

## Brigstock, Northamptonshire

Βρύστροτ

Church of St Andrew

Church fabric

Grid ref ..... SP 946 852

### Date

Lower part of W tower and nave walls above later arcades – period A or B. Upper part of W tower and round W stair-turret – period C

*Taylor*

Remaining Anglo-Saxon parts are the tower up to the belfry stage; the stair-turret; most of W quoins, W wall and W ends of N and S nave walls; part of SE angle of old chancel (now SW corner of present chancel) incorporated in S pier of present chancel arch.

*Fisher*

Very probably the Anglo-Saxon church consisted of W tower and stair-turret; nave; narrower rectangular presbytery or sanctuary and E apse (similar to BRIXWORTH but without aisles); the Anglo-Saxon corner now incorporated with S pier of present chancel arch with strip of foundations running 4' N, indicating S end of arch leading to apse.

*Carpenter*

### Tower

Narrower than nave. Quoins big, upright-and-flat, roughly dressed with projecting stones at base of each quoin. Walls 2'6" thick. Two floors, but this is not indicated on exterior by set-offs or string courses. Tower of plain Lincolnshire type. String course visible just above level of top of stair-turret marks top of Anglo-Saxon tower, separating it from C13 third stage.

Interior wall has gable-head doorway leading into stair-turret with a door of great age, possibly Anglo-Saxon. Gable-head of two massive slabs. Jambs of megalithic, upright-and-flat stones 1'6" long × 6"-12" thick. All through-stones over 2' deep. No imposts. Base is a flat sill between jambs, and is now the lower of two steps leading to turret. Higher in tower S wall and now within church is a crudely built, round-head, single-splay window. South or narrow side has each jamb consisting of two rectangular slabs on end, slightly inclined from vertical, so that the opening is narrower at the top than the bottom. The arch-head is of massive voussoirs with keystones, so large that the outer edge of the head extends beyond outer sides of



jambs. Sill of one slab only a few inches wider than the window opening and much narrower than distance between exterior edges of jambs. North wide face has head consisting of eight through stones of irregular shape. Sill apparently not splayed, of four thin, flat slabs superimposed. Rebates all round, 3" wide and 3" deep to hold wooden frames for window shutters.

### Similar window in N wall.

Higher up still in N wall of second stage of tower is a roughly-built round-head window with jambs and arch-head of rough rubble, recessed for shutters. There was originally a similar window in S wall below present clock, now roughly blocked with stones.

E wall has blocked opening which probably led originally to space or chamber between inner and outer nave roof (c.f. BARNACK, DEERHURST etc.) Arch head was a solid oak lintel so much decayed by 1870s that stability of wall above was endangered. Head was replaced by stone. It is now known if the wooden head was original.

### Tower Arch

Tower arch leading to nave; sturdily built in characteristic Anglo-Saxon form. Opening 7'6" wide × 11' high to arch spring. Round-head with voussoirs. Jambs of Escomb type – three uprights

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each over 3' high with two flats separating them in each jamb. Plain, square-sectioned imposts 7'8" thick, protruding 4" beyond E face of wall and jamb face but flush with wall on W face. E face only has vertical, square-sectioned pilaster-strips on both sides of the arch, resting on square corbels at base, which themselves rest on tower plinth (an Anglo-Saxon peculiarity). Strips share main imposts above which they pass around arch-head. Tower arch leading to N aisle has S jambs that look Anglo-Saxon, but arch is definitely Norman. The N face consists of very poor, soft mortar (almost like dried mud).

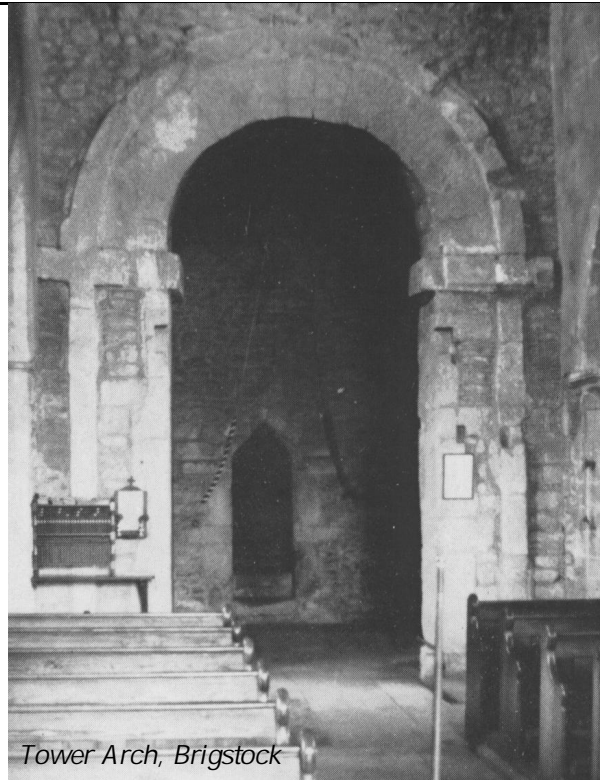
### Stair-turret

Three-quarter-round, Anglo-Saxon, but looks later than tower. Stonework of local rubble, except four courses, about 5' from ground, of large, roughly square stones from Little Oakley. Mortar on interior as hard as stone itself, very different from soft, Norman mortar used in N arch of tower. The turret contained a circular, wooden stairway, long since destroyed and replaced with ladders to provide access to the upper stage. Two rectangular windows in W face, both double-splayed. Lower window has jambs of single stones, upper one has each jamb of two stones. Arch-heads are flat, cut from single stones.

### Nave

Height of Anglo-Saxon nave indicated on exterior SW angle of nave above aisle roof and just below the level of springing line of C14 clerestory windows by smaller angle quoins and smaller rubble of walling. Nave was lofty, but present nave 3'-4' higher. Interior 40'4" long × 15' wide. Walls 2'10" thick, built rather roughly of fairly large rubble with wide, irregular mortar joints.

NW and SW quoins almost megalithic in size, upright-and-flat, plainly visible on interior.



*Tower Arch, Brigstock*



*St Andrew's from the SW*