



The Berks, Bucks & Oxon Archæological Journal.

Notes on the Churches of Hanney, Lyford, Denchworth and Charney Bassett.

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(Continued from page 37.)

AS Lyford was formerly a chapelry to Hanney it will be convenient to describe this next, though in driving it can only be reached by a somewhat circuitous route of nearly three miles.

The Abbey of Abingdon appears to have possessed the Manor from very early times till the Dissolution. We also find the Cowdrays, who at the same time were seized of the Manor of Padworth in the reign of Henry III., and they continued to hold the Manor from Abingdon Abbey till the end of the 14th century, when it passed to the Popham family. "Shortly before the Dissolution, John Lord Mordaunt held the Manor of Lyford under the Abbot of Abingdon. The record states that it was held as of the Castle of Windsor, and cites an old book of Knights' fees belonging to the castle of the reign of Henry IV."

About the middle of the reign of Queen Elizabeth John Ayshcombe became possessed of the Manor, and it continued in this family till 1765, when it was purchased by the Trustees of Mrs. Sarah Eaton, daughter of the Rev. Byron, D.D., Principal of

Gloucester Hall, now Worcester College, Oxford, and in 1775 was conveyed to the Provost and Fellows of that College, to whom it still belongs. The old Manor House (Fig. 24) stands to the West of the Church. It is a picturesque building, and may partly date back to the 16th century. It was formerly surrounded by a moat, the river Ock bounding it on the west side. There was formerly a pigeon house here, and according to tradition, the family plate of the Ayshcombes was concealed within it, during the stormy times of the great civil war, but was discovered by the rebel soldiers, who carried off "valuables to the amount of a cartload." Oliver Ayshcombe in 1603 founded some almshouses, which have since been added to, at Lyford, and now provide for 20 tenants on either side of a narrow open courtyard with a small chapel at the end. The very interesting series of brasses and monuments of the Ayshcombe family in Hanney Church has already been described.

Another estate in Lyford, which had belonged to the Abbey of Abingdon came into the possession of John Yate of the adjoining hamlet of Charney Bassett in the reign of Henry VIII. Their residence stood about 300 yards to the north of the Church and was surrounded by a moat fed by the river Ock. The south front of the present house has very thick walls, and there are two old panelled rooms, part of the old mansion of the Yates, who resided here till about the year 1700; but the chief part has been pulled down. The Yates, who also had estates at Buckland and Charney Bassett, continued to hold the Roman, or, as stated on two of their monuments in Hanney Church, the "entire cathelick" faith, and the most interesting event in connection with this house was the capture there of Campion, the Jesuit priest, which is graphically described by the Rev. P. H. Ditchfield, in his work on the Old English Squire.

The Church (fig. 25), dedicated to St. Mary, was a Chapel in the Parish of Hanney, till 1845, when Lyford was formed into a separate Ecclesiastical district. It is 67 feet long by 18½ feet in width, and mainly in the Early English style, but was somewhat drastically restored in 1875. It is (fig. 26) of simple design consisting of a west turret, nave and chancel.

Taking up our position in the Chancel (fig. 27) we notice that the east window is a single lancet, and that there are two more lancet windows both in the north and south walls. The sill of the east on south is brought down to provide a sedile. In the south wall is a small arched piscina (fig. 28A) with stone shelf and projecting round basin on which is carved some foliage, probably of 14th century date.

On the north side is a shouldered arched recess for the aumbrey (fig. 28B) with the hinges for the door or shutter still remaining. This is coeval with the rest of the Chancel. On the north and south near the west end is a small low-side window. That on the south is a plain oblong opening, and in the Ecclesiastical Topography is stated to have the iron work and the shutter with its hinges still remaining, but these have now disappeared. The low side window on the north side is trefoil-headed but of early character. There is a squint through the wall from the nave on the north side of the Chancel arch. This arch is new.

In the nave are two lancets on south and one on north, also two three-light clerestory windows on each side square-headed of debased character. The roof is low pitched. The pulpit is Jacobean of wood hexagonal in form with good carving. The door is gone. The old 15th century screen (fig. 29) is now at the west end. It has four plain open upper divisions and plain lower panels. There are three old oak benches with plain ends on each side at the west end of the nave. The supports to the turret are very massive with solid oak beams and probably date from the 15th century. The font is of the same date with plain octagonal bowl on slender stem. At the west end are preserved on a large panel the Royal Arms and supporters with initials G R^s and date 1787. The window of two lights in the early Decorated style is new.

On the exterior the north doorway (fig. 30) within a much restored porch, is plain Early English with grooved and chamfered hoodmould and plain chamfered angle to the arch and jambs. There is a geometrical figure carved in the east side of the arch and numerous early scratchings on the jambs. Some of the timber of the Porch is of 15th century date. The south doorway, blocked up, has chamfered hoodmould and chamfered angle to arch and jambs, and is of Early English date. The east window has a modern hoodmould, and the east on north in the Chancel has the original hoodmould, all the other lancets being plain. There is a good trefoil head to the low side window on the north (fig. 31). The clerestory windows have plain labels.

A drive of about one mile will bring us to Charney Bassett still a hamlet and chapel of ease in the Parish of Longworth. The Abbots of Abingdon had a grange here, and part of their residence adjoining the north side of the Chapel, and dating back to the middle of the 13th century, still remains. The ancient part consists (fig. 32) of two stories, with a roundheaded doorway at the east end

of the lower storey, some early windows, and a large fireplace with a curious tiled recess on one side of the chimney, said to have been a small oven for baking the holy wafers. The upper storey has the little Chapel with east window, piscina and aumbrey of the 13th century date. Adjoining this was the hall with fireplace and roof having tie beams and kingposts, this part having been reconstructed in the 15th century. It is in a deplorable condition. The roof is falling in, the floor of the upper storey is rotten and full of holes, and indeed the building is in imminent danger. It is gratifying to learn that the present owner is about to undertake its restoration, and we trust his efforts to save and preserve this most interesting structure may be crowned with success.

The Chapel, dedicated to St. Peter, is built of stone and consists of a west turret, nave, north aisle or chapel and chancel, and is 61 feet in length by 34 feet in width across the nave and chapel. It was built (fig. 33) in the late Norman period as evidenced by the south doorway, chancel arch and sculptured tympanum now preserved in the Chancel. In the latter part of the 13th century, a two-light window was inserted in the south wall of the nave and Chancel, and towards the end of the 15th century the east window was put in and a Chapel added on the north side of the nave. Standing in the interior of the Chancel we note that the east window is segmental headed of three lights of late Perpendicular style. Numerous fragments of old glass remain, namely, a blazing star, two lion's heads, crowns and some borders of leaves. On the south side is a two-light window with trefoil headed lancets. On the north side is an oblique passage serving perhaps as a large squint, leading from the chapel to the Chancel. Now placed (fig. 34) over the eastern opening, but of course not in its original situation, is a large sculptured tympanum, 49 inches in length at the bottom by $24\frac{1}{2}$ inches in height at the centre. It is illustrated in Lysons' *Magna Britannia*, Berkshire; *The Berks, Bucks and Oxon Archæological Journal*, Vol. VI.; *The List of Sculptured Norman Tympana and Lintels*; and the recently published 5th volume of the *Transactions of the Newbury and District Field Club*. "Round the arch and carried across "below the tympanum, is a series of pellets and there is the head of "a female, perhaps inserted, at the apex. Round the arch is a "course of pairs of large leaves joined together. On the tympanum "or recessed portion is some quaint carving, this being the only "example remaining in the County, of a tympanum enriched with "sculptured figures, though these are comparatively common in the

"adjoining Counties of Gloucester, Oxford and Wiltshire. Here in
 "the centre we find a human figure with perhaps a low crown and
 "single garment down to his ankles. A large winged griffin on
 "either side has the upper part of his arm in its mouth, while the
 "man has his hand on the neck of each animal. The late Mr.
 "Romilly Allen suggested (page 285 of his *Early Christian*
"Symbolism) that this may be intended to represent the ascent of
 "Alexander, but it seems more probably designed to illustrate the
 "passage in Psalm XLIV, verses 18 to 20,—'And though all this be
 "come upon us, yet do we not forget thee; nor behave ourselves
 "forwardly in thy covenant.

"Our heart is not turned back; neither our steps gone out of
 "the way.

"No, not when thou has smitten us into the place of dragons
 "and covered us with the shadow of death.'"

There is a very similar tympanum at Downe St. Mary's Church, Devonshire, and another at Leckhampstead in Buckinghamshire. The Chancel roof is new. The Chancel arch is semicircular with two chamfered ribs supported on massive chamfered corbels and plain jambs. The nave roof is low pitched of 15th century date. On the south side is a three-light Perpendicular window, and to the west of the doorway a two-light of Early Decorated character. On the north side between the nave and chapel are two four-centred Perpendicular arches on central octagonal column (fig. 35). In the chapel at east and west is a three-light four-centred Perpendicular window (fig. 36). In the north wall close to the east end is a single low side window of the same date. It seems to have been designed for the benefit of the monks living in the Grange close by, as may also have been the passage from the Chapel to Chancel. The roof of the Chapel is of the late Perpendicular period. The pulpit is of wood with good panelling, and is of this same date. The font is of uncertain date with plain circular bowl on octagonal stem, with a step on the west side. The interior walls are covered with whitewash.

On the exterior, the south doorway (fig. 37) within a porch, is very quaint, and has also been illustrated in Vol. VI. of the *Berks, Bucks and Oxon Archæological Journal*. Only the arch and part of the jambs is old. It is in two orders with, on the outer on the upper chamfered face a rich cable band, then a series of twelve monster heads two or three with beading on the forehead (fig. 38), and each with a double leaf protruding from the mouth, perhaps to portray the double tongue of the evil ones. The inner order has chamfered

edge to arch and jambs. There is one small votive cross on the west jamb. The nave and chapel have embattled parapet. The Perpendicular windows have the usual labels. There is a small late 15th century doorway on the north of the Chapel, probably the private entrance from the Grange. The quaint (fig. 39) little bell-cote on the west gable is probably of 17th century date.

(To be continued).

Sandhurst, Berks.

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Medical Corps.*

INTRODUCTION.

THE parishes of Sandhurst and Crowthorne are situated in the south eastern corner of the County of Berkshire. The Blackwater river on the south, and its tributary the Wish brook on the east, forming, respectively, the Hampshire and the Surrey boundaries. The Chobham ridges terminate northward in the gravel capped plateau of Easthampstead Plain, from which three main spurs are thrown out in a south westerly direction, abutting on the northern and eastern borders of the parish. That on the east terminates in the rising ground on which the Royal Military College stands, the central one is named in the ordnance map, Poppy Hills, and the western one, Lodge Hill, has been chosen for the site of the Broadmoor Criminal Lunatic Asylum. The latter spur is prolonged nearly across the breadth of the parish as a ridge which rises abruptly at one spot to a height of three hundred feet, forming a conical hill named Edgbarrow. Beyond this it ends in the irregular mass of Longdown Hill with its subsidiary spurs, Scotland Hill, Hurt's Hill, and Cock-a-dobby. The parish boundary on the west