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Notes on the Churches of Stanford-in-the-Vale, Hatford and Shellingford and the Chapels of Goosey and Baulking.

By Charles E. Keyser, M.A., F.S.A.

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FOLLOWING the custom which I have now inaugurated for the past few years, I propose to bring under the notice of our Members another group of our ancient Berkshire Churches and Chapels, which, I venture to think, are not so well known as they should be even to the residents in our own County. This paper may fairly be considered as a corollary to the one I read last year, as I have selected the same district, namely that between Faringdon and Wantage, situate in the fertile Vale of the White Horse, and containing some of the richest agricultural land to be found in our County. It is not to be wondered at that many evidences still remain to attest to the munificence of former landowners, whose very names are unknown, but who no doubt dedicated a large proportion of their prosperity to the building and beautifying of these Temples of God in their midst. How sad it is to reflect on the wanton mischief which has been perpetrated both with regard to the

structures and furniture of the Churches, on which our predecessors expended so much of their genius and pious attention in days gone by. As in the former papers, so to-day, it will not be possible to elucidate the history of the several parishes. There are few local traditions, and the information to be gleaned from the accessible written authorities is most meagre. We shall have therefore to content ourselves with the most superficial details as to the Lords of the Manor and other prominent residents and their doings, and mainly confine ourselves to a description of the architectural features of the several edifices. We will, as usual, consider we are driving round to visit this group of Churches, and will make our first halt at the large and important village of Stanford-in-the-Vale. The Manor was from the period of the Norman Conquest in the hands of the great family of Ferrars, Earl of Derby, and in their time a Market was granted to this town by a charter of Henry III. in 1230, together with a fair on the festival of St. Dionysius, both of which have long been discontinued. The estates belonging to this Earldom were all forfeited in 1266, and it is supposed that the Manor of Stanford was granted to the Clares, Earls of Gloucester, who were possessed of it in 1290. From them it passed by heirs female to the Despenchers, Beauchamps, and Nevilles; and became vested in the Crown by the marriage of Anne Neville, daughter of the Earl of Warwick, with the Duke of Gloucester, afterwards King Richard III. In the reign of Henry VIII. it was held by the Fettiplace family, who continued to possess it for a considerable time. So much we learn from Lysons in the *Magna Britannia*. We shall be able to point out in our description of the Church, evidence of the influence of these families. The Manor House stood to the south of the Church and some ancient buildings remain, including a very fine stone barn, with two porches and good timber roof.

The Parish Church, one of the most interesting in the County, is dedicated to St. Dionysius or Denis, the Patron saint of France, who is still commemorated in our Calendar on October 9th. His history is somewhat involved, and in early times he was wrongly identified with Dionysius the Areopagite. He was sent from Rome to found the Church in Gaul, and came with his two companions Rusticus and Eleutherius to Lutetia Parisiorum, the city destined to become the capital of France. Here, according to tradition, many attempts were made to bring about his martyrdom. He was cast into a fiery furnace, but emerged unharmed. He was crucified, but preached to his persecutors from the cross, and finally with his two

companions was beheaded. He was even then able to walk, carrying his head in his hands, to the spot where the great Abbey of St. Denis now stands, and is thus depicted on some of the Norfolk screens and elsewhere in England. The date of his martyrdom was about A.D. 286. It is a singular coincidence that the one other Church in Berkshire dedicated in his honour is that of Stanford Dingley, nearly thirty miles distant. I cannot find any connecting link, either through ownership or otherwise, between the two Stanfords which can explain their dedication to this somewhat uncommon Saint. The only other Church in the Diocese with the same dedication is that of Northmoor in Oxfordshire.

The Church of Stanford-in-the-Vale (Fig. 1) is a fine and spacious edifice, being 122 feet in length by 34½ in breadth across the nave and aisle. It consists of a west tower, nave and north aisle with south and north porches, and chancel with the old sacristy on the north side. The earliest remaining portions are the north and south doorways, which are obtusely pointed Transitional Norman, of near the end of the 12th century. The tower seems to have been commenced early in the 13th century, and to have been carried on rather slowly, the middle stage being late in the Early English style, circ. 1240, and the upper about 50 or 60 years later. Considerable alterations took place about 1260-1270 when the nave arcade and chancel arch were erected. Most of the windows are of very fine decorated character of the early part of the 14th century, the sacristy and north porch being of this date. Somewhat late in the 15th century the nave roof and clerestory were constructed, the south porch was built, the rood-loft staircase was inserted and some other alterations made, which will be duly noted during our perambulation of the Church.

Let us now commence our description starting as usual in the interior of the Chancel. (Fig. 2.) The east window is a very beautiful example of the best decorated period. (Fig. 3.) It is of four lights, the lower portion being divided into two two-light arched compartments with a quatrefoil in the head, the upper part is filled with a large trefoil having bold cusping of the type which has been denominated Kentish tracery, and is a very rich example of this style. Within the quatrefoils is some ancient glass, with figures of two cherubim with feet on wheels. On the north side of the Chancel is one two-light decorated window with quatrefoil in the head, and on the south are two two-light decorated windows of similar character, and then at the west end a beautiful three-light

window of the same type as the east window with three trefoils in the head, two and one, all with the rich Kentish tracery cusping. Within the quatrefoils in the heads of the two east windows on this side is some rich decorative glass with bordering of leaves, etc., on a ruby ground enclosing a circular medallion surrounded by diamond quarries with the ivy leaf pattern. The canopies remain to the main lights with numerous pinnacles and rich ruby colouring. In the western window within the upper trefoils are three armorial shields. In the top one gules three lions passant guardant or for England. In the lower east gules 10 bezants or roundels 4, 3, 2 and 1 or for Zouch, and in the lower west, or three chevronels gules for Clare. The Chancel roof is low pitched but does not appear to be old. In the usual place in the north wall is a double aumbrey with two openings separated by a plain impost, and the groove in front for the former doors. Facing (fig. 4) it in the south wall is a very remarkable piscina and tabernacle niche above. The piscina has a projecting basin supported on a large bracket, a stone shelf, and shouldered arched canopy. This supports a beautiful stone tabernacle probably a reliquary. It is in the form of three sides of an octagon standing out from the wall, with small angle buttresses capped by pinnacles and richly moulded canopies with crocketing and finials within each compartment. The upper cornice is embattled. There is an oblong opening in the lower part of the central panel, and there can be little doubt that this was designed to contain a relic, which was an object of reverence and possibly of pilgrimage to worshippers in the Church. There is a tradition that a finger of St. Denis was either preserved here or lent periodically by the Monks of Abingdon Abbey, who possessed property in the hamlet of Goosey in this Parish. There is a somewhat similar niche over the centre of the reredos at Fyfield Church, near Abingdon. Within the sill of the window to the west of the piscina is a plain sedile. On the north side of the Chancel, behind the organ is the original entrance to the sacristy now blocked up. On the Chancel floor at the east end on the north side is a very fine brass (fig. 5) with the bust of a priest life size. He has the tonsure and curly hair, and is fully vested, with the amice, open sleeves to the vestment, and hands clasped on his breast. On a plate below is the following inscription :—

Hic jacet Rogus Campedene quondam

amē

Rector isti eccle qui obiit tcio die mensis

Junū A°dni M°ccc°lxxxx°viii° cui' aie ppiciet dē.

Here lies Roger Campedene, sometime Rector of this Church, who died on the third day of the month of June in the year of our Lord one thousand three hundred and ninety eight on whose soul God have mercy, amen.

On four shields at the corners are the emblems of the Evangelists, viz. : SS. John and Matthew, much mutilated above, and SS. Mark and Luke below.

On the floor are numerous ledger stones. The following black marble (fig. 6) slab is interesting and the inscription in capital letters is in excellent preservation. When Ashmole visited the Church, "it was laid over a raised monument erected against the aforesaid south wall of the Chancel." This monument has disappeared. The inscription reads as follows :—

JOHN HEIGHAM ESQ LATE MARSHALL OF THE
HALL TO KINGE JAMES & KINGE CHARLES
SONNE OF JOHN HEIGHAM ESQ OF GIFFORDS
IN THE COUNTY OF SUFFOLKE DEPARTED
THIS LIFE THE TWENTIETH DAY OF MAY 1632
HEE WAS A MAN RESPECTIVE TO HIS SUPERIORS
CURTEOUS KINDE AND LOVINGE TO HIS
INFERIORS AND AFFABLE TO ALL MEN
AND A GOOD BENEFACITOR TO THE POORE
OF THE PARRISH OF STANFORD WHERE HEE
LIVED AND WHERE HEE NOW
IS INTERRED.

Not that hee needed monument of stone
For his well gotten fame to rest uppon
But this was Rear'd to testefie that hee
Lives in their loves that yet surviving bee
For unto vertue whoe first rais'd his name
Hee left the preservation of the same
And to Posterity remaine it shall
When Brass and Marble monuments shall fall.

On the south wall of the Chancel is a large white marble tablet to Capt. Francis Knollys, nephew to the Earl of Banbury, whose sumptuous tomb still remains in Rotherfield Greys Church, near Henley. There is a long inscription given in full in Ashmole's History and Antiquities, which informs us that the said Francis Knollys was twice married, that he had the command of the Traine Band of the Abingdon division, and was here interred the 4th of August, 1640.

On the floor on north side are ledger stones, one with inscription to Mary, wife of Edward Jennings, died 1715, and shield a chevron between three lanterns, and (2) to Lawrence Lane, Rector, died

1699. On the north wall at east end is a large mural tablet with two gilded cherubs and armorial shield in the head with the following bearings: arg 2 chevronels az. It has the following epitaph, fully setting out the virtues of the deceased ladies:—

Underneath

Lye interr'd in one Grave
 Elizabeth y^e wife of Walter Tyrrell Esq
 Who died May 5th 1731, Aged 62.
 And Mary their Daughter greatly beloved
 who died Oct^r 27th 1728 aged 24.
 Both whose Memories
 deserve to be transmitted to Posterity
 with a becoming Esteem
 if unaffected Piety towards God
 a decent Reverence to things sacred
 and an obliging Carriage towards all
 are Qualities worthy Esteem.
 The former discharg'd y^e respective Duties
 of a Wife and a Mother
 in such a manner, as to make her Death
 a Loss to be greatly lamented
 by her surviving Relatives;
 and y^e Conduct of y^e latter
 as a Daughter, a Sister, and a Friend
 was so dutiful affectionate and engaging,
 that her Memory to those she convers'd with
 will be ever dear.
 To mention nothing more They were both of y^m
 Friends to y^e Communion of y^e Church of Engl^d
 Friends of y^e Poor
 Enemies to no one.

On the north side of the Chancel arch is an oblique passage to the north aisle, similar to the one at Charney Bassett. There has clearly been a squint here in the 13th century, and a small shaft supports two segmental-headed arches in the north wall. The passage was probably constructed when the rood-loft steps were added, and these and a curious projection with a small window opening, supported on a large bracket, still remain on the north side of the Chancel arch. (Fig. 7). The Sacristy has a new entrance from the passage. It has a two-light square-headed window within a segmental-headed containing arch both on the east and north sides, of the decorated period, and is of the same date as the windows of the Chancel to which it is attached. The entrance to the roodloft (fig. 8) is through a four centred late 15th century doorway, the stone steps still remain but the upper doorway has been blocked up. The Chancel arch is wide and rather low segmental-headed with two

plain chamfered orders dying into the jambs and continued without imposts to the ground. It is of rather uncommon design and probably of early decorated date or circ. 1270. Between nave and north aisle are (fig. 9) three arches of the same date and similar character dying into, and resting on, plain octagonal piers. Above, or rather between, them are three small trefoil-headed clerestory windows within large widely splayed segmental-headed openings. They are also of early decorated date. The present flat roof dates from the late 15th or early 16th century. It has ornamental carving in the spandrels between the trusses and wall brackets. These rest on a series of stone corbels, with quaint human and animal heads, three roses and other devices.

On the south side of the nave near the east end is a trefoil-headed single low side window within semi-circular containing arch of the early decorated period. On this south side (fig. 10) are four windows, namely, (1) a two-light square-headed decorated window, (2) high up in the wall one single light trefoil-headed clerestory window, (3) a large four-light square-headed late perpendicular window. In the smaller compartments in the head are small medallions in contemporary glass, with the sacred monograms ihc xpc. the word "lady" and some other initials not easy to decipher. This window was no doubt inserted when the south porch was built, (4) a two-light decorated window with a quatrefoil in the head. In the north aisle are three windows on the north side, the eastern one of three-lights, the other two of two-lights, all square-headed within segmental-headed containing arches. At the west end are three trefoil-headed lancets, also within a segmental-headed containing arch. These are all of early decorated date. The tower arch is (fig. 11) massive Early English with three recessed chamfered orders supported on an undercut abacus, with plain jambs. Above is a large hatchment with the Royal Arms. In west wall of tower is a small trefoil-headed lancet. The font (fig. 12) under the tower is of wood, hexagonal, and Jacobean, with very nice carving on the panels of the bowl and lower portion, which are all of one size. There are roses and lilies alternately on the bowl, and scrolls below. There is a pyramidal cover of the same date, which is also nicely carved. The pulpit in the south-east corner of the nave is of the same date with richly carved Jacobean panels and cornice, only four of the sides now remain.

On the exterior of the Church we note that it is mainly built of the local stone, but the nave and tower are covered with rough cast.

There is a late decorated priest's doorway on the north of the Chancel with undercut hoodmould and small roll moulding and two quarter round mouldings with deep hollow between, round the arch and down the jambs. All the Chancel windows have dripstones or hoodmoulds except the west on the south side. (Fig. 13.) Let into the south wall of the Chancel is a large stone with a very roughly carved sundial incised on it, no doubt a relic of the earlier Church. The sundial was within a circular border, but this has been carefully hacked away. The low side window on the south of the nave has a hoodmould, the other windows have not. The nave is embattled, as is also the south porch (fig. 14), which is of late 15th century date. It has a four centred outer arch with square label terminating on shields. On these are the ragged staff impaling the rose with fetterlock above. The position of the arms is reversed on each side, so that the rose and fetterlock should come on the inner side. It is supposed that this porch was built in 1472 and other alterations made to the Church to commemorate the marriage of Anne Neville, daughter of the Earl of Warwick, and widow of Edward Prince of Wales and son of King Henry VI., to Richard, Duke of Gloucester, afterwards King Richard III. She was at this time only nineteen years of age, and the arms on the shields are a record of this alliance. Within, the porch has had a stone groined roof, but this has gone, though the groining shafts still remain at the angles. There is a two-light window on east and west sides. The porch has been utilised for the heating apparatus and the interesting south doorway has been partially concealed by this and the roof of the later porch. It is obtusely pointed transitional Norman with an outer course of the elliptic arched, then a hollow and bold angle roll, supported on a large grooved and chamfered abacus, low cylindrical shafts and bold scalloped capitals. There is a plain inner order with chamfered angle to arch and jambs. The date is about 1190. There are four low buttresses at intervals on south side of the nave and chancel. The north porch, now the principal entrance is late decorated or early perpendicular. It has a parvise above. The outer doorway has an undercut label and chamfered arch and jambs. Above is a small window for the parvise. Within are two-light east and west windows. The north doorway (fig. 15) is transitional Norman, obtusely pointed, with half round and hollow on the hoodmould, and then a bold roll with small fillet band on the angle and hollow on either side. This rests on a massive chamfered abacus with low cylindrical shafts, and large capitals enriched

with the stiff leaved foliage on the east and the acanthus on the west side. There is a plain chamfered inner arch and jambs. In the porch wall are inserted portions of three stone coffin lids, one with a Maltese Cross dates probably from the 12th century, the other two from early in the 13th century.

The tower is lofty (fig. 16) but somewhat narrow in proportion to its height. The upper stage has been added. It is embattled and with nice two-light decorated belfry windows on each face. To the next stage is a stringcourse and Early English corbel table, and on each face a two-light window with a quatrefoil within a circle in the head. In the upper part of the lower stage on north, west and south, is a trefoil-headed lancet, and on the lower level on west another trefoil-headed lancet with a head above. The tower seems to be of about the same date as that at Harwell.

(To be continued.)

Bishops' Transcripts.

By the Rev. Canon Oldfield, D.D.

WHAT are known as Bishops' Transcripts are copies of the entries in the Parish Registers sent annually to the Diocesan Registry, in obedience to the order of the Constitutions of 1597, Canon 70, and the Act of 1812. Peculiars did not send their transcripts to the Diocesan Registry until after 1812.

The Oxford Diocesan Registry has 25,001 transcripts from 246 parishes and chapelries in the Archdeaconry of Oxford, all carefully endorsed and arranged. Ninety-nine parishes begin in the 17th Cent. 25 of them in 1639, the earliest date; but there is no general succession of copies before 1720, and the latest date is 1906. Of these 25,001, 2,344 are on paper, the rest on parchment of every possible size, and shape, and substance, from the coarsest skins to the finest vellum, until 1812, when a prescribed form came into use. In many cases the backs of old deeds are used for the purpose; Bladon (1750) and Clanfield (1753) use portions of the Manor Rolls of those Manors, the former dated 1679; St. Peter le Bailey, Oxford