



The Antiquities of Wallingford.

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11.—ST. LUCIAN'S CHURCH stood five poles southward of the Almshouse* ; and the site, at the edge of the Chalmore Gardens, is well identified by the bones which have been often and quite recently disinterred there. It was evidently the Parish Church for the eastern half of the district outside the earthworks, between the Mill Brook and Bradford's Brook, while the whole or part of the western half of this district was in St. Rumbold's parish. Thus St. Lucian's would seem to have been connected from the first both with the parish of St. Leonard within the town and with the neighbouring parish of Sotwell. A Charter of King Henry I. granted "the Churches of Saints Lucian and Leonard in Wallingford with all their appurtenances" to the Priory of St. Fritheswithe in Oxford, and the grant was confirmed by a Charter of Pope Hadrian IV., which specifies "the Church of St. Lucian with the Chapel of Sottewelle and all its appurtenances."† Afterwards, when the parish of St. Lucian was absorbed in that of St. Leonard, the Chapelry of Sotwell belonged to the latter Church, from which it was severed in 1868. St. Lucian was a priest of Antioch, martyred in the early part of the fourth century, and was a popular Saint in the Middle Ages. We may presume that the dedication of this Church, like that of St. Leonard, is of Norman date, and that both had been recently founded when they were given by Henry I. to St. Fritheswithe's. Its connection with the Oxford Priory seems to have given rise to a groundless idea that it was itself a monastic house.‡

12.—THE HOSPITAL OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST, with its free Chapel, was immediately outside the south gate, on the west of the open space known as the Lower Green. The remains of it exist in the house which occupies the angle between this green and the lane now called St. John's Road. Skermer speaks of "the ruins of the chancel still to be seen" ; and the massive north wall of the front

* Hedges' History of Wallingford, II., 374.

† Dugdale, Monasticon (1655), I., 174, 175.

‡ Hedges' History of Wallingford, II., 298.

garden of this house is evidently ancient, and is probably a part of these ruins. The cellar of the house was certainly either the cellar of the old hospital or the crypt of its Church ; and the general aspect of the house, including the high-pitched roof of the western portion, is sufficient evidence that the entire fabric is in all material points of mediæval date. Skeletons have recently been found in the garden near the south-west corner of the adjoining house, now called St. John's, showing the situation of the burial-ground. The foundation consisted of a master, brethren, and sisters, who were engaged in works of charity, and it is described as being in the parish of St. Ruald. The earliest record of its existence appears to be a grant of the year 1240, when a message in the parish of St. Leonard, "within the south gate of Wallingford," was granted to it. Certificates in the reign of Henry VIII. speak of it as having been founded by the inhabitants of the town.* In connection with it there was a Hospital of St. Mary Magdalen for Lepers across the river at Newnham Murren.†

13.—THE PRIORY OF THE HOLY TRINITY was the great monastic establishment of Wallingford. It was a Convent of Benedictine Monks, founded by Robert D'Oilgi as a cell of St. Alban's Abbey, in the days of Paul of Caen, who became Abbot in 1077. It stood on the north of the High Street, about midway between Castle Street and the west gate, and its grounds occupied nearly the whole of the north-west quarter of the town, including the meadow now known as the Bull Croft. Mr. Hedges‡ mentions the discovery of massive foundations of flint work on more than one occasion ; of skeletons, and a small stone coffin ; also of an ornamental seal, and several encaustic tiles. Among these last, which are laid in the pavement of a summer-house at the northern end of the Croft, one or two bear the figures of lions, and the rest have various designs of fleurs-de-lys and roses, and other ornamental patterns. In the wall of a sunk fence which formed the eastern boundary of the grounds, now in the garden of the Croft, there is a fragment of a Norman arch bearing a good grotesque mask with beak and ears. Portions of chevron moulding and other fragments are built into the walls of buildings at the southern end, and in the garden-wall of "The Priory" there is a fine early English stoup or piscina. Near the south-western corner of the enclosure is

* Hedges' History of Wallingford, II., 370, 371.

† Ibid, 372.

‡ Ibid, II., 358.

the fish-pond, with a piece of flint wall on its southern margin ; and at the south-eastern corner a portion of an old building forms the northern end of the cottages in Victoria Place. There is thus an abundant series of relics of the monastic buildings along the north of the upper part of High Street. In 1525, April 19th, Geoffrey, the last Prior, surrendered the house to the King's Commissioners. Five years later "half the Priory Church" was bought by the bridgemen for the repair of the bridge, and six score loads of its stones were conveyed thither.* Several of these stones, with Norman diaper-work and chevron ornament, are to be seen in the arches of the bridge on the Oxfordshire bank. It may also be presumed that the gabled house of Tudor date facing the Kine Croft, and known as Stone Hall, is built with the materials, as it occupies part of the site, of the Priory. The next house still preserves the name of "The Priory." A parish of Holy Trinity is mentioned in grants of property preserved in the Corporation chest† ; whence it would seem that the Church was parochial as well as monastic. It now forms part of the parish of St. Mary-the-More. The seal of the Priory represented our Saviour seated on a rainbow, raising His right hand in benediction and holding a book in His left. It is attached to a deed of the fifteenth century among the documents of the Corporation, and is figured by Mr. Hedges in his frontispiece.

14.—THE COLLEGIATE CHURCH OF ST. NICHOLAS, within the Castle, was certainly in existence in King John's reign, and was probably an appendage of the Castle from earlier times. It is said to have been founded by Milo Crispin,‡ the second Norman Lord ; possibly in succession to a Saxon Chapel. It doubtless served for the inhabitants of the Castle, while the neighbouring Churches of All Hallows and St. Peter were built for the benefit of the dependents about the Castle gates on the west and south. The precincts of the Castle are still extra-parochial. In the 10th year of Edward I. the Church of St. Nicholas was liberally endowed by Edmund, Earl of Cornwall, the King's cousin, who is often spoken of as its founder, and who brought his bride here in 1272. The endowments were further increased by Edward the Black Prince, whose widow, Joan of Kent, died here. The Church then possessed a dean and six prebendaries or chaplains, together with six clerks and four choristers. It was suppressed at the commencement of the reign of

* Hedges' History of Wallingford, II., 254.

† Ibid., II., 336.

‡ Lyson's Berkshire.

Edward VI., and the buildings were purchased shortly afterwards by the Dean and Chapter of Christ Church, Oxford, as a place of retirement in times of pestilence. A few years later they were for the most part demolished, and eventually the site passed into private hands. The situation of it, between the inner and outer moats of the Castle, has already been described. The existing remains of the Collegiate buildings (which about half-a-century ago were a malt-house) are a west wall with a doorway and four windows of perpendicular date, and a lofty and massive south wall, with part of the Church tower at its eastern end. This tower was built by Dean Underhill (1510 to 1536), as we learn from Leland :—"The Deane afore Dr. London that now is, built a fair steple of stone at the west end of the Collegiate Chapel, in making whereof he defaced, without license, a piece of the King's lodging, joining to the eastward end of the Chapel. The Decane hath a fair lodging of tymbre, within the Castle, and to it is joined a place for the ministers of the Chapel." There is also extant a letter of Dr. London, the last Dean, to the Lord Privy Seal, supposed to be of the year 1538, in which he states that King Henry VIII. "dydde within thees viij. years past bylde newly the hole Colledge, in maner all, as well the Deans as the Prests and Clerks lodgyngs." From the light which these two passages* throw upon the ruins, we gather that the Church has entirely disappeared with the exception of its western tower, and that the lodgings which Henry VIII. built for the Collegiate body, being of timber, have also disappeared. Leland is puzzling when he states that "a piece of the King's lodging *joining to the eastward end of the Chapel*" was defaced by the erection of a *western* steeple. It looks as if he meant to say "the King's lodging *joining eastward to the end of the Chapel*"; in which case this "King's lodging" would be the existing buildings,—possibly appropriated by the King to his own use when he built the new lodging of timber for the Dean and clergy. The ground adjacent to them is known as the priests' orchard. The portion of the tower which remains is now surmounted by a modern turret, in which several encaustic tiles from the Church and various other relics of the Castle are preserved by Mr. Hedges. The graveyard was, as usual, on the south of the Church, the site being now on the south-east of the ruins, where "human bones are frequently turned up in the garden ground."†

(To be continued.)

* Quoted by Hedges, II., 296, 297.

† Hedges' History of Wallingford, II., 308.