

that on west, and a head (Fig. 54) on the angle and an inverted trefoil on the inner west face of the eastern one. Plain inner order and jambs. On the jambs and shafts are a large number of votive crosses, especially good on the east side. On the outer east jamb is a rude sun dial. There is a much later sun dial with the gnomon remaining and part of a black letter inscription near the west end.

The Church is built of the local stone. The old Manor House remains close by to the west of the Church.

History of the Parish of Beenham.

By Mary Sharp.

(Continued from page 76.)

CHAPTER III.

It seems doubtful whether the Manor held by the Monks of Reading did or did not include the whole area of the parish ; such evidence as we have rather points to the contrary ; but whether this was the case or not, it is certain that after the Dissolution, besides many small freeholdings, two so-called Manors existed within its limits. That called the Manor and Farm of Beenham, as it is described "late the property of Reading Abbey," and its appurtenances, together with the Rectorial tithes, and (as we have seen) the advowson of the living, were granted by Henry VIII. to Sir Henry Norreys, afterwards Lord Norreys of Rycote.

The particulars of the Grant are specified as being "'parcel' (part) of the possessions of the late dissolved Monastery (of Reading) . . . and said Lordship lyeth VI. miles from the King's Man^r at Redyng."* The names of some of the woodlands are added,

* The distance is about eight miles.

—"Coteshill Grove, Shrubwood and Highgrove." Old local names are often lost, but Shrubwood occurs again in the Vicar's Tithe Accounts in 1810 in connection with what has, till quite lately been known as "Beenham Farm" to enable us to identify the site. The place is now known as "The Grange," but the wood overhanging it is still "Shrubwood."

Sir Henry Norreys was a noble and knightly gentleman whose father had, but a short time before, suffered death at the hands of the executioner rather than satisfy Henry VIII.'s jealousy by giving evidence to incriminate the Queen, Anne Boleyn. Some pangs of remorse, in those early days, may have visited the King's conscience ; at any rate he bestowed on the son of his victim, together with other Church properties, considerable lands and possessions in Berkshire. The same Henry Norreys came into great favour in the reign of Anne Boleyn's daughter, Queen Elizabeth. She sent him as her Ambassador to France, and eventually created him Lord Norreys of Rycote. The figures of himself and his wife Margery, daughter of Sir John Williams, of Burghfield, lie on a splendid monument in Westminster Abbey, surrounded by life-sized figures of their six sons, all of them distinguished in war or peace.

In 1589 the property of Beenham still belonged to Lord Norreys, for in that year widow Carter, the tenant, made a "Complente in Chancery against him, that whereas divers lands and parcel of the said Manor, for the time whereof the memorie of man is not to the Contrarie, were devisable by coppie of Court Rolle . . . for one, two, or three lives, according to the Custome of the Manor, one John Louche and Anne* his wife were in possession of two mesuages, called† Combes and Bottoms, for the life of the said Anne, whereof the said Lord Noreis for 100^s. paid by William Carter . . . did grant unto the said William Carter deceased and unto the said Anne and John Carter, the compleynants, for their lives . . . The said Lord Norreis tried to defeat the Compleynants of their reversion . . . your Compleynants humbly pray that the said Lord Norreis may be called to answer the premises of the Bill of Compleynt." The complaint was apparently about some outlying cottages or farms which were then commonly let to tenants for several lives in succession. The Carters‡ continued their tenancy for

* John Louche married in 1565, at Beenham, Anne Combe, widow.

† Probably so called from a family named Combe resident in the parish till early in the 17th century.

‡ Ric^d. Carter, of Beenham, married at St. Laurence, Reading, 1655, Elizabeth Marcy, of Bradfield.

many years to come, so we may hope that the result of their appeal was satisfactory.

Lord Norreys died in 1601, and it seems probable that his Beenham estate had, during his lifetime, been conveyed to his younger son, Sir John Norreys, and that on the early death of the latter it passed to his daughter Elizabeth, who had married Thomas, Earl of Kelly. She died in 1622, and her husband then received a fresh grant by letters patent from James I. "of the Manor of Beenham late belonging to the Monastery of Reading, of the yearly value of £68 4^s. 4^d."

The Manor House* was described in evidence given in a court of law, in 1693, as an "antient" building where Manor Courts had been held; but it does not appear to have been at any time the residence of the lord of the Manor. It is always referred to as the Manor Farm in the occupation of the tenant.

From the beginning of the 17th century and onwards what has been ascertained of the story of this Manor, late the property of Reading Abbey, consists mainly of isolated and unconnected facts and dates.

In 1627 Sir Peter Vanlore is said to have held, at the time of his death, the manor and farm of Beenham, then in the occupation of Thomas Carter, together with the rectorial tithes and the advowson "late belonging to the Abbey of Redyng." In 1668-70 his son, also Sir Peter, speaks of his land in Beenham as "the farm or manor of Beenham." Sir Peter Vanlore, the elder, was a Dutch banker and money lender, and it was probably in that capacity that he had endeared himself to three successive English monarchs, as it is recorded on a magnificent tomb erected at Tilehurst.

In 1727† John Vanden Bempde, another foreign banker, who had acquired the manor and other lands in Beenham by his marriage with the daughter of Sir Peter Vanlore, by his Will settled them on his only daughter and heiress, Charlotte, dowager Marchioness of Annandale. She had married William Johnstone, Earl of Annandale, afterwards created first Marquis, a Scotchman who had held many titles and high offices. After his death she married, secondly, Colonel John Johnstone, also of the Annandale family, whose eldest son by her, eventually became the third Marquis. Her second son, Richard Vanden Bempde Johnstone, inherited her

* Excheq^r Dep^t. 8 Will^m III. East. No. 6, Berks.

† See "Notes and Queries," June 7th, 1913.

Beenham property, which in 1792 he sold to one John Blake. This episode is alluded to rather loosely in *Lysons' Magna Britannia*, where it is stated that previous to 1793 the manor of Beenham had been for a considerable time in the Marquis of Annandale's family.

In 1804 the Manor Farm with its appurtenances was divided among five owners, one of these being the Marquis of Downshire. About the year 1820 it was bought from them by Sir Charles Rich. In Sir Charles Rich's time the house was a substantial red brick building of a style common in English rural districts, picturesque in its way, with a steep red roof of the Georgian period. This has since been enlarged in the same style and is now known as The Grange.

The various transfers of the advowson have been recorded on page 15, vol. 20.

In 1729 the Rectorial Tithes were in the possession of one Francis Hawes, a *director* of the South Sea Company,* and in that year were purchased by Dr. John Girle, in whose family they remained till 1802, when they became the property of Sir Charles Rich and have remained in the possession of succeeding lords of the Manor to the present day.

* Who purchased and lived at Purley Hall till obliged to sell after the South Sea Bubble burst. Mr. Wilder said he was related to, but not the Director of the South Sea Co.—E. E. COPE.

The Potters' Art.

By E. E. Cope.

HAS it ever struck you what an enormous amount of pottery must have been imported into England during the two centuries Rome held sway here? Of course it stands to reason that the Romans brought over with them a certain quantity, for some of the pottery found could not have been produced in this country, even if the best potters of that age had come to England they had not the materials to hand such as they were accustomed to in their own country.