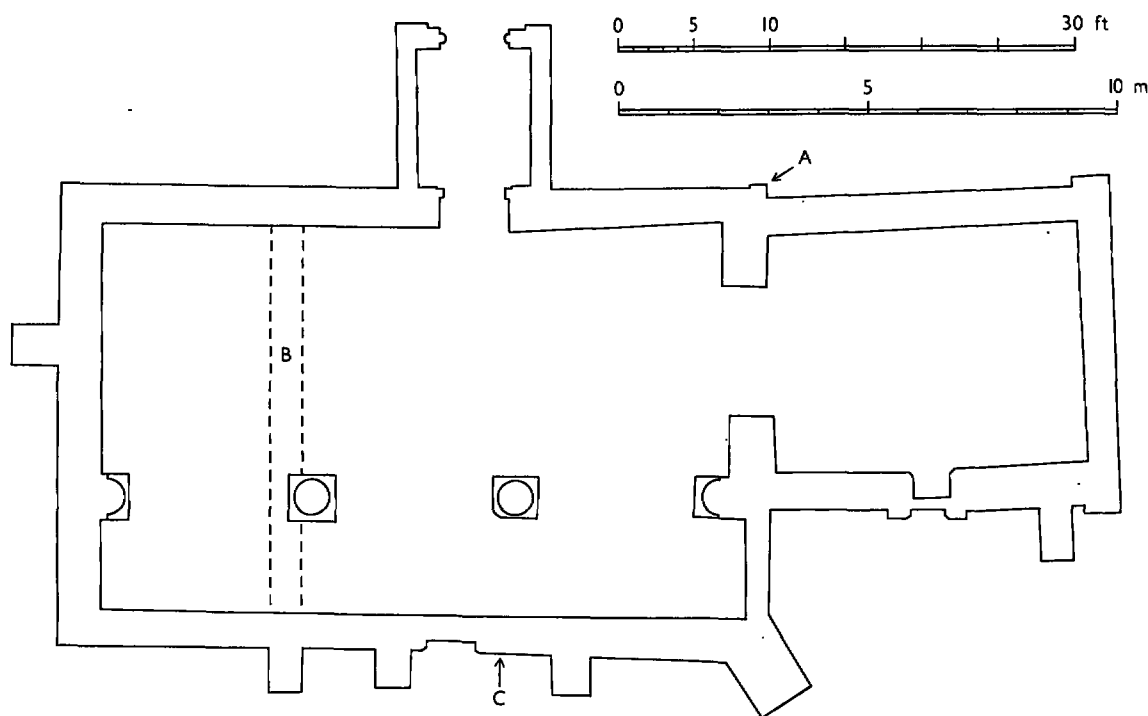


Fig. 2. Plan of All Saints Church, Hannington. *Key to lettering:* A, north-east quoin of nave, built in long-and-short fashion; B, approximate position of the west wall of the church prior to 1855; C, position of Anglo-Saxon sundial.

and the present chancel would appear to belong to the fifteenth century. In 1855 the nave and south aisle were extended about 13 ft (4.00 m) westwards, an additional bay being added to the south arcade. The bell-turret was erected over the west end of the nave to replace an earlier tower of unknown form. In addition, a north porch was demolished in 1855, but a new porch was constructed soon afterwards in 1858.

At the same time as the westward extension of 1855, the rest of the church underwent heavy restoration. This restoration involved the renewal of much stonework and the removal of external rendering from the walls of the existing structure. Further restoration was carried out in 1884 (see Appendix on p. 201 for the sources of information about the nineteenth-century restorations).

The north-east quoin of the nave is the only structural feature of the Anglo-Saxon church which survives (Fig. 3). The north face of the quoin is fully exposed, but the east face is partly concealed by the north wall of the fifteenth-century chancel. As will be seen from the elevation, both the north wall of the chancel and the north wall of the nave lean markedly outwards.

The quoin consists of nine stones rising to a height of 17 ft 3 in (5.26 m) above external ground level. There are four upright 'long' stones and five flat 'short' stones. The uppermost 'long' stone may be truncated but the three other 'long' stones are of massive size, one of them measuring as much as 4 ft 9 in (1.45 m) in height. The 'short' stones do not bond deeply into the face of the walls. The two lowest 'long' stones are separated by a

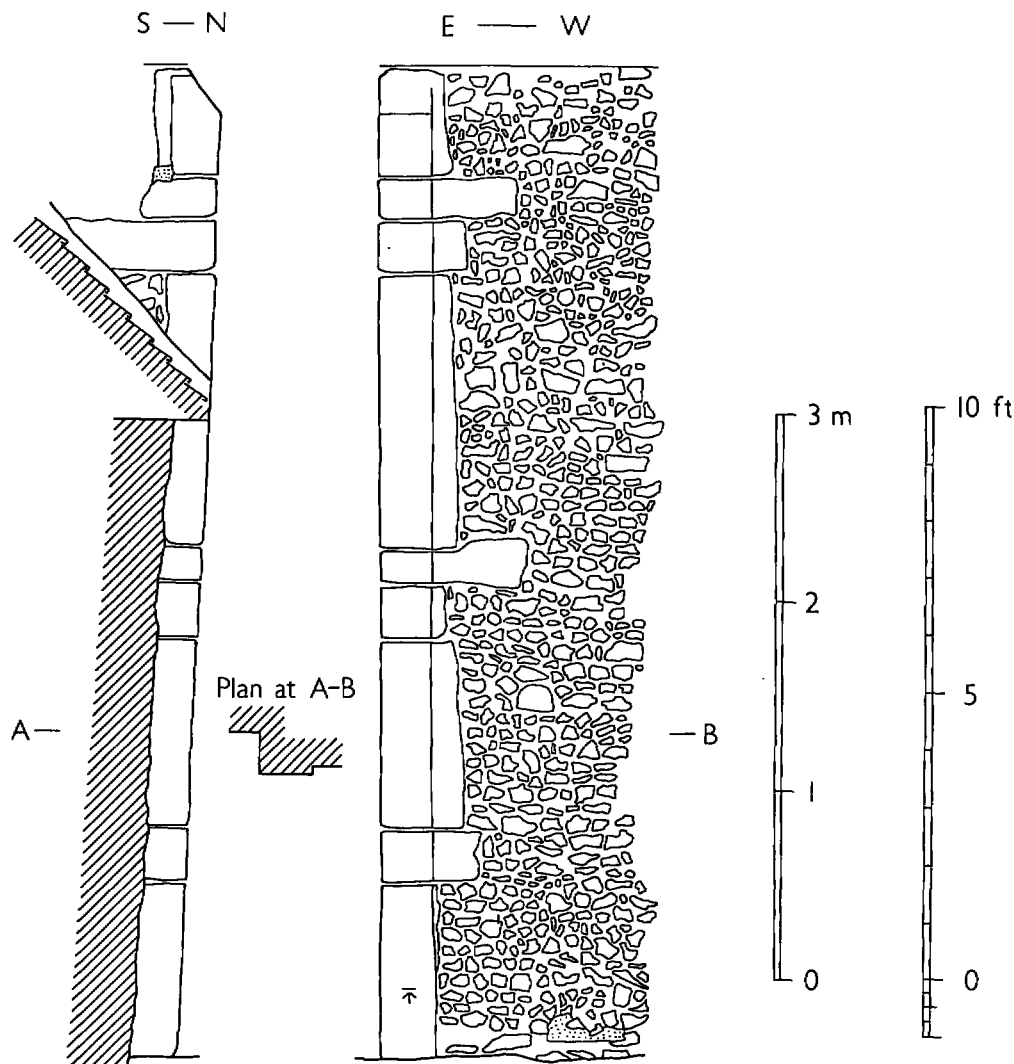


Fig. 3. Elevation of long-and-short north-east quoin of the nave, showing (left) the east face and (right) the north face. The Ordnance Survey bench mark is 667.10 ft (203.33 m) above sea-level.

single 'short' stone, but in the upper part of the quoin each 'long' stone is separated by two 'short' stones. Although the quoin cannot be fully examined on the east face, it appears that the 'short' stones bond into alternate walls. Dr. Taylor (1978, 943) has drawn attention to this variant form of long-and-short quoining which occurs chiefly in Hampshire and Sussex; it may

for instance be seen at Bosham and Worth (Sussex) and at Corhampton, Fareham and Headbourne Worthy (Hants) (Taylor and Taylor 1965, *passim*).

On the north face of the Hannington quoin the individual stones are worked to show a raised strip about 11 in (28 cm) in width, giving the appearance of a narrow pilaster-

buttress. This raised strip runs up the whole quoin beside its salient angle, standing forward about 1½ in (4 cm) from the face of the wall at the base and about 4 in (10 cm) at the top of the wall. It is uncertain whether this feature was also present on the east face of the quoin, since this face is largely concealed by the north wall of the chancel; above the chancel roof this feature is not present, though the top stone of the quoin does show faint signs of a raised band. Dr. Taylor (1978, 946) has listed a total of sixteen churches which display long-and-short quoining of this cut-back type. The raised band is normally considered to have acted as a stop for external rendering.

A. R. and P. M. Green (1951, 17) drew attention to the fine masonry joints of the Hannington quoin and they suggested that it may have been rebuilt. The suggestion warrants careful consideration in the light of the excavations at Little Somborne (Hants), where the evidence indicates that the long-and-short west quoins of the nave were rebuilt in a different position in the fourteenth century (Webster and Cherry 1976, 182). The joints of the Hannington quoin are indeed fine—where measurement is possible the joints are between .10 and .12 in (4–5 mm) thick. However, fine jointing is found elsewhere in Hampshire in churches of Anglo-Saxon date, for instance at Boarhunt (Green and Green 1951, 4), and there is no clear-cut evidence at Hannington which indicates rebuilding. It is certainly improbable that the quoin has been rebuilt at any time since the fifteenth century, for the north wall of the chancel butts against the east face of the quoin. The question cannot be answered with certainty, but on balance it appears improbable that the quoin has been totally rebuilt; it is however possible that the upper part of the quoin, above the chancel roof, has been rebuilt at some unknown date. It should be noted that the surface of the stones of the quoin is smooth and the angles are well-preserved; this suggests that the quoin may have been re-dressed, perhaps in the nineteenth century.

The extent to which Anglo-Saxon work sur-

vives in the rest of the church is uncertain. The north wall of the nave adjacent to the quoin is built of roughly coursed, cut flints. Anglo-Saxon flint walling in Hampshire and Sussex normally consists largely of uncut flints, and the presence of cut flints suggests that the wall may be re-faced. The wall is between 2 ft 6 in (0.76 m) and 2 ft 9 in (0.84 m) in thickness. It is uncertain whether long-and-short work survived at the western angles before the restoration of 1855; unfortunately no illustrations of the church before restoration have yet been traced.

In the east wall of the nave the plain square-cut jambs of the chancel-arch may be Anglo-Saxon or Norman in origin. The arch is 8 ft 6 in (2.59 m) in width and the jambs are approximately 9 ft 3 in (2.82 m) in height, standing in a wall 2 ft 9 in (0.84 m) thick. The jambs are now plastered but in 1911 the *Victoria County History* (Page 1911, 230) reported that they 'have been much mutilated and are now mostly of modern stone'. The head of the arch is pointed and is probably later than the jambs. The east gable of the nave above the arch appears to have been rebuilt, for the face of the wall above the chancel roof is set back about 4 in (10 cm) behind the east face of the north-east quoin of the nave.

The nave is irregularly set out, but in its present form it measures internally about 41 ft (12.50 m) in length and 16 ft 6 in (5.00 m) in width, with walls 18 ft 4 in (5.59 m) in height above internal floor level. Before the extension of 1855 the length of the nave was approximately 28 ft (8.50 m).

While the long-and-short quoin establishes the Anglo-Saxon character of the church, it does not serve to fix its precise date. Long-and-short work is usually dated to the tenth and eleventh centuries, and there can be little doubt that most surviving examples belong to the later part of the Anglo-Saxon period. It should, however, be noted that Dr. Taylor (1978, 957) believes that the origin of this feature dates back at least to the ninth century.



Fig. 4. Anglo-Saxon sundial built into the south wall of Hannington church. Scale $\frac{1}{4}$.

THE SUNDIAL

The interest of the church for the student of the Anglo-Saxon period was enhanced in 1970, when a sundial of Anglo-Saxon character was discovered. During the course of repairs the south wall of the south aisle was stripped of plaster and subsequently re-rendered (Hannington Parochial Church files). The sundial was found built into the south wall just east of the blocked fifteenth-century south doorway at a height of 4 ft 0 in (1.22 m) above modern ground level.

It appears unlikely that the dial is in its original position. The outer wall of the south aisle is probably contemporary with the late

twelfth-century south arcade. It may be surmised that the dial was originally built into the south wall of the aisleless Anglo-Saxon nave, perhaps close to the south doorway. When the south aisle was added, the dial would then have been moved to the outer wall of the new aisle. While this suggestion is hypothetical, it does satisfactorily explain the present position of the dial.

The dial appears as a round stone, the surface of which is set back behind the rendering of the wall. The diameter of the stone, as it is now visible, is 1 ft 3 in (38 cm). Although the surface of the stone is weathered and pitted, the details of the dial are still clearly visible

(Fig. 4). The stone has a plain border marked by an incised line approximately 1 in (2.5 cm) from the edge of the visible face of the dial; this incised line has a diameter of 1 ft 1 in (33 cm). The upper half of the circle is plain, while the lower half has nine incised lines radiating from the style-hole. The lines follow the Anglo-Saxon method of reckoning time, which divided the day and night into eight tides of three hours. The principal lines on Anglo-Saxon sundials are those which mark the middle of the tides, that is to say the lines for 6 a.m., 9 a.m., 12 noon, 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. On the Hannington dial three of these lines—those for 9 a.m., 12 noon and 3 p.m.—are marked with an incised cross-bar close to the outer circle. Further lines mark the beginning and end of the three-hourly tides. Thus the lines marked on the Hannington dial are, reading from left to right, 6 a.m., 7.30 a.m., 9 a.m., 10.30 a.m., 12 noon, 1.30 p.m., 3.00 p.m., 4.30 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. The style-hole of the dial is broad, measuring about $1\frac{1}{2}$ in (4 cm) across; it is also deep, passing $2\frac{1}{2}$ in (6 cm) into the stone. None of the metal of the gnomon remains.

The rendering which closely surrounds the face of the dial makes it impossible to determine whether the stone is any larger than the dial as it is now visible. It may however be suspected that this is the case. In the three known Hampshire sundials of Anglo-Saxon date (Corhampton, Warnford and Winchester St. Michael), the round dial is carved in relief on a large square stone. These three sundials all display foliage carved in each angle of the stone, though no foliage was apparently observed when the Hannington sundial was discovered.

The particular character of Anglo-Saxon sundials was first established by A. R. Green (1928, 489–516), who also, in conjunction with P. M. Green, published a detailed description of the Hampshire dials (Green and Green 1951, 55–9 and Pl. XIX). At the time of Green's initial survey, twenty-four Anglo-Saxon sundials were known; the principal addition since 1928 is the Orpington sundial discovered in 1958 (Bowen and Page 1967).

The dial at Hannington can safely be regarded as an addition to the corpus of Anglo-Saxon sundials. Its Anglo-Saxon character is established by the use of the distinctive Anglo-Saxon octavial time-system, rather than the standard duodecimal system used from the Norman period onwards. The use of cross-bars to mark the middle of the morning, noon and afternoon tides is also a particular Anglo-Saxon feature. Like other Anglo-Saxon sundials the Hannington dial constitutes a distinct piece of sculpture; by contrast later medieval mass-dials are made up of a collection of lightly incised lines and a style-hole, usually cut on the jamb of a doorway or on a quoin.

The Hannington dial seems to be an example of the Anglo-Saxon sundial in its simplest and plainest form. There is no evidence to enable us to determine the date of the dial within the Anglo-Saxon period. It should however be noted that the details of the face of the Hannington dial are closely paralleled on the other Hampshire dials at Corhampton, Warnford and Winchester St. Michael. These three dials have traditionally been ascribed to the late seventh century, owing to the misinterpretation of an inscription beneath the Warnford dial. This inscription was long thought to refer to St. Wilfrid. The Warnford dial was therefore ascribed to the period of St. Wilfrid's mission to Sussex (681–6), the two other dials being similarly dated by analogy (Haigh 1846, 408–10, followed by later writers such as Green and Green 1951, 57–9). However, the inscription is now believed to refer to Wulfric, abbot (c. 1067–72) of the New Minster at Winchester (Rigold 1967, 189). The date of the three sundials is therefore open for fresh consideration.

The best clue to the date of these dials is provided by the foliage carved in the angles. The traditional seventh-century date finds no corroboration in the ornament of manuscripts and sculpture of the seventh and eighth centuries. Nor is there any other archaeological or historical evidence to suggest that the churches of Corhampton, Warnford and Winchester St. Michael were founded at this

period. By contrast, parallels for the foliage can be found in the late Saxon period. For instance the foliage on the Warnford and Winchester dials is similar to that found on the Barnack tower-slabs and sundial, tentatively dated by Professor Cramp (1975, 192-3 and Fig. 20) to the early tenth century.

It is not possible to say that the Hannington sundial necessarily belongs to the same period as the three dials with foliage. It is, however, relevant to note that sundials of similar general character to Hannington were probably being produced in Hampshire in the late Saxon period.

CONCLUSION

The archaeological evidence for the Anglo-Saxon church at Hannington is fragmentary, consisting solely of the long-and-short quoin and the sundial. Neither feature can be accurately dated. However the evidence is not inconsistent with the late Saxon origin of the parish implied by the historical evidence.

APPENDIX

This Appendix sets out briefly the sources of evidence for the nineteenth-century restorations of Hannington church.

The major restoration took place in 1855, but no evidence for the exact nature of the work survives either in the parish files or in the HRO. Fortunately, details of the work can be ascertained

from the file of the Incorporated Church Building Society, which made a grant of £40 towards the restoration. A plan, showing the position of the original west wall of the nave, also survives in the Society's file (Lambeth Palace Library, ICBS files, 2nd series, Hannington).

White (1859, 477) refers briefly to the major restoration and adds the information that a new north porch was built in 1858.

Evidence for the restoration of 1884 is provided by an entry in the vestry minutes dated 25 January 1884 (preserved in the Hannington Parochial Church Council files) and by references over a period of years from 1875 to 1885 in the Rural Dean of Basingstoke's Report Book (HRO, 46M74 AR1).

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Abbreviation

HRO Hampshire Record Office, Winchester.

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