

The party then left the church, examined the outside walls, especially that portion of the chancel which had been conjectured to be Saxon work, and then drove through Marlow to Bisham Abbey, where they were kindly welcomed by Sir Henry and Lady Vansittart Neale. Assembled in the dining-room, the walls of which are covered with family portraits, they had the satisfaction of hearing a learned paper read by Sir Henry upon the story of the home of his ancestors, tracing its history back to its successive monastic foundations, and recording the memories of the interesting families who had been connected with it. We hope that this valuable record of the history of Bisham may shortly be published. After the reading of the paper Mr. Keyser thanked Sir Henry and accorded to him and Lady Vansittart Neale the most cordial thanks of the Society for their welcome to Bisham, and for their most kind and hospitable reception of the Berks Society. The antiquaries were then conducted through the principal chambers of the house, and partook of tea in the beautiful hall of the Abbey, remarkable for its fine timber room, its magnificent fireplace, and for the interesting tapestry that lines its walls. All too soon it was necessary to start in order to catch the train, and with renewed thanks to their kind host and hostess the party left the Abbey, of which they will ever retain pleasant recollections. As the time was short for the return drive to Cookham, the train was boarded at Bourne End, and the return to Reading was safely accomplished.

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## Notes and Queries

### RELATING TO BERKS, BUCKS AND OXON.

*Communications are invited upon all subjects of Antiquarian or Architectural interest relating to the three counties. Correspondents are requested to write as plainly as possible, on one side of the paper only, with REPLIES, QUERIES and NOTES on SEPARATE SHEETS, and the name of the writer appended to each communication.*

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### Notes.

EXCAVATIONS AT CHOLSEY CHURCH.—Dr. F. J. Cole has succeeded in making an interesting discovery relative to the plan of the Church of St. Mary, Cholsey, near Wallingford. The interest of this church rests mainly in its ground plan. It is a simple cruciform church, of chancel, north and south transepts, and nave, and obviously corresponding to two architectural periods—the so-called Norman and Early English. The latter is represented by the eastern extremity of the chancel, which was extended, judging from the mouldings, at the end of the 13th century. The remainder of the walls of the church are generally supposed to belong to the Norman 12th century church, and if this be so, the church, so far as its planning is concerned, and omitting such ephemeral structures as windows, has come down to us in its original form. It is possible, although improbable, that the eastern limb of the church had an apsidal termination—destroyed by the early Gothic builders when they lengthened the chancel, and it is greatly to be regretted that the old foundations of this portion of the church were not looked for when the floor was up in 1877, and when the present incongruous tiling was substituted for the flag-stones which formerly, and appropriately, formed the floor. The statement, so often made, that the tower of Cholsey is a Saxon Tower (of course as regards its lower portion only) rests on no evidence

whatever, except the long and short work at the corners, which, however, can be very readily explained in quite another way. Further, the facts brought to light as to the construction of the tower arches at the restoration of the church last year give no support to this view. It was, however, by no means certain that the transepts were part of the original Norman church. The passages into the transepts are small and apparently not turned with ashlar, and look as if they had been broken through the tower wall; the walls of the transepts are less massive than those of the nave and Norman portion of the chancel; and certain features of the turret in the south transept seem to indicate that it had at one time been outside the church. The presence of only one genuine Norman window in each transept was also significant, as these might well have been removed from the north and south walls of the tower, and re-set, when the transepts were broken through. There was still, however, in the north transept a large, round-headed recess, obviously of 12th century date, which had to be explained. This had generally been interpreted as an altar recess, but it was clearly not that. Dr. Cole had always been convinced that this was the entrance into an apsidal chapel, and the Vicar of Cholsey, the Rev. H. C. Field, M.A., very kindly gave him permission to excavate outside the transept, to ascertain whether the foundations of an apse were still to be found. This has been done, with the result that such foundations, practically complete, were exposed, and would have been still more complete if certain ancient interments had not taken place on the north side of the chapel. Fortunately, the excavations were commenced on the south side, and the foundations were soon picked up at about three feet from the surface, and then carefully followed round to the more obscure north side. They consisted of blocks of chalk arranged in the form of a semi-circle four feet thick, and without any binding, and enclosing a space 7ft. 1in. at the base, and 5ft. 6in. from west to east. The dimensions of the apse would be slightly larger than this, as the footing is always wider than the wall. This discovery proves that the recess in the north transept is the closed-up archway which formerly led into a small semi-circular chapel, or apse, with probably a lean-to roof, and which would, of course, be provided with an altar. It also establishes the Norman date of the north transept, and although the south transept is of somewhat different size, it seems hardly likely to belong to a different period. Cholsey Church, therefore is a rare example of a Norman cruciform parish church absolutely in its original condition as far as its ground plan is concerned, apart from the extension of the chancel in the early Gothic period. It is possible that its original form may have included three parallel apses, one in each transept, and one at the east end of the chancel. It is therefore hoped that further excavations may be possible outside the south transept, although there are no internal indications in the shape of an arch that this transept was ever apsidal. Further excavations were carried out by Dr. Cole on Tuesday and Wednesday, August 8th and 9th, this time outside the south transept. In the south transept, however, there are no indications that it was ever apsidal, except that the east wall shows an extensive patch of newer material at the middle. It is, however, all the time possible that the original plan of the Church included three parallel apses, although such a plan in an English Parish Church would be almost unique. None the less, the excavations have exposed the foundations of another apse on the south side of the church, and, in spite of the fact that numerous ancient interments had interfered greatly with the old work, it was possible to follow the foundations right round, to measure the thickness of the wall, and to arrive at the dimensions of the structure. Strangely enough, the two sets of figures are precisely identical, except that the apse attached to the south transept is eleven inches wider at the

base. The Norman twelfth century church at Cholsey, therefore, was a cruciform church without aisles, with the tower at the crossing, with apsidal chapels attached to the east well of both transepts, and, doubtless, an apsidal termination to the eastern limb. It is to be hoped that if there is ever any occasion to take up the chancel floor, the old foundations there will be carefully looked for.—*Oxford Diocesan Magazine*.

MONKS RISBOROUGH.—An interesting correspondent to the "*Oxford Diocesan Magazine*" writes to explode the theory that there was ever a monastery in the village. It takes its name from the fact that in far distant times the Manor belonged to the monks of Canterbury. Nearly a thousand years ago (993 A.D.) Bishop Æschwyn gave, or (as one document has it) "restored Risberg" to the monks of Christ Church, Canterbury. The gift was confirmed by the Saxon Charter of Edward the Confessor, and William the Conqueror, "for the honour of God and the good of his own soul generously and freely restored to the Monks" this among other lands and manors. It is interesting to note that, after the rapacious policy of the uxorious monarch had taken away the ownership from the hands of those who had so long held it, its association with Canterbury continued until some sixty years ago. For the benefice remained "a peculiar" of Canterbury, being, notwithstanding its geographical situation, a part of the Archdiocese; enjoying this distinction with Newington in Oxfordshire, which also up to the Reformation formed part of the possessions of the Canterbury monks. Until the middle of last century the patronage remained in the Archbishop's hands, from whom it then passed, through the instrumentality of Bishop Wilberforce, to the Bishop of Oxford. In the Canterbury Rolls of the 14th century there are some curious references to the parish, which go to support indirectly the argument that there was no religious house on the spot. Trouble with recalcitrant tenants, admonitions to bailiff and steward to use greater severity, evidently point to a condition of things which would hardly have obtained if there had been resident monks on the spot. Under the date of July 25th, 1331, there is an entry to the effect that certain tenants, John Atte Welle and Richard the Hopper, had complained that the bailiff, James Frysel by name, was demanding excessive dues; and an agent was appointed to tax them as far as they can bear. In the following year an amusing instance is recorded of the disobligingness of the tenants of the Manor, who, it is recorded, when the Warden of the Manor of Christ Church, hearing that there were hawks in Risborough woods, sent for some, but "he was bluntly told by John Nodel the Bedel, that, if there were hawks there, he had better catch them himself, and other rude things, all of which need not be recalled here." Therefore, the record adds, John must be removed from office and some other worthy man appointed. On the other hand, it is stated that at Halton (a neighbouring manor, also in the possession of the monks), the messenger was fairly and honestly welcomed, and received two sparrow hawks and two musketts. Under the date of September 12th, 1332, a state of things is referred to which betokens anything but pleasant relationships. It is stated that the tenants at Risborough have combined to deceive the Convent in the matter of a tax. The Warden of the Manor writes to James Frysel, the bailiff, that the tenants "shall not have at our hands such favours as they have hitherto enjoyed, and it much troubles us that even we should have asked you or anybody to show favour to them. And we desire that you be pleased to punish them sharply for every kind of trespass with all the rigour of the law." The same James Frysel is, on August 9th, 1334, asked to come to Canterbury to consult with the Chapter about the means to be used in dealing with the tenants who are showing signs of insubordination. "You say our tenants bear themselves coldly towards you, and have made a joint stock fund for the maintenance of their cause." The matter is again referred to at the end of the same year, and things apparently go from bad to worse, for, in

February, 1335, the steward is blamed that the state of the manor is worse, and not better, and he is summoned to Canterbury. The difficulty of managing property at a distance is illustrated by the advice that is given in March, 1335, by the same Frysell, that the protection of some great noble should be obtained, and he is given *carte blanche* to secure such, and the Prior suggests applying to John de Stonor. The following year sees a number of tenants seized and brought to Canterbury, and the Prior has to beg the Archbishop to protect him against attempts at revenge. However, two and a half years later it is stated that the natives of Risborough are anxious to make a formal recognition of their servile condition, and in June, 1341, we have a letter referring to "the confirmation of a stable peace between the bailiff and our rebellious bondmen of the Manor of Risborough." The significance of this series of extracts is unmistakeable. They point to the difficulties and dangers of absentee landlordism.

CORSTOPITUM (Corbridge-on-Tyne).—Some of our readers will remember Mr. R. H. Foster's interesting lecture on his excavations of this northern Silchester. His industry has been rewarded by the discovery of a finely carved Roman altar with an inscription:—

IOVI AETERNO  
DOLICHENO  
ET CAELESTI  
BRIGANTIAE  
ET SALUTI  
C IULIVS AP  
OLINARIS  
LEG VI IVSDE.

This means "To the eternal Jupiter Dolichenus and to heavenly Brigantia, and to the safety (of the Emperor?) C. Julius Apollinaris, a centurian of the 6th Legion." The name of the dedicator is not part of the original inscription. Julius Apollinaris erased the name of some other person and substituted his own.

### Queries.

HARTLEY DUMMER, SHINFIELD.—Can any one throw light upon the history of this manor? There were two Hartleys in the parish. It is believed that Hartley Dummer belonged to Reading Abbey, and was also known as Hartley Battle. Was it part of the endowment of Battle Abbey and transferred to Reading Abbey by Henry I.?—LEX.

EARLEY COURT AND THE MANLEYS.—Sir Owen Buckingham held this manor at the beginning of the 18th century. He bought it from Sir Edmund Feltiplace, and died in 1713, leaving a son, Owen Buckingham, who was M.P. for Reading, and was killed in duel fought with Mr. Aldworth, in 1720. Then the Manleys, a Cheshire family, came into possession. Richard Manley held the manor when he unsuccessfully contested Reading in 1739. Can any one tell me how the Manleys acquired the manor? Did Richard buy it from the Buckinghams, or was Richard Owen, Buckingham's heir?—ANTIQUARY.

### Replies.

In answer to Mr. Coleman Hall's inquiries respecting the Hall family, formerly of Harpsden Court, Oxon. In the *Reading Mercury* of July 25th, 1910, I read in the obituary, "at St. Osythe, Oundle, Thomas Owen Hall, Priest, son of the late Thomas Hall, of Harpsden Court, Oxon; for 23 years Rector of Stretton, Rutland, aged 80." In my Crockford's Clerical Directory I read: "Mr. Hall was of Lincoln College, Oxford, B.A. 1852, D. 1853, P. 1854, R. of Stretton, Dio Pet. 1883." Of course, Hall is not an uncommon name. I should be tempted to write to Lincoln College to know what is recorded there of Mr. Hall, and where he came from which might lead to tracing the whereabouts of the family. In my "Genealogist's Guide," amongst many references to the family of Hall, the following may lend a light on the family: "Visitation of Oxford, 1634, printed by Sir J. Phillipps (Middle Hill), fol. 20. Foster's Visitations of Yorkshire, 298, 322, 621."—EMILY J. CHIMENSON.