

A GUIDE

TO THE

ARCHITECTURAL ANTIQUITIES

IN THE

NEIGHBOURHOOD OF OXFORD.

PART I.

Deanery of Worcester.

PUBLISHED FOR THE OXFORD SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING THE STUDY OF
GOTHIC ARCHITECTURE.

OXFORD,

JOHN HENRY PARKER;

RIVINGTONS, LONDON; AND STEVENSON, CAMBRIDGE.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE object proposed in this publication is to assist the junior members of the Society in the practical study of Gothic Architecture. Presuming that they already possess such a knowledge of the subject as is supplied by the usual elementary works, we would lead them to seek for more detailed and accurate information by the study of buildings rather than of books : these may supply good general rules, but liable to so many exceptions, that any student who attempts to apply them will at first find himself very much at fault, and will speedily discover that to describe with tolerable accuracy the different parts of almost any old Church, with the style and probable date of each portion, requires considerable practice, or the assistance of a more experienced guide ; and as such a person is not always at hand, it is hoped that this printed Guide may in some degree supply the deficiency, and that when a student has examined a few such buildings with this help, he will be better enabled to study others without it. Every building of the middle ages may be considered as a subject for study from which something may be learned ; and the student who has advanced so far as to feel this will never be at a loss for objects of amusement and interest in any part of England, or indeed of Europe ; for although there are peculiarities belonging to each country, and to a great extent also to each district, the general features of Gothic Architecture

are the same in all; and the more closely its history is investigated, the more nearly we shall probably find its progress to have been simultaneous.

The plan proposed in the work, of which the First Part is now placed in the hands of our members, is to furnish *some account of EVERY CHURCH* within a circuit of twelve miles from Oxford; even in those cases where the Church is modern and altogether unworthy of notice, the information of this fact may save many a student a fruitless walk or ride; whenever the Church is old, it will not be found entirely devoid of interest. This First Part of the Guide contains those Churches in the Deanery of Bicester which come within our limit, and it is intended to follow it up with the other Deaneries in succession, as this ancient Ecclesiastical division of the country seems the most convenient for our purpose: at the same time, the Churches within the Deanery are arranged in the order of a ride from Oxford, going by one route and returning by another, and a slight map of the route is prefixed to enable strangers to make use of it.

The motives for selecting the Deanery of Bicester to begin with, were, first, that the Churches themselves are of a very interesting character, and little known; secondly, that more particulars respecting their history have been collected by the laborious researches of Bishop Kennett than can often be found relating to mere country parishes; and these "Historical Notices" which are appended to the Architectural description of each Church, add considerably to the interest of the work. Bishop Kennett's Parochial Antiquities are arranged in chronological order, which renders it often difficult to make out clearly the history of each parish separately; this, however,

had been in a great degree prepared ready to our hands in Mr. Dunkin's History of the Hundred of Ploughley, which consists chiefly of a useful digest of Bishop Kennett's learned researches ; and we have not scrupled to avail ourselves of this assistance, more especially as Mr. Dunkin's work was limited to a very small number of copies, and is now difficult to meet with. In speaking only of Churches, it is not intended to confine the work to them, whenever any other Gothic buildings come within our range ; but the domestic buildings of the middle ages, though worthy of more attention than they have hitherto met with, are not very common, and our district is not rich in them. It may be asked why we did not commence our work with the buildings of Oxford itself ; but it may be presumed that the generality of our members are well acquainted with them, and the excellent illustrations afforded in Dr. Ingram's valuable Memorials, seem to have in a great degree forestalled us.

In presenting this First Part of the proposed Guide to the Architectural Antiquities of the neighbourhood of Oxford to our members, it seems necessary to make a few remarks on the buildings contained in it, their general character and peculiarities : and this affords a good opportunity of calling attention to the fact, that although the four Styles of Gothic Architecture are almost as distinct and as well known as the three Orders of Grecian Architecture, yet that the number of buildings which do not belong to any of these styles is much more numerous than is commonly supposed ; and this arising not merely from different parts of a building being of different ages, but from so many buildings being erected during the periods of transition from one style to another. Gothic Architecture never stood

still; and as we have many buildings early or late in each particular style, so we have also others which do not properly belong to either, and can only be described as belonging to the period of transition from one to the other.

The number of buildings erected about the end of the twelfth century, during the reigns of Richard I. and John, when the change from the Norman to the Early English style was in progress, has led Mr. Bloxam to make a new style of this period of transition, which he has called Semi-Norman. The objection to this is, that it is impossible to define such a style, some buildings being almost Norman, with just a beginning of change; others almost Early English, with just a last lingering remnant of Norman work; and this continues, in some instances, to a period when the Early English style was in general fully established. Instances of this transition will be found in the Churches of Islip, Chesterton, and Middleton Stoney.

The second period of transition, from the Early English to the Decorated styles, about the time of Edward I., is less marked, and consequently not so generally known as the former one; instances of it are, however, very common, and some persons have proposed to make another new style of this, under the name of Geometrical Gothic. The same objection applies to this as in the former instance; it is impossible to define such a style; the later examples of Early English, in which we have foliated circles in the head of the window, and the earlier examples of Decorated, in which we have these combined with trefoils, and other geometrical forms, would equally belong to it. It may truly be said, that all Gothic Architecture is Geometrical. Geometry is the very

soul and essence of Gothic, pervading every part of it, and an Architect who is ignorant of Geometry does not deserve the name, and is not fit to erect any Gothic building. A good example of this transition occurs in the east window of Hampton Poyle (p. 53,) and the tower of Oddington, (p. 7.)

The transition from the Decorated to the Perpendicular styles has been less noticed than either of the others, from the circumstance of its character being less marked and obvious, discovered rather by the mouldings and details than by any general features, although instances do occur of a mixture of Decorated and Perpendicular tracery in the head of a window, as in the east window of Charlton on Otmoor, (p. 10.) Most of the buildings erected in the latter part of the fourteenth century, during the reign of Richard II., partake of this mixed character.

Of the anomalous class of buildings supposed by some persons to be Saxon, and called by Mr. Bloxam the Saxon style, we have a good example in the tower of Caversfield Church, to which we have endeavoured to do ample justice at pp. 30, 31. Here, as in other instances, this work is so much mixed up with other features having the usual character of Norman, as to make it very doubtful whether any part of it is really of an earlier age, or merely rude country work, such as may be found at all periods. This remark applies equally to Bicester, (p. 24.)

Of the Norman style, we have some good examples in the North Porch of Caversfield and the Tower of Bucknell.

Of the Early English style, the Nave of Charlton on Otmoor, the South Arches of Bicester, the Chancel of Bucknell (a fine example,) the Tower of Middleton Stoney, and the Nave of Kirtlington.

Of Decorated, Merton Church is nearly a perfect specimen. The South Aisle of Ambrosden is very rich and good; the Tower and south side of the Nave of Chesterton, the Nave of Hampton Poyle.

Of Perpendicular, the Towers of Islip and Bicester, the Chancel of Ambrosden, the Clerestory and Porch of Bicester, and many windows inserted in all the Churches.

This Part of the Guide has been prepared by Mr. J. Henry Parker and Mr. William Grey of Magdalene Hall, who visited all the Churches together, and generally one took notes of them while the other made sketches of the most interesting features. These rough notes, made on the spot, have been printed with very little alteration, neither party having time to prepare a more elaborate work, but in any case where a doubt was entertained on any particular point, the Church has been visited again. It is hoped that the publication of this specimen will lead to an improvement in the subsequent parts of the Guide, and that other members of the Society will come forward and render their assistance; that one who is conversant with the manuscripts of the middle ages, will examine the Bishops' Registers, or other documents, calculated to throw light upon the history of the Churches; another who is conversant with Heraldry, will examine the different monuments, and see what light can be thrown from that source, (as has been done in the case of the monument at Caversfield, the date of which was ascertained by means of the Heraldry, with the kind assistance of the Count Mortara, and the Rev. Dr. Bandinel;) another who can draw, to make sketches, accompanied by measurements which are indispensable in Architectural drawing; another who is con-

versant with the costume of different periods, to examine the various heads which occur as corbels, &c., in almost every Church, and see how far they agree with the Architectural character, and the date thereby assigned. In this way a far more valuable work may be produced than is promised by the present imperfect attempt, but it appeared that unless some one made a beginning nothing would be done, and it is hoped that even this, imperfect and superficial as it is, may be found useful.

I. H. P.

OXFORD, Oct. 10, 1842.

ISLIP.

PATRONS.
THE DEAN AND
CHAPTER OF
WESTMINSTER.

St. Nicholas.

DEANERY
OF BICESTER.
HUNDRED
OF PLOUGHLEY.



	FT.	IN.		FT.	IN.
Chancel	40	0	by	18	6
Nave	50	0	by	21	0
N. Aisle	50	0	by	15	6
S. Aisle	50	0	by	11	0
Vestry	10	9	by	9	0

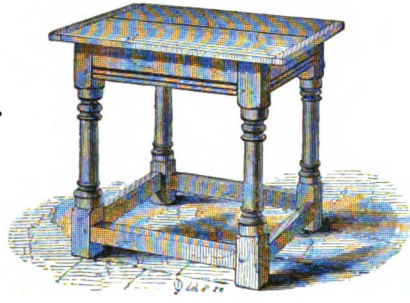
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There can be little doubt that there was a Church at Islip in the Saxon times, but no part of the present building appears to be earlier than about the end of the twelfth century, to which date the pillars and arches on the north side of the nave must be attributed. The Church appears to have been in a great degree rebuilt in the fourteenth century, and the tower added in the fifteenth. The Chancel was probably destroyed in the civil wars, and rebuilt soon after the Restoration.

CHANCEL.—Built by the celebrated Dr. Robert South, in 1680, in the debased Gothic style, prevalent at that period. The circumstance of this Chancel being rebuilt so soon after the restoration of the Church of England, and by a divine so well known for the orthodox character of his writings, attaches a degree of importance which would not otherwise belong to it, and therefore makes it necessary to describe it more minutely than its own merits would require. Of the architecture little need be said, but that it is a favourable specimen of that age, though not free from the usual faults; the windows have semicircular heads, with the mullions crossing and intersecting each other in the head, without foliation; the masonry is good and substantial, buttresses not being required are not used; the roof is of too low a pitch to have a good effect, but the timbers are left open, without much ornament, excepting the eastern bay immediately over the Altar; this has a plaster ceiling, which, though now mutilated is sufficiently perfect to shew that it was richly painted in the best style of the period, with the Dove in the centre represented as descending, surrounded by cherubim. The portion of wall immediately over the east window is painted in imitation of open Gothic work, with the date 1680. On one of the beams of the roof is this inscription:

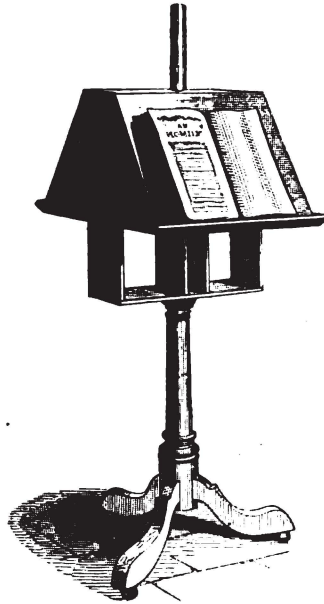
“ROBERTUS SOUTH S. T. P. IN ECCLESIAM HANC PAROCHIALEM INDUCTUS ANNO DOMINI 1678, PROPRIIS SUMPTIBUS HANC CANCELLARIAM A FUNDAMENTIS INSTAURAVIT EXTRUXITQVE. ANNO Dⁿⁱ. 1680.”

The Communion-table is plain and substantial oak, of the usual style of Charles II. In the vestry are preserved the small Credence-table, also of oak, corresponding exactly with the larger table, and a plain oak Lettern of the same period, the upper part of which is square, having two desks, and turning on a pivot on the top of a plain round pillar.



Credence Table A.D. 1660

The Altar-rail is plain, of the same age as the above; this end of the Chancel is raised one step. On the north side of the Chancel is the vestry, of the same date, but built in imitation of an Early English chapel, with small lancet windows. In the vestry is the parish chest, of plain oak, in which are preserved the Chalice and Paten, also of the same date; these are of pewter, being probably the best that could then be afforded; their place has since been supplied by silver.



Lettern. A.D. 1680

The Chancel-arch belongs to the old part of the Church, and is plain work of the fourteenth century. Parts of the old Rood-screen remain, with the linen pattern panel, marking it to be of about the time of Henry VIII. Other parts are preserved in the vestry, but are plain and mutilated.

NAVE—North side—three arches, Transition Norman, pointed with flat soffit, the edges slightly chamfered. These rest on pillars

of the same style, very short and massive; one square in section, with shafts at the angles, and a plain Norman capital, the other plain round, with sculptured Norman capital; the two Responds, or half pillars, correspond nearly with the square pillar, but the shafts have more of Early English character. In the eastern pillar a Decorated niche is inserted.

South side—three arches, of plain work in the Decorated style.

Roof—plain open timber of good construction, with garret windows inserted afterwards.

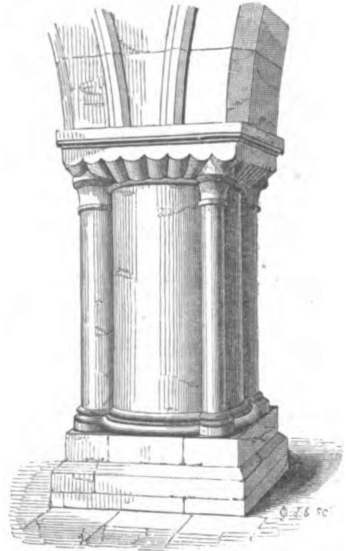
Tower-arch—good Perpendicular, now plastered up, and a gallery brought out in front of it.

Pews—mostly open, good old oak, some agreeing with Dr. South's other work. Several enclosed pews have been introduced of late years.

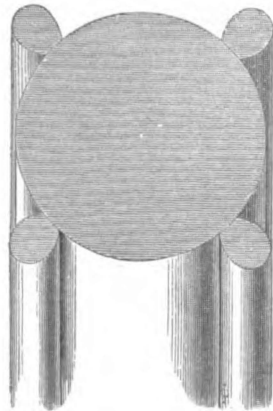
Pulpit—plain, probably Dr. South's work.

Font—stands at the west end of the nave, good Perpendicular, octagon cup-shaped, with a quatrefoil panel on each face.

NORTH AISLE—Decorated, good windows at each end; the east window lately (1842) restored in a creditable manner; the side windows are still in a bad state, with their tracery cut out. On the north wall of this aisle some ancient painting has recently



Pillar, North side of Nave. c. 1300.



Section of Pillar.

been discovered, (March, 1842,) and the whitewash of a small part scraped off, but very little can as yet be made out. In this wall there is a small Decorated door now blocked up. A bracket at the east end of the aisle shews the situation of a Chantry-altar.

SOUTH AISLE—Decorated, the windows mostly mutilated; the west window looks like a small Early Norman one, but is only an imitation, of the time of Charles II. At the east end of this aisle is a Decorated Piscina, partly concealed by modern pewing; this of course marks the situation of another Altar. On the south wall of this aisle is a curious painting of the offerings of the three kings to the infant Saviour, date about 1360, as appeared from an inscription visible at the time it was discovered, in 1824.

Roofs of both aisles open timber, plain rough work, but original. South doorway and porch Decorated; on the east side of the door under the porch is a Stoup of the same period, but mutilated.

THE TOWER is good plain Perpendicular, of four stages, with pinnacles at the angles; the west door is a good specimen of this style.

I.H.P.

HISTORICAL NOTICES.

In 1009, King Ethelred kept the greatest part of his residence in this county, chiefly at Hedington and Islip^a. (Vide Kennett's *Parochial Antiquities*, 1808. vol. i. p. 62; for other notices respecting Islip, see also pages 36, 63, 66, 67, 68, 69, 85, 93, 97, 101, 110, 111, 257, 436, 467, and 582; vol. ii. pages 5, 140, 143, 339, and 385.) King Edward (whom for his piety and chastity our forefathers honoured with the title of Confessor) was born here, as is made evident by the original charter of the restoration of the Abbey of Westminster, wherein he gives to that Church the town of Islip, with this additional clause, "The place where I was born." Sir William Dugdale mentions nothing of this charter in his "*Monasticon*;" but the Saxon copy of the greatest part of it was discovered by Dr. Kennett, Bishop of Peterborough, and is published with other instruments relating to the antiquities of Ambrosden, Bur-

^a Islip, in Saxon *Lighthlepe*, called anciently "*Ghistlpe*;" in the Pipe Rolls of King Henry II., "*Hiltesleape*;" in a

Charter of the same king's, "*Hleslepe*;" and in a presentation of the Abbey of Westminster, 6th Henry III., "*Ighteslep*."

cester, and some other parishes of this county. In this charter this town is called Lyðrlepe^b.

When King Edward founded the Monastery of St. Peter at Westminster, he gave to it this village of Githslepe, as it was then spelled. Notwithstanding this grant, William the Conqueror seized upon the Islip estate, and bestowed it upon the valiant Hugh de Grentmaisnil, who gave it, as a marriage portion, to his daughter Adeline, the wife of Roger de Ivery. Soon after the death of Jeffrey de Ivery, to whom it descended, the manor and other estates of the lordship of Islip were granted to William de Curcy, who dying about 1173, the land again reverted to the crown. The Abbot and Convent of Westminster, availing themselves of this circumstance, tendered their claim to the village and liberties of Islip, and ultimately succeeded in gaining the restitution of their properties here; and still retain it. They soon after found the chapel of the palace, which stood near the Church, in a state of dilapidation, and either repaired or rebuilt it, as was attested by the lancet windows in the eastern wall. An engraving of it was published by Hearne in his preface to "Curious Discourses," A.D. 1720, and a copy of it is given in Mr. Dunkin's History of the Hundreds of Ploughley and Bullington. It was in the eighteenth century used as a barn or outhouse, till about 1780, when, being in a dangerous state, it was taken down. The old Font belonging to this chapel has been generally, but erroneously, supposed to have been that in which Edward the Confessor was baptized; no one, however, in the least acquainted with the character of Fonts at that period, can for a moment entertain such an idea; it appears to be of about the end of the fourteenth century, and is now carefully preserved in the Rectory garden.

TRANSLATION OF THE ORIGINAL SAXON CHARTER.

Edward, king, greeteth Wlsey, bishop, and Gyrth, earl, and all my nobles in Oxfordshire. And I tell you that I have given to Christ and St. Peter into Westminster that small village wherein I was born, by name Githslepe, and one hide at Mersce, scot-free and rent-free, with all the things which belong thereunto, in wood and field, in meadows and waters, with Church, and with the immunities of the Church, as fully and as largely, and as free as it stood in mine own hand; and also as my mother Imme, upon my right of primogeniture, for my maintenance gave it me entire, and bequeathed it to the family.—Kennett, vol. i. p. 68, 69.

^b Magna Britannia 1727, vol. iv. p. 403.

ODDINGTON.

PATRONS.

TRINITY COLLEGE,
OXFORD.

St. Andrew.

DEANERY

OF BICESTER.

HUNDRED

OF PLOUGHLEY.

	FT.	IN.	by	FT.	IN.
Chancel	27	3	by	15	9
Nave	46	0	by	21	7

THIS Church is plain Decorated, at least so much as remains of the original work, but it is so much mutilated, and concealed by plaster, that it is difficult to make out what it has been.

In the CHANCEL there is an elegant Decorated Piscina, and the Chancel-arch was plain Decorated, but is now an ugly low plaster one. The east window is restored Perpendicular. In the Chancel is a small Brass, a skeleton in a shroud, to Radulph Hamsterley, Fellow of Merton College, Rector of this parish.

. . . Anno 15 . . . Mensis . . .

[The blanks have never been filled up.]

The NAVE has Early Decorated buttresses; on the north side is an arch, stopped up, which appears to have opened into a chapel now destroyed.

Pews—good plain open benches. Font—plain, round, lined with lead, probably the same age as the Church, and therefore of the Decorated style, though without any ornament. South Porch has an Early Decorated doorway.



Tower of Oddington Church. © 1300.

TOWER—good, Early Decorated, plain, of two stories; windows—lancet-shaped with foliated heads; arch—plain Pointed, not chamfered, now plastered up.

In the Church-yard is the shaft of a Cross.

w.g.

HISTORICAL NOTICES.

In 1079, Adeline, widow of Roger de Ivery, held, by inheritance from her father, lands in Charlton, *Otendon*, and Islip^c.

In 1138, Sir Rob. Gait, Knight, Lord of the manor of Hampton thence called Hampton Gait (now Gay), possessed a fourth part of the village of *Ottendun*, and going to Gilbert, Abbot of Daverlie, he desired and obtained leave to build an Abbey of the Cistercian order, in the said village of *Ottendun*, which accordingly he raised at his own charge, and endowed it with five virgates of land, which made the fourth part of a Knight's fee, and called it from the name of an adjoining wood, *Ottelei*^d.

In a short time the Monastery was found so much exposed to inundations, that the society petitioned for a removal; and in consequence of their representations, Alexander, Bishop of Lincoln, was induced to grant them the park of Thame, in this county, and some land which had belonged to Nigel Kyre, for the purpose of building thereon. On their acquisition of this gift, the Monks lost no time in proceeding with the new fabric. The Convent was removed, and on July 21, A.D. 1138, the Church was dedicated to St. Mary, by the same Bishop, who in gratitude thereof was hereafter reputed the Founder^e.

^c Kennett, vol. i. p. 85.

vol. ii. p. 403.

^d Kennett, vol. i. p. 126, 127. See also p. 149, 159, 276, 282, 295, 296. and

^e Dunkin, vol. ii. p. 115.

CHARLTON

PATRONS.
THE PROVOST AND
FELLOWS OF
QUEEN'S COLLEGE,
OXFORD.

ON OTMOOR.
St. Mary the Virgin.

DEANERY
OF BICESTER.
HUNDRED
OF PLOUGHLEY.

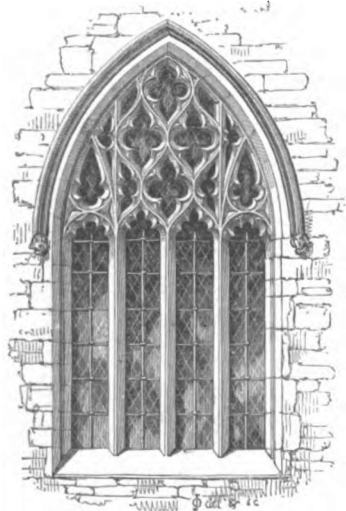


	FT.	IN.		FT.	IN.
Chancel	36	9	by	14	6
Nave	40	0	by	21	0
Aiales	40	0	by	10	0

THIS Church appears to have been built about the middle of the thirteenth century, and the Chancel added or rebuilt at the end of the fourteenth. Some alterations were made and a story added to the tower in the fifteenth. No part of the original Norman Church remains.

CHANCEL—late Decorated and Transition to Perpendicular, a good specimen of this period, although the work is somewhat rude and clumsy, as might be expected in a remote country village.

East window of four lights, with ramified tracery, approaching to Perpendicular. Side windows of two lights, with more of Decorated character, but the labels over them, and the mouldings throughout, partake of the same mixed character. There are some good bits of original stained glass in the heads of all the windows; in that of the east window is an elegant little figure of the Virgin and Child.



East Window, c. 1390

Sedilia and Piscina of the same late Decorated or Transition style, the label forming a square head to the whole. The work is rude and clumsy: in the piscina the *wooden* shelf remains.

Opposite to these is a plain sepulchral recess in the north wall, with an obtusely pointed arch: as there is no tomb under it, there can be little doubt that this was for the Easter sepulchre.

There are three steps to the Altar, with many of the encaustic tiles remaining, but in a very dirty and mutilated state.

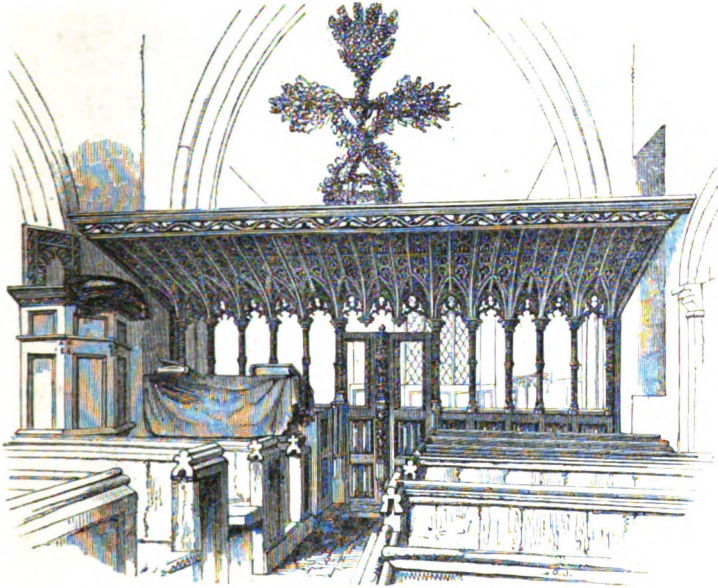
On the floor near the Easter sepulchre is a stone slab, with an elegant cross fleurée, of the fourteenth century, to the memory of a former Rector—John de France—but much defaced and the date lost.

The Altar-rail is a fine piece of oak carving, in the style of Grinling Gibbons.

The Chancel has a low flat plaster ceiling, which entirely spoils the Rood-arch.

The most interesting feature in this Church is the Rood-loft, which is a very fine and perfect specimen: it is of richly carved

oak, with the original painting and gilding, of the time of Henry VII, or VIII. The stone stairs to the Rood-loft are all cut away but two. The staircase arch, however, remains open.



Rood-loft. c. 1500.

On this Rood-loft a garland is placed from immemorial custom on May day, strung upon a wooden cross, which remains in the position of the ancient Holy Rood until the following year, when the flowers and evergreens are again renewed.

NAVE—North side,—three Early English arches, acutely pointed, recessed, chamfered, on octagon shafts with plain circular caps, labels of early character, with good terminations.

South side, three similar arches, but the caps have the roll moulding, and the label is different in the inside, but on the outside, in the aisles, it is the same as that of the north arches, and is terminated by masks.

CLERESTORY—On north side three very good small quatrefoil windows remain, and are probably Early English: within they are played into a square opening, but the effect is very good. On the south side the windows are square common Perpendicular.

Roof of Nave spoiled by a modern flat plaster ceiling.

Pulpit, good Elizabethan, with the date, 1616. Pews in Nave, all good open seats, a few modern boxes introduced in the Chancel.

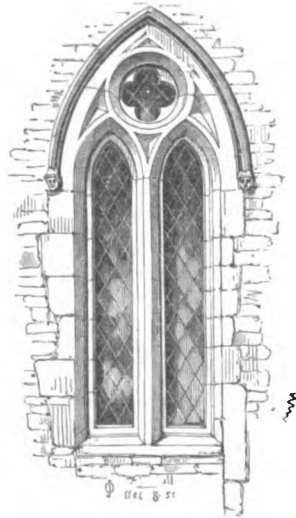
Font, plain, round, spreading upwards, stands on two steps, which are built in with the base of the west pillar on the north side, so that it is clearly all of one age, Early English. The cover is plain pyramidal, with a singular and good top to it, consisting of a sort of crest of the Tudor flower.



Crest of Font Cover

NORTH AISLE, windows Decorated, but in Early English walls ; at the east end a plain Early English Piscina and Bracket.

SOUTH AISLE, east window Early English, late in the style, label the roll moulding, with masks for terminations, window of two lights, with foliated circle in the head. Near this also an Early English Piscina, and Bracket. Other windows Decorated, and a square Perpendicular insertion. This aisle has a good parapet, ornamented with sunk quatrefoils, Early English, late in the style. The south door and porch are plain Early English: over the door is a Perpendicular panelled niche, for a Holy Rood. Roofs of aisles, plain open timber, rough work.



East End of the North Aisle. c. 1200.

TOWER, Early English, with a Perpendicular upper story added, lower windows lancet, upper original windows two light Early English with open head, and roll moulding for

labels, terminated by masks. Upper windows and parapet Perpendicular, with good pinnacles at the angles.

Tower-arch good Early English, but plastered up to accommodate a singing gallery, which is as usual brought out into the Church, instead of being placed *in* the tower.

The masonry of this Church is very good, entirely built of small stones, with a marked difference between that of the Aisles and Tower, and the Chancel, though both good. It has buttresses only at the angles, none being required at the sides.

The cross in the Church-yard is plain, and much worn, but is probably Early English.

I.H.P.

HISTORICAL NOTICES.

In 1076, or before, Hugh de Grentemaisnil, father of Adeline, wife of Roger de Ivery, among other large possessions given by him to his restored Monastery of St. Ebrulf^a, in Normandy, granted the Church of Charlton-upon-Otmoore, with the tithes, and five virgates of land, and one villain, &c., &c., which grants William the Conqueror confirmed to those monks by a large charter, dated at Winchester, 1081^b.

In 1392, the patronage of the Church of Charlton-upon-Otmoore, being now in the crown, king Richard the Second gave the perpetual advowson to the prioress and nuns of Henwode, county of Warwick, to the intent the said Church might be united for ever to the said nunnery,

^a The monastery of St. Ebrulf, or St. Evran, was founded for Benedictine monks by one Ebrulf, in the reign of Clothair I., A.D. 578, and being almost destroyed by the intestine ravages of the Franks and Normans, was restored, in 1049, by William Geronis, and his nephews Robert and Hugh de Grentemaisnil; and in the following year Robert assumed the habit and became a monk. [Guil. Gemet. sub an. 1051, p. 280.] On the death of Theodoric, the Abbot, he was elected to the vacant dignity, but was driven from his house and banished by Duke William. He found an asylum in

the dominions of his countryman, Robert duke of Calabria, and built a new monastery nigh Brepe, on the shores of the Adriatic sea, where he died, after having governed the community seventeen years. —Neustria Pia, p. 104, 105, Rothomag 1663. Also some account of the Alien Priors, collected from the MSS. of Warburton and Ducarel, vol. ii. p. 81, 82; London, 1786. Dunkin, vol. i. p. 210. —Ordericus Vitalis, p. 603. Mon. Ang. tom. ii. p. 966.

^b Kennett, vol. i. p. 84; see also p. 85, 97, 101, 110, 131, 296, 357, 371, and 372; vol. ii. p. 85.

provided a sufficient portion should be allotted for the endowment of a perpetual vicar, and that a due portion at the Diocesan's discretion should be yearly allowed for the better support of the poorer parishioners of the said village of Charlton, which gift King Henry the Fourth did afterwards confirm^c. And Pope Innocent the Seventh, in the first year of his pontificate, upon petition of the said prioress and nuns, did allow them to appropriate the said Church on death or cession of the present Rector^d.

Henry the Fifth, in the third year of his reign, annexed this Church, together with the greater number of the estates formerly belonging to the Alien Priory of Ware, to the Carthusian Monastery of Shene, in the county of Surrey.

After the dissolution of that Monastery, it appears that the advowson of this Church was the property of William Dening and John and Lancelot Shaw, and that they did homage for it^e.

By indenture bearing date 20th May, 1567, [10 Eliz.,] Alan Scott, the Rector of Charlton, and the Provost and Fellows and Scholars of Queen's College, Oxford, patrons of the same, granted to William Shillingford, *alias* Izode, of Beckley, his heirs and assigns, a lease of the parsonage of this village for eighty-one years, on condition of his paying the said Alan Scott and his successors the sum of £20 per annum, in equal portions, at the four usual seasons of payment, and finding an able and sufficient curate, to be allowed by the ordinary to perform divine service and all other parochial duties, or, in case the said Alan or his successors do the duty, the said William Shillingford, *alias* Izode, further covenanting to repair the Chancel, whenever necessary, during the continuance of his lease.

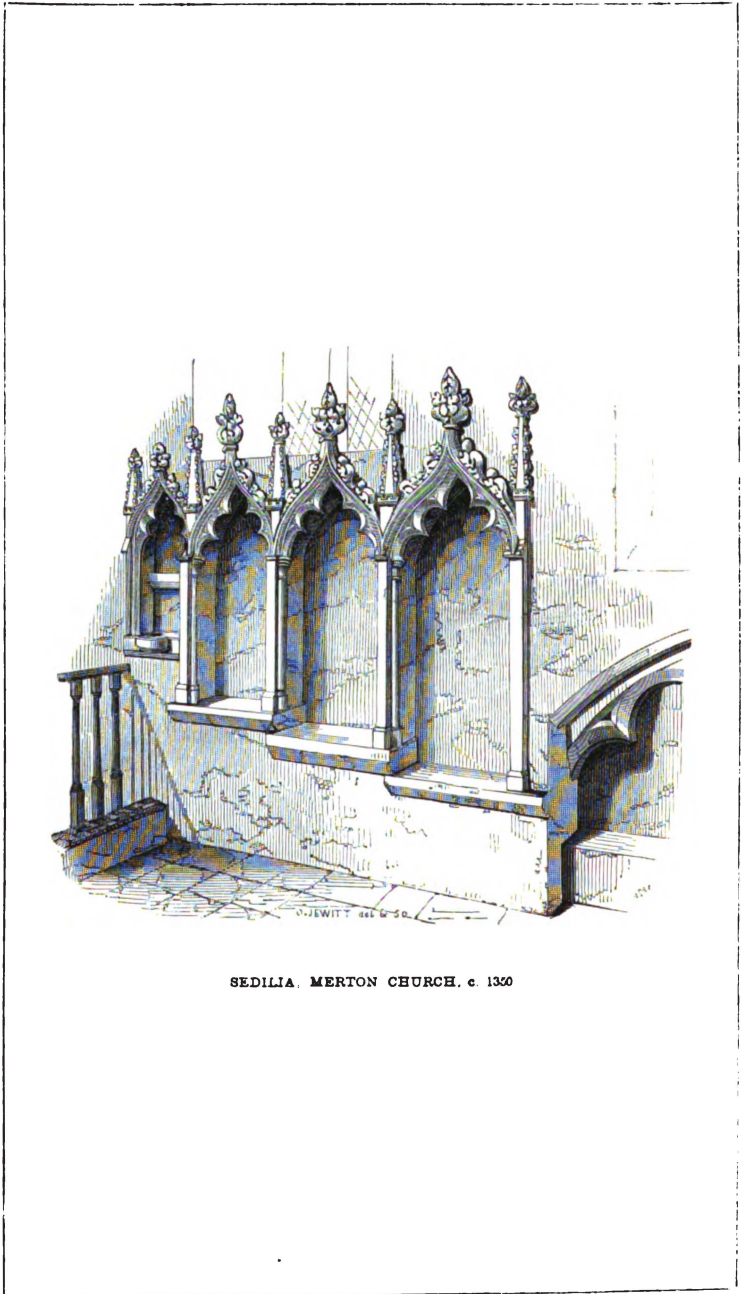
Thomas Lamplugh, afterwards Archbishop of York, was Rector of this parish from 1658 to 1685.

^c From the registers, this gift seems not to have been carried into effect.—Vide Dunkin, vol. i. p. 211.

^d Mon. Ang. tom. i. p. 479; Kennett,

vol. ii. p. 176, 204, 205, 210, and 220.

^e Originalia, 28—35 Henry VIII., f. 295. b. No. 6365, Additional MSS. in Brit. Mus.



SEDILIA, MERTON CHURCH. c. 1350

MERTON.

PATRONS.
THE RECTOR AND
FELLOWS OF
EXETER COLLEGE,
OXFORD.

St. Swithen.

DEANERY
OF BICESTER.
HUNDRED
OF BULLINGTON.

	FT.	IN.		FT.	IN.
Chancel	35	7	by	15	0
Nave	61	0	by	19	0
S. Aisle	61	0	by	17	0

THIS Church is entirely of the Decorated style, and was probably built in the latter half of the fourteenth century, a few windows only being added, and the roof of the Nave rebuilt in the fifteenth.

CHANCEL—East window, three light, Perpendicular, but the label and stringcourse Decorated, the roll moulding. Three windows on the south side, of two lights, Perpendicular tracery inserted in Decorated arches, with hollows in the head.

In the Chancel there are some very good carved Decorated corbels to the roof and the arch; the roof of the Chancel spoiled by a plaster ceiling. Chancel-arch Decorated, pointed, recessed, chamfered, springing from rich corbels.

Sedilia and Piscina, good Decorated, rather late, with ogee arches, crockets and finials; the Piscina has a shelf and basin perfect; near these is a foliated ogee-arched sepulchral recess. The south-west window has a low seat under it, and adjoining a small Decorated door. On the north side a good Decorated locker, with ogee arch, having pinnacles, crockets, and finials.

Two mural monuments, of the time of Elizabeth.

The Communion-table plain and old, with the slab detached, as ordered by the injunctions of Elizabeth †.

On the outside of the Chancel on the north side, is a small niche in the wall.

NAVE—On the south side four Decorated arches, on octagon pillars, plain, with Decorated caps richly moulded: on the north side three arches walled up with their labels, having Decorated windows, and a door inserted in the wall under them: these have been moved back from the outer wall when the arches were filled up, and the aisle destroyed.

Roof of the Nave original Perpendicular, open timber, with a little of the old painting. Clerestory also Perpendicular.

Seats mostly open, plain and old, but higher than usual, some modern and very bad.

SOUTH AISLE, good Decorated; the east window has Decorated tracery, rather peculiar, between flowing and flamboyant. Two Decorated niches on the south side, and one on the north side of this window. Side windows very good, Decorated, two light, with quatrefoils in the head, one Perpendicular inserted.

South door, plain Decorated, with Perpendicular panel for a rood over it, the same as at Charlton.

Font plain, round, with an octagon shaft, probably Decorated, and has a pyramidal canopy of the time of Charles II.

Pulpit and Reading-desk carved oak scroll work, about the time of James I.

TOWER situated at the west end, plain Decorated, and has a good ornamented parapet, window and niche; has had a spire, which was taken down about 1770, to save the expense of keeping it in repair. Tower-arch small and plain; west window, single light, cinque-foiled ogee head.

POUCH, plain Decorated.

In the Church-yard is the base of an old Cross; the foot entrance to the Church-yard is worthy of notice, having the original coping, apparently of the fourteenth or fifteenth century.

W.G.

† See Mr. D. Parsons' Letter to the Oxford Heraldic Society.

HISTORICAL NOTICES.

That the first Church in this village owes its origin and endowment to one of the early lords of the manor, is evident, from his successor, David, Earl of Huntingdon, having granted the advowson to the Abbot and Convent of Eynsham in the latter end of the reign of Henry I., A.D. 1118^f; and shortly after, the same community, by a compact with the successive incumbents, reserved to themselves a pension of 30*s.* per annum out of its revenues ^g.

On the twenty-second of June, 1351, the Abbot and Convent of Eynsham procured licence from King Edward III., to appropriate the Church of Merton to their Abbey, and soon after petitioned the Bishop of Lincoln, their diocesan, to grant them letters for this purpose, setting forth the following weighty reasons for the necessity of augmenting the revenues of their Convent: "that their Monastery, standing near the highway, was often frequented and burdened by travellers; that they had been engaged in many suits and trials in courts ecclesiastical and civil, by which they had contracted many and great debts; that a late raging pestilence had much diminished and detained their old rents and profits; and that their house, as well as their offices and other buildings, were much decayed, and they unable to repair or support them ^h. They therefore humbly prayed, that as the parish Church of Merton was only taxed at seventeen marks and ten shillings, it might be appropriated and for ever annexed to their Convent." The Bishop remarking the strong case adduced, consented to their request, and ordained that the appropriation should commence on the death or resignation of John de Wanse, the present Rector, reserving for a perpetual Vicar the yearly pension of ten marks, together with a manse in the village, and the sum of twenty shillings yearly to the See of Lincoln, to compensate for the pro-

^f *Regist. de Eynsham Chartæ 22, Apud Æd. Christ. Oxon., ap. Dunkin.*

^g *Dunkin, vol. ii. p. 9.*

^h Had their allegations been true to their full extent, the whole revenue of Merton Church could not have preserved the Convent from ruin; but as it was usual to set forth some cogent reasons in cases of appropriation, this seems to have been the nature of the formula, for nearly the same arguments are adduced for the

appropriation of Hickfield, Hants, to New College, Oxford, A.D. 1383. See *Reg. Wykeham Episc. Winton, p. 1, f. 144.*

After the Bishop had received this petition, it was common for him to order an inquisition to be taken of the matter; and as the petitioners generally contrived to procure a report which echoed back their previous statement, the mandate was granted without difficulty. *Ap. Dunkin.*

fits which would otherwise accrue to the said Bishop in the successive vacancies of the Church; further directing, that the aforesaid Abbot and Convent should discharge the Church and Vicarage of all ordinary and extraordinary burdens, repair the Chancel and its windows, and find all books, vestments, lamps, incense, &c., necessary for the celebration of Divine Service, excepting the bread and wine for the sacrament of the Altar, which the Vicar himself was to furnish at his own expense¹.

On the surrender of the Abbey of Eynsham, this Parsonage became vested in the crown, and, with other conventual estates, was subsequently granted to Sir William Petre, one of the visitors employed by Cromwell to enquire into the government and behaviour of the votaries of both sexes, preparatory to the dissolution of religious houses, as a reward for those services. In the latter part of his life, Sir William conveyed all right and title therein, together with the appropriations and advowsons of the Churches of *Yarnton*, *Kiddlington*, and *Long Wittenham*, in the counties of Oxon and Bucks, to Exeter College, Oxford, where he had been educated².

Amidst the changes of religion, which took place in the reigns of Henry VIII., Edward VI., Mary, and her sister Elizabeth, John Jones contrived to retain his vicarage of Merton, and died in possession, A.D. 1559.—*Dunkin*, vol. ii. p. 15.

In the village is a manor house, a building erected by the Doyleys in the time of Queen Elizabeth, and for more than a century the chief residence of the Haringtons, their descendants by a female heir. The mansion faces the north, and is entered by a porch leading through a passage to the hall, beyond which is a large parlour, remaining in the same state as left by Sir James Harington, the last member of that family who owned the estate. It appears that little alteration has been effected on the northern side since its original construction; the greater part of the ancient staircase remains, as well as the upper apartments. The kitchen is also entire, and below is a large cellar arched, now used as a dairy. The south front of the mansion is said to have been originally in the form of a Roman L, and a long gallery ran along the upper part, while the ground floor was occupied by parlours, &c. This portion of the edifice is now demolished¹.

¹ *Dunkin*, vol. ii. p. 9, 10.

¹ *Dunkin*, vol. ii. p. 1, 2.

² *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 14, 15.



AMBROSDEN CHURCH FROM THE S.E.

AMBROSDEN.

PATRON,

SIR G. P. TURNER.

St. Mary.

DEANERY

OF BICESTER.

HUNDRED

OF BULLINGTON.

	FT.	IN.		FT.	IN.
Chancel	18	6	by	17	5
Nave	66	4	by	22	2
Aisle	68	7	by	11	7
Tower	16	0	by	15	1

THIS is a fine Church, mostly of the Early Decorated style, about the time of Edward II., with a Tower somewhat earlier. The effect of the south front is very striking, from the richness of the open parapet and cornice to the aisle and porch, and the buttresses with their niches.

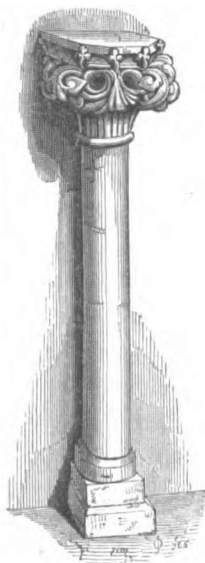
CHANCEL—Perpendicular, early in the style. East window, three lights; side windows, two lights. At the east end are two short pillar-brackets for images, one on each side the Altar, with Early English caps of stiff-leaf foliage.

Piscina—Perpendicular, on an octagon shaft.

The recesses of the north and south windows are continued below the lights, and stopped by a seat across.

Some encaustic tiles, but of very common patterns and common work.

Rood-arch—plain Perpendicular.



Pillar bracket. c. 1250.

NAVE—South side, four Decorated arches, pointed, recessed, chamfered; the labels consist of the roll moulding and small corbel heads.

Pillars—plain octagon, with Decorated caps, but only two are in their original state.

North side—windows originally Early Decorated, but Perpendicular tracery inserted; two lights with quatrefoils.

Font—Perpendicular, octagon, cup-shaped, with a quatrefoil in each face; the shaft plain.

Seats—mostly old, open, and good, but some square enclosed pews have been introduced, and a gallery-pew has been put in at the east end of the north side, against the Chancel-arch: and the upper part of this arch is cut off by a large beam, supporting a board having the Royal Arms painted on it: the Commandments &c., are painted on the wall by the side of the arch.

Roof—the original open timber roof remains, but is concealed by a plaster ceiling; there is a gallery at the west end, and the Tower-arch is plastered up.

At the west end is a curious oil painting of the Resurrection, said to be of the last century; it is painted on the wall and partly on the plaster partition under the Tower-arch.

Pulpit—plain and modern, of wood, standing on a stone shaft, plain Decorated.

South Aisle—windows plain, two lights, early Decorated, with quatrefoil in the head.

The exterior has a good open parapet of trefoils, with spaces open above, and closed below; and a cornice of good Decorated work, filled with a row of heads and ball flowers.

South door—plain Decorated, with a niche over it.

Buttresses—early Decorated, with niches.

Porch—Decorated, the same age as the aisle, and with a good open parapet of trefoils enclosed in circles.

On the north side is a small plain Norman door; the parapet on this side is plain, with bold hollow cornice.

The Turret for the Rood-loft staircase, on the north side, now used as stairs to a gallery pew.

TOWER—Early English, but late in the style, lower windows lancet, upper ones of two lights under one arch, closed in the head and divided by a shaft.

Parapet—battlemented, with a plain cornice.

Buttresses—on the north side, small, plain, and low, reaching only to the first story; on the south side, in three stages, to the second story.

The Parsonage House, a good old stone one, chiefly built by Dr. John Stubbing, in 1638, but its ancient character has been much spoiled lately by additions.

W.G.

HISTORICAL NOTICES.

The name of the earliest priest belonging to this parish which appears in any known record is William, who is found subscribing to a confirmation [A.D. 1106, 6th Henry I.] by Joan de Piddington, of the hermitage and chapel of St. Cross, at Muswell, to Missenden Abbey, which had been previously annexed to the same by Ralph the hermit^m.

A.D. 1283. Edmund Earl of Cornwall founded the first College for the order of the Bonhommes at Esserugge, Asherugge, now Ashridge, in the county of Bucks, to which this Church of Ambrosden was soon after impropriatedⁿ.

A.D. 1308. In the fifth year of Oliver Sutton, Bishop of Lincoln, Edmund Earl of Cornwall presented a Rector to the Church of Ambrosden^o. We may here observe, that Edmund Earl of Cornwall designed no part of the revenues of this Church of Ambrosden should be converted to the use of his new Convent, but he only trusts them with the presentation of a Clerk, on a charitable opinion that these good men would better execute the right of patronage, and more incorruptly provide an able incumbent. But too many guardians have embezzled

^m Dunkin, vol. i. p. 9. Mon. Ang.,
vol. iii. p. 18.

ⁿ Kennett, vol. i. p. 423, 4.

^o Rot. Ol. Sutton ep'i Linc. R. Dods.
MS. vol. cvii. f. 144. Kennett, vol. i.
p. 429.

a trust to their own proper use ; so these holy brethren, without any regard to the donor's intention, soon resolved the inheritance should be theirs, and therefore, purchasing a deed of gift from the Pope, (who, like the tempter in the wilderness, offered what he had no right to bestow,) they quickly made themselves the perpetual Rector. And indeed in this manner was the illegitimate birth of most impropriations ; the lay patrons devoutly (and as they thought innocently) resigned their right of presentations to religious houses, and they, by their interest and money, procured from the Popes an annexion of the tithes to themselves, with an arbitrary portion, or a poor settled reserve to a servant of theirs, whom they should call a Vicar^p.

A.D. 1334. The Bonhommes of the Convent of Ashrugge, to whom the presentation of this Church of Ambrosden was given by Edmund Earl of Cornwall, not content with the honour of patronage without the profit of the tithes, petitioned Pope Clement V. that he would authorize the appropriation of the said Church to their Convent, and effectually begged or bought the Pope's consent, given in letters missive, dated in this third year of his pontificate, and recited in the Bishop of Lincoln's licence, sub an. 1334. Thus at Rome began the sad abuse that yet wants a reformation^q.

During the time of this Vicar (Richard Hunt, admitted 1518) the suppression of religious houses took place, and their lands and livings were given to the King, who, in 1542, granted the patronage of this Church, by letters patent, to John Denton, Esq. The Vicar (Richard Hunt) died at Ambrosden, A.D. 1547^r.

The Vicarage of Ambrosden hath been much augmented by the purchase of a farm out of Queen Anne's Bounty at Arcott. Previous to the Reformation, this Church was included within the deanery of Cuddesdon, but at that period was attached to Bicester, where it now remains^s.

From the period of the dissolution of the Convent at Asherugge till the reign of Elizabeth, the Rectory of Ambrosden remained in possession of the crown ; but that Queen having despoiled the See of Oxford during its long vacancy of several of the best estates, to make some amends, bestowed on it the endowment of several impropriations, among which was the present Rectory, then rated at 18*l.* 12*s.* 11*d.* per annum^t.

^p Kennett, vol. i. p. 440.

^q Ibid., vol. i. p. 509.

^r Dunkin, vol. i. p. 15.

^s Dunkin, vol. i. p. 19.

^t Ibid., vol. i. p. 20.

BICESTER.

PATRON.

St. Cadburg.

SIR G. P. TURNER.

DEANERY

OF BICESTER.

HUNDRED

OF PLOUGHLEY.



South Porch, circa 1420.

	FT.	IN.		FT.	IN.
Chancel	39	0	by	17	0
Nave	82	0	by	28	0
Aisles	82	0	by	14	9

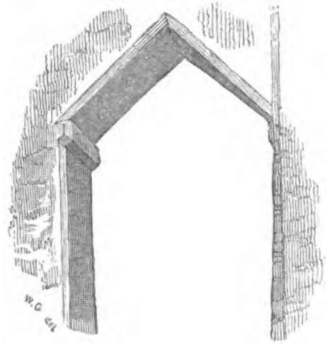
ORIGINALLY a Norman cruciform Church, with a central tower, now destroyed, and aisles added; the south in the thirteenth, the north in the fourteenth century; a western tower also added in the fifteenth.

CHANCEL—Has Norman walls and buttresses, with Decorated windows inserted, but the tracery of the east window has been cut out, and a modern semi-circular head turned on the outside; the mouldings of the jambs are Decorated: on the south side a Decorated window of two lights; on the north side a Decorated arch of wide span, originally opening into a chapel, now used as a school-room, and the arch plastered up.

Woodwork at the east end, very bad. On the north wall of the Chancel is an inscription on brass, to Roger Moore, 1551, and another in raised letters, to Will Stavely, and Alice his wife, 1498. A gilt helmet suspended as a funeral achievement.

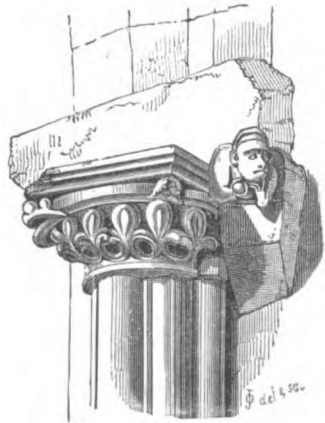
THE ROOD-ARCH, and two arches on the west side of it Early Norman, plain, square edged, not recessed.

On the north side, west of this first Norman arch, is a small straight-sided arch, in a slanting direction, partaking of the supposed Saxon character; the impost and the edges of the arch are chamfered.



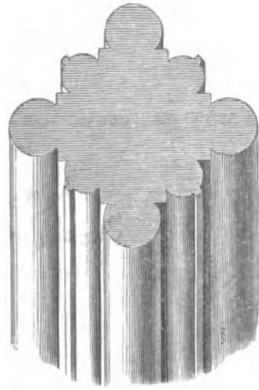
Supposed Saxon Arch in Nave.

NAVE—Has on the south side four Early English arches recessed, the inner arch chamfered; the outer has bold round mouldings, label, and corbel heads; the pillars are clustered; capitals have had the stiff-leaved foliage, now cut away, excepting on two in the south aisle, which are good, and part of the one by the pulpit. Against this pillar also are remains of a very elegant Decorated niche.



Capital, E. End of South Aisle, c. 1200

On the north side, three Decorated arches, not moulded, but recessed and chamfered, pillars octagon, with good Decorated cap mouldings. The Clerestory Perpendicular. The roof good, plain, open timber, Perpendicular. On the south wall of the Nave is some good Decorated sculpture, two square recessed panels, each with three small figures of Knights in armour, under foliated arches^u, and a female figure on a corbel, with a canopy over the head; a curious specimen.



Section of Pillar, S. side of Nave, c. 1200

Some original open seats remain, with plain bench ends. The stem of the pulpit is original oak, and good Perpendicular work. There are some fragments of screen-work. This Church is much spoiled by galleries, and by having the mullions and tracery of some of the windows cut out.

Font plain, polygonal, probably Early English.

SOUTH AISLE—Windows, some Decorated, and some Perpendicular, the tracery cut out.

A small, good, Perpendicular Piscina, with the label defaced.

South door, very good, Early English; mouldings of arch and caps perfect, the shafts gone: over this door another panel of sculpture.

NORTH AISLE—Decorated, with some good two-light windows. Near the west end of the wall in this aisle, is a piece of zigzag moulding, as a string-course, very perfect, shewing that the Norman Church extended to this part, and had no aisles.

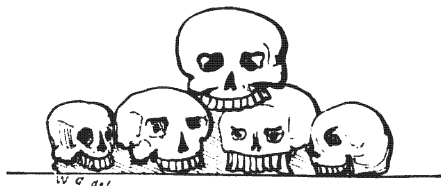
NORTH DOOR—Good plain Decorated. **PORCH**—Early Perpendicular, with a room over it.

TOWER—Perpendicular, with arch of the same date, now plastered up; west door and window plain, but good, very deeply recessed. Belfry windows, of two lights, with transoms. Parapet battlemented; pinnacles at the angles, panelled and

^u These are engraved by Skelton in his "Oxfordshire."

crocketed. This Tower bears so close a resemblance to that Islip, that they are probably the work of the same hand.

In the Chancel is a marble slab to the memory of the five children of Samuel Blackwell, sometime Vicar, carved with skulls in a very grotesque manner.



SAMUEL BLACKWELL S.T.B. HUIUS ECCLESIE VICARIUS
ET MARIA UXOR

FILIUS AC FILIABUS SUI
HIC IN PROXIMO SEPULTIS

SAMUELI	} NATIS	MAY 26, 1678.	} DENATIS	SEPT. 1, 1677.
SAMUELI		JAN. 4, 1678.		JAN. 31, 1678.
ELIZABETHÆ		APRIL 26, 1680.		FEB. 15, } 1681.
JOHANNI		APRIL 17, 1681.		FEB. 14, }
ELEANORÆ.		OCT. 21, 1683.		MART. 2, 1684.

PIETATIS CAUSA
MOERENTES POSUERE.

W.G.

HISTORICAL NOTICES.

In the reign of Edward the Confessor the manors of Burcester, Ambrosden, Stratton, Weston, and many adjoining villages were a part of the large estate of Wigod de Walengford, a noble thane, who kept his residence at the town from whence he had his title, where at this time were two hundred and seventy-six houses, of which a mint master had one free from all geld while he coined money; but at the general survey in the next reign thirteen of these houses were diminished, and eight had been demolished to make a castle^x.

A.D. 1066. 1 William the Conqueror.—Among the Normans who were engaged in this expedition, those who were soon after rewarded with lands in these parts were, first Robert de Oiley, to whom the King gave *in marriage* the estate of Wigod de Walengford, and two other honors, including Burcester, &c., &c.^y

A.D. 1073. Robert de Oily having now finished his castle in Oxford, built within the walls of it a chapel, dedicated to St. George, and established there a fraternity of secular priests, whom he endowed with several rights and possessions in these parts. He gave them the Churches of

^x Kennett, vol. i. p. 74. ^y Ibid., vol. i. p. 75. See account of Bucknell, p. 36.

Cudelinton, Weston, Cestreton, &c., with two parts of all the tithe of his demesne in Berencestre ^a.

A.D. 1084, 18, and 19, William the Conqueror.—Between the time of the survey taken in these parts and this year, Robert de Oilly married his only daughter Maud to Milo Crispin, who had before great possessions in the counties of Oxon and Bucks, and in right of this wife had now the custody of the castle and town of Walingford, with that whole honor, within which was included the manor of Berncestre ^a.

Before the end of the year 1107 this great baron Milo Crispin died without issue, upon which his own proper estate reverted to the crown, but the castle and whole honor of Walingford remained in right of birth to Maud his widow, who from hence was called Matildis Domina de Walengfort ^b.

It seems that during the time of Milo Crispin, seven knights fees of the honour of Walingford were granted to Gilbert Basset, a younger son of Ralph Basset, Chief-Justice of England, and amongst these fees are the villages of Bicester, Wretchwic, and Stratton, particularly specified A.D. 1107 ^c.

Gilbert Basset, in the year 1182, baron of Hedington, and lord of the manors of Burcester, Wrechwike, and Stratton, who had his mansion seat and park at Burcester, this year founded there a religious house for a Prior and eleven Canons of the Augustine order, dedicated to St. Edburg, with consent of Egeline, his wife, who, surviving her husband, and adding other benefactions, was reputed a co-founder ^d. Great part of the Priory seems to have been left standing for many years, but nothing can be said of its original form ^e.

How long these buildings remained in their original state after the dissolution is uncertain; the Monastery afterwards became the residence of the Blounts, and was



Remains of the Priory. 1842.

^a Kennett, vol. i. p. 81.

^a Ibid., vol. i. p. 94.

^b Mon. Ang. tom. i. p. 582, ap. Kennett, vol. i. p. 106.

^c Dunkin's History of Bicester, p. 151.

^d Kennett, vol. i. p. 185.

^e Dunkin, p. 81.

probably then of considerable extent, but the only part remaining is a house, now occupied by a Mr. Wilson, who rents the gardens, and is 41 feet in length and 16½ feet in breadth, one end of which forms a part of the boundary wall belonging to the Monastery^f.

Though we have no precise data for ascertaining the form or materials of the original Church of Bicester, recent discoveries have placed it beyond doubt that the present edifice has been constructed out of the remains of some former Church, built of stone, and decorated with carved ornaments^g.

Kennett states, that the present Church was built about the latter end of the fourteenth or fifteenth century, when the older structure was demolished^h.

In what way the sums necessary for building this fabric were raised, or who were the chief contributors of the undertaking, are points alike unknown. According to tradition, the Tower was originally intended to have been erected near the present Chancel, (and the massive thickness of the walls seems to countenance the statement,) but that the design was relinquished by the generous offer of the Vicar to build a tower at the west end at his own expense, which he afterwards carried into effect, and the present structure attests his taste and liberalityⁱ.

The presentation belonged to the lords of the manor till the foundation of the Monastery by Gilbert Basset, when the Church was conveyed by charter to the Prior and Canons, who henceforth became its patrons, and annexed it to the Priory^k.

It was formerly usual for many of the inhabitants to pay sums for rents &c. in the parish Church, or in and over the Church porch, and to lodge copies of their leases &c. in the parish chests, many of which still remain in those depositories. An indenture, stipulating payments as above, is given by Kennett, made 1352, 26, 27 Edward III., between Sir John Trymnel and Thomas de Panton and Camerona, his wife, for the conveyance of the enfeoffment of two cottages, with their appurtenances, which were held by John Spaygue and John de Langton, in Bicester, for the yearly rent of twenty-nine shillings sterling, to be paid in the parish Church on Sunday after the octaves of St. Michael.

^f Dunkin, p. 81.

^g Ibid., p. 48, 49.

^h Ibid., p. 49.

ⁱ Ibid., p. 50. There can be little doubt, from the existing remains, that there was

a tower at the intersection of the original Norman Church in the twelfth century. The present tower at the west end is of the fifteenth century.

^k Dunkin, p. 51.

In the Churchwardens' chest are also several leases of the estates given for charitable purposes, which expressly stipulate for the payment of rents on a certain day into the hands of Mr. John Coker in the room over the Church porch¹.

“Good wodds about sum partes of Burcester. There be goodly meddowes and pastures about Burcester. There is a commune market at Burcester every weke on a——day. There risyethe hard by Burcester a little broket passyng thrwghe a pece of the towne, and aftar thoroughe the Priory. It goithe a 4 miles of about Otmore into Charwell river.

The Bassets were Lords of this towne, after the Straunges, and now the Erle of Derby.

Sum say that Bassets had his mansion place where the comon pound is now in the midle of the towne.

Some say that Basset's Howse was where the late Priorie of Burcestre stode.

Gilberte Basset and Æglean Courtney, his wife, were originall foundars of the Priorie of Chanons in Burcester.

Æglean Courteney was buried in the Priorie of Burcester^m.”

¹ Dunkin, Appendix, p. 27

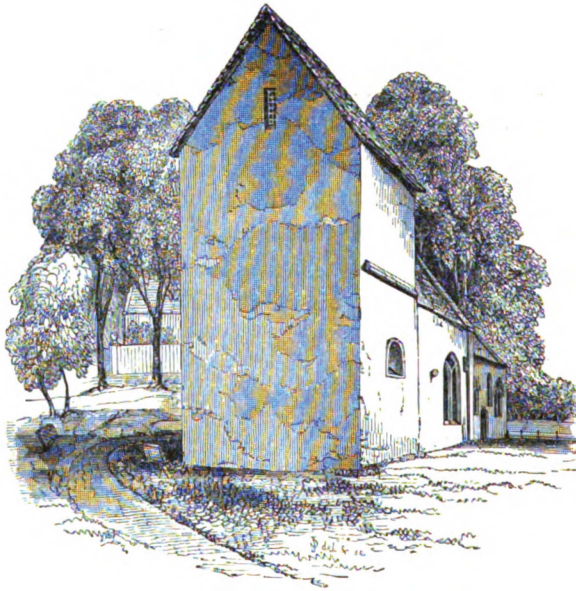
^m Leland's Itinerary, vol. vii. folio 7.

CAVERSFIELD.

PATRONS.
TRUSTEES OF
THE LATE
J. BULLOCK, ESQ.

St. Lawrence.

DEANERY
OF BICESTER.
COUNTY
OF BUCKS.



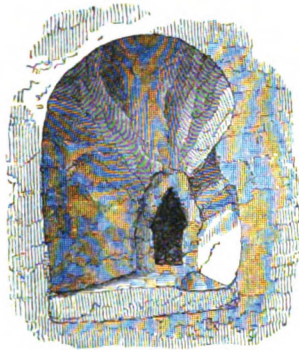
West View of Church.

	FT.	IN.		FT.	IN.
Chancel	29	6	by	13	9
Nave	30	0	by	13	9

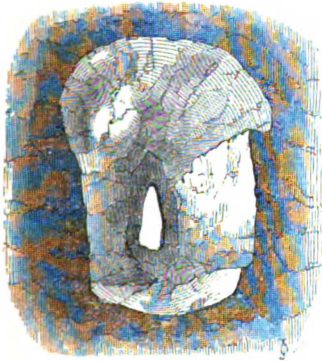
A SMALL Church or Chapel coated over with rough cast, having an antique appearance.

Plan—simple, oblong, without aisles.

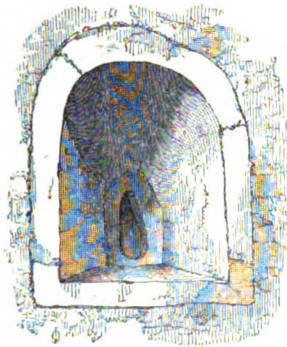
TOWER—at the west end, has a gable roof; no buttress; on the north and south sides a string-course of rude character. On the ground floor are small windows, of the character supposed to be Saxon, widely splayed outside and inside, with a very small opening in the middle of a very thick wall; that on the north side is blocked up outside and plastered over: on the east side is a round-headed arch also blocked up, and a Perpendicular door inserted under it. This arch has a plain dripstone, chamfered underneath, the imposts also chamfered under, resembling the usual early Norman impost or string-course. No windows in the upper part of the Tower, but a small square modern opening under the gable on the north side.



North Window.



South Window. Interior



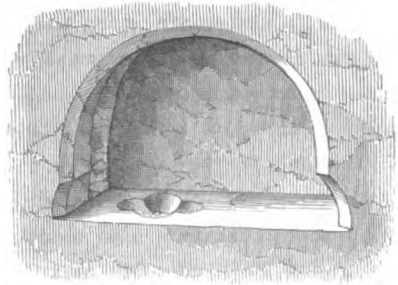
South Window. Exterior

NAVE—has, on the south side, two Early English arches, of early character, with good bold mouldings, and the tooth ornament. These arches are now filled up with masonry, an aisle having evidently been destroyed. On the north side, a good small Decorated window, of three lights, with flowing tracery.

Font Norman, round, with intersecting arcade round the upper part, of rude and early character.

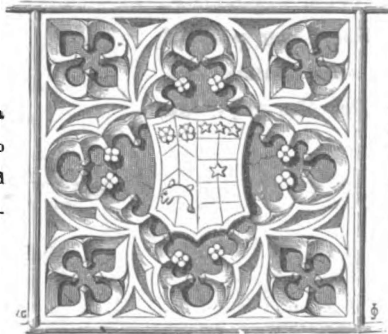
CHANCEL—east end, two lancet windows, cut off by a plaster ceiling. A plain Norman Piscina.

On the south side, a lancet window and a Decorated window, square-headed inside, and pointed outside; also a square-headed Perpendicular window.



Piscina in Chancel.

In the Chancel on the north side is a high tomb, commonly called an Altar-tomb, of the fifteenth century, with rich panels enclosing shields of arms, but all turned upside down.



LANGSTON : or, a chevron between two roses gules in chief; and in bases a dolphin ha-riant, saure.

Impaling DENTON, viz.: A mullet between two bars, in chief three estoils.

JOHN LANGSTON, Esq., who died ann. 1487, married Joan, daughter of John Denton.
—*Browne Willis, in History and Antiquities of Buckingham.*

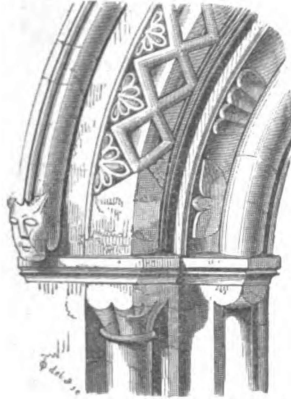
On the floor within the altar rails, a Brass, the inscription of which is gone: it has three scrolls with texts, proceeding from a heart held in a hand; a shield of arms under it. Another Brass, concealed under a modern pew, and a slab to Maximian Bond, Esq., 1690.

Chancel door, Early English, of the form called a square-headed trefoil.

Chancel-arch has parts of the Norman imposts remaining, partly cut away, and Perpendicular cap-mouldings inserted over them. Arch cut off by a plaster ceiling.

POUCH—Norman, the outer doorway has good late Norman mouldings, and shafts, with scolloped capitals. The inner doorway is plain Norman, the pillars supporting them are Transition from Norman.

I. H. P.



Mouldings and Capitals of Norman Doorway. North Porch.
circa 1180.

HISTORICAL NOTICES.

A.D. 1222. Within this year the Abbot of Missenden presented a Clerk to the Church of Kaversfeld (now Casefield) nigh Burcester, as also to the Church of Chalfhunt, county of Bucksⁿ.

Caversfield, in the hundred and deanery of Buckingham, lies about two miles from Bicester in Oxfordshire, wholly surrounded by that county. The Manor of this place having been seized by King Henry II., in consequence of its owner, Brien Fitz-Count, having entered into a religious order, was granted to Robert Gargate, whose family gave a part of it to the Prior and Convent of Bicester, partly under whom, and partly in their own right, it seems to have been held for many generations by the Langstons. After the dissolution of Monasteries, they became possessed of the whole, which passed by a female heir to the Moyles, and afterwards by successive purchases to the families of Davenport and Bard^o, and Joseph Bullock, Esq., through whose daughter, married to the Hon. and Rev. Jacob Marsham, it descended to the present worthy possessor, Robert Bullock Marsham, D.C.L., Warden of Merton College, Oxford.

ⁿ Kennett, vol. i. p. 285.

^o Lysons' Bucks, p. 534.

BUCKNELL.

PATRONS.
THE WARDEN AND
FELLOWS
OF NEW COLLEGE,
OXFORD.

St. Peter.

DEANERY
OF BICESTER.
HUNDRED
OF PLOUGHLEY.

	FT.	IN.		FT.	IN.
Chancel	35	6	by	19	6
Central Tower	18	0	by	15	0
Nave	48	0	by	21	6

THIS CHURCH is principally of the thirteenth century, with the tower of an earlier Church remaining in the centre, of very massive character. The Chancel is a fine specimen of the manner in which country Churches were built in the thirteenth century. The Nave is of the same age, but had a new Roof and Clerestory added in the fifteenth; a Clerestory without aisles is not a very common feature. Plan; oblong, without aisles.

The TOWER is placed between the Nave and Chancel, and is plain early Norman, with a Perpendicular story added on the top.

Of the Tower-arches, three are plain, round-headed, square-edged, not recessed. The west arch remains nearly in its original state, but the imposts are cut away. The north and south arches are filled up, having small early Norman windows under them; these are on the outer face of the wall, splayed widely within; the imposts of the arches remain. The east arch cut into a pointed one, recessed, chamfered, with dripstone; the chamfers die into the piers without any marked imposts.



TOWER OF BUCKNELL CHURCH

On the first floor of the Tower there is a small early Norman loop window, widely splayed within; on the second floor, Norman windows of two lights; the upper story has Perpendicular windows and battlement. On the north side of the Tower there is a very good early Norman stair-turret.

CHANCEL—good Early English, in nearly a perfect state, one window blocked up, and the roof plastered, but rounded and lofty: at the east end, three good lancet windows, with elegant shafts between them, supporting the arch mouldings, a very good design. Side windows, lancet, plain, but good; a low window on the north side at the west end, lancet outside, with square-headed opening inside. Neither Piscina nor Sedilia.

The Chancel has doors both on the north and south sides; that on the south side is very good Early English, that on the north side has been cut through at a much later period.

On the floor near the Altar, a Brass, to Edward Eure, Arm., 1638, with shields of arms, and inscription.

NAVE—west end, a lancet window, with shafts and mouldings very good inside and outside: the side windows all lancets.

Near the east end of the Nave on both sides, a low round arch in the wall with Early English imposts and labels; under each a window of unusually wide span, but with good Early English mouldings.

South door very bold and good Early English, with a peculiar moulding like broken sticks, unless parts are really broken off, which may be the case: the wooden door is modern, but the original iron hinges are preserved, and are very good. North door also good Early English.

Font, octagon, quite plain. Pulpit, carved oak, Elizabethan. Pews, modern deal, enclosed, very bad.

Clerestory—Perpendicular, square-headed two-light windows, evidently an addition to the original Church, and has a singular appearance, from the Church having no aisles.

Roof flat, plastered ceiling; the Perpendicular corbels and springers of the roof remain below the plaster ceiling.

HISTORICAL NOTICES.

This parish formed part of the estate of Wigod de Walengford in the time of Edward the Confessor ^p.

After the decisive battle near Hastings, the Conqueror carried his forces into Kent, and, marching back from thence, passed by London, possessed by the party of Edgar Atheling, and came to Walingford, where the lord of that town, Wigod de Walengford, went out to meet him ^q, delivered the town to him, and entertained him there, till Archbishop Stigand and many of the grandees of Edgar's faction came and offered their submission ^r. For which service and merit of the lord of that place, the victorious prince, in policy to ingratiate with the Saxons, and to reward his Normans, gave Aldith only daughter of the said Wigod in marriage to Robert de Oily, who, after her father's death, which happened nigh the same time, in right of her became possess of that great estate, wherein Burcester was, in the honor of Walingford, and Ambrosden in that honour which was after called S. Walery. From Walingford the Conqueror led his army through this part of the country with great spoil and mischief in his road to Bercamsted, at which place Prince Edgar, the Earls Edwin and Morcar, the Bishops of York, Worcester, Hereford ^s, &c., waited on Duke William, and resigning up all their interest, invited him to London, and on Christmas-day he was crowned at Westminster by Aldred Archbishop of York ^t.

In 1073, Robert d'Oily gave two parts of his tithe in this parish to the Chapel of St. George, in Oxford Castle, which he had founded ^u. In 1149, the whole foundation of this Chapel was transferred by Robert d'Oiley, nephew of the preceding, to Oseney Abbey ^x.

A.D. 1296. At the general taxation of ecclesiastical benefices and dignities, usually called Pope Nicholas's taxation, the Church of Bucknell was valued at £10^y (equal to about £200 of our money). This valuation originated in a grant of the tenth of all spiritualities for six years, to King Edward I., by the Pope, when the King, being desirous of raising all the money which he possibly could by the measure, caused a

^p Kennett, vol. i. p. 75.

^q Gul. Pict. Gest. Ducis Norman, p.

21. ap. Kennett, vol. i. p. 76.

^r Ibid., p. 285. ap. *ibid*.

^s Sim. Dun. p. 193. ap. Kennett, vol. i. p. 77.

^t Chron. Thos. Wilkes, ap. Kennett, vol. i. p. 77.

^u Kennett, vol. i. p. 81.

^x Ibid., vol. i. p. 141.

^y Taxatio Ecclesiast., P. Nicholai, p. 3. ap. Dunkin, vol. i. p. 185.

new valuation to be instituted, which in most cases rated them much higher than before. This created a general murmur among the Clergy, and some even refused to pay the tax. Among these was the Rector of Bucknell, whose Church had sustained an increase of rate to the amount of four marks per annum. This determination being made known to the Abbot of Oseney, the collector of this district, he complained to his diocesan, the Bishop of Lincoln, and the Rector persisting in his refusal, his Church was put under an interdict. Hereupon he sued the Abbot in the Spiritual Court; the Abbot appealed to the King, and a precept was directed to the Sheriff of Oxon, requiring him forthwith to attach the body of Ikel de Kerwent, and carry him before one of the Barons of the Exchequer to answer for the contempt and damage. In this court Ikel was convicted of detaining the King's dues; and the result was, the temporals of his living were seized, and put in the hands of John de Burey, Gilbert de Buckenhull, Chaplain, and nine others, who received the profits for two years, when the Rector submitted; and an order was issued for the restitution of his property, and the removal of the interdict from his Church, Anno 1298.—See *Maynard's ed. Mem. in Scacc.*, p. 38. London 1678, and *Prynne's Histor. Collect.*, vol. iii. p. 798.

In 1348, Sir Richard de Amory sold the advowson of this Church for one hundred marks to the Rector, William de Peecks, who the following year resigned his Living, and exercised the office of patron^a.

In 1350, William de Peecks [or Peeks] the patron, obtained full licence from Richard de Stuele and Milisent, his wife, of Great Barton, county of Oxon, to give the advowson of this Church, which he held from them, to the Abbot and *Convent of Oseney*, to hold for ever; upon which he passed a fine in the King's court, and made an absolute conveyance of his right of patronage to that community^a.

After the dissolution of that society, it was conveyed by indenture to the Warden and Fellows of New College, to whom it still appertains^b.

^a Dunkin, vol. i. p. 186. Kennett, vol. i. p. 186.
vol. ii. p. 95.

^b Dunkin, vol. i. p. 182.

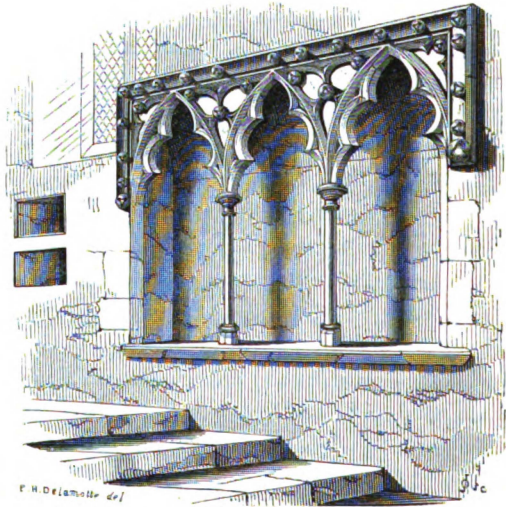
^a Par. Ant., vol. ii. p. 235. ap. Dunkin,

CHESTERTON.

PATRONAGE
OF
NEW COLLEGE,
OXFORD.

St. Mary.

DEANERY
OF BICESTER.
HUNDRED
OF PLOUGHLEY.



Sedilia, c. 1300

	FT.	IN.		FT.	IN.
Chancel	23	6	by	16	6
Nave	40	8	by	20	9
N. Aisle	37	9	by	10	10
S. Aisle	36	9	by	9	0
Tower	13	6	by	12	0

THIS CHURCH appears to have been built in the fourteenth century, but some parts of an earlier structure have been preserved, and are of about the end of the twelfth; some windows have also been inserted in the fifteenth. The Tower is a good

specimen of a simple country Church tower of the Decorated style. The Sedilia are also worthy of notice, as an elegant example of the earlier part of the fourteenth century.

Plan, oblong, with two aisles. Tower at the west end.

CHANCEL—East window Perpendicular, five lights with foliated heads, but no tracery, arch flat; south side, two good Decorated two-light windows, with flowing tracery.

SEDILIA—Early Decorated, three cinque-foiled arches, with a square label over them, with ball-flowers. In the spandrels a trefoil, also ornamented with ball-flowers. Piscina plain, square, with a shelf.

North wall, plain, with one small plain window.

Rood-arch, Early English, with shafts, which have good caps, with stiff-leaf foliage. Rood-screen tolerable, but plastered up above. Altar-rail handsome, time of James I.

NAVE—North side, three Transition Norman arches, pointed, plain, not recessed, but slightly chamfered, on round pillars, with Norman scalloped caps.

The south side, three Decorated pointed arches, larger and more lofty than those on the north side. The pillars plain, round, with cap-mouldings. South aisle, a square Decorated window at each end, two brackets, and the fragment of a Piscina at the east end. The side windows mostly square, Perpendicular, three-light; one a wide lancet, without foliation or tracery, but has a good Decorated dripstone. South door, plain Decorated. Clerestory of Nave, Decorated. Roof plain, open timber, resting on good Decorated corbels.

Font, plain round Norman.

TOWER—Decorated; the ground-floor has a Decorated window of two lights, with quatrefoil in the head, two small buttresses at each angle; the second story has no windows; the Belfry a Decorated window in each face; Parapet ornamented with quatrefoils.

In the Church-yard there is a fine yew tree.

I. H. P.

HISTORICAL NOTICES.

The Lincoln Register states this Church was consecrated by Bishop Grosteste (or Grosthead) in 1238^c, and dedicated to God and St. Mary^d.

In ancient times the authority of this Church extended over Great Chesterton, Little Chesterton, and Wendlebury, and consisted of two separate and distinct endowments under different patrons^e.

For some time subsequent to the Conquest, its history is the same with that of Bucknell. In 1238, at the consecration of this Church by Robert Grosthead, Sir Roger de Gunelade, Knight, gave towards its better endowment one acre of land at Fundeshulle, and an acre upon Ruggé: at the same time, William, son of Fulk de Chesterton, for the soul of Denise his wife, and Agnes his daughter, gave to the said Church, for endowment, part of a meadow which belonged to his fee in Blackmore. Bardulf, son of Roger Bardulf, for the health of his own soul, and the health of the souls of his father and mother, and the souls of his ancestors, also gave three acres of arable land of his demesne lying between Wadewell and Small Weye; and for a further endowment, gave for a mansion-house for the incumbent one messuage and a croft belonging to it, which Ralph the miller held, as well as his whole meadow in demesne in Blakemore, and confirmed to the said Church the gift of his tenants of their right of common in Blakemore, which was his fee^f.

A.D. 1263, 47, 48 Henry III. This year, the Convent of Oseney, not satisfied with the bare right of patronage to the Churches of Chesterton, Weston, and others, prevailed upon Richard de Gravesend, Bishop of Lincoln, to issue a letter of appropriation^g.

Shortly after, the Abbot and Convent of Oseney appear to have con-

^c Skelton's Oxfordshire, Ploughley Hundred, p. 3; and Kennett, vol. i. p. 312.

^d This date does not agree with the present Church (except the Chancel-arch), but many Churches were consecrated about this time, in consequence of a general order, although some of them had been built long before, and others, as in the present instance, have been subsequently rebuilt.

^e Dunkin, vol. i. p. 248.

^f Reg. Osen., p. 101 and 62. No Church

could be legally consecrated without such allotment of house and glebe, generally made by the lord of the manor, who thereby became patron of the Church. Other persons, at the time of dedication, often contributed small portions of ground, which is the reason why in many parishes the glebe is not only distant from the manor, but is in remote divided parcels.— Kennett, vol. i. p. 314.

^g Regist. Osen., fol. 32. ap. Dunkin, vol. i. p. 251.

veyed their interest in this Church to the lord of the manor, for no more entries of their presentation occur in Hutton's Collections in the Harleian Library; but among Dodsworth's Extracts from the Lincoln Register (vol. cvii. p. 119, in Bodl. Lib. Oxon.) is a memorandum dated 16th Richard de Gravesend, stating, that in a recent trial at law William de Leslie had recovered the right of presentation to the Church of Chesterton against John le Bret, and then conveyed his full right of patronage to Edmund Earl of Cornwall.

1283. On the foundation of the College of Bonhommes, the above-mentioned Edmund Earl of Cornwall gave the advowson of this Church, with the manor, towards its endowment; and that religious community accordingly became patrons, and presented till the dissolution.

1403. This year the Convent of Asherugge procured the appropriation of the Church and the ordination of a Vicarage^h. By this instrument, the former allowances to the Vicar were abrogated; and instead thereof the ancient Rectory-house, with its appurtenances, and four virgates of land, containing one hundred and thirty-two acres, and sixteen acres of meadow, together with other small parcels, formerly pertaining to the Rectory; the altar-offerings, small-tithe, an annual pension of 6s. 8d., due from the Church of Wendlebury (in token of subjection), and the trees and fruit growing in the Church-yard, were secured to him: but in consideration of these advantages, he was required to discharge all procurations, synodals, and other ecclesiastical dues, repair and beautify the Rectory-house and Chancel, and his next heir to pay heriot at his decease to the Rector and Convent of Asherugge, the patrons.

In 1539, the Rector and Convent of Asherugge surrendered their house, lands, and all other possessions, into the hands of the King^l, who authorized Master William Day and Richard Andrew to present Jacob Fell to the Church of Chesterton (on the death of William Ellye), June 25, A.D. 1544^k; and in the thirty-eighth year of his reign he granted the Rectory of the same Church, with all its appurtenances, by Letters Patent, to Richard Longe and Christopher Edmonds, on condition of rendering to the King, his heirs and successors, the sum of sixteen shillings per annum, payable at Michaelmas only^l. Soon after which it was conveyed to the Warden and Society of New College, Oxford, who are now the patrons^m.

^h Dunkin, vol. i. p. 251, 252.

^k Reg. Episc. Oxon. vol. i. ap. Dunk.

^l Vide Willis's Abbeyes, vol. ii. p. 9. ap.

^l Rot. 27, No. 244, Co. Oxon. ap. Dunk.

Dunk.

^m Dunkin, vol. i. p. 253, 254.

WENDLEBURY.

St. Giles.

PATRONAGE
OF
CHRIST CHURCH,
OXFORD.

DEANERY
OF BICESTER.
HUNDRED
OF PLOUGHLEY.

THE former Church of Wendlebury, the *Tower* only of which now remains, was originally cruciform, and was doubtless an interesting structure : falling however into decay, it was taken down in March 1761, and rebuilt so as to be fit for service by the 25th of April, 1762 ⁿ.

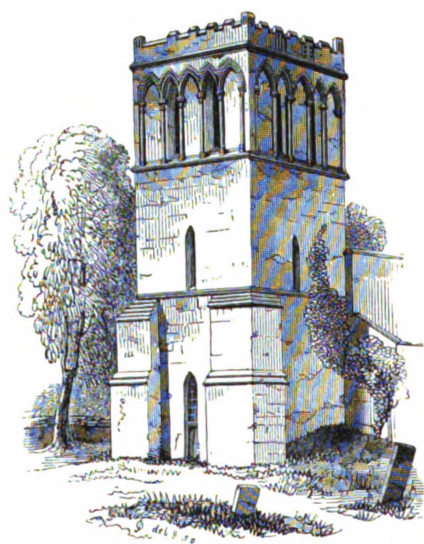
HISTORICAL NOTICES.

The Church of Wendlebury was originally a chapel of ease to the adjoining Church of Chesterton, but after its separation and endowment paid annually 6s. 8d. in token of subjection. This sum, at the ordination of the Vicarage of Chesterton, was reserved to the Vicar, and formed a part of his revenues. The actual time of separation is unknown, though it probably took place in the twelfth century ^o.

The scite of the Roman station or city of Alchester is now a part of the field belonging to this parish ; the ruins are still apparent on the eastern bank of a small rivulet which crosses the Bicester turnpike road about half a mile from Wendlebury. For a full account of this Roman station and the road leading from it over Otnoor, and by Beckley over Bullington Green, and by Baldon to Dorchester, see an interesting memoir by the Rev. R. Hussey, published by the Ashmolean Society, in 1841. For a history of the Lordship of Wendlebury and lands therein, see Dunkin, vol. ii. p. 186—197.

ⁿ Skelton's Oxfordshire, Ploughley Hundred, p. 8.

^o Dunkin, vol. ii. p. 180.



TOWER OF MIDDLETON STONEY CHURCH. c. 1220.

MIDDLETON STONEY.

PATRON.
BISHOP OF
LINCOLN.

All Saints.

DEANERY
OF BICESTER.
HUNDRED
OF PLOUGHLEY.

	FT.	IN.		FT.	IN.
Chancel	33	6	by	17	3
Nave	40	0	by	20	0
North Aisle	40	0	by	9	4
South Aisle	40	0	by	8	8

A good small Church, chiefly of the end of the twelfth century, in the period of transition from the Norman to the Early English styles.

NAVE—the north side has three pointed arches, recessed; outer arch square-edged, with Early English label over it; inner arch has round mouldings on the edges; pillars plain round, with Norman caps.

On the south side are two Decorated arches, recessed, chamfered edges, with labels springing from a corbel head in the centre: the western arch springing from a grotesque head, the other plain square-edged, without any particular character.

CHANCEL—east window has Decorated mouldings on the jambs, tracery cut out, and a plain upright bar substituted. The south side has two Decorated windows; on the north side there is one Norman window; on this side of the Chancel is a modern sepulchral chapel of the Jersey family.

Chancel-arch good Transition, pointed, recessed; outer arch square-edged with label over it; shaft, round, with a Norman

cap; inner arch has round mouldings on each edge, and the tooth-ornament boldly and well cut in the hollow moulding between them.

Clerestory windows Perpendicular; roof has a flat plaster ceiling, both in Nave and Chancel.

TOWER, a very good specimen of Early English, with a fine Early English arcade running round it.

North door, round-headed, though having Early English mouldings and capitals, with Norman abacus, evidently Transition work. Font, modern, of marble. Windows of aisles, Perpendicular, square-headed.

SOUTH PORCH, Transition Norman. Outer doorway Early English; inner doorway rich, late Norman, with varieties of the zig-zag moulding, and singular foliage in the head.



SOUTH DOORWAY. c. 1150.

Near the east end of the Church are the interesting traces of an ancient Castle, supposed to have been built in the reign of King Stephen by Richard Camvil on the site of a Saxon military work ^p.

W.G.

^p Skelton's Oxfordshire, Ploughley Hundred, p. 6.

HISTORICAL NOTICES.

The Village and Castle of Middleton in Oxfordshire, is two miles by west from Burchester. The Castle stode hard by the Church. Sum peces of the walls of it yet a little apeare ; but almoast the whole site of it is overgrowne with bushys ^q.

In Doomesday book, Middleton is thus entered, as the property of William Earl of Warren, a valiant Norman nobleman, who came over with the Conqueror, and obtained one hundred and nine lordships in Norfolk, besides many others in Yorkshire, Shropshire, &c. &c. His feudatory vassal was Roger, perhaps the ancient Saxon proprietor ^r.

The village was subsequently possessed by Gerard de Camvill, and at his decease passed to his son Richard, a faithful adherent of King Stephen, who is generally supposed to have built and garrisoned a stately castle on or near the scite of a military work, originally designed for the protection of the West-Saxon kingdom. The strength of the new fortress is believed to have preserved this neighbourhood from those scenes of war and desolation which afflicted almost every other corner of the kingdom during the greater part of this monarch's reign. And when at last the principal chieftains, tired of rapine, mutually agreed to settle their disputes by treaty, our Baron cheerfully signed the instrument which guaranteed the crown to Stephen during his natural life, but secured the succession to Prince Henry on his decease. That part of the engagement, however, which doomed Middleton Castle to destruction, seems to have been cautiously evaded, as it continued to be the residence of this nobleman's posterity several generations afterwards. On the accession of the new Monarch, Richard Camvil was constituted sheriff of Oxon and Berks for the first two years of his reign, and received a grant of the lordship of Sutton in the county of Northampton ; but he had only enjoyed this acquisition two years when he was arrested by the hand of death, and called to give up his final account. This event happened A.D. 1157 ^s. From the well-known piety of this Baron, and the general features of the architecture of Middleton Church, there is good reason to believe that edifice was built by his directions about the same time with the Castle. He also founded Combe Abbey in Warwickshire for the Cistertians ^t, gave two hides of land at Goding-

^q Leland's Itinerary, vol. vii. fol. 9. p. 4.

^r Dunkin, vol. ii. p. 67.

^s Par. Ant., vol. i. p. 158. ap. Dunk.

^t Dugd. Warwick., p. 145. ap. Dunk.

ton to Missenden^u Abbey, and the Chapel of Leigh, county of Oxon, with two virgates of land within the same parish, to the Convent of Reading, for the health and safety of himself, Milisent his wife, Robert his son, and Robert Marmion, and for all their souls, that they might partake of all the special benefits of the brethren of that house ^x.

The advowson of the Church of Middleton was granted to the Abbey of Barlings, county Lincoln, by Gerard de Camvill, the lord of the village temp. Richard I., who thereby became patrons. The first Rector was Gervase de Paveby, in 1217. He was presented to the Church by the Bishop, at the petition of William Longspe and the Abbot of Barlings, between whom a dispute had arisen respecting their title to the advowson ^y.

In 1334, the King, Edward III., grants licence to the Abbot and Convent of Barlings to convey the advowson of this Church to Henry, Bishop of Lincoln, and his successors; and on the 17th Kal. June the same year, on the death of the Rector, the Bishop collated Palmer Francis de Florentia ^z.

In 1816 an Act of Parliament was procured to enable the Earl of Jersey to remove the parsonage-house from the immediate vicinity of his park, to some higher ground near the entrance of the town, and add the scite, as well as some adjacent land, to his demesne: this he has since effected, and thereby enclosed the parish Church and cemetery within the park.

The scite of the Rectory, lands, meadows, and closes situated on the east and west sides of the ancient road leading from Oxford to Middleton conveyed to Earl Jersey, contained seventy-two acres, three roods, fourteen poles, and were worth £106 13s. 5d. per annum: while those which the Rector received in exchange comprised one hundred and six acres, one rood, and fifteen poles, and were of the yearly value of £125 14s. 8d, besides the new Parsonage ^a.

^u Regist. de Messend., p. 129. b. ap. Dunk. vol. ii. p. 63.

^x Regist. Cart. Abbatiss de Reading, c. 196. ap. Dunkin, vol. ii. p. 108, 9.

^y Pat. 8th Edward III. dated 4th March Reg. Burgwersh. ap. Dunkin, vol. ii. p. 63.

^z Private Acts, 56 George III. cap.

^y Rot. 9. Hugh Wells, ap. Dunkin,

39. ap. Dunkin, vol. ii. p. 57, 58.

WESTON ON THE GREEN.

PATRON.
THE EARL OF
ABINGDON.

St. Mary.

DEANERY
OF BICESTER.
HUNDRED
OF PLOUGHLEY.

THE former Church of Weston being dilapidated, a *Grecian structure* was in 1748 erected upon its site at the sole expense of Norreys Bertie, Esq., who died in 1766^b.

HISTORICAL NOTICES.

That a Church existed in this village a few years after the Conquest, is evident from the name of "Wakelin, priest of Weston," appearing among the witnesses to a charter of Henry de Oilley, granting four hides of land in Chesterton to the Abbey in Eynsham, temp. Henry II. ; and that the advowson of the Church was also included in the grant of the manor to Oseney Abbey, A.D. 1226, is equally clear, from the Convent exercising the office of patrons from that time^c.

For some interesting particulars respecting the manor of Weston, and its connection with Oseney Abbey, see Dunkin, vol. ii. pp. 206—216.

At a short distance from the Church is the Manor House, a large building, two stories in height, erected about the latter end of the sixteenth century, but much altered by its successive owners of the Norreys and Bertie families. Of late years it has been the residence of the steward only. Many of the family pictures remain^d.

^b Skelton's Oxfordshire, Ploughley Hundred, p. 8.

^c Dunkin, vol. ii. p. 203.

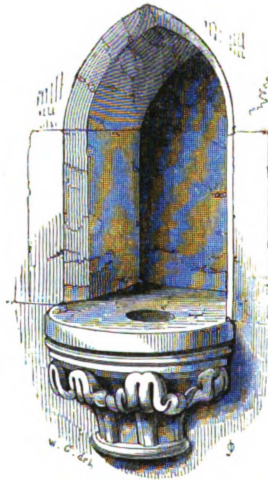
^d *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 198.

KIRTLINGTON.

St. Mary.

PATRONAGE
OF
ST. JOHN'S COLL.
OXFORD.

DEANERY
OF BICESTER,
HUNDRED
OF PLOUGHLEY.



Piscina. East End of South Aisle, circa 1220.

	FT.	IN.		FT.	IN.
Chancel	35	0	by	18	0
Central Tower . . .	18	6	by	18	6
Nave	48	0	by	25	0
North Aisle	48	0	by	9	0
South Aisle	66	0	by	11	6

CHANCEL—Norman, with Decorated east window. Side windows Norman, long and narrow. East window very plain, of five lights, mullions crossing in the head without foliage. Arches of Tower, east and west, early Norman, plain, square-edged, not

recessed with Norman impost. North arch also Norman, filled up. South arch, Decorated. Groined Norman ceiling, with open circle in centre.

Tower itself destroyed, bells stand on the floor.

NAVE—has three Early English arches on each side, pointed, recessed, chamfered, with good labels; capitals on south side have stiff-leaf foliage; north side have plain cap-mouldings. Clerestory and roof Perpendicular. Side windows, square, plain. At the east end of the south aisle a small good Early English Piscina, with foliage under. South door, plain Decorated. West door and window, plain Decorated. South porch, Perpendicular.

On the north side a sash window. At the east end corbie steps ornamented with pinnacles at the angles.

At the east end of the south aisle is the burial-place of the Dashwood family.

Pews and seats all high, modern, and bad. Galleries erected by Sir Robert Dashwood in 1726, very bad. Pulpit probably of the same age.

This Church is very much spoiled on the outside by rough-cast, and inside by the galleries and pews.

HISTORICAL NOTICES.

In 977 a great Synod or Council was held at Kirtlington in this county (Oxon), which had been a place of great eminence and antiquity, a frontier town between the kingdoms of Mercia and the West Saxons, and of great resort from the port-way that led through it, and had a very ancient Church dedicated to St. Mary^e. There has been much doubt and controversy about the name and situation of this place of council^f.

Bishop Kennett thus sums up the reasons for believing this to have

^c Mon. Ang., tom. ii. p. 1007.

^f Kennett, vol. i. p. 58, 59.

been the place. "In short, from the continual preserved name^s, from the commodious situation, from all circumstances thereto agreeing, I think it most certain that this micle gemot, this great Synod, was held at Kirtlington, within three miles of Burcester^h."

At the Norman conquest this village fell to the lot of William, Earl of Warrenⁱ.

A. D. 1201, 2 and 3 K. John. Gilbert Basset, lord of Burchester, nigh this time provided that his body should be buried in the Priory of Burcester of his own foundation; and to that end gave to those Monks all the land which he had bought of Baldwin de Munz in the village of Kirtlington, as also two mills in Kirtlington, paying yearly to the Monks of Aulney in Normandy eleven shillings, and to the heirs of Ingeram two shillings, for all service^k.

An. 1271. Philip Basset died possessed of the manors of Kertlington, Chefield, and Hunington, County of Oxford^l, which, with the manors of Haselee, Ascote, and Peryton, passed to Roger de Bigod, Earl of Norfolk, and Mareschal of England, who had married Aliva, the sole daughter and heir of the said Philip Basset^m.

^s "In the Saxon Chronicle it is called Kÿntlungtune, which the expert editor (Gibson. locorum explicatio) grants to be a mistake for Kÿpplungtune, as Spelman does record it. (Concil. Brit. tom. i. p. 493.)"—Kennett, vol. i. p. 59.

^h Kennett, vol. i. p. 60.

ⁱ Ibid., vol. i. p. 76.

^k Ibid., vol. i. p. 225.

^l Dugd. Bar., tom. i. p. 385.

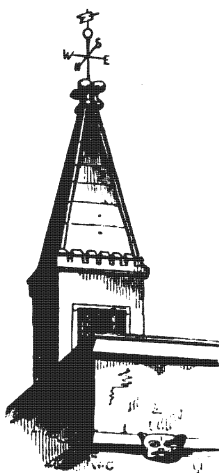
^m R. Dods. MS., vol. lxxxii. f. 10. b.; ap. Kennett, vol. i. p. 387.

BLECHINGDON.

PATRONAGE
OF
QUEEN'S COLLEGE,
OXFORD.

St. Giles.

DEANERY
OF BICESTER.
HUNDRED
OF PLOUGHLEY.



Spire-Turret on the Tower, circa 1600.

	FT.	IN.		FT.	IN.
Chancel	29	0	by	17	6
Nave	52	6	by	22	0

CHANCEL—late and bad. Communion-table has the slab detached.

South door, good Perpendicular, dripstone has particularly good returns. Interior, quite plain, plaster ceilings. Open seats, with poppies and scroll-work of the time of James I.

Pulpit good old oak, James I. Font, very small plain octagon. A square gallery-pew, battlemented.

POUCH—tolerably good of its kind, 1695.

TOWER—Perpendicular, with a square turret, surmounted by a pyramid, rising from the middle of the west side of the tower, and serving as a small spire: west door, Perpendicular.

W.G.

HISTORICAL NOTICES.

In the parish of Blechingdon is dug a sort of grey marble used for chimney-pieces, pavements, &c. The pillars of the porticoes of St. John's College, Oxford, are built with it; also chimney-pieces at Blechingdon Park, at Cornbury Park, and other houses in the neighbourhood^a.

The early history of this parish being nearly identical with that of Ambrosden, Bucknell, &c., it is not necessary to repeat it here.

A.D. 1339, 13 and 14 of Edward III.—An inquisition was taken in these parts on the death of Joan, widow of Thomas de Musegrave of Blechesdon, wherein it appears that the said Joan held the moiety of one messuage and one caracute of land in Blechesdon of the King, by the service of carrying one shield of brawn, price twopence halfpenny, to the King whenever he should hunt in his park of Cornbury; it being understood that one shield of brawn so carried to the King on his first day of hunting, should suffice during the whole of his stay at his manor of Wodestocke^o.

^a Magna Britannia, p. 401.

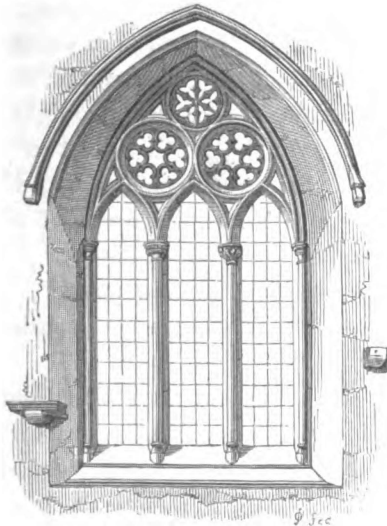
^o Kennett, vol. ii. p. 73, 74.

HAMPTON POYLE.

PATRONAGE
OF
QUEEN'S COLLEGE,
OXFORD.

The Virgin Mary.

DEANERY
OF BICESTER.
HUNDRED
OF PLOUGHLEY.



East Window, circa 1270.

	FT.	IN.		FT.	IN.
Chancel	20	0	by	12	0
Nave	31	10	by	17	0
Aisles	31	10	by	9	6

A SMALL oblong Church, with aisles to Nave, and bell-turret at the west end.

CHANCEL—East window, remarkably good Early English, very late in the style, and transition to Decorated; of three lights with

three circles in the head, filled up with tracery in a sort of star form, leaving trefoils in each opening. The mullions have shafts on the edge inside, with Early English caps; one has the tooth-ornament, another is sculptured foliage, the dripstone terminated by masks.

A plain bracket on the north side, with Decorated mouldings on face; on the south side, one quite plain.

South door of Chancel, small plain Decorated, with dripstone and corbel heads. Windows on this side blocked up.

On the north side, a Perpendicular tall square-headed window, has the symbols of the four Evangelists in stained glass.

Chancel-arch, Decorated, pointed, recessed, chamfered.

NAVE—West window, Decorated two-light, with flowing tracery—very good. On the north side, two pointed arches, recessed, chamfered; pillar, plain octagon, with the capital ornamented with half-length figures, the heads of which have close round helmets; abacus, the roll-moulding.

South side, two Decorated arches, pointed, recessed, chamfered, divided by a flat pier, the imposts consisting of a plain bold roll-moulding.

NORTH AISLE—East window, transition from Decorated to Perpendicular, dripstone Perpendicular, but corbel heads more like Decorated. North windows square-headed, tracery good transition from Decorated to Perpendicular; one has a Decorated dripstone, the other a Perpendicular. In this aisle a fine Perpendicular sepulchral recess, with ogee canopy, crockets, and finials, and panelling over it, under a square label: a curious little Decorated Piscina, in the form of a hand supporting a small basin.

Font, plain round, with octagon base.

SOUTH AISLE—East window has a Decorated dripstone, three lights, mullions crossing in the head very clumsy. The south window and door modern. In this aisle lie two fine monumental effigies, separated from their tombs, of a knight in plate armour, cross-legged, and his lady; also a brass of John Poyle, Oct. 21st, 1434, and Elizabeth his wife.

The Roofs, both of nave and aisles, are Perpendicular, good open timber work.

Pews, modern, high and bad ; but old open seats, with carved ends of a great variety of patterns, remain under them, being built upon ; these might easily be restored.

HISTORICAL NOTICES.

For a long account of this Church, see "Gentleman's Magazine," 1806, p. 524.

In the 51st and 52nd of Henry III., 1267, Stephen de Hampton held half a knight's fee in Burcester, who died this year, and left Alice, his daughter and heir, fifteen years of age, married to Walter de la Poyle, which family gave name to Hampton Poyle^p.

In the year 1420, Robert Jordan, priest, was presented by John de la Poyle to the Church of Hampton Poyle, void by the death of R. Thorpe, the last Rector. In 1466, Ric. Colyns, A.M., was presented by Sir Edmund Rede, Knight, and Catherine his wife, lady of Hampton Poyle, to this Church, void by the death of Rob. Jordan^q.

^p R. Dods. MS., vol. xl. p. 107. ^q Kennett, vol. ii. p. 242.
ap. Kennett, vol. i. p. 376.



circa 1300.

HAMPTON GAY.

THE present Church is modern, and a very bad specimen of the meeting-house style, which prevailed in the early part of the present century.

Near this Church is a good Elizabethan house, of the usual ground plan, two gables, and a recess, with a porch projecting in the centre: some handsome chimney-pieces remain, and several of the rooms appear to be nearly in their original state, though much dilapidated. It is at present only partially occupied by the superintendant of the adjoining paper-mill, belonging to C. Venables, Esq.

HISTORICAL NOTICES.

The Church of Chesterton, with those of Weston and Hampton Gay, &c., had been appropriated to the Abbey of Oseney, by Richard, Bishop of Lincoln, in 1263. The said Church of Hampton Gay had been appropriated by the patron, Robert Gait, in the time of Hugh, the second Bishop of Lincoln, by letters of request to the said Diocesan^r.

1140. 5th and 6th King Stephen.—Nigh this time Sir Robert de Gait gave to the Abbey of Oseney his Church of Hampton Gay by charter, to which were witnesses Henry de Oily and Robert his brother. He married Maud de Povre, and afterward, by consent of the said Maud his wife, and of Philip and Robert his sons, he confirmed the Church, and gave the manor of Hampton to the said Monks of Oseney; who in consideration thereof, gave ten marks of silver to the said Robert, one bezantine to his wife, and a horse to his son Philip, who confirmed his father's donation in the 3rd of Henry III.^s

A.D. 1138.—Sir Robert Gait, Knight, lord of the manor of Hampton, thence called Hampton Gait, now Hampton Gay, possessed a fourth part of the village of Ottendun; and going to Gilbert, Abbot of Waverlie, he desired and obtained leave to build an Abbey of the Cistercian Order in the said village of Ottendun, which accordingly he raised at his own charge, and endowed it with five virgates of lands, which made the fourth part of a Knight's fee, and called it from the name of an adjoining wood, Ottelei^t.

^r Kennett, vol. i. p. 579.

^s Ibid., vol. i. p. 132.

^t R. Dods. MS., vol. cxliii. f. 41. et

Mon. Ang., tom. ii. p. 802; ap. Kennett, vol. i. p. 126, 127.

