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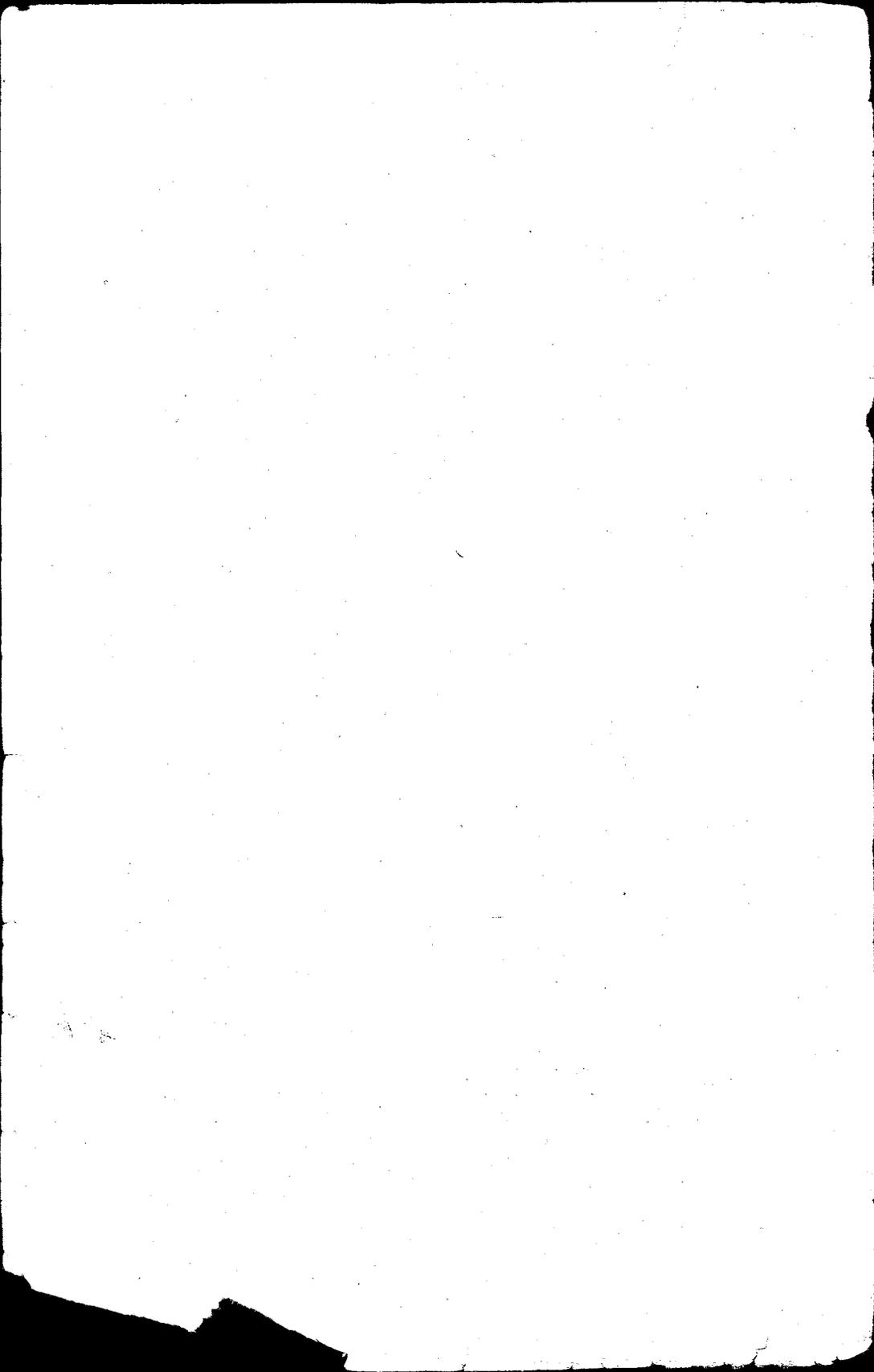
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The following new rule was adopted (No. X in the list of rules) :

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The Society passed votes of thanks

To the late Secretary, THOMAS DINHAM ATKINSON, for his long and valuable services to the Society;

To the Publisher of the *Antiquary* for his kindness in presenting it to the Society;

To WILLIAM MILNER FAWCETT for the gift of *The Ely Diocesan Remembrancer* and *Fenland Notes and Queries*.

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### ICKLETON CHURCH AND PRIORY.

BY A. R. GODDARD, Esq., of Bedford.

#### I. *The Site.*

The village of Ickleton stands, with a crusted antiquity of some 2000 years, on the Granta, or, as Domesday spells it, the Grente, at a bend of a very early track-way. The *Ykenildeweie*<sup>1</sup> "via que vocatur Ikenylt" after descending from Venta Icenorum in Norfolk, and skirting the western border of Suffolk, passed through this county by a long narrow strip of cleared upland, with continuous fen to the north and continuous forest to the south. Its course at intervals was guarded by the four dykes, drawn across it almost at right angles from water to wood. Ickleton is placed a few miles within the foremost of these barriers, namely, the Brand Dyke, and its early importance is shewn by the strong southward swerve that the old way makes to reach it, before striking due west to Royston. This Society has already given much attention to both road and dykes in the papers by Professors Babington and Ridgeway, and Mr Bullock Hall.

This advanced Icenian outpost at Ickleton was thus in the direct line for fighting, even before the Roman legionaries broke

<sup>1</sup> Grant of land in Newmarket. Henry III. Brit. Mus. Ad. 25306.

up the host that fought for Boadicea and Iceniland. It may have been about this time that the strong station of Icianos was planted down at Great Chesterford to watch the main entrance to the country of the tribesmen. In Romano-British times the district was probably well peopled, if we may judge by the buildings unearthed by the Hon. R. C. Neville in 1847, a quarter of a mile south of the present village; and Roach Smith suggests that the name may be one of the plural names covering scattered settlements<sup>1</sup>.

In Domesday, the manor of *Hichelintone*<sup>2</sup>, in the *Witelesford* hundred, was twice as large as that of *Cestreforda*<sup>3</sup>, being rated at 19½ hides, with a further ½ hide in *Inchelintone* held by Durandus of Hardwin de Scularis<sup>4</sup>, which brought up the assessment of the vill to the round 20 hides. The men on the Ickleton land were 30 villani, 10 bordars, and 3 serfs; in all 43. Allowing five per head, and for inhabitants un-named, the population can hardly have been under 250 souls. It is evidence of the cleared state of the land, that there is no wood at all there, whilst Chesterford to the south has wood for 1000 swine<sup>5</sup>. The lord of Ickleton in pre-Domesday times was Alsi, a king's thegn, and judging by the very early work in the nave of the church it is probable that he was a worshipper in it; he may even have been its builder. At the time of the survey, Eustace, Count of Boulogne, held the manor. His father, of the same name, the "strenuissimus Boloniae Comes<sup>6</sup>," had received it from the Conqueror, but he had died before 1086. His first wife was Goda, the Confessor's sister. The Count played a notable part at Hastings, where he was wounded, and he afterwards received lands in ten English counties. Eustace III, whom we find in possession of Ickleton, was the son of the second wife, Ida, the sister of Geoffrey, Duke of Lorraine. The family made many royal alliances, for this Eustace wedded Margaret, the Scotch king Malcolm Canmore's daughter, and Maud their only child became the wife of King Stephen<sup>7</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> *Journ. of Brit. Arch. Ass.* vol. iv. p. 365.

<sup>2</sup> *D. B. i.* fol. 196a.

<sup>3</sup> *D. B. ii.* fol. 36.

<sup>4</sup> *D. B. i.* fol. 198a.

<sup>5</sup> *D. B. ii.* fol. 36.

<sup>6</sup> *Battle Chron.* J. H. Round's *Feudal England*, p. 381.

<sup>7</sup> *Digest of Beds.* D. B. W. Airy, p. 31.

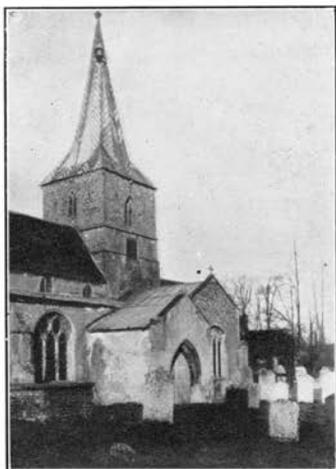


FIG. 1.



FIG. 2.



FIG. 3.



FIG. 4.

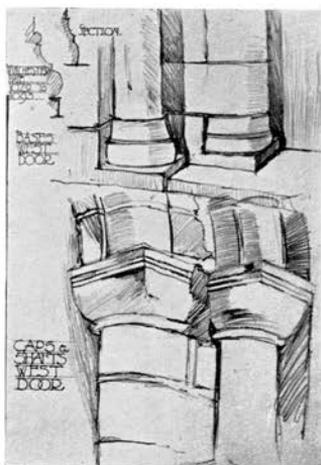


FIG. 5.

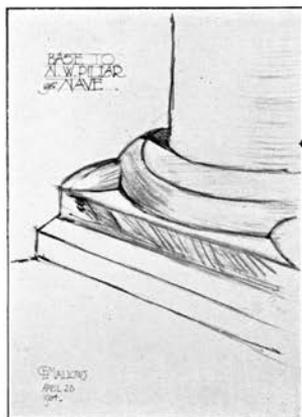


FIG. 6.



FIG. 7.

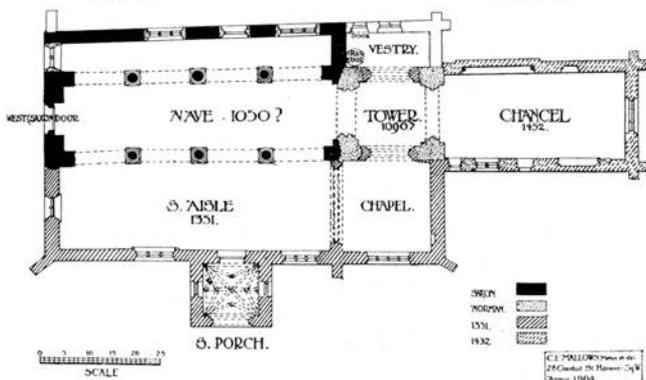


FIG. 8.

II. *The Fabric.*

There is some mystery as to the date of the foundation of the priory. It is ascribed to an Aubrey de Vere, Tanner says the third of the name, first earl of Oxford, or his father-in-law, Sir William de Cantelupe<sup>1</sup>. Nasmith's note on the text points out that this must be in error for Aubrey II, who was killed in a riot at London in Stephen's time in 1141<sup>2</sup>. Stowe also ascribes the foundation to him.

The only building belonging to the Priory which now remains is the ancient church, which deserves much more notice than it has hitherto received. It was certainly earlier than the priory, which stood one-third of a mile to the west of it. The distance between them, as well as the archaic detail of the nave, proves that it was already in existence at the foundation, and that it must have been adopted and adapted for the conventual service. The oldest part of the fabric shews clear evidence of additions made in early Norman times to a substantial building still earlier. The first church of all consisted of a nave 14 ft. in width, with two narrow aisles, only 6 ft. 3 in. wide, one of which still remains (plan, Plate IX, fig. 8). There are four nave arches on either side, plain unmoulded semi-circles, and the wall above them is some 2 ft. 7 in. thick (Plate VIII, figs. 3, 4). Essex in his sketch shews the arch-stones as alternatively long and short, in Saxon fashion, but these have been recently plastered over<sup>3</sup>. The old roof-line may be seen clearly on both sides of the walls just over the round arches. There are certain unique features about the nave pillars, of which there are three on each side, with bold half-pillar imposts in the end walls. The two centre pillars, now almost cemented over, are built up with stone, and, as Sir Robert Herbert informed me, with a free use of Roman tiles, which were laid bare during restoration. The other four are monoliths. These pillars vary in their dimensions, from 6 ft. 7½ in. in height to 6 ft. 11 in., and from 1 ft. 8 in. to 1 ft. 10 in.

<sup>1</sup> Tanner's *Not. Mon.* Ed. Jas. Nasmith, 1787. Cambridgeshire, xii.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* note n.

<sup>3</sup> *Archæologia*, iv. 1786, pp. 100-1.

for the diameter of the monoliths, and 2 ft. 3 or 4 in. for that of the built-up pillars. Such inequalities are troublesome in arch-building, and thus the rude capitals vary from 10½ in. to 14 in. in depth, to bring the springing line up to a level. These capitals are very coarsely shaped, with three roughly incised lines drawn round the square tops by way of abacus, below which they are rounded off to the circular; ending in a rude roll-mould at the neck (Plate IX, fig. 5). They are unlike even the simplest type of Norman cushion capitals. Nor are they all really square at the top, but vary from 2 ft. 4 in. by 2 ft. 8 in. to 2 ft. 11 in. by the same.

The bases have a sprawling attempt at an ovolo for the chief member, with a foot-like projection, "the griffe," at the angles of the large ungainly sub-bases (see Plate IX, fig. 6).

Over the nave arches, and belonging to the early Norman extensions of the church, are narrow round-headed clerestory lights, some 10 in. wide by 2 ft. high, with a deep internal splay. Two of them shew 15th century frescoes on the splays. The piers of the tower arches also belong to this enlargement. They are nearly twice the height of the nave pillars, and have double half-round masonry shafts, of Norman type, but with ruder detail than the similar work in the north transept of Winchester, dated 1079-93<sup>1</sup>. There is nothing to shew that there was a chancel at this time, nor were any foundations of an eastern apse noticed at the restoration.

The western door is high and wide, unlike early Norman doors (Plate VIII, fig. 2) and its caps, bases, and moulds have the same rude, shapeless character as the detail of the nave (Plate IX, fig. 7). Cole visited the church on 21 August, 1742, and made many useful notes of the work in it, but he quaintly describes this door, with its semicircular head, as "built in a very Gothic taste<sup>2</sup>." Although much of the original wall of the west front still remains, there is no sign of any flat Norman buttresses. It was therefore probably of the same work as the nave arcades.

Where did these monoliths and Roman tiles come from?

<sup>1</sup> Parker's *Intro. Gothic Arch.* 7th ed. ill. p. 47.

<sup>2</sup> Cole's MSS. Brit. Mus. i. fol. 9.

The use of old pillars from former buildings is common enough in Italy, but rare with us. For the almost certain answer we have to thank tradition and Mr Neville's spade-work on the old Chesterford road. This road runs along a natural bank, skirting lower land to the east, which even now is subject to floods, and in earlier times may have been largely marsh. A quarter of a mile from Ickleton there is a sudden bend and dip in the road known as "Church Bottom," and the field to the west of it is known to the villagers as "Church Plat," or "Church Field." Here Mr Neville found the remains of a basilica-like building, 88 ft. inwards from the hedge. Its foundations formed a great oblong 78 ft. by 36 ft. interior dimensions; with walls 3 ft. thick. Two rows of footings 3 ft. square, and 7 bases of dressed stone for columns 2 ft. square on either side divided the space into, as it were, nave and aisles<sup>1</sup>. The walls remained to a height of 3 ft. 6 in. above the concrete bottom of the floor, and were of flint rubble, bonded at the angles with tiles. Mr Neville conjectures that the building was either a basilica or some sort of temple. Dr Salmon in 1740 speaks of "some ruins of a building by the neighbourhood called Sunkin-church<sup>2</sup>," which from his description seems to apply to this site. With these remains so near the builders of the church on higher ground would not have far to go for stone already squared and pillars already hewn. The problem is, whether the large remains of the oldest part of this church are of Saxon times with a flavour of Norman; or of Norman with a survival of Saxon methods. Probably the former, as the Norman builders have left us no such work elsewhere. If so, we have here a church which belongs to Edward the Confessor's time. This conclusion is strengthened by the fact that the extensions of the first building are in the very earliest type of Anglo-Norman work.

As to the later additions, architecture and date agree. The building stood unaltered until 1351, when, on the 3rd of June, the Ely Register records a rededication of the priory church<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> *Journ. Brit. Arch. Ass.* vol. iv. p. 365; also *Arch. Journ.* vi. pp. 25, 26, from which the plan is taken.

<sup>2</sup> *History and Ant. of Essex*, N. Salmon, 1740, p. 137.

<sup>3</sup> *Bp. Lisle's Reg. Ely.* Cited in Cole's MSS. Brit. Mus. vol. xxiii. fol. 104.

A new south aisle, broader than the nave, was added, with a fine groined south porch, and middle decorated windows with choice tracery, now mutilated. The tower, with its arches of clunch, and the charming broached spire of wood, laced up zigzag fashion in its close-fitting coat of lead (Plate I, fig. 1); also the chapels to the north and the south of the tower, were erected at this date.

A rededication took place in 1452, when the original perpendicular chancel was added, with two chantry chapels on the north. Both chantries were standing in Cole's time, although since fallen to ruin, and the north chapel is now replaced by a modern vestry. The communicating arch to one of the chantries still remains. The church must then have been refitted with unusually fine perpendicular woodwork throughout. Cole speaks of a "small oaken reading desk . . . formerly painted, and standing on the backs of four couchant lions," and of oak choir stalls: all now gone. The beautiful rood-screen is still in place, and in the nave there are many carven and shaped oak bench ends, with spirited finials. On one of these, facing the south door, appear the letters "Orate p—," probably a petition for the soul of some donor. When the restored choir was built about 20 years ago the work of 1452, with its piscina, sedilia, and lowside window, was in a ruinous state, and ceiled very low down<sup>1</sup>.

### III. *The Worshippers.*

So much for the fabric. What of the people who worshipped in it—clerical, conventual, or folk of the village? Of all these we gain some vivid glimpses in the later days of the Priory.

The list of the prioresses is defective, but there is mention of the following<sup>2</sup>: Margaret de Sancto Andrea, prioress in 1272; Avicia Kersonyngs, in 1373, possibly the same with Avicia Kersenaar or Kerserier in 1402; Margaret Hokle or Hockle, who died 6 August, 1444; Alice Pyrrye, or Perry, chosen

<sup>1</sup> For the plan of the church and the drawings of the details we are indebted to Mr C. E. Mallows, F.R.I.B.A.

<sup>2</sup> Dugdale's *Monasticon*. Bohn, 1846, iv. p. 439.

17 August next, who died 7 February, 1457, and was buried in the church; Constantia Bosom, elected 8 March next, who died 8 July, 1490; Dyonisia Thyrston, elected on the 22 July next; and Jone Ashwell, who figures in 1516, and who proved to be the last.

In the time of Edward I we find the Prioress of Ickleton, amongst many others, summoned before travelling justices, in 1299, to prove that she had not usurped any royal rights, nor evaded any royal dues. The four justices want to know—“*quo warranto*”—by what right, she claimed to hold a weekly market on Thursdays, and a yearly fair on 22 July; and “*visum franciplegii, et emendas assisae panis et cervisiae fractae, sok, sak, tol et team. et infangenethef*,” in Ickleton. Her attorney claimed the market by charter of Henry III, and the fair by immemorial use, whereunto sworn men gave witness.

By these terms we learn the prioress's duties and rights. She must enforce proper standards for the village bread and ale<sup>1</sup>. She must lay by the heels any thieves on her land<sup>2</sup>, although in her case there is no query as to a gallows for their correction. She has full feudal rights over the services and persons of her villeins<sup>3</sup>. She must regularly hold the “view of frank pledge,” so that every responsible man may be sworn on the list for jury duty<sup>4</sup>. She may retain her own due “toll,” and see to it that millers and bakers only keep back what is justly theirs of meal after grinding, or of cake after baking. Lastly, by “sok and sac” she had the right to hold her court, with her steward as president, and to absorb all the profits of justice, and every soul on her land must resort thereunto.

All the Ickleton rights and charters were confirmed by the Court. This must have been a satisfaction, as the priory was always in low water. In 1402 the then prioress, probably Avicia with the Dutch surname, begs the episcopal authorities at Ely to remember that she has only two advowsons, Icklington and Arrington (Arrington), which brought her in £10 and 10 marks per annum respectively. The Ely Register shews that the priory was constantly excused the tithes, on account

<sup>1</sup> *Emendas assisae panis et cervisiae fractae.*

<sup>2</sup> *Infangenethef.*

<sup>3</sup> *Team.*

<sup>4</sup> *Visum franciplegii.*

of poverty, and at the Dissolution the total yearly revenue was only between £70 and £80<sup>1</sup>.

The fair was held on the same day up to 1872, towards the end, chiefly for horses and cheese. The late Mr Maynard of the Walden Museum had a note of 1851 that his father at Whittlesford used to buy up the produce of several farms, so that the dairy farmers were saved the labour of carrying their goods to the fair.

Let us now turn to certain events in the life of the ladies of Ickleton nunnery made known to us in Bishop Alcock's Register<sup>2</sup>. On July 8, 1490, the sisterhood and the villagers are in turmoil over the death of the prioress, Constantia Bosom, who had ruled them for three-and-thirty years. The obsequies over, on Tuesday the 20th the nuns assemble in their chapter-house, and agree next day to meet in the church to elect their superior. The licence has come from Bishop Alcock; and Master Wm. Robinson, Dean, with Mr Henry Wallas and Sir John Crowche, Vicar, are the clergy present. The roll-call of the sisters contains the following names: Dyonisia Thyrston, sub-prioress, Agnes Damse (Dauncey), Margaret Poore, Olivia Smyth, Joan Ade, Alice Maio, Elena Coots, Joane Asshewell, and Alicia Sutton; only nine; all professed, that is, in vows. Master Richard Hooke, notary public, is also present. The Dean reads to them the constitution of the General Council, "quia propter," and then they elect "by inspiration" Dyonisia Thyrston as the prioress. Then, "for the greater security Sister Agnes Damse re-elected her, by the consent of the nuns"; after which they carried their elect to the high altar, and all present join in singing the "Te Deum." That there should be no later hesitation, "afterwards, about 12 o'clock they returned to the Chapter-house where they deputed Agnes Damse and Margaret Poore to go to the elect to get her consent: and at 2 o'clock they went to her in an upper chamber called the sub-prioress's chamber, in which she had been placed and left by the said processes after the publica-

<sup>1</sup> Given by Dugdale at £71. 9s. 10d.; and by Speed at £80. 1s. 10d. Quoted in Tanner's *Monasticon*, 1695, p. 24.

<sup>2</sup> Cole's MSS. xxxi. fols. 66, 67, Brit. Mus.

tion of the election, where after much entreaty she gave her consent: upon which the Convent desire the Bishop to confirm the process of the election" (fol. 183-6). Then is issued the mandate to "Sir Jno. Crowche, Vicar of Iklyngton, and Lewis Bramston, Apparitor sworn, of Ely diocese, to cite all opposers to the election of Dyonisia Thyrston to appear before the Bishop on Thursday, 22 July, in the conventual church of Iklyngton: upon which none appearing against her, precludes all further proceedings that way" (fol. 197). "Finally the Bishop, at the request of Dame Agnes Daunsey and Dame Margaret Poore, confirms the elections, and orders her to be installed, and then the Elect swears canonical obedience to the Bishop, and subscribes a cross" (fol. 198-9).

Next year, on 23 June, 1491, there is an entry in the Bishop's register, that as Iklyngton Church is undergoing repairs, he will grant 40 days' indulgence for every day on which certain devotions are performed, and aid given to the works going on.

Five years later the prioress loses her vicar, Sir John Crowche<sup>1</sup>, by death, and on 14 February, 1496, Bishop Alcock inducts Dominus Robertus Burton, on the presentation of the prioress and convent. Not long after Master Burton loses his prioress, in what year is not recorded, when the old church saw another election ceremonial, and one of the sisters who sang the "Te Deum" at the last is advanced to be prioress, Dame Joane Asshewell. She was destined to be the last of the long line. The new prioress did not see eye to eye with the vicar on the subject of tithes, the hearing of confessions and administration of the sacrament, and Bishop West arbitrated to adjust the dispute<sup>2</sup>.

In her time we hear of another solemn assembly in the church. Two young girls are to take the veil. Nicholas West is now bishop. It was on 5 October, 1516. The bishop and clergy are in full canonicals: mass has been sung at the high altar: then one of the two girls, advancing with a paper in her hand, reads it in the face of all present. "I, Elizabeth Otte,

<sup>1</sup> or Creviche, Cole's MSS. XLV. 83.

<sup>2</sup> Cole's MSS. xxvi. fol. 134.

offer myself to serve godly piety in chastity and modesty, and I promise constancy and conversion of my behaviour, and obedience after the rule of St Benedict, before God and his saints, in this monastery which was built in honour of St Mary Magdalene, in presence of the most reverend father and lord in Christ, Nicholas, by divine permission Bishop of Ely, both to Joanna my prioress and to her successors canonically following her; and with my own hand I this subscribe." Here she signed with a cross<sup>1</sup>. Thereafter the other, Margaret Charlton read a like declaration, and with the same sign made it good. Then both maidens humbly kissed the documents and handed them to Dame Joanna Asshewell the prioress, who stood near to receive them. And there were then present the Ven. Thomas Alcoke, Archdeacon of Ely, Thomas Pellis, doctor of laws, Raphael Colbecke, chaplain, and other ecclesiastics, and seculars in crowds, "in multitudine copiosa," but apparently *not* Burton the vicar. The fact that the bishop's decision in the dispute alluded to is dated the next day suggests the probable cause of his absence<sup>2</sup>.

No records of misbehaviour have come down to stain the good name of the black sisters of Ickleton. It is true that in 1345 they receive a stiff injunction from Hugo de Seton, Vicar-general and Canon of Ely, *sede vacante*, against allowing their precincts to become the resort of secular women, against having any such persons in the choir during the hours of service, and especially against having or keeping "Canem seu caniculum," dog or puppy-dog, in the choir of the church<sup>3</sup>.

Fuller has a curious story, however, which can only concern this house. He says that "Two young gentlemen, whose names for just cause I forbear, went to a nunnery within twelve miles of Cambridge in the nature of travellers on the highway: who being handsomely habited, and late at night, were admitted into some out-lodgings of that nunnery. Next day their civil addressés to the abbess were returned with such entertainment as became the laws of hospitality. Afterwards producing or pretending a commission to visit their convent, they abode

<sup>1</sup> Cole's MSS. xxvi. fol. 98.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* xxvi. fol. 134.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* xxiii. fol. 96.

there certain days: and how bad soever they were, met with no counterpart to embrace their wanton proffers." They then went away and spread spiteful reports as to the conduct of the nuns; but Fuller concludes: "One of the aforesaid gentlemen, with great grief and remorse of heart, did in private confess to Sir William Stanley, knight, that nothing in his life lay more heavily on his conscience than this false accusation of these innocents<sup>1</sup>." Fuller discredits Stanley's word on the ground that he had changed sides and faith in the Netherlands struggle, and had betrayed Deventer to the Spaniards.

When the two novices took the veil, Robert Burton was vicar. Eleven years later he died, having held the living 31 years. His will is dated 1 September, 1527, and is proved seven weeks later.

"I Robt. Burton, Preest, Vicar of Icklyngton makes and writes this my testament with my owne Hande. My body to be buried in some sanctuary where it shall please God. I give my vestment to the Parish Church. I give to my Lady Prioress of Icklyngton & to her sisters & to their chaplain 10s. to say a Dirige & Masse for all Christian souls. To Sir Tho. Knotts Priest, my feather-bed, Bolsters, 2 Pillows, 2 Sheets, 2 Blankets, a Quilt & my best Coverlitt, my Horse, Saddle & Bridle & all my Hay, for that he hath served me for many years for little wages. To Wm. Biall my poor Scolar, my Short Gown and all things that I delivered unto him. To the Master & Fellows of St. Michael's College in Cambridge, all my debts owing to me, a note of which I have delivered to the President, to the Reparations of the same place. To Sir Tho. Knotts Priest all such debts as by a note I have given to him. To the poorest people all such residue of my wheat, malt, & Barley, in Alms. To Maister Wm. Nicholson President of St. Michael's College my little Maser<sup>2</sup> to pray for me. I give to my Lady Prioress my best Pane & my greatest Pott of Brasse and to Dame Margaret Charlton 6s. 8d. to pray for my Soul. The Residue of my other Goods I comit them to the discretion of Maister Wm. Nicholson and Sir Thomas Knotts, my executors, who are to cause one Trental of Masses to be said for me immediately, and another when they have sold so much of my goods as will pay the Priest.

Witness Ric. Crude. Tho. Reythey. Joh. Nelson.

"Moreover I will the best Meat Table, the best Forme, 2 Trestills the greatest Chayre and the painted Cloth shall still remain in the Hall continually for ever in the Vicarage of Ickleton."

<sup>1</sup> Fuller's *Ch. Hist.* Bk. vi. Sect. iii. viii.

<sup>2</sup> *i.e.* Mazer, a little wooden bowl.

There may be in this will signs of the friction between Burton and the prioress. He does not ask to be buried in the churchyard, nor leave money to the sisterhood to pray for his soul, but only to Margaret Charlton. Nor does he leave anything for the lights of the church.

The usual form of these bequests is seen from the will of Wm Bruett de Ickleton, carpenter, dated 17 Feb., 1524. "High Altar 4d. Rood light 4d. Sepulchre light 4d. Lady light 4d." He also leaves to "Joh. my son all my tolys appertaining to my Craft." The vicar, Robert Burton, is one of the witnesses.

His son John prospers in the world. His will is dated 7 September, 1541, and is proved 8 October. He leaves his

"House to Jane my wife while a widow, and thence to John my son, and a Saffron Ground, and a Matras, Bolster, Pair Blankets, a Coverlitt and pair sheets, a Testor and other Hangyngs: to the same a foulte Table, a great Hutch, a Chair, a Bedsted, and all my Boards, Tressyls and Pulleys that were wont to belong to Mary Magdalen Fayer, my best cote, a Doublett with Sleeveys of Buck Leather, a Payr of Hosen and a Petycote. To Robert Swanne my Sonne in Lawe 10 Sheep. To Jone Browne my Gossype a Roode of Saffron Ground."

There are wills of three widows: Joan Aspenden (28 Mar., 1524); Alice Dolygoode (6 Dec., 1525); and Agnes Mayler (24 Oct., 1527). Two of them remember all four lights. The third was a woman of means, with a warm heart, and a favourite daughter Margaret.

"My body to the church-yard, nigh my husband. To Marget Mayler all my Corne, and if I die she to deliver as much as will serve for my funeral charges, that is to say in bread and ale. To Petronilla and Margaret my daurs. have all my Household Stuff between them, and Margaret to have first choice and a Cow."

She also leaves 20s. to the churchwardens "for the repacon (repair) of the Navy (nave) of the Church, and £6. 13s. 4d. (10 marks) to Margaret my Daur." And again: "Margaret my Da. to have 10 of my best Shepe."

There are also the wills of Robert Savage de Icklyngton, 20 March, 1520, a small farmer and saffron grower; of Richard Growt de Icklyngton, 7 February, 1531, beginning "High Altar for Tythes forgotten and to be prayed for, 12 pence"; of John

Crud, senr, husbandman, 12 November, 1535; of Stephen Swanne, 24 Aug., 1540, who leaves money for all the lights, but "Soul to God only," a trace of the new reforming spirit; and of John Fulston, senr., 22 Nov., 1547, plowright, with no religious bequests at all<sup>1</sup>.

Not one of the forty-five Ickleton names in these wills now remains in the village. All are as extinct as the skin-clad Icenii. A large stone slab in the chancel supplies us with one solitary link. "Here lyeth entered the Body of Tho. Crud, Esq., Single man: Son of John Crud and Ann his wife: Who departed this life April the 5th, 1714: aged 67."

There is some pathos in the words *in perpetuo* found so often in these wills. Before the two last were penned, the black ladies went no more between abbey and church. The house was suppressed with the lesser monasteries in 1535. As Cole wrote: "There are no remains at present of the old Building" on the "Scite" of it, except traces of the enclosing earthen rampart and ditch, and of the fish-ponds. In 1539 Henry VIII exchanged the whole estate and the Priory of Swaffham for the Manor of Hatfield in Herts with the Bishop of Ely<sup>2</sup>.

One small piece of flotsam lies in St John's Library. It is a small "Psalter cum hymnis secundum usum et consuetudinem" of Sarum and York, as a note of Baker's on the cover tells us. It is printed for Francis Byrckman, 1516: and inside bears the note: "Thys Bowke belongs unto Dame Elizabeth Trotter prophessed noyne in the abbey of Ikelyngton in the Diocess of Ely."

Religious changes were now rife in the country. In 1530 came Thomas Cromwell's injunction for the destruction of images. In Mary's reign these were replaced, only to be destroyed a second time by Elizabeth. Weaver, writing in

<sup>1</sup> I am indebted to the late Mr G. N. Maynard, for 24 years Curator of the Walden Museum, for the sight of copies of these wills from the Record Office at Cambridge, and for a packet of Collectanea of Ickleton which gave me many valuable clues. All who know his fine and skilful work in that museum will join in regret at his recent death.

<sup>2</sup> For terms of conveyance, cf. Dugdale's *Monasticon*, Edition Bohn, iv. p. 442.

1631, tells of the wholesale ruin of monuments, brasses, and church windows, which had resulted from those repeated attacks. The wonder is that the Parliamentary Commissioners found anything left to destroy. The diary of the notorious Wm Dowsing shews one entry dated 1643: "Icleton, Mar. 19. We brake down the Crucifixes, and 60 superstitious pictures, brake 2 Crosses of the Steple, and one of the churche, and the widdow Rolfe to level the steps in the Chancell<sup>1</sup>." The same day he did as much for the churches of Sawston, Whittlesford and Pampisford; and the next day of Hinxton, Duxford (2 churches), Abington Magna and Parva, and Bartlow.

Laud's clergy were not popular hereabouts, nor were the attempts against Scotland known as the Bishop's Wars. The men pressed into service proved unruly, as a letter of Lord Maynard shews, dated 27 July, 1640<sup>2</sup>.

"I am ashamed that I have to trouble you so often about the same thing, but the insolencies of the soldiers billeted in Essex are every day increased by new attempts, insomuch as they have now, within these few days, taken upon them to reform churches; and even in the time of divine service to pull down the rails about the Communion Tables, and in Icklinton in Cambridgeshire, to force the minister to run over a river."

In 1647 the calm of the country-side was again disturbed by the presence of an army. The ground trembled at the tramp of one-and-twenty thousand Ironsides marching from Newmarket to their rendezvous on Triplow Heath—a stirring sight for the neighbouring villagers on that summer day as regiment after regiment swung past with their red and buff coats, pot helmets, snaphances, and pikes.

In 1676 there were 244 inhabitants, no recusants, and 7 dissenters<sup>3</sup>. The population in the 1891 census stood at 604.

When Cole visited Ickleton in 1742 he found a vicar there, the Rev. Thomas Sayes, who had held the living for 53 years, from 1689 to 1742, and was full of gossiping tradition concerning Dowsing's visit.

<sup>1</sup> Baker MSS. Camb. Univ. Library.

<sup>2</sup> Kingston, *East Anglia and the Great Civil War*, p. 25. —

<sup>3</sup> Note by Rand, quoted by Cole.

"On the top" of the spire, he said, "was a large leaden Cross which the Rebels in Oliver's time obliged the Parish to take down, or threatened to set fire to the Church, which to prevent was perform'd accordingly. But they could not so easily take down, or perhaps they would not have escaped, 2 neat large Crosses Patonce of black Flint on the outside of the Tower, over the S. & E. window<sup>1</sup>."

These crosses are still there.

It must have been while this Mr Sayes was vicar that the bell No. 5 was hung, which informs us: "I tell all that doth me see That Newman of Norwich new cast me. 1729." There are none earlier. Of all the bells to which moneys were sometimes left in the old wills not one remains.

The tablet at the east end of the south aisle is in memory of St Leger Algernon Herbert, one of two war correspondents who fell in the fight at Gubat in January 1895. This tablet reminds us of the widening destinies of our race, and that they leave their mark on the life of our smallest villages.

In the subsequent discussion remarks were made by Mr MALLOWS, Miss FRERE, Professor RIDGEWAY, Mr W. M. FAWCETT, and the Rev. D. H. S. CRANAGE.

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Monday, 23 May 1904.

A. C. HADDON, Sc.D., F.R.S., President, in the Chair.

G. C. MOORE SMITH, M.A., of St John's College, read a paper on

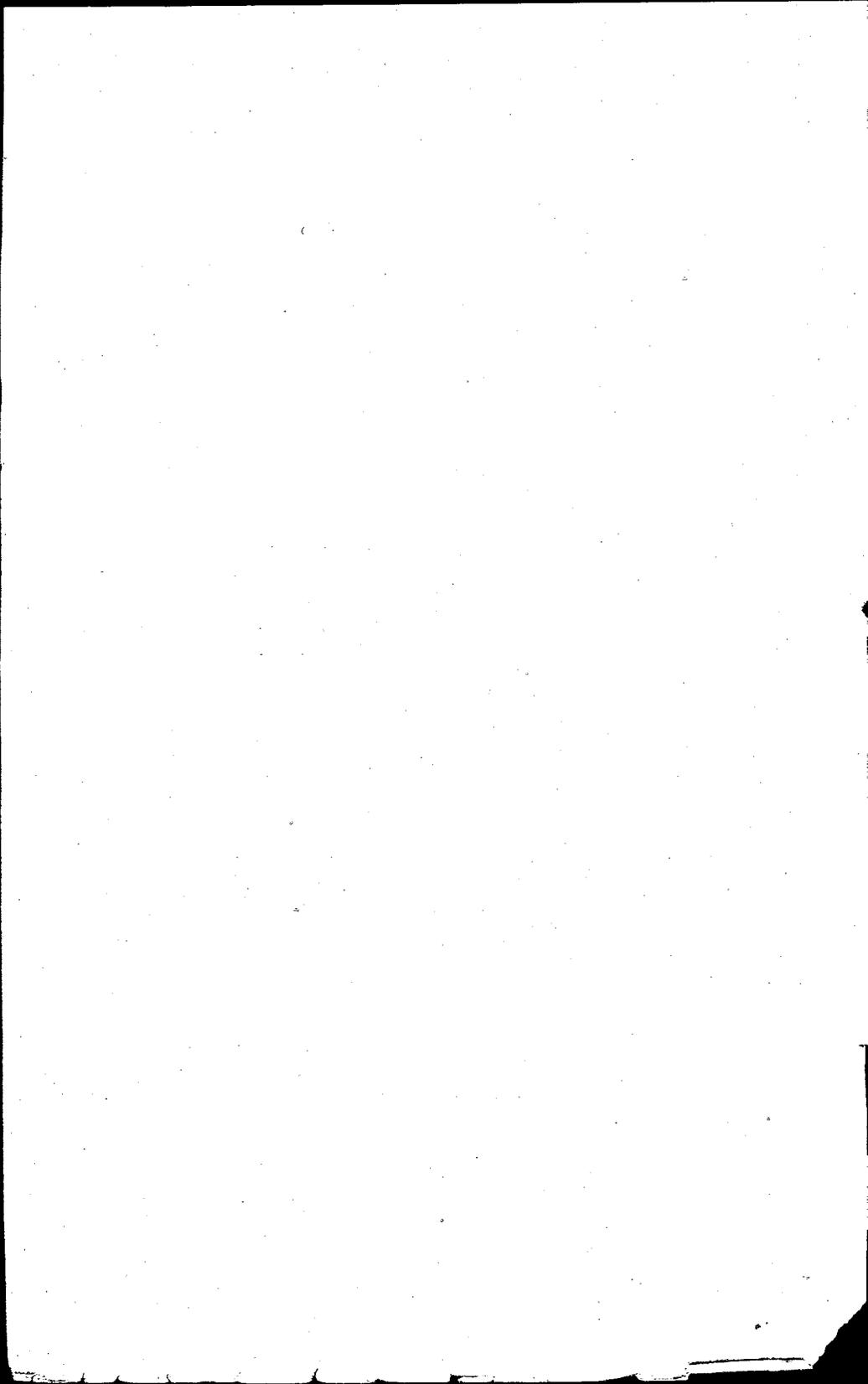
THE COMEDY OF PEDANTIUS<sup>2</sup>, PERFORMED AT  
TRINITY COLLEGE IN 1581.

The manuscript of the play, from the Library of Gonville and Caius College, was exhibited at the Meeting.

Remarks were made by Dr J. PEILE, Dr M. R. JAMES, the Rev. Dr H. P. STOKES, and Professor HUGHES.

<sup>1</sup> Cole's MSS. i. fol. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Mr Moore Smith has since edited the play in W. Bang's *Materialien zur Kunde des aelteren Englischen Dramas*, Band VIII. (Uystpruyst, Louvain, 1905, 8vo.) See also a paper by Mr Smith on 'Forsett of Marylebone and Wells Hall, co. Suffolk,' in the *Genealogist*, October, 1904.



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