

Chesterfield.

Papers read at the Society's visit there, May 6th, 1920.

I.—THE PARISH CHURCH.

By H. RYDE.

DOMINATING the eastern end of a ridge which lies in a natural basin surrounded by uplands, the site of the Church is noteworthy. The town at first extended westward, and was contained in an angle formed by two brooks, the Hipper and the Rother, such a natural strategic position as its early inhabitants loved.

Over this eminence passed an old British track, which the Romans made their Rykneld Street. It linked together the stations and camps between Derwentio to the south and Danum (Doncaster) to the north. Its Roman characteristics are still noticeable in the determined way how, after crossing the southern boundary stream, it ascends boldly over the crest, closely passing the church, and drops immediately to the river-level at its northern crossing.

We may thus allow its position to have been of geographical importance from the earliest times. Although Roman coins have occasionally been unearthed, no finds of importance have been met with, or recorded. Seldom,

however, do we find an old native village situated directly on a Roman highway, and it appears highly probable that Saxon Cestrefeld had an earlier origin, and it is held by many to have been the Roman mart LUTUDARUM.

For any definite trace of Christianity hereabouts, prior to A.D. 900, we search in vain. The fierce Northmen overran the Kingdom of Mercia during the years 874-887, leaving nothing behind but a local tradition of slaughter and a huge Danish grave-mound.

The earliest extant record to which we can point is found in a copy of an original charter in the Lincoln Cartulary, dated 1093-4, addressed by William Rufus to the Bishop of Chester, Roger Earl, H. de Ferrars, and William Peveril; declaring that he had given to the Church of St. Mary, Lincoln, and to Robert the Bishop, and his successors for ever, the churches of Oschinton, Cestrefeld, Eseburn, and Mannesfield, and the chapels which are in the Berewicks adjacent to the said four manors, so that he should firmly hold the same, with all lands and tithes, and all things which to the said churches belonged in the time of King Edward (A.D. 1042-66). Witnessed by Walch, Bishop of Winchester, William, Bishop of Durham, William Peveril, and five others. This gift of William II. went to endow the new Minster just completed by Bishop Remigius, and the Deans of Lincoln became thereby possessed of the great tithes, pre-Norman in origin, and were rectors of Chesterfield church and its several chapelries until recent times.

Quite a quantity of squared and sculptured Norman stones are to be observed employed in the walls of the 13th and 14th century re-buildings, but nothing remains in situ prior to *circa* 1180; to which period we may assign the semi-circular-headed piscina of the north-east chapel. High up in the nave wall, near its inner south-west angle, is a very early and rudely incised stone, which may perchance have served as impost to a Saxon arch. The

ground plan in cruciform, with central tower, and a large porch at the south-west ; the latter stone-benched, and its gable enriched by a crocketed, but figureless, niche. Projected eastwards from each transept is a small outer, and a larger inner chapel, these formerly served as Gild Chapels and Chantries.

Internally the extreme length is 169 feet and the transepts measure $110\frac{1}{2}$ feet across. Supported on four piers of masonry, massive in girth, spanned by as many lofty pointed arches, rises a 14th century square tower, and from within its parapets the most curious of all spires commences its gyratory course skyward for some 230 feet. Apart from its many features of interest, Chesterfield Church possesses an individuality all its own, by reason of the " Crooked Spire," a land-mark celebrated far and wide.

Of its story—whether in prose or in poetry, its problematic origin, its questionable loveliness, its contorted leaning twist, crookedness, or stability—much has been written, but a native Cestrefeldian cannot allow its curt dismissal.

The exact date of its erection is now unknown. Similar construction—timber sheathed with lead—was a favourite method during the 14th century. Amongst other notable examples we may instance those of Old St. Pauls, London, A.D. 1315, and Lincoln Minster, central tower, A.D. 1311 ; both destroyed by storms. Numerous examples remain, but none so distorted as this. Taking into consideration architectural peculiarities, and judging by comparison with others of known date, one has little hesitation in placing its completion as near A.D. 1400. It leans more than six feet to the south-west, and is so flexible that, with little exertion, it can be made to rock perceptibly. Applied in oblong pieces, meeting chevron-wise midway on each of its eight sides, such a disposition of the lead-work produces an appearance of each face being chan-

nelled, which is an illusion. Opinions differ respecting the cause of its twist, in contradistinction to its crookedness, each of which effect had been attributed to the sun's action. Careful examination of the joints, and especially those of its substantial timber base, fails to detect any dislocation by warping, and it would appear to have been the designer's intention to produce a twisted effect only. To accuse him of intentionally aiming at crookedness is, of course, absurd.

Viewed externally from the south, this theory is confirmed, strangely enough, the twisting is actually anti-sunwise. Warping has no doubt caused the deflection about mid-height, so marked towards the south-west. Unseasoned timber (chiefly Spanish Chestnut and oak), erratic method of construction, combined with the excessive difficulty of obtaining a satisfactory result by the method adopted, together with a possible interruption by the visitation of the plague—the Black Death, A.D. 1349—may be factors in its distortion. In support of the latter cause, a careful scrutiny of the masonry shows that, of those dozen craftsmen who fashioned the lowest stage of the tower (two of whom incidentally worked side by side at Dronfield church), there is evidence of but three in the work of the higher middle stage ; while a totally different set of masons dressed the stones of the later "Decorated" work at the western extremity of the nave.

After exhausting many theories concerning the spire, you may perhaps arrive at the simple conclusion that the aim was to commence spirally, which, on ascending should become so modified that the topmost section should finish perfectly upright. Such a steeple, stone-built, may be seen in the older "Corkscrew Spire of Puiseaux," France. The idea had therefore occurred to others, for twisted effects were often sought after by mediæval builders.

Having paid due deference to the steeple we may leave its further discussion, casually note the ancient "pan-cake bell," then proceed within the church where we shall find other absorbing problems with solutions equally elusive.

Entering by the south-transept doorway we notice the first of them—the hoary age-old Font. Here, as in many an old church it is the earliest relic of the Faith extant, the sanctity rightly attached to the consecrated instrument of a holy sacrament having preserved it unchanged through centuries of alterations and re-buildings. In 1644 it was decreed that all roods, fonts, and organs were to be removed and defaced. Some offending portions of our extremely interesting Rood-screen happily remain, whether the font then suffered ejection cannot be stated, but one's earliest impression of it was when serving the office of a geranium pot in the old vicarage garden; from whence it was removed by the late Canon Littleton, and reinstated mounted on steps, base and pedestal. While Norman fonts are numerous, earlier ones are comparatively rare. Some there are, akin to this, whose features and symbolism it is well nigh impossible to classify into any definite period.

Mr. G. Le Blanc Smith's series of "Derbyshire Fonts" in vol. xxvii., June, 1905, of our *Journal*, contains two remarkably good half-tone illustrations which present more detail than is usually recorded. We find ourselves in complete agreement with the opening sentences of the letterpress. "The font here is one of those curious examples of conflicting evidence of styles, which some of the art workers of early mediæval times seem to have delighted in concocting, to the bewilderment and annoyance of the unfortunate archaeologist who seeks to class them individually, and to ascribe a precise date for their origin." Regarding the conclusions arrived at—they may not quite coincide with local theories and

ideas, which ever tend to ascribe origin to the remotest of dates.

“ Here we have a cord-pattern used in pre-Norman times (and in Norman also to a small extent) combined with a floriated cross which might be Early English and foliage of a late Norman style. If we call this font Middle Norman and date it as about 1100, it is as early as it would be safe to deduce.”

Tub-shaped, in height about 2 feet, it no doubt was originally about a foot taller, and probably stood on its own base. It is sufficiently large for a person to stand in during the baptismal ministration, which posture contemporary artistic representations sometimes depict. The decoration of the outside consists of a facade of panels between columns, supported on square bases. The capitals have the ovolo decorated with a spiral design, and the abacus moulding is akin to the Norman pellet. Only a spandrel is left above the column, suggesting the spring of an arch to the other pillars, some twelve inches apart, a proof conclusive that a portion is missing from the top of the font. Within the panels in low relief are convoluted floral scrolls, and loose knotwork, and in another a geometrical figure forming two interlaced and endless knots. If we wished to compare them with similar work we should look not to Norman sculpture, but rather to Lombardic Comacine art of the end of the 9th century, which these figures so much resemble in design, feeling, and symbolism. Occupying another panel is a round-headed cross, or glory, supported on a tall shaft; its head is incised forming a cross patée, and might be taken for a flower on its stalk. The whole surface is so badly weatherworn and pitted that it is most difficult to decipher details. Before assigning its workmanship to Norman times, we would emphatically insist there was a church here in Saxon days (with its chapelries of Old Brampton and

Wingerworth amongst others), and we entertain little doubt this venerable age-worn font occupied an honoured place therein.

Timber-work, at once artistic and historic, abounds here. Standing by the font we cannot but admire the handsome parclose screen of ten bays which forms a partition between transept and the south-east chapels. Redundant with Tudor embellishments, its principal muntins of clustered shafts ascend into, and form the ribs of, its beautiful fan-vaulted canopy. Crocketed tall pinnacles rear themselves through the upper batement-lights towards its depressed four-centred arches. At a lower level a most effective transom displays its cusplings and featherings. Tudor roses ornament the spandrels of the innermost doorway, differing from those of the south door, which are old and patched additions from other screenwork formerly here. Between moulded plinth and wavy-carved rail, panel-heads are embellished with cusplings which terminate in quaint little faces and a variety of floral devices, with quatrefoils in base, all conducing to make it a worthy example of later Perpendicular craftsmanship; although it possesses the local characteristic of the carver having paid less attention to the canopy, rails, and panels on the east side.

Overhead, in the roof above, we may observe a carved timber boss bearing the famous "Wake Knot" badge of the ancient Lords of Chesterfield and Bourne; the original of which may well have been used by Hereward the Wake himself. Those who would learn the traditional and romantic origin of the Knot should refer to Chapter xx., of *Hereward the Wake*, the historical novel, by the Rev. Chas. Kingsley.

The Manor of Chesterfield came to the Wakes by the marriage of Baldwin de Wake with Isabel Briewere. The Hundred of Scarsdale, and the Town of Chesterfield remained with the Wake family for four generations,

when it passed by the marriage of Margaret Wake into the royal family. She married Edmund Earl of Kent, brother of King Edward II. Her only daughter and heiress was Joan, the Fair Maid of Kent, who wedded the Black Prince.

Baldwin Wake took part with the Barons *versus* the King, during the latter days of de Montfort, when a conflict took place on the east side of the town in A.D. 1266. The Royal party was uppermost and some part of the town was fired. Baldwin Wake escaped by flight, but Earl Ferrers was captured hiding under the woosacks in church.

Choir-stalls on the south side are composed of the ancient pew of the Foljambes. This church was the first one restored by Sir Gilbert Scott, who, in his *Memoirs* states " I recollect that there existed in the church, as I found it, a curious and beautiful family-pew or chapel, enclosed by screenwork, to the west of one of the piers of the central tower. This was called the Foljambe chapel, and was a beautiful work of Henry VIII.'s time, what to do with it I did not know, it was right in the way of the arrangements, and could not but have been removed. I at last determined to use its screenwork to form a reredos." Which was accordingly done, later it was removed into the south transept and again to the choir-stalls.

Of our three fine screens this one is latest in date and type. Its panelled coved canopy has a wide projection. On the cornice is carved running vine-foliage and shields. Above this an interlaced pattern forms the cresting, while below it dips a pretty curtain-piece of cuspswork, the points of which are ornamented with a variety of small figures. The rail is low and carved with a wavy foliated design. Divided into six compartments by the principal muntins, each of these is sub-divided into three lights, panelled below the rail, and open above. At the

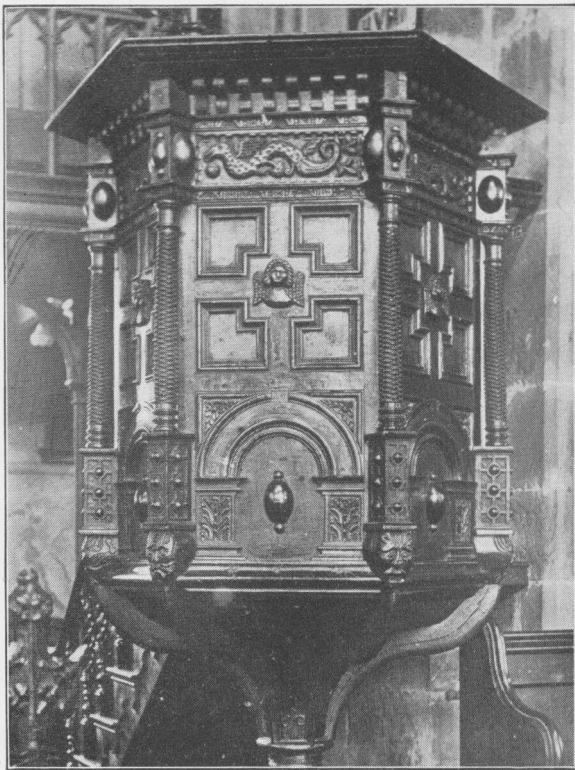
head of each is a central shield of one of the Foljambes or their alliances. We thus notice the "bend between 6 escallops" of Foljambe, the "Chevron between 3 escallops" of Breton, the "bend and 5 cross-crosslets" of Loudham, the "Saltire engrailed bearing the 9 annulets" of Leake of Scarsdale, the ermine saltire of Nevile, the barry of six, Bussex, and the mullet of Ashton. Some of these are seen in impalement with Foljambe, representing various marriages between these families. In fifteen of the panels the escutcheon is flanked by a smaller one on either side, charged with a leg coupé at thigh, booted and spurred—the jamb of the Foljambe—and the other an unusual heraldic badge, surmounted by three roundles, a cross with the lower limb divided at base and bifurcated, the arms being slanted in bend, at either end. The central shield is supported in the heads of the open panels by intertwined foliage, and while the rest of the screen is excellently worked in the late Gothic manner, this portion of the embellishment appears later and does not follow the usual traditional lines. Its fellow on the north side—the Markham screen—is a beautiful modern replica, executed in Chesterfield, and bears the heraldic insignia of that local family. Superlative in interest, however, is the screenwork forming the entrance to Holy Cross Chapel, in the north transept, for there we find the breast-summer of the old Rood-beam, boldly sculptured with the "Emblems of the Passion."

When Gilbert Scott commenced the refitting of Chesterfield church in 1843, he found the rood-screen to have been pulled down and sold, but protested and it was recovered, and re-erected in its present position in place of the central site of former days. The screen now consists of five bays, each compartment being spaced into three lights—an abnormal arrangement. Although perpendicular work, the muntins do not run up into the traceried fenestration, and the spacing of the batement

lights above form an even number, out of agreement with the lower work. This would lead one to assume that its origin was early in the 15th century, *circa* 1430. The sculptured figurework appears to be somewhat later, perhaps between 1465 and 1480. To quote Mr. Aymer Vallance, F.S.A., from his *Roods, Screens, and Lofts in Derbyshire Churches*—"I know nothing that so much resembles this admirably appropriate ornament as that in a corresponding position in the stone pulpitum at Canterbury Cathedral; and in a wooden parclose at Hitchin. And yet I have no hesitation in pronouncing that the Chesterfield example surpasses the others in beauty and variety of design. It is, in a word, a very model of its kind."

At the extreme north is an eagle, the emblem of St. John, next a curious composite beast, which may perhaps typify the lion of St. Mark; it is however a curious medley of the animal kingdom, with a chain round its neck, and like the former accompanied by a scroll. Then follows a row of six demi-angels clad in albs, and issuant from conventional cloud-wreaths, the tips of their wings cross each others, pointing downwards. Each angel bears one or more "Emblems of the Passion." The Crown of Thorns—The Cross—The Vesture and two Dice—A Shield of the Five Sacred Wounds—The Spear and the three Nails—The Scourge and the Hammer. The latter abruptly terminates the series, but it is evident other figures and symbols succeeded them to the right hand.

Another interesting timber structure is the Jacobean pulpit in the nave. Hexagonal in form, with sides panelled and figured in the manner of the times, at each outer angle a gracefully fashioned shaft lends support to the deskwork above. The whole rests on a single oak column. Balusters supporting the handrail are worthy of notice, their wonderfully executed spirals must have required a



CHESTERFIELD CHURCH.
THE FONT.
JACOBAN PULPIT.

deal of patience in manipulating. In Jacobean days the pulpit occupied a more elevated position, as may be seen from the hook which is affixed in the spandrel above the second column westward, then forming the support of the sound-board. Enclosed on every side with spacious galleries, the east vista blocked by the organ, parcelled out with horse-box pews, disfigured with unsightly stoves, the whole dominated by this lofty pulpit, and illuminated by the warm glow of 24 candles from each of the beautiful Renaissance chandeliers (given by Godfrey Heathcote in 1760), which were suspended from the flat plaster ceiling; however quaint the nave appeared in 1840, we gladly welcome the return to Gothic proportions.

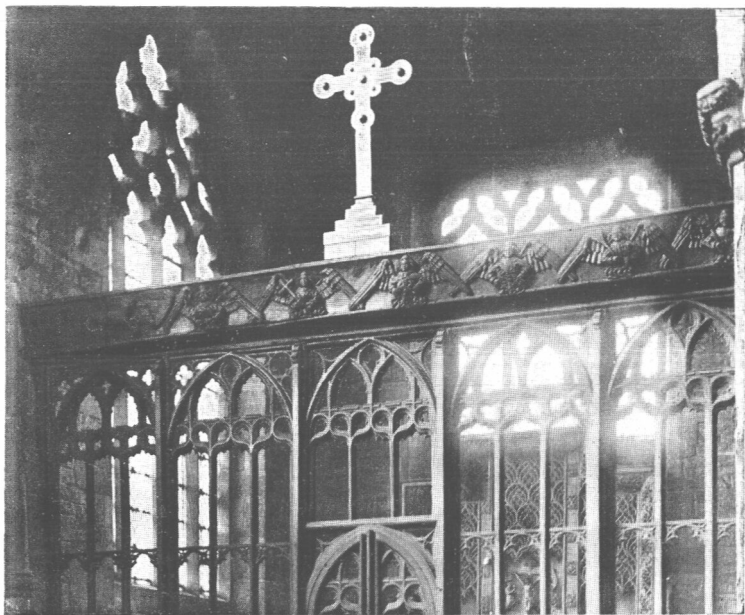
In diversity of design, and vigour of execution, the pew-heads in the nave, A.D. 1843, merit inspection. Other timberwork we might notice is the Elizabethan altar-table in the Chapel of Intercession (extreme south), and portions of the 12th century roof, including the carved ridge-piece, to be found within the railings of the Foljambe Chapel, and the corbel angels supporting the roof of the same chapel.

Herein, beneath the east window, are ranged the handsome sepulchral monuments of the Foljambes A.D. 1516-1604. Very noticeable is a shield on the east wall blazoned—Arg: a chevron between three escallops gules—Breton. Quartered with this is argent, on a bend azure, five cross-crosslets, or—for Loudham. These escutcheons are found on the Foljambe screen in impalement, expressing thereby the marriage of Sir John Loudham who came into the manor of Walton by wedding Isabel, daughter and heiress of Sir Robert le Breton. Their eldest daughter Margaret, a co-heiress—mated with Thomas Foljambe, and so the Walton estates came to the family about 1389. Oldest is the Gothic chest-tomb, next the High Altar, to the memory of Henry Foljambe

(died A.D. 1499), brother and heir of the third Sir Thomas of Walton. He married Benedicta, daughter of Sir Henry Vernon of Haddon. Their effigies are figured in brasswork on the dark marble slab, with the escutcheons of Breton, Loudham, Foljambe, and the fretty shield of Vernon. These brasses are modern replicas, the originals having been removed, they were renewed by the late Earl of Liverpool. The lower portion of the tomb is alabaster with finely wrought crocketed canopies. In each compartment are the figures of a knight and a lady, intended for the seven sons and seven daughters of Henry and Benedicta, with shield bearers and other figures. This monument was carved by Henry Harpur and William Moorecock, of Burton-on-Trent. By an agreement dated October 26th, 1510, £5 was paid on account, and a further £5 on completion. On the 9th June, 1489, this Henry Foljambe and Sir John Leake of Sutton had a covenant of marriage executed, wherein it was arranged that Henry's son Godfrey, or in the event of his death Thomas Foljambe his second son, should marry Catherine, daughter of John Leake, or in the event of her death, Muriel, the second daughter. It was further arranged that John Leake, son and heir of the said John, was to marry Jane, daughter of the said Henry Foljambe.

On the floor adjoining is a dark pitted marble slab bearing two effigies in brass. One is the Sir Godfrey alluded to, his head resting on his great heaume, his feet on a stag, and his hands clasped in prayer. Over his plate-mail he wears his Tabard. Foljambe and Breton escutcheons quartered thereon, and the sleeves showing the full quarterings of Loudham, Foljambe and Breton. The long mantle of the lady is ornamented with the saltire and annulets of Leake (as on the screen the saltire is not represented "engrailed," which it should be).

High Sheriff of Derbyshire A.D. 1519, 1524, and 1536,



CHESTERFIELD CHURCH.
PORTION OF ROOD SCREEN.
THE FOLJAMBE TOMBS.

this (4th) Sir Godfrey died in 1541, his wife Katherine having pre-deceased him in 1529. Next to the right is a very beautiful Renaissance tomb bearing the recumbent effigies of the 5th Sir Godfrey, d. 1585, and Trothea, daughter of William Tyrwhitt of Kettleby, carved life-sized in alabaster.

Attached to the south wall, dated 1592, and erected by Godfrey, son of the fifth Sir Godfrey, during his lifetime, is the florally decorated tomb of Renaissance work, and mural monument which he erected to himself prior to his death in 1594. He also placed the other elaborate mural monuments to record the memory of his parents and grandparents. That to Sir James (died 1558), on the east wall, presents Sir James kneeling and his two wives, the first Alice Fitzwilliam, and the second Constantia Littleton.

To effect the destruction of all images of a religious nature, the order of 1547 was passed. Humanity, then as now, in Tudor days as well as our own, must have its symbolism of some sort, so here are placed the emblems of mortality, in taste often questioned. A plump boy with a toy windmill for youth, a tottering old man, for age, and a skeleton figure for death with his spear and spade. The usual gruesome appurtenances are also introduced—winding sheet, bier, skulls, bones and grave-diggers tools, making a sorry comparison with the former imagery of the church. In the south-east angle a peacock in its pride is placed on the adjacent monument. Occupying the eastern position appears to typify it "day," or the "Resurrection," while its fellow to the west is an owl, the bird of night.

Kneeling on the first table-tomb is the figure of an armoured knight, the neck of which appears to have, at some time, been mutilated and curiously restored, giving it an abnormally long neck. Formerly it stood on a pedestal of its own and is supposed to represent Thomas

Foljambe (1604). On this tomb also rests a huge bone, probably from a whale or some mammoth, known as the "rib of the Dun Cow." It bears the name of "Fletcher" carved in good Gothic characters upon it. There also rests on this slab the small earthenware mug found in the nave roof, left there forgotten by a workman after he had plastered a portion of the ceiling, some two hundred years ago. The worn alabaster slab on the floor is a memorial to George Foljambe of Brimington (1588) and attached to the south wall is a long lost brass to Jane, wife of Thomas Foljambe, 1451.

Loyalty of the house of Foljambe to the Anglican Church is exemplified in the remarkable sequence of these tombs—before the Reformation, during its stormy crux, and well on towards the end of Queen Elizabeth's long reign.

Glazed in the south window above, we notice four shields, one is charged with the three lions passant guardant of Plantagenet. Over this is a golden chief displaying three torteaux, really the chief of Wake escutcheon, which a modern plumber has adapted as a chief for Plantagenet (Barry or and gules, in chief three torteaux; the bars being noticeable in a quatrefoil below). He has also turned the glass inside out, making the lions face sinister, but—how like a plumber! Arg: a cross recercelée gu: (Colvile): and gules, a cross recercelée arg: for Beck. Anthony Beck was a dean of Lincoln, and his nephew Thomas was Bishop of Lincoln in 1342. These four heater-shaped shields, in pot-metal glass of the early 14th century, are all that remain of some forty listed as here in the year 1592, and with the sole exception of a disc of patchwork (c. 1500), in a nave window, are the only remains of much ancient glazing. In 1789, there was in one of the east windows "a satirical representation in glass of a mitred fox in a pulpit preaching to geese, and a cock Pegasus retiring behind. Pes be here in."

Architecturally considered, the church, as it now stands, emanates from the early 13th century. Of this style extensive remains are found in each transept, and especially in the eastern facade of each. In the north transept an octagonal column with ornate capital, sculptured with foliage and figure work of the period, placed between two responds of disengaged shafts, each of which has an annulet at mid-shaft, and deeply undercut floralwork, applied stiffly upright on to the round capital, and a trough-mould at base, bespeaks these bays and arches unmistakeably Early English. In the wall overhead, and in agreement with them on the opposite wall are corbel human figures boldly executed, of a crowned figure, the Chesterfield Imp., the fat burgher, and others, which appear to have been corbel supports of an older roof. Within the Holy Cross Chapel adjoining, the large hagioscope, or squint to the High Altar, which was discovered some years ago walled-up and forgotten¹—is the broken bowl of the oldest piscina. It is contained under a semi-circular arch which once was decked with an effective leaf-moulding, and under it is a trefoil head, decorated with a circle containing a trefoil on each of its simple cusps.

Outside the south chapel (Foljambe) is an extensive corbel table of Early English figures.

To use alternate forms was a common practice at this period, and, as in the north transept, so we find in the south, the respond of four orders of clustered and engaged shafts divided by two sets of annulets into a tripartite respond, adjoining the south wall, is followed next by an unusual but beautiful column, combining in itself this same principle of alternation; though octagonal in form, the alternate round and fillet with which it is sculptured gives it a round appearance. The plinth of

¹ See Vol. VIII., p. 160 of this *Journal* where Dr. Cox gives an account of its being opened out and restored.

the external south wall, and bases of two columns in the west wall are also E.E., the latter showing there was some extension, or divergence of the ground place in those days, hereabouts.

This 13th century structure was much more ornate in decorative enrichment than the so-called "Decorated" one which began to come into being about A.D. 1300. The lowest stage of the tower is the earliest portion of this rebuilding. You may follow its progress by the mouldings employed, so very simple, round and plain at first, with but a single fillet running up the face of the outermost shaft, and a simple chamfer where joined to the wall. In the adjacent responds attached to these massive piers of masonry, a fillet soon displaces the chamfer of the earlier work, and by the time the nave columns were raised on their tall bases fillets abound, giving so marked an effect of upright lines, heralding the approach of the style known as "Perpendicular."

Judging by its late curvilinear details, the nave would appear to have been completed a little prior to A.D. 1360. The scroll-mould is the most conspicuous member in the capitals of its columns, and is at once dignified and restrained. As shown by its altered window-tracery the west end is thoroughly Perpendicular in type, though it would seem this facade replaced one of Decorated lines, for a little while ago, when the buttresses were renewed, in turning the stones, to use them over again, Decorated figure-sculpture was found inside the masonry.

Over the arches of the six bays, the hood-mould is continuous, and we remark the same usage over aisle windows and along the wall between. In the 15th century clerestory above, the hood-mould is wanting, having unfortunately been ruthlessly hacked away; presumably it interfered with the plaster of Stuart and later days.

Nave windows are worked in the very latest type of

“Curvilinear”—note the cavetto of the jambs, and the slender flanking columns supported on bases so lofty as to appear quite “Perpendicular” in feeling.

Holy Cross Chapel window has interesting tracery in Flamboyant lines, and those in the south wall of the Foljambe Chapel are rather earlier 14th century work, reticulated tracery, or network of quatrefoils. Perpendicular examples are afforded by the renewals of the larger windows, such as those at the east of the Foljambe and St. Katherine’s chapels, and some of the embrasures now containing modern designs, presented in 1843 tracery of the stiffly rectilinear or perpendicular type. A remarkable return to Gothic is seen in the north window of the transept, dated 1769; though of interest in itself, yet its features are heavy and inartistic, missing entirely—as might be expected at that era—the spirit of Gothic.

Standing at the west doorway and looking to the High Altar one is surprised to what an extent the choir is “oriented” towards the north-east. In fact the tower is proportionately as distorted to the north-east, as is the spire to the south-west, for no angle of the tower is rectangular. The tower arch likewise appears to lean somewhat to the north side. Whether it is really an ancient symbolical representation of the Redeemer’s head so hanging on Calvary’s Cross—whether the inclination is accidental, or whether a correction of the line of orientation, is another of those queries of the ancient building.

Segmental arches between transepts and nave aisles are unusual and remarkable. On the south side it is quite apparent such arrangement was not the original intention. This will be realized by the imperfect manner the superincumbent masonry is imposed on the older respond. Actually they are flying buttresses, possibly placed so as to take the extra thrust when the spire was added.

In existing arrangement the Sanctuary of Chesterfield

Church consists of the High Altar, and an array of ancient subsidiary altars. On either side of the Great Altar are two chapels, those of Holy Cross and St. Katherine to the north, and the Foljambe Chapel and Chapel of Intercession to the south ; the latter, though the smallest, has many points of interest, not the least being its eastern termination which is in the form of a polygonal apse ; an architectural rarity in the locality. In four of these chapels the mediaeval piscina remains marking the site of an ancient altar.

Formerly Holy Cross Chapel housed the Gild of that name, and the " Chauntrye att the Alter of the Holy Crosse." The Foljambe Chapel has been alluded to as St. Mary's Quire, or the Lady Chapel. There was also an Altar, or Chapel of St. George, besides the Chantry of St. Michael the Archangel. (Note the Brass affixed to the south transept wall dated M^o. C^v (1500) to the memory of John Verdon, a priest of the chantry). The Chantry of St. Mary Magdalene (A.D. 1364) is also mentioned as being within the Chantry of St. Michael. St. Michael's Chantry is understood to have been situate in the south transept, probably where the Children's Altar now stands. It was founded by Roger de Chestrefeld, A.D. 1357, who, owing to the scarcity of chaplains when the " Black Death " had passed, agreed with the bishop and chaplain to a moderation of the chantry rules, which were very exacting. The resident chaplain was thereby relieved from saying many of the accustomed prayers, and the " Office of the Dead " (Sarum) at the Tomb of the Founder's father and mother, and the daily offices in the choir, except on Sundays and double feasts, provided he be not absent more than twenty-one days in the year, and say the hours in some fit place, and the " Office of the Dead " when not honestly hindered.

Built in the south wall, at the east end of the nave aisle, is a crocketed canopied niche, ogee shaped, long

known as the "Founder's Tomb." Occupying the receptacle is a recumbent effigy of a priest—15th century in character—vested in alb, the extremities of the stole showing over it, a chasuble acutely pointed, the amice is arranged collar-like close round the neck, and the hands are conjoined at the breast in prayer. On the head the close-fitting scullcap, or birretum, is represented; the feet pointing to the east, rest on a lion, and the head (hair of which is slightly wavy) has been supported by two small angels. It is plain the niche was not intended to accommodate this figure, for a portion of the structure has had to be cut away to allow its admittance. Perhaps it may be the effigy of Richard de Chestrefeld, rector of Wykyneston, in the diocese of Lincoln, who refounded St. Michael's Chantry in the year 1370. Roger and Richard de Chestrefeld were both ecclesiastics. Thomas Durant married their sister, hence the patronage passed to the local Durrant family. A portion of the north nave aisle was known as the Durrant Quire, and the space by the Founder's tomb was fenced off by the Foljambe Screen, as we have already noticed, and called the Foljambe Quire, prior to the re-pewing of 1843.

Of ancient gilds there were three:—

The Gild of St. Mary commenced January 1st, 1218. King Edward I. granted a Gild of Merchants in 1294—the Gild of the Holy Cross—which in 1393, by royal licence, we find amalgamated with the former, as Gild of Blessed Ladye and Holy Cross. An ancient Gild of the Smiths (simply "ffabrorum") had a separate identity up to 1387, and was then merged in the Gild of Holy Cross of the Merchants of Chesterfield. Although their shrinkage made it necessary for them to combine with Holy Cross Gild, it would seem their own ordinances were upheld, for they are set out at length in the return: "To keep and faithfully perform these constitutions, all the brethren have bound themselves by touch of relics."

In the church of All Saints' they appear to have worshipped before the greater Cross in the nave.

It is unfortunate that so few local records are now available relating to these gilds of mediaeval Cestrefeld, and were it not for the hardship imposed on the fraternities in A.D. 1388, any reliable information we might possess would be small indeed. By the authority of a parliament held that year at Cambridge, Richard II. issued a writ requiring that masters and wardens of all gilds should send to the royal chancery, before the Feast of Purification 1389, a return describing the foundation, and form of government, of the gilds over which they presided, stating their oath of entry, their feast and meetings, liberties and customs, together with a list of their property and goods, all particulars of their constitution, and copies of the charters, or letters patent, if possessed of any.

Unlike the Chantry Certificates (Henry VIII., 1547), these returns were compiled by the brethren in person, and the result is less formal, and at once a more sympathetic and realistic record than would be the efforts of inquisitorius strangers. Thus we obtain a more detailed account, and a wider insight regarding their activities. Mr. Toulmin Smith was the first to call attention to these documents in the Public Record Office, and from his translations of the original Latin script much light has been thrown on the purpose of these ancient gilds. Their quaint rules—to uphold the due rights of the church, maintain the rights of the lord of the place, guard the liberties of the town, their mutual assistance in sickness, and defence at law, the fines and dues for provision of wax-lights, for use and ceremonial, common to all gilds, their primitive form of assurance in sickness and poverty, insurance against robbery and fire, the latter so necessary by reason of their timber habitations, the solemn obligation of secrecy respecting the

affairs of the gild—have all been recorded at length elsewhere.¹

Attached to the return of the “Gild of the Blessed Mary” is a very long list of the possessions of the fraternity, showing it to have been very wealthy. A local list of A.D. 1385 enumerates fifty-one different holders of its goods and property, for use and mutual profit.

The condition of the original Latin document is very bad and several pieces destroyed. That of the “Smiths” is similar, and torn, attached to it “a fragmentary waif from the lamentable destruction which these invaluable Rolls have undergone, remains, sent up sewed together with this. Not one line is complete, nor is one ordinance left. Only enough to let us know it was the return made by the Gild of the Holy Cross of the Merchants of Chesterfield; and to tell us with a strange mockery, that the gild of which this relic alone remains, was ‘imperpetuum duraturam’; and that the brethren were bound, for ever ‘conservare, manutenerere, et sustentare,’” its statutes and ordinances.

Distinction between religious and secular gilds was a late development. The former often included all the prominent people of the parish, as was the case here. The tombs of Henry and Benedicta Foljambe, and Godfrey Foljambe have been referred to. In life they were members of St. Mary’s Gild, as was many another opulent inhabitant of the ancient borough. Thus it appears the gild consisted of aldermen, brethren and sisters.

Nowadays we fail to apprehend the important place occupied by such doctrines as those of Purgatory and the efficacy of masses and alms as a means of deliverance therefrom, so vital in the days of the gilds. Chantries and altars were established by the munificence of private

¹ See Vol. VIII., p. 162 of this *Journal*; also *English Gilds*, Early English Text Socy. (by N. Trübner & Co., 60 Paternoster Row).

donors, for their soul's health in life, as well as therein to celebrate the Holy Sacrifice on their behalf after death. Guild brethren, unable to provide a chantry for themselves individually, combined on a co-operative principle, through their fraternity, to protect their religious and civil liberties, and mysteries, or crafts, and assure themselves the benefits of Holy Church—then, and to them, of absolute necessity. In many towns the guilds became gradually merged in the governing authority of the place, in some the guild practically ruled the town.

Corporate bodies had long been forbidden to acquire land without the consent of the feudal lord. In 1279 the statute "De Religiosis" or "Statute of Mortmain" was passed to prevent the alienation of lands so as to deprive the crown, or feudal lord, of their dues. Its effect on the guilds was to make them apply for licenses of foundation, allowing them to hold lands in "Mortmain." Thereby many of the ancient guilds have been recorded as founded when the royal charter was granted, whereas it is known numbers existed centuries earlier. Confiscation, however, came at length, for by A.D. 1545, the king's need was so pressing that the property of all "Colleges, free chapels, chantries, hospitals, fraternities, brotherhoods, guilds, and stipendary priests" was doomed. In all 90 collegiate bodies, 110 hospitals, and 2374 guilds, chantries and free-chapels were destroyed. The king was not much richer, the realm did not benefit and the poor were only made poorer as the result.

According to Mr. Pym Yeatman's researches these guilds appear to have been seized by Eglington and Higford, St. Michael's Chantry by one Venables, while other properties and farms—some in distant localities—were shared between Lord Clinton, the Earl of Shrewsbury, and Messrs. Place and Spakeman.

As the brass of John Verdon, chaplain of St. Michael's Chantry, and the tomb slab (denuded of its brass) to

John Pepys, chaplain of the Gild of Holy Cross, appear as the only material reminders in church of gilds and chantries, so the "Bidding Prayer," recited each Sunday morning, may perchance be the sole spiritual legacy from the gilds. It has been found contained in the rules of a London gild, and has been used from time immemorial in Chesterfield church, and especially on the occasions when Mayor and Corporation have attended divine service in civic state.

II.—GILDS AND CORPORATION INSIGNIA.

By W. JACQUES.

THE Bibliography of Gilds is now somewhat extensive and is still growing, but in spite of careful research and the opening up of previously unsuspected sources of information, our knowledge is by no means complete. These ancient gilds were of different kinds, Religious and Social Gilds, Merchant Gilds, Gilds of Merchant Adventurers, and Traders and Crafts Gilds, and Chesterfield supplies examples of at least the first and last of these.

The Gild of St. Mary was commenced on January 1st, 1218, and its members were required "to uphold the rights of the Church, and of the lord of the place, and to guard all their liberties within the town and without and to give trusty help thereto whenever it may be needed" The regulations of this gild are quoted *in extenso* by the late Dr. Cox in the account of Chesterfield Church in his work on "The Churches of Derbyshire,"¹ and it is not necessary, therefore, to refer to them at any length. The chief officials were the Alderman, the Dean and the

¹ See also Vol. VIII., p. 162 of this *Journal*.