

Anno Domini 1586. Mr. Doctor James preached at the prishe Church of Spelsburye vpon Blacke Muday in Ester weeke vppon the Lordes Praier. [April 4.]

Mr. Simon Culverway, of Marten Colledge, preached at Spelsburye the xiith of June. [Sunday.]

Mr. Doctor James preached on Mihlemas Day, anno Domni 1586. [Thursday.]

The Register has the following :—

Receyved 14 (\*) Aprilis 1620 of Sir Hen. Lea, Knight and Barronett, the summe of xiijs. iiij*d*. to be distributed vnto the poore of the parish of Spelsbury; wch money was for a [P] licence wch was granted him by the Lord Bishopp of Oxford for eating flesh that Lent. I say receyved. Wm. Negose, Vicar.

1634. Collected in the Chirch of Spelsbury, 5 Octobris, for the repayreing of the Church of St. Paule, in London, three shillings, six pence.

Anno Domi 1622. I William Bronker, some times Vicar of Hungerford, in ye couty of Barks, preached one sermon at Spelsbuie ye first dae of September, authorised by John, Lord Bishop of Oxford.

per me, Gulu. Bronker.

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\* [Maunday Thursday.]

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## St. Katharine's Hospital and Chapel in Regent's Park, London.

*Abridgment of a Paper read before the O. L. A. B. R. Society,  
Feb. 1st, 1910, at Oxford, by H. M. Poynter.*

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**M**AY I begin by explaining the title of my paper, for the word Hospital attached to the present building in the Regent's Park, and to its predecessor, Saint Katharine-by-the-Tower (of London), does not imply, as in the modern use, a cure-house for the sick, but has the secondary meaning, more common in the Middle Ages, of "a place built for the support of the poor, or for shelter or entertainment," as Johnson's Dictionary has it.

A brief sketch of its history and appearance should be of interest to our Archæological Society of Ladies, because it was founded and maintained by royal women, and is the one piece of patronage belonging by law to the Queens of England, accounted a part of their dower. They alone nominate the Master, the Brethren, and the Sisters of the Hospital, and have power to alter the statutes. Moreover, the Sisters have equal rights with the Brethren as voters at the meetings of the Chapter.

The Hospital of St. Katharine was founded on the north bank of the Thames, to the east of the Tower, and a little south of Smithfield, in 1148 by Queen Matilda, for the repose of the souls of her children, Baldwin and Matilda; and for the maintenance of a Master, Sisters, Brethren, and other poor persons. It was built on ground belonging to the Augustinian Friars of Holy Trinity, a community newly settled there, in great repute for their piety and wealth. To them Queen Matilda confided the care and rule of her Hospital, which she dedicated to Saint Katharine of Alexandria, whose fame had been brought by the first crusaders to Western Europe where it rapidly spread and flourished. She became one of the most popular saints of the twelfth and following centuries in England, where 80 churches, ancient and modern, exist dedicated to her. Queen Matilda's kinship with the Duke of Flanders, Godefroi de Bouillon, first Christian King of Jerusalem, the hero of the first crusade and of Tasso's "Jerusalem Delivered," may have determined her choice of this patroness, whose festival on November 25th is kept by old villagers in Somerset as Kattern's Day. I am told that in Northamptonshire it was kept under the same name in honour of the local heroine, Queen Katherine of Aragon!

The Hospital remained under the Augustinians' rule until 1272, when Queen Eleanor of Castile determined to oust the Friars and take the management into her own hands. With the help of the Bishop of London she succeeded, in defiance of the civil law and the protests of Pope Urban VI, in obtaining the surrender of the Hospital, with all its rights and privileges, to herself. The intent of her new foundation was "for the health of the soul of her late husband, Henry III, and of the souls of the preceding and succeeding Kings and Queens." Every day of the year up to November 16 she ordered twelve pence to be given to twenty-four poor men for aforesaid souls, and on November 16 one thousand poor men were each to receive a penny, this being the anniversary of the death of her husband, still commemorated in Magdalen College Chapel by

special psalms, lessons, and prayers at the morning service, as he was the founder of the Hospital of St. John the Baptist, incorporated in the College by William of Waynflete. The service is held on November 20 instead of November 16, owing to a confusion having arisen between the Festivals of St. Edmund the Archbishop (16th) and St. Edmund the King (20th).

This re-foundation by Queen Eleanor deprives St. Katharine's of its just claim to be the oldest surviving ecclesiastical foundation in England. It now stands fourth, giving precedence to Peterhouse Cambridge, and Merton, and Balliol Colleges. The successors of Queen Eleanor enriched her Hospital with right royal gifts of money and lands. Notable amongst them is Queen Philippa, who declares in her deed of gift, that "mindful of so many and so great benefits, and considering how the overflowing of divine compassion has enriched us, his simple handmaid, with many good things in this life and the abundance of riches, we have chosen the glorious Virgin of God and Martyr Katharine, the handmaid of chastity, to be our mediatrix with God, and also our happy and blessed patroness."

This Queen directs the Brethren and Sisters should wear "a strait coat or clothing, and over that a mantel of black colour on which shall be placed the sign of the holy Katharine"—the toothed wheel intended for her martyrdom. "Green cloaths, or those intirely red, or any tending to dissoluteness shall not at all be used." No Brother nor sister should go abroad without permission from the Master, nor ever after the ringing of the firebells (*couvre-feu*) in the City of London. If need arise she orders the Brethren to be punished "by curtailment of their victuals and drink, not by stripes." If ill they are to have their full allowance of food in their chambers, where the Sisters' meals were always served. The daily diet consisted of two loaves of bread, one white, one brown, of the weight of sixty shillings; one flagon of ale, or one penny in lieu thereof; two pieces of flesh, or one of fish to the value of three half pence. These rations were doubled on fifteen feast-days of the Church. They also received a daily pittance of a penny, and twenty shillings for apparel and other necessities. The Bedeswomen were to have "a cloak and cap of grisette and no other colour," and, in concert with the Sisters, "to assist in attending to those who be sick, as much as lies in their power."

These primitive district nurses are now well represented by the Queen's Jubilee Nurses, founded by Queen Victoria, and partly supported by a grant from the revenues of the Hospital.

The translation of Queen Philippa's Latin deed, and other details, I have taken from Ducarel's book on St. Katharine-by-the-Tower, written in 1782 when he was Commissary to the Hospital. Edward III founded a chantry to Saints Fabian and Sebastian in honour of his Queen, in the chapel of the Hospital, with an annual stipend of ten pounds from the Hanaper office; and Henry VIII and Katherine of Aragon another to St. Barbara. Later in his reign it was the influence of Anne Boleyn that preserved the Hospital intact at the Dissolution of the Monasteries, but all its lands were given to the Crown in the first year of Edward VI.

In 1442, at the instance of the Master, Bishop Beckington, Henry V granted a charter making the Hospital a peculiar precinct, free from taxation and from all jurisdiction but that of the Lord Chancellor, and permitting a fair to be held on Tower Hill, within the precincts, for twenty-one days after the feast of St. James. This fair continued until the reign of Elizabeth, when the rights were sold by the then Master, Dr. Wilson, a most unscrupulous person, very different to his predecessor, Bishop Beckington, who was one of the great benefactors of the Hospital. He built the aisles and body of the old chapel by the Tower, and bequeathed to the Hospital, besides much plate, jewels, vestments, and £50 in money, an image of St. Katharine garnished with parcels of silver, and three silken coats of the saint in a chest. His Rebus, a flaming beacon (*Bekyn*) and a barrel (*Tun*) decorates a wall at Lincoln College, Oxford.

His successor in the Mastership, a century and a half later, Sir Julius Cæsar, was also a munificent donor to the Hospital; and it shows what a valuable office it had become when we find that he paid a sum of £500 to the Scottish Ambassador, Archibald Douglass, to procure the next reversion of it from Queen Elizabeth. He spent £250 on "a handsome rough-cast laid on the whole building of the Hospital"; the Brethren's houses and cloister, from Ducarel's drawings, much resembling Christ's Hospital, Abingdon. These were taken down in 1775; the Master's house, "a magnificent timbered building of great antiquity," became ruinous and was removed in 1751.

The remarkable pulpit, a glory of the new chapel, as it was of the old one, was presented by him about 1620. It is a hexagon of oak, deeply carved on each panel with representations of the old Hospital by the Tower, and two of its gates. Round the base a clear cut inscription runs: | Ezra the Scribe | stood upon a | Pulpit of Wood | which he had | made for the | Preachin. (*sic*) Nehem. | Chap. viii., 4 |.

The precinct of St. Katharine-by-the-Tower, included many streets, lanes, and alleys, and at the end of the 16th century Stow tells us that the Hospital was "inclosed about and pestered with small tenements and homely cottages, having inhabitants, English and strangers, more in number than in some cities in England. In a census taken in 1527 there were 425 aliens residing there ; Dutch, French, Danes, Polanders, Spaniards, one Italian, and twelve Scots. Many Flemings fled from the religious persecutions to settle there, mostly hat and shoe makers by trade. They seem to have lived peaceably together, no disturbances being recorded until 1780, when a one-armed soldier, William Macdonald by name, joined by a black woman and a white one, headed a large mob and raised a riot shouting "Down with Popery," a popular cry of the day. They burned a publican's house and were proceeding to attack the chapel, but were checked and dispersed by some gentlemen from London. The three ring-leaders were tried, convicted, and hanged on Tower-hill.

In 1824 a great revolution in the Hospital took place, when some merchants of London obtained an Act of Parliament for the construction of docks upon the Precinct of St. Katharine-by-the-Tower, and the Hospital was removed to the Regent's Park, then a new suburb of London. Enormous compensation was paid to the Crown ; £125,000 for the site by the Thames ; £38,000 for the new site and buildings ; with smaller sums for the removal of the monuments, organ, etc. King George IV, as patron of the Hospital, being then a widower with no Queen-Mother living, appointed my father Ambrose Poynter, architect to the new building, his first important work. The soil was so poor that there was great trouble in making the foundations, and the water so bad that it could not be used from the ornamental conduit that stands before the west front of the chapel.

The old 14th century chapel had been almost entirely renewed in 1778 "in a judicious and admirable Gothic style," to quote Ducarel. From it were removed to the new chapel the carved Miserere seats and choir stalls, two of them with heads of Queen Philippa and her husband ; the splendid Cæsar pulpit, already described ; and the organ which, when it was set up in 1778, was a wonder of its day with twenty-two stops and the largest swell then made. It is a fine instrument still standing in the west gallery, and on either side of it there sit on Sundays the girls in brown frocks and boys in blue coats with brass buttons, successors of the children of

St Katharine's-by-the-Tower, for whom a charity school was founded in the Precinct in 1705. Also the tracery of the magnificent east window, "30 feet high, 24 wide, containing 561 superficial feet of glass; supposed" says Ducarel, "to be the largest in or about London"; refilled with modern glass in the last century. And the fine monument on the north side of the choir of John Holland, last Duke of Exeter, Lord High Admiral, and Constable of the Tower under Henry VII. He died August 5, 1447, and lies in effigy under a richly carved canopy, decorated with his armorial bearings, beside his first wife Anne, daughter of the Earl of Stafford, and his sister Constance. His second wife survived him, and was buried by her own request in the vault beneath "to avoid pomp and expense." This is the only monument of importance in the chapel, though there are many tablets of later dates. Beneath the windows runs a frieze of demi-angels holding the coats of arms of the Queens of England from Matilda to her present Majesty.

The new chapel—built after the style of a 16th century college chapel—is 90 feet long, 60 feet wide, and 45 feet high. It stands between two blocks of houses, three on each side, the dwellings of the Brethren and Sisters, who are appointed by the Queen absolutely at her own will and pleasure. The Master's large house and grounds stands opposite to the Hospital in the Regent's Park. His office is a sinecure, but one of the Brethren, who must be clergy but may be married and receive £300 a year, has to be in residence to conduct the chapel services, once daily and twice on Sundays, when there is an excellent choir of men and boys in royal red cassocks. The Bedesmen and Bedeswomen are now non-resident, and receive pensions.

Outside the chapel, over the west window, are the Royal and the Collegiate coats of arms—Perfesse gules and azure, in chief a sword barwise argent, hilt and pommel or to the dexter side, in base a demi-Catherine wheel of the last divided fesse-ways, the circular part towards the chief; with the motto: *Elianora fundavit*. The lodges at the entrance gates bear the same coats, with *Fundavit Matilda* 1148 round the one, and *In hoc situ restit* 1825, round the other.

Sir Walter Besant in his "London" (pp. 53-55) makes some scathing, but justifiable criticisms on the destruction of St. Katharine-by-the-Tower, and its transference to the other side of London. He says—"This, the most interesting of all the City Foundations . . . remained for 700 years on the spot where it was first established. It lived on—albeit a sleepy life—a centre of religion and education to

the poor people among whom it was placed. It should have become the Westminster Abbey, of East London ; but greed of gain destroyed it. . . . In order to construct docks—not wanted for the trade of the City—this most precious monument of the past, the Abbey Church of East London, was ruthlessly destroyed. . . . In Regent's Park they stuck up a new chapel with half a dozen neat houses round it, and called that St. Katharine's-by-the-Tower. ' Some day this Foundation, with its income of £10,000 a year, must be sent back to East London to which it belongs."

Whether we agree with him or not the deed has been done, and I can only advise any readers who have a spare Sunday in London, to go to the service at St. Katharine's Chapel, Regent's Park (close to the Cambridge Gate), where they will find much to satisfy the eye, the ear, and the historic imagination.

H. M. POYNTER.

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## Berkshire Court Rolls.

*By Nathaniel F. Hone.*

*(Continued from page 82.)*

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Reading Hundred with Whitley Hill, Sercarstrete, Whitley West and Whitley Yeld, Pangbourn above Down, Pangbourn Town, Stratfield Mortimer, Batell, Stretfieldsaye, Maiden hatch, Colley. Temp. Edw. VI.

Theale Hundred with Trunkwell, Nunhide, Woolhampton, Bradfield, Purley, Hartley Amice, Okefield, Englefield, Hartruge, Hartley Dummere, Padworth, Southcote. Edw. VI.

Blewbury with Northend, Westhatche, Gidiall, Camplestrete.

Cholsey with Westmorende, Hype, Winterbrook, Ilgers, Hyll, Upstrete, Westrete, Forty Estrete Estmore, Pudmore, Estmorends. Edw. VI.

Shaw. V.D. Hen. IV. —Hen. VIII.

Shippon by Abingdon with Stowford. Ph. and Mary. —Chas. I. Sinesham (Syndelsham). V.D. Edw. VI. Eliz.

Sotwell Stonore's Court and St. John's Court. Hen. VI. —Hen. VIII.

Sparsholt with Hallingcourt als Hall Place, Challow. Hen. VI.