

Church of St. Nicholas, Boarhunt, Hampshire.

All photos these pages are described viewed clockwise from top left.

There is now no village beside the small church, which stands on a north slope of the Downs. A possible DMV may be represented by rectangular undulations seen in a nearby field by the run of a stream, and which may be near the site of a medieval mill.

Externally the distinctive features of the church are the horizontal string-course and vertical pilaster strip on the eastern gable of the chancel, and the double splayed window in its north wall. Internally the round headed chancel arch is of a square order (not of through-stones) and outlined on its western face by strip-work carried round its head as a hood-mould. The pilaster-strips which would originally have continued the line of the hood mould down to the floor have been

cut away in medieval times to form a recess for an altar on each side of the arch. The imposts are returned along both eastern and western faces of the wall and have separately formed capitals for the strip-work.

1. The church seen from the north. The site of the Saxon N doorway (observed by H.Taylor) is marked by a pair of red lines. The building is of uncut flints, partly plastered, with quoins of dressed stone in side-alternate fashion.

2. The chancel arch seen from the nave.

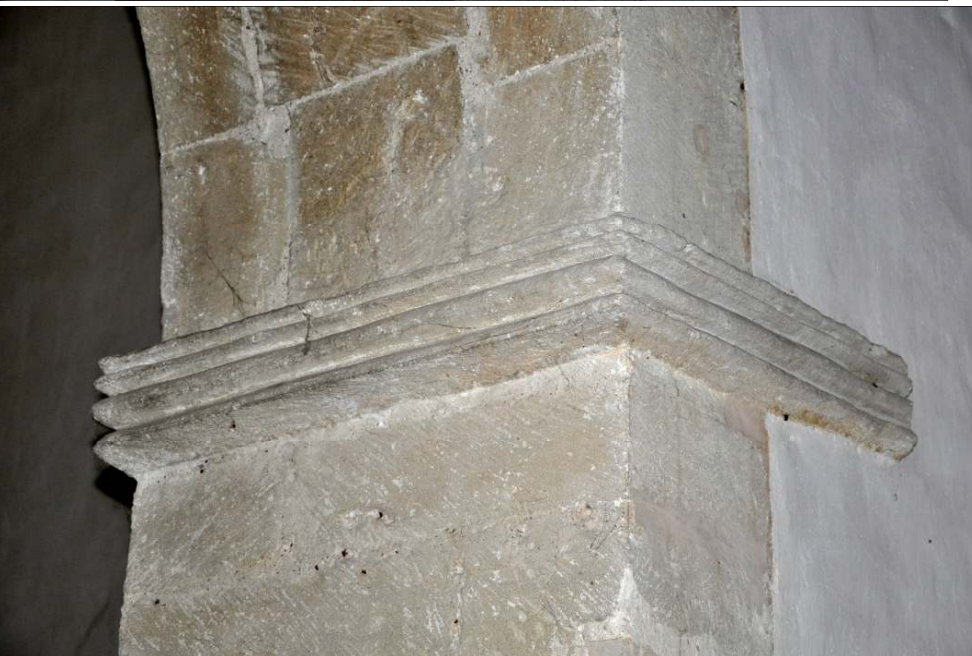
3. The N impost viewed from the nave. Square in section but chamfered below and enriched by four lines of mouldings carried horizontally on the faces of the impost. The treatment of the mouldings is in a strikingly similar manner to that of the capitals of the entrance doorway to be found at Stopham church, in Sussex. Perhaps a 'popular' decoration in that period because of the comparative ease with which the stone could be scribed/marked out with parallel lines, and the work executed possibly by an apprentice.



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4. The south impost of the chancel arch; comparing this with its northern sister one can see it has been partly mutilated at the point of the hood-mould. Also, in this case, the five mouldings are of a shallower nature when compared to its sister, and are somewhat poorly executed in comparison.
5. Seen here, the north impost, mutilated on the left hand (north side).
6. The western end of the south wall of the nave (this photo enhanced), the blue lines indicate the scar visible on this wall of the removed cross wall, and noted by H. Taylor and which see Vol I of Anglo-Saxon Architecture, page 77. This would have cut off the western entrance from the nave and no doubt with a sister archway to that of the chancel-arch. Taylor also noted outlines, visible on the plaster, of tall doorways (and externally that of the S doorway) and which partly cut by later, lower, doorways to both north and south (see red lines indicating the S doorway position).

The flint facing of the walls to a lesser or greater degree, where not covered in plaster, have been restored/refaced in more recent times. The west wall appears rebuilt or refaced and the flint-work has received much attention in its fine detail.



7. The north impost of the chancel arch, seen from inside the chancel.



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8. The eastern gable of the chancel with string-course and vertical pilaster-strip above.
9. A detail of the pilaster strip. This raises the question of the 'disappeared' pilaster-strips which may have been 'restored out' on the rest of the building, since the walls are patently the original walls of the Anglo-Saxon church despite the later features which have simply been inserted in those walls. Witness the clever and intricate Victorian flint-work which can be seen on the west wall (not pictured here).
- 10 & 11. The blocked north window in the chancel. The outer face is of well-dressed stone (absent at the base), neatly laid; the aperture cut in a stone mid-wall slab narrows slightly to the top. The stone slab is enriched by a band of wheat-ear ornament which is carried up beside the opening and round its head. Note: the surrounding dressed stone is in very fine condition, hardly weathered and possibly from hails from the same source as the dressed stone at Stoughton church, which is only some 15 miles distant. However, the rather curiously decorated window perhaps dates this building to a previous time in comparison to Stoughton. Having said that double splayed windows are notoriously difficult to date, as H.Taylor mentions, but decorated windows are on the rare side.

