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Cambridge Antiquarian Society,

OCTOBER 28, 1889, TO MAY 19, 1890.

WITH

Communications

MADE TO THE SOCIETY.

No. XXXII.

BEING No. 2 OF THE SEVENTH VOLUME.

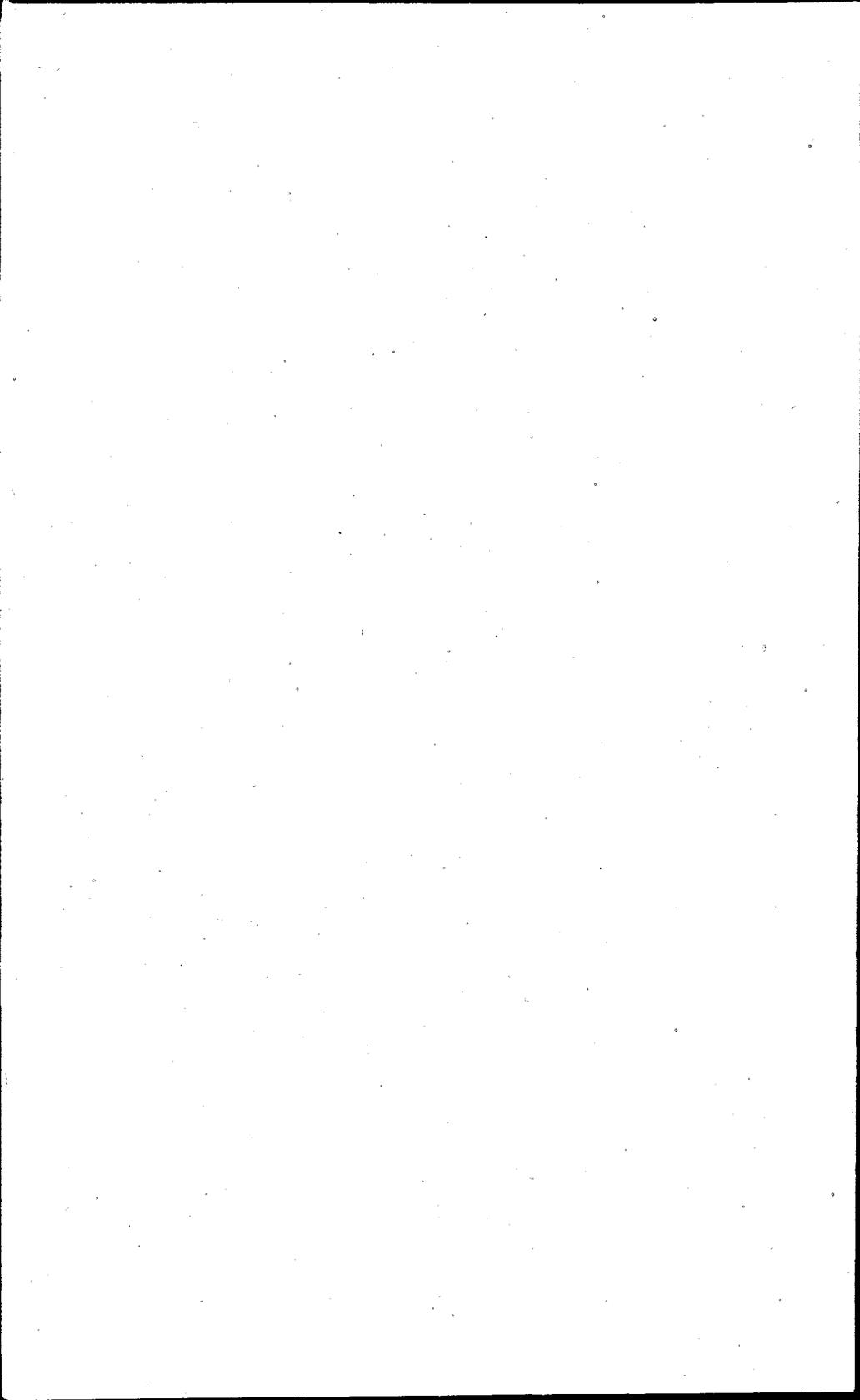
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The Rev. W. H. SHIMIELD, Rector of Wendy, Cambridge-shire, made the following communication:

ON SHENGAY AND ITS PRECEPTORY.

ABOUT half a mile westward from the small village of Wendy, on the road to Guilden Morden, and in the pleasant pastures of Shengay, may be seen the site of a once celebrated Preceptory of the Knights of St John of Jerusalem. Though

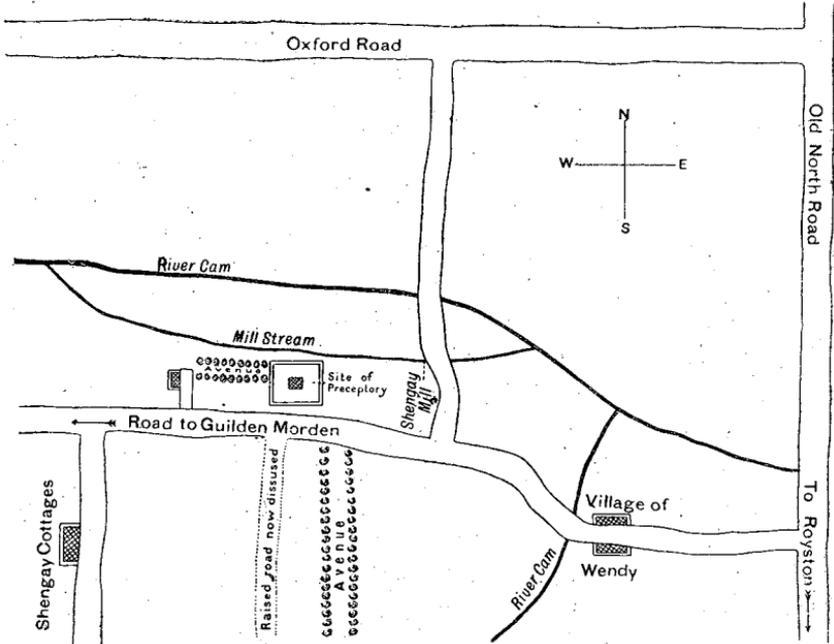


FIG. 1. Rough plan of Shengay and its neighbourhood.

it must have been an establishment of large dimensions, as it was certainly of great ecclesiastical importance, no traces of its buildings now remain, nothing is left to testify to its existence but the dry moat which surrounds the site, the inequalities of the ground caused by the removal of the foundations, and the avenues of trees which mark the former approaches to it. The moat encloses a grassy space about 200 yards square, and was probably fed by the stream which has been diverted from the Cam, and runs close past the site, on the north side of it (Figs. 1, 2).

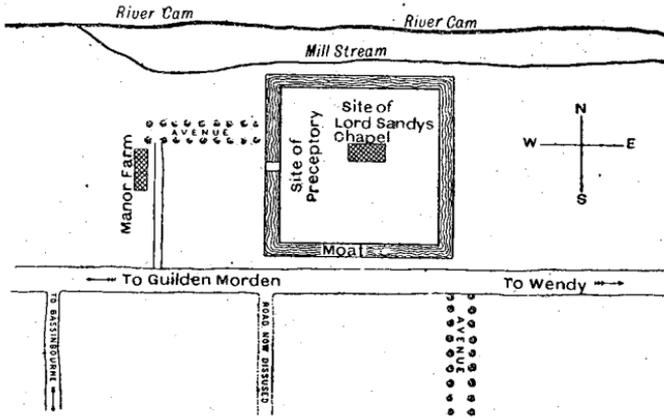


FIG. 2. Shengay: Site of Preceptory.

Though Shengay retains some of its ancient ecclesiastical prestige in giving its name to a Rural Deanery in the Arch-deaconry of Ely, it has now neither church nor chapel nor burial-ground, and no ecclesiastical revenues whatever. It has practically been disestablished and disendowed, and its people are left to the voluntary ministrations of the Rector of Wendy.

After several years' search and enquiry, I have been unable to discover any record of the architectural features of the Preceptory Buildings, and I can only suppose that they were on the same plan as the other Hospitals of the Order built at the

same period in other parts of England. Apologizing, therefore, for the poverty of the material for this paper, I will ask your indulgence while I lay before you, chronologically, the various scraps of information I have been able to collect from various sources.

Dugdale, enumerating the possessions of Algar, Earl of Mercia, has the following passage:

“Of the Lands which this Earl *Algar* did possess in King *Edward* the Confessors days, these are Recorded in the Conquerors Survey; viz.... Lidlinton, Mordune, Scelgy, Melleburne, Everesdone, and Badburgham in Cambridgeshire...”¹

Roger de Montgomerie, afterwards Earl of Arundel and Shrewsbury, a Norman and kinsman of the Conqueror, had at the Survey eleven manors in Cambridgeshire. To the Abbey of Utica in Normandy he gave the Lordship of Melbourn and the tithes of Shengay². In the year 1130, Sybil his daughter, who married John de Reynes³, founded at Shengay a Commandery of the Knights Templars, and bestowed on them the Manor of Shengay and other property in the county. It was dedicated in honour of the Blessed Virgin, and was held by the Templars until their order was suppressed in 1313, when it was bestowed on the Knights Hospitallers of St John.

From this time to the Dissolution many circumstances point to the importance of the Hospital, the Grand Prior of the Order in England being sometimes also at the same time Preceptor of Shengay.

In the Register of Simon de Montacute, Bishop of Ely 1337-45, we find that Walton de Middleton was instituted to Shengay on June 14, 1338, being presented thereto by Philip

¹ *The Baronage of England*. By William Dugdale, fol. Lond. 1675, i. 10. In Domesday the word is spelt Scelgei.

² *Ibid.* i. 26, 27.

³ Camden, ed. 1722, i. 479. Dugdale marries the lady to Robert Fitzhamon.

de Thame, Prior of the Order of St John in England, and on December 4th, 1349, Simon of Shengay was Prior of the Order.

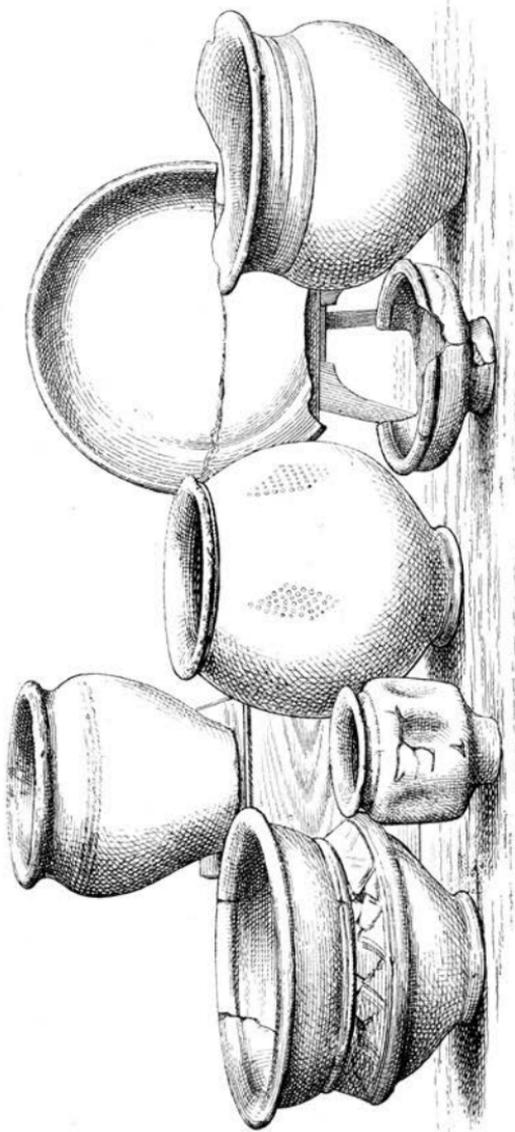
The year 1371 is a very important one in the annals of the Shengay Preceptory, for a general chapter of the Order was held there on June 12 of that year, John de Dampford being then Preceptor¹. The Chapter was presided over by Raymond de Berenger, the Grand Preceptor of the Order, and was for the purpose of receiving an account of the Lands held by the Order in England, Ireland, and "the other parts of the seas." It was again convened on October 28, the Feast of St Simon and St Jude, in the same year, and some of the Preceptors of the Principal Hospitals in the Kingdom are mentioned as being present. Among them are the following: John Paveley, Prior of the Hospital in England; John de Dalton, Preceptor of Willoughton and Beverley; Roger de Middleton, Preceptor of Lynnemore; Richard de Wirkeley, Preceptor of Egle; Robert Hales, Preceptor of Stebach and Stamford; John de Dingley; John de Dampford, Preceptor of Shengay, etc. etc. It must have been an important event and have caused a great deal of excitement in this part of the country, and in imagination we can picture the various knights and their retinues wending their way along the Old North Road, and thence through the groves of Wendy and the rich meadows of Shengay to the stately house where the Chapter was held.

From the date of this general chapter until the end of the century, the Preceptors of Shengay do not seem to have been remarkable; nor is any extraordinary event recorded in the annals of the Hospital. I have the names of some of the brethren who held offices, and they are English names. I may as well mention them with the dates of their taking office.

1378. John Cokerel of Steplemorden, Chaplain, Deacon of Shengay.

1379. June 20. Wm. Ledman, vicar.

¹ *A Description of Leicestershire*. By William Burton, ed. 1622, p. 85.



Roman Pottery found at Eldernell.

1380. Dec. 29. John Belman, do.
 1381. Dec. 8. John Ive, vicar, took oath of canonical obedience to Thomas de Arundel, Bp. of Ely. The same day Wm. Cook of Steplemorden, Chaplain, Deacon of Shingay.
 1382. Dec. 5. S. Corby on the death of Ive.
 1385. John Wesenham.
 1393. Sep. 13. John Edward.
 1402. June 21. Wm. Battle of Abington.
 1404. July 21. Thos. Peacock on Resig. of Battle. (*Mason's Book of Documents.*)

In this year, 1404, on Sept. 5th, the Preceptor Robert Dalison died. He must have been a man of some note, because he was honoured with a monument in the Chapel, and

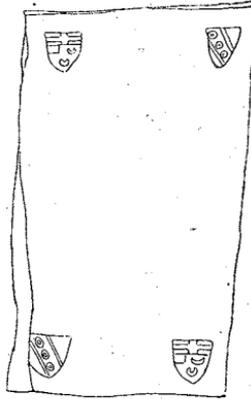


FIG. 3. Gravestone of Robert Dalison, reduced from Cole's sketch.

part of it, the gravestone without the effigy, was remaining until 1684. Cole¹ says:

"Being at the Herald's Office, by the Favour of Mr Warburton, I was shewn a Visitation for Cambridgeshire in 1684, with which were some few Epitaphs taken, and among the rest this at Shengay: viz.:

'Shingay. In the Chapel.

'Hic jacet Frater Robartus Dalizon, Miles, quondam Preceptor hujus Preceptorie de Shingey, et nuper Preceptor Preceptorie de Halston et Temple-Combe, qui obiit quinto Die Septembris Anno Domini 1404.'²... There is also tricked out the Form of his Gravestone, without his Effigies,

¹ MSS. Cole, ix. Add. MSS. Mus. Brit. 5810, f. 121 b.

² Cole thinks that we ought perhaps to read 1504. MSS. Cole, LX. fol. 92 b.

being an oblong Stone with 4 Shields at the 4 Corners, the first and last having these Arms on them, viz.: 2 Crescents and a Canton, for Dalison, with the St George's Cross in a Chief, as Preceptor of the Order of St John of Jerusalem. The 2nd and 3rd Coats are, 3 Annulets en Bend between 2 Cotises."

In the Chapel Windows, says the MS. Visitation, are 4 Escocheons.

1. Gules, a Lion rampant Or, debruised by a Bend, Sable.
2. Blue, a Bend engrailed, Ermine.
3. Argent, on a Chevron Gules, a Crescent for a Difference inter 3 plates, Sable.
4. Gules, a Chevron Ermine and Border engrailed, Blue.

In Shingay Hall 3 Coats.

1. The Cross above, Sable a Chevron engrailed int. 3 Plates each charged with a Pale, Gules. Impales Argent a Bugle Horn inter 3 Griffons heads erased, Sable. Greene impaled by Docwra.
2. The Cross and 4 Coats below it. 1 and 4, a Chevron inter 3 Pheons: 2 and 3, a Cross.
3. Gules, the Cross, Argent. Under it 1st and 4th a Chevron inter 3 Garbs. 2nd and 3rd Blue Frettè, Argent, and on the Sides of each of them is wrote obliquely "*Sane Thele Otheos.*"

This motto evidently puzzled Cole, and he adds:

"As to the motto I can say nothing more than that on the great Beam of the Kitchin Chimney at Balshall in Warwickshire, (belonging also to the Hospitallers,) is cut in Wood a chevron engrailed inter 3 Fermeaux, and in Chief a Jerusalem Cross, with this Motto, *Sane Baro*¹ which may lead to explain the other²."

In passing, I may note that in 1524 Thomas Dalison, steward of Shengay, was the recipient of a very useful, if not a romantic, legacy. Sir John Thorney, chantry priest of Clopton, by will dated 10 Jan. in the above year, left him 10s. and a pair of Fustian blankets; and "to Helen Janewaye of Shengay 4*d*³." There are still several Janeways living at Shengay, doubtless the descendants of the fortunate Helen aforesaid.

Cole also quotes "Mr Laver's small MS." noting the same

¹ Professor Hughes, President of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society, suggests a probable solution of the motto, which is that it was Greek, and that the Greek E was taken for S. He reads it thus, 'Εάν ἐθελῆ ὁ θεός, which is intelligible.

² Cole cites Dugdale's *Warwickshire*, ii. 969.

³ MSS. Cole LX. Add. MSS. Mus. Brit. 5861, fol. 92.

arms in the Hall of the Preceptory in his time, and "this Inscription or Motto, at most places in the Windows *Sane thele otheos*, set in oblique manner."

Cole adds, of his own observation :

"In the Hall Window is still remaining St George's Cross viz. G. a Cross A. and this Motto in a Scrole sideways or obliquely: *Sane Thele Otheos*. This Hall and some other old Buildings joyning to it, and the new small House, was part of the old Commandery and stands at the West end of the Chapel¹."

No hint is given as to whom these arms belong. No. 3 in the Chapel are evidently Sir Thomas Docwra's. Those in the Hall all belong to Brethren of the Order, as shewn by the Cross in chief. The 1st are those of Docwra quartered with Greene, while No. 3 are those of Sir Thomas Sheffield quartered with Lound of Butterwicke in Lincolnshire. Of these two Preceptors of Shengay, Docwra and Sheffield, we know that the former was Lord Prior of St John of Jerusalem, and was probably Preceptor of Shengay first, as he was a Bedfordshire man. There was also a family of that name at Bassingbourn, and in East Hatley Church there is a monument to Sir Roger Docwra, who married Elizabeth, daughter of Ed. Brockett, of Brockett Hall. It originally had two brasses of him and his wife. His brass is gone but his wife's is left. His arms, the same as those which were at Shengay, were at the first and fourth corner, his wife's at the second, and his impaled with his wife's at the third. Doubtless he was a relative of Docwra the Preceptor of Shengay. In 1870 the Postman at Guilden Morden was a Docwra, and at Shepreth there is Docwra Manor. Doubtless it was a local family. While Prior of the Hospital of St John by Clerkenwell in London, he finished the rebuilding of it, as it had been nearly destroyed by fire in 1381 by the rebels under Wat Tyler. His arms were carved in stone over the great gate, and bore the date 1504.

Sir Thomas Sheffield, Grand Seneschal of Rhodes, was

¹ MSS. Cole, *ut supra*, p. 123.

Preceptor of Shengay in the year 1518. He seems to have built a chapel at Wendy, for in the MS. Visitation, dated 1684, before quoted, in a few notes taken in some churches in Cambridgeshire, the following are mentioned as being in a window at Wendy, being the arms of Sheffield already described as existing in the Preceptory of Shengay. At Wendy this inscription was added :

“Orate pro bono Statu Thome de Sheffeld, Militis, Magni Seneschalli Rhodi ac Preceptoris Preceptorie de Shengay ac Beverley qui istam Capellam de novo prima fundatione reedificavit in Anno 1372¹.”

But whatever might have been the glory or usefulness of the Shengay Hospital, it was soon to cease. The cloud which had long threatened the religious houses soon broke, and in 1538 the Preceptory shared the fate of the rest, and was suppressed, and its lands and possessions handed over to the king's use. It was worth £176. 4s. 6d. at the suppression, and was bestowed by the king upon Sir Richard Long, Master of the Hawks².

It passed thence to Henry his son, who died 15 April, 1573, “leaving alive at the time of his death Elizabeth his sole daughter and heir³.” She married William Lord Russell, Baron of Thornhaugh, son of Francis Russell, Earl of Bedford⁴. William Russell died 1663, and his son and grandson suc-

¹ MSS. Cole, *ut supra*, p. 118. This inscription was copied at the Herald's Office by Browne Willis, who adds : “or 1472, for the Date is blind.”

² I suppose it was before the suppression that the following curious custom prevailed. Mr Rand's Q^o MS. 1773, July 7, says : “In ancient times they had a cart there called a ffairy cart, with which they fetched those from Cambridge that were executed, and buried them there; such blind devotion they imputed to that place.”

³ From his tomb in the Church of S. Andrew, Wardrobe, London.

⁴ By inquisition taken at Cambridge 15th December, 10 James I., the Jury found that Elizabeth Lady Russell (daughter and heir of Sir Henry Long, Knt.), wife of William Lord Russell, Baron of Thornhaugh, then living, died on the last of March (9 Jas. I.), possessed of the Manor of Shengay in Cambridgeshire, leaving Sir Francis Russell, Knt., her son and heir, then of the age of 21.

cessively inherited the title, but enjoyed it only a short time, the latter dying in 1669. "Sir William Russell, son and heir of Sir John, having ruined his fortune by raising troops at the Revolution, sold his estate at Chippenham to the brave Admiral Russell (nephew to William Duke of Bedford), who for his splendid victory at La Hogue was created Baron Shengay and Earl of Orford¹. The admiral built a splendid mansion at Chippenham, where he entertained George I. 4th October, 1717. By his will bearing date 1727 he bequeathed his estates to his niece, whose daughter and heir married Samuel Sandys, Esq., of Ombersley in Worcestershire" and thus the Shengay estate passed into the family of Sandys². Mr Sandys was created a Peer in 1743. From Lord Sandys, the manor of Shengay passed to his daughter, the Marchioness of Downshire, thence to the Hon. Thomas Windsor, and thence to Lord Hardwicke by purchase.

Glancing back at the fate of the Preceptory buildings after the Dissolution they seem to have gradually fallen into ruins, and the cure of the souls of the people of Shengay was handed over first of all to a stipendiary curate, and afterwards, doubtless for purposes of economy, to the vicar of Wendy. Some acknowledgment of the responsibility of the Lord of the Manor to provide for the spiritual needs of the people was made by Lady Dorothy Russell, for in one of the old Registers at Wendy the following is entered on a fly-leaf:

"Aug. 10, 1656. A true note of four acres of arable land in Wendy, set over and confirmed by Lady Dorothy Mortimer and Francis Russell, sometime Baron of Thornhaugh, and lastly Earl of Bedford, to the Vicar of Wendy, in part for the Composition due from Shengay to the Vicarage of Wendy."

Then follows a description of the several half acres of the land making up the four acres with their boundaries and posi-

¹ Cole says his arms were in the east window of the Chapel with the date 1697, he supposes the date of the building of the Chapel.

² Lysons' *Cambridgeshire*, p. 167.

tion. This entry is signed, Seth Pavy, Vicar, and John Loudon, Churchwarden.

The redoubtable Dowsing in his Diary says of Shengay :

“1643 Mar. 15. At Shingey a Chapell of Mr John Russells. There was a Crucifix and 3 of the Marys with her Children, and 12 Pictures more.”

Whether these were demolished or spared, history saith not, but it would seem that at least the escutcheons in the windows were spared, as the MS. Visitation of 1684 describes them as then existing. I have come to the conclusion that the Hall and original Chapel were pulled down in 1697, and that the

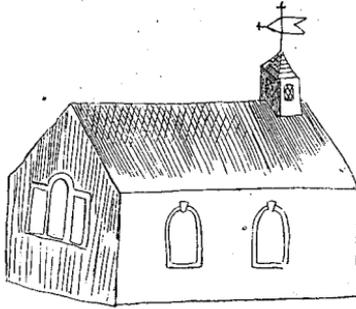


FIG. 4. Reduced copy of Cole's Sketch of Shengay Chapel.

glass was either destroyed in the process or carried away. A new small Chapel was then built on the site by Lord Sandys. Cole¹, under date April 14, 1747, describes this Chapel as it was then, and gives a sketch of it, which I have reproduced (fig. 4):

“This is only a small Chapell consisting of one Room paved with black and white Marble about the Altar which is on one Step: the rest with free Stone. The Pulpit stands on the South Side between the two Windows. The Church or Chapel has only one small Bell in a little Turret at the West End. There are no Inscriptions or Monuments in or about the Church which stands close to a new House by the old Commandery. It is only a Curacy and dedicated, at least the old one, to the Honour of the Blessed Virgin and belonged antiently to the Knights Templers of this Place. It stands in the Archdeaconry of Ely, and gives Name to the Deanery, and is in the Hundred of Armingford. My Lord Sandys is

¹ MSS. Cole, *ut supra*, p. 122.

Patron of the Church. The Atlas in Cambridgeshire p. 239 thus speaks of it: 'Shengay by which the River *Cam* runs northward with a crooked Stream. Here are the most pleasant Meadows of the country...'

In the East Window of the Venetian Order are the Arms of the Earl of Orford and Baron of Shengay viz: A. a Lion rampant G. on the Shoulder a Mullet for Difference, on a Chief S. 3 Escallops A. impales Russell. Supporters; a Lion on the Dexter and an Antelope on the sinister side both G. the antelope horned and gorged with a Ducal Coronet O. Motto *Che sara sara*, and this Date 1697. I suppose the time when the Chapel was built. Over all an Earl's Coronet."

In the early part of the last century this Chapel remained intact, because I find in the Wendy Registers that a marriage was solemnised in Shengay Chapel in the year 1713, and again another in 1716. But the parish of Shengay having neither benefice nor ecclesiastical endowment, the Chapel became disused, and as a natural consequence fell into ruins. Some part of it remained about 70 years ago, but the late Lord Hardwicke cleared away every vestige of it, and the site is now covered with grass.

The new house mentioned by Cole is now what is called the Manor Farm House; it is built in the plain modern style and a few small parts of the stone-work of the windows of the Preceptory are built into the wall of the stable. One of the labourers says that in his youth he carted away many loads of broken stone-work from the site of the Preceptory, and that the material was deposited in the farm yard. His father told him that he carted away the bells to Gransden, but I can learn nothing of them there.

Dom F. A. GASQUET made the following comments:

The records of the Suppression of the Knights of St John appear to be most scanty, and (except for one or two documents in the Record Office) nothing apparently exists in the public archives. The preceptory must not be considered as a religious house with *common* life. Probably, with the exception of the London House, preceptories were very small, and resembled the cells of the alien priories, or the granges of the greater Monastic houses. One or two Knights with a chaplain and a few servants constituted the entire household; the management of the estates belonging

to the Order was the chief object of their residence. The volume on the Knights Hospitallers by Kemble and Larking in the Camden Society's publications gives a very good picture of their life and state in the 14th century.

The Rev. E. G. WOOD, B.D., made the following communication :

NOTE ON THE CULTUS OF S. GEORGE OF CAPPADOCIA AS PATRON SAINT OF ENGLAND.

ATTEMPTS have been made to shew that a special cultus of S. George of Cappadocia existed in England even in the pre-Norman period; Papenbroch, Selden, Dr Smith in his edition of Bede's Martyrology (Cambridge 1777), and Heylin in his life of the Saint have all done so. It cannot be said that their efforts are very successful, or really go beyond shewing that in common with the rest of Christendom the Anglo-Saxon Church esteemed S. George highly. One great argument employed has been that in Bede's Martyrology the name of S. George stands alone on April 23; and that this, it has been urged, would seem to indicate that in *England* he was so specially venerated that no other name, as in other Martyrologies, was allowed to appear on that day. This consideration, however, is of little weight, first because the Martyrologium Vetus Romanum, contemporary with Bede's, itself has S. George's name and none other on April 23, and Rabanus Maurus commemorates only S. George; secondly, Bede's idea, as expressed briefly by himself at the conclusion of the Ecclesiastical History, seems to have been to give only the names of martyrs whom he believed to have some genuine history, and the structure of the Martyrology bears this out. Many days are vacant, and many besides Ap. 23 have only one name, e.g. Jan. 18, S. Prisca, and June 15, S. Vitus; other Martyrologies containing many names on those days. The names of both the Saints just mentioned

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