

Church of St Botolph, Hadstock, Essex.

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

Described in Vol I in H.Taylor's "Anglo-saxon Architecture" (see pages 272 to 275), this church comprises a pre-conquest nave and with openings to transepts. The chancel has been totally rebuilt in Victorian times (1884) and with a pseudo Saxon chancel arch to 'match' the transeptual arches. Both these arches are not complete however. The north of which opens to the pre-conquest transept, but the south transept has been replaced in medieval times. The picture becomes more complicated, as I will detail further (see text belonging to archway photos), and as Warwick Rodwell so ably expounded in his book "The Archaeology of the English Church" and which see pages 128 to 130. The pre-conquest tower at the crossing has now gone, local tradition has it that it was the tempests of 1440 that carried it off. Taylor thinks that the crossing was probably low and the walls continuous with the nave, similar to Breamore (Hants).

1. A view from the NW of the north transept, note the massive (random) side-alternate quoins. The medieval porch lies, and abuts, immediately its west wall.
2. The east wall of the transept and where it makes a join with the easterly end of the north wall of the nave. You will see running to the left the 'new' west end of the Victorian nave (violently different in character). The east wall of the nave has been built up against but any trace of the original chancel arch has disappeared with its wall.



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3. One of the six double-splayed windows high in the nave walls. This is the easternmost set in the south wall.
4. Inside the nave looking west towards the medieval tower. A doorway seen to the right exhibits (externally) similar mouldings and decoration to the south transept arch.
5. The external face of the north doorway.
6. A detail of its west jamb. Taylor notes that the battened door hangs against the inner face of the wall (there is no rebate, this is typical pre-conquest practise). The impost is returned along the exterior wall-face and is roughly square in section but with a roll moulding on the lower angle and a panel of carved ornament along the vertical face. The round head of the doorway is of through-stones of a single order, recessed externally with a roll moulding round the arris.
7. The east jamb. The carved ornament which occurs on the capitals of the angle shafts, and the imposts, and less distinctly on the hood-moulding is described by the Royal Commission as 'crude honey suckle ornament'.



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8. The archway to the south transept seen from within the nave. Note the later medieval pointed archway, but the jambs to the arch and their imposts are reminiscent of the north doorway, and here stand on a plinth built up of four orders. And here we have an interesting twist. Warwick Rodwell relates that the fabric excavation yielded unexpected findings. The four-tiered plinths revealed their true form; when the limewash and plaster 'filling' was removed it was discovered that the plinth belonged to two periods, the lower two tiers were re-used Roman stones from a major building and the upper two tiers were jumbled and certainly not in their original position. The whole build of the plinths was a makeshift arrangement made up of battered mouldings and wide joints. It was also clear from a study of the mortar that this entire archway from ground to apex was a reconstruction of the 13th century. The chaotic jointing was disguised by generous pointing and the coating of limewash was marked with red paint outlining the false joints.

9. The east plinth belonging to the south archway (the timber screen is mid way of the full width of the walling).

10. The east plinth to the north transept archway. (& see pic 14)



11. The western plinth to the south archway seen from within the nave, note the robust size of the masonry adjoining the plinth.

12. This is the impost belonging to the previous picture. Note the 'honeysuckle ornamentation' adorning the capitals and the upper order of the impost (repeating that on the north doorway).

The north archway has jambs above the plinth belonging to the 13th century. Clearly there has been much disturbance of the original fabric of the two pre-conquest archways in this church, and this has only been revealed by the fabric excavation and exploration.



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Dimensions.

Archways. Where H1 is the height of the opening: H2 is the height to the underside of the impost:
W is the width between jambs: T is the thickness of the walling at the jambs (or walling at an opening).

The south transept archway.

W. 3.362 metres.

H2. 3.384 metres.

Nave.

L. 16.994 metres.

W. (at east end) 6.614 metres.

W. (at west end) 6.484 metres.

H. to underside tie beams 7.322 metres.

Dimensions taken using laser equipment, accurate to +/- 1.5mm in 10 metres.

Dimensions under 1.5 metres taken using steel rule.

13. Part of the north wall of the nave, with two of the double splayed windows high in the wall, and separated by a later medieval buttress (repaired in brick) and with the west tower just visible to the right.

14. Here is another view of the east plinth to the north transept archway (seen previously in pic 10). The jambs of this archway are medieval.

