



Stowe-Nine-Churches, Northamptonshire

Stop

Church of St Michael

Grid ref SP 638 576

Church fabric

Cross-shaft

Date

Of present church only tower is Anglo-Saxon, 950-1000 or perhaps reign of Cnut 1017-35

BB

Long-and-short work at quoins

Rom. A.

No long-and-short work at quoins

Brereton

If long-and-short work is there, it is hidden by plaster

EAF [churches]

St Werburg founded nunnery at Stow about 680. St Alnot, bailiff to St Werburg, lived as hermit in cell near church until killed by robbers. His relics at one time were in the church.

Tower

About 16' square, wall 2'8"-2'11" thick. Exterior rough cast, interior plastered.

Two stages separated by square-sectioned string-course. Later belfry windows cut through string-course. Two intermediate bands, one of which passes across W middle window, are modern, strengthening bands.

Lower stage takes up about 4/5 of the total height. Short upper stage, possibly of later date, has narrow pilaster-strips of considerable projection on E and W faces.

Blocked W opening in lower stage, plain jambs, square-head, curiously narrow (2') and 6' high.

W face has two windows: upper round-head double-splay, lower single-splay with flat lintel (renewed).

Tower arch

Opening into nave. Characteristically Anglo-Saxon but rather small: 7'3" x 3'7". Jambs and voussoirs appear to be through-stones, but obscured by whitewash. Flat, square, slab imposts cut away on soffit sides flush with jambs and stones of springing, which is not set back from jamb faces. Imposts about 5" thick, returned on E faces to serve as imposts also for flanking vertical 4½" wide

pilaster-strips of square-section, now cut away flush with wall except for a few inches at base and top.

Above returned imposts is square-sectioned hood-mould around arch-head 4½" wide, 14"-18" from arch soffit edge.

W face of arch has neither hood-mould nor pilaster-strips.

Sculpture

Hardly later than C8

Radford

Built into exterior NW corner is carved stone, about 2' long. One side 15", other tapering from 15"-13". Probably part of cross-shaft. One face panelled with (probably cabled) half-round border; panel filled with interlace. Other side too worn to show whether panelled or not. Carving contains circles and possibly vine scroll.