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Notes on the Churches of Sutton Courtenay, Appleford, Drayton & Milton.

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FOLLOWING on my custom for the past few years of bringing annually to the notice of members of our Society the architectural features of some of our Berkshire Churches, I have selected a group in the neighbourhood of Abingdon, namely, Sutton Courtenay, Appleford, Drayton and Milton, which will, I think, justify a careful investigation of the details of the several edifices. Much might be added with respect to the history of these parishes, particularly of Sutton Courtenay, but this is beyond the scope of this paper, and only a few references will be made to elucidate the main subject under consideration.

Sutton Courtenay, though a large and important parish, with a most interesting Church, and some early examples of domestic architecture, is not so well known, or so often visited, as one might expect. The "South town," and only about two miles from Abing-

don, as the crow flies, the main road connecting the two places following a circuitous route, twice crossing the river Thames, on the banks of which it is situated, it occupies a somewhat secluded position, and this is enhanced by the fact that the main traffic on the river passes through the long Culham cut, and misses this part of the stream, adjoining the village.

In our description of other Churches, particularly in the north and west of the County of Berkshire, we have constantly noted the fact that the great mixed Abbey of Abingdon became seized of the manor and advowson, and it is therefore not surprising to find that as early as the year 687 "King Ina first gave to God, the blessed Mary, and the Monastery of Abingdon, with the monks who serve God there, the town of Sudtone in free and perpetual almes, with all the appurtenances belonging, and this place the monks posses'd freely and quietly in peace, up to the time when King Kennulph reigned, and the Abbot Retunus gave it as an exchange for the Island of Andresey to get rid of the King's hawks and hounds kept there to the great annoyance of the monastery."

At the time of the Domesday Survey the King held Sudtone, and it apparently remained as Crown property till Henry II. granted the manor to Reginald de Courtenai, an ancestor of the Earls of Devon, and with one short interval, when it was forfeited in 1462 and granted to Sir William Devereux, it remained as a possession of the Courtenays till it was again forfeited by the attainder of Henry Courtenay, Marquis of Exeter in the reign of Philip and Mary, and was leased to Elizabeth, Lady Mason, and afterwards by Queen Elizabeth for sixty years to Sir Richard Hyde in 1591, and it has since passed through several hands to its present esteemed owner, Lady Wantage.

Lysons, in the *Magna Britannia*, informs us that King William the Conqueror granted the Church to the Abbot and Convent of Abingdon, and in the reign of Edward IV. the advowson of the Vicarage was given to the Dean and Chapter of Windsor. "In 1547 the Manor of Sutton, described as late parcel of the possessions of the Abbot and Convent of Abingdon, was granted to Lord Wrothesley; it is probable that this was the rectorial manor, afterwards given to the Dean and Chapter of Windsor, under whom it has been held for many generations by the family of Justice." We may therefore infer that the Abbot and Convent of Abingdon owned very substantial rights in this charming parish.

Before commencing to describe the Church, we may briefly refer

to the two ancient houses still remaining in the village. The Abbey, as it is called, seems to have belonged to Abingdon, and has been very drastically restored. Some portion of it, with a good decorated window, dates from the latter part of the 13th century. The Manor House mainly dates from the Jacobean period, but there is a very interesting detached building, which appears to have been the chapel of the earlier mansion. Till recently it was divided up into small rooms, but has now been carefully cleared out and restored, and affords an interesting example of work of the end of the 12th century. It has a good lancet window, with remains of decorative colour on the interior splays, in the east wall, and traces of other windows on the north side. There are semi-circular-headed doorways on the north and south sides. That on the south is small, with the roll moulding in arch and an engaged shaft with flat foliated capital and chamfered abacus; that on the north is much larger with undercut hoodmould, and two recessed orders. On the outer are small nailheads in a hollow and a roll moulding on the angle; on the inner a course of dogtooth in a hollow and roll with a fillet band on the angle. The abacus is undercut. The shafts to the outer order are gone, but the capitals, enriched with foliage, still remain. The shafts to the inner order are engaged with flat foliated capitals. This work seems to be of the same date as the west front and doorway of St. Nicholas' Church, Abingdon. There is an illustration of it in the "Transactions of the Newbury and District Field Club," vol. v., page 10, pl. xix.

Close to the village green is the Parish Church (Fig. 1). It is dedicated to All Saints, and is one of the finest edifices in the County. As we have stated, at a very early date the Manor and Church were granted to Abingdon Abbey, and after these had reverted by exchange to the Crown, William the Conqueror again presented the Church to Abingdon Abbey. Of this early structure there do not appear to be any remains. The present edifice is built of stone, and consists of a west tower, nave and aisles with south porch (the north porch is modern), and chancel. The east bay of each aisle is separated by a screen, thus forming a separate chantry or chapel. The earliest portions of the present edifice are of late Norman date of the second half of the 12th century. The west tower and piers of chancel arch appear to be the remains of a Church with broad nave and chancel only. The eastern arch of the south nave arcade, which is no doubt the original chancel arch, moved to its present situation, and the fine circular font are also of

this date. In the 13th century the Chancel was re-built, and a chapel added on the south side of the eastern bay of the nave. About the year 1300 a great re-construction took place. The upper stage of the tower, aisles with north and south doorways, and clerestory on north side were added, a new chancel arch erected in place of the Norman arch, which was re-constructed as the east bay of the south nave arcade, and large windows inserted in the east and south chancel walls. The present flat roof, with clerestory on south side of nave, and the aisle windows are additions of the latter part of the fifteenth century, while early in the sixteenth the fine brick porch completed the Church as we now see it. It was carefully restored in 1903, and is now well cared for and in a good state of repair.

The dimensions of the Church are as follows:—Chancel 36ft. 6in. in length by 17ft. 5ins. in breadth; Nave, 58ft. by 24ft. 3ins.; South Aisle, 58ft. by 9ft. 1in.; North Aisle, 58ft. by 8ft. 3ins.; Tower space, 13ft. 4ins. by 13ft. 1in.

Let us now commence our description starting in accordance with our usual custom in the interior of the Chancel. (Fig. 2.)

The east window is a good example of decorated work of four lights with intersecting mullions. The stained glass with representations of the Nativity and Ascension was designed by a pupil of Burne Jones, and presented in 1912. On the north side are three lancets within widely splayed containing arches, and farther west a three-light late perpendicular window with some nice diamond quarries with foliage in the head. On the south side near the east end is an elegant two-light decorated window with Kentish tracery, and the keel shaped moulding round the containing arch, and farther west a three-light late perpendicular window with diamond quarries enriched with foliage in the head.

In the south wall is a large trefoil-headed piscina (Fig. 3) with two circular basins of the Early English period. Further west and on a low level is a small oblong opening formerly carried through the wall, and possibly inserted to command a view of the Easter sepulchre. There are similar openings at Bredon, Worcestershire, and Bibury, Gloucestershire, and these must not be confounded with the low side windows so commonly found in our old Churches. On the north side at the east end is a large table tomb with altar slab and two quartrefoils on the south front and one on the east and west side. This was formerly on the south side and was moved to its present situation in 1903. Further west is a beautiful founder's

tomb and Easter Sepulchre (Fig. 4) with large arch in the wall. It has a hoodmould and the quarter round moulding and rich cusped fringe, the lower part hacked away. It is of the same date as the east window. Within it lies the effigy of a priest, with new head and hands, richly vested the hands clasped on the breast, and feet on a dog. This seems to fit very well, and to be of the same date as the arch, and it probably commemorates the benefactor who restored the Chancel at the end of the 13th century. It was prior to 1903 on the table tomb on the south side, but at the restoration it was moved to what may fairly be presumed to be its original situation. There are four ancient stalls with miserere seats having small heads on the under side. There is a small segmental-headed doorway on the south side. The Chancel roof is wagon-shaped and mainly old.

The chancel arch is low, segmental-headed, with two chamfered members. It was constructed towards the end of the thirteenth century, and rests on the original Norman piers (Fig. 5). These consist of a main respond and an engaged shaft to the outer order on each west face, with chamfered abacus having the quarter round on the main upper portion, and sculptured capitals. Those to the responds are scalloped, to the shafts are enriched with scroll foliage, that on the north with a head at the angle (Fig. 6), and both with cable band below. The chancel screen (Fig. 7) is very good 15th century work, with two tiers of open traceried compartments to each door, and six similar panels on each side. It has been varnished over. The loft with crucifix above remained till 1841, when it was removed. Over the chancel arch are painted on the wall the Royal Arms of one of the Stuarts within a Garter, and the motto "Dieu et Mon Droit" below, and the Lion and Unicorn as supporters on either side. Above is a large halo with rays pointing downward to a subject, over which the Royal Arms have been painted. Traces of this can be seen, where portions of the later design have fallen away. It would probably have been a representation of the Last Judgment, so often found in this situation. In the south-east corner of the nave is a good Jacobean pulpit with sounding board, which has been recently presented as a memorial to that distinguished soldier Lord Wantage, V.C., late Lord Lieutenant of the County, and one who was revered and beloved by all who had the privilege of knowing him.

The nave (Fig. 8) is of unusual width, and is separated from the aisles by an arcade of four arches on either side, which no doubt

rest on the foundations of the walls of the old Norman Church. With the exception of the eastern arch on the south side, these were erected about the year 1300, when the Church was materially altered and enlarged. The arches (Fig. 9) have two chamfered recessed orders dying into blocks of masonry above the capitals, which are well moulded and rest on octagonal columns. The eastern arch on the south side (Fig. 10) is very fine Norman, and was no doubt the original chancel arch. It is now pointed, so as to adapt itself to its new situation. It has an outer order with a very bold example of the frette or embattled moulding, of which other specimens remain in the County on the doorways at Faringdon and Lockinge, and on some of the sculptured fragments from Reading Abbey. On the inner order are three courses of the raised zig-zag ornament. The arch is supported on a slender respond with round capital in the east wall, and on a pier composed of four engaged semi-circular shafts with well-moulded capitals on the west side. These imposts are of Early English character, and, as has already been pointed out, prove the erection of a chapel here, when the chancel was re-built in the 13th century. On the west side the frette moulding terminates on a ball flower, some distance above the capital, and it may be suggested that this ball flower was thus introduced to indicate the period at which the chancel arch was taken down and re-erected in its present situation.

There is a clerestory above the nave arcades, with five two-light windows on each side. Those on the north side are varied in their design and are coeval with the arches below, while those on the south are of perpendicular character, and of the same date as the flat timber roof. This was an addition of the 15th century, and is supported on a series of stone corbels on either side. The north aisle has the eastern bay partitioned off by a 15th century screen, with mutilated cresting and four open compartments on the north side of the doorway. The lower part has been brown painted over. The east window is of two lights of the Decorated period with a six-foil in the head. Within this is some very rich glass, with a central red medallion and white rays, with some slight remains of foliage, filling up the surrounding divisions. This may be coeval with the window. There is a hoodmould of the usual decorated type to the containing arch. On the north side are three three-light late 15th century windows of very excellent design. The two centre mullions are carried straight up to the head of the arch, and the space within has a cinque-foiled canopy to the lower, and four cusped panels

within the upper portion. The compartments on either side have the cinque-foiled canopy and arch above, enclosing a quatrefoil, and with a trefoil filling up the space between the arch and the central mullion. In the middle window are numerous fragments of old glass (Fig. 11). In the four upper compartments of the central light are mutilated representations of the Evangelists. In the upper one, on west, is part of a wing, and "evage" on a scroll in black letter, and here was St. Matthew; in the adjoining panel portions of a wing and on a scroll "us eva," this no doubt having been St. Mark. In the lower compartment, on west, the body of the ox remains, but a *fleur-de-lis* has been inserted in place of the head. On a scroll is the inscription "Scs lucas Eva." In the adjoining panel only the wings of the eagle remain and the inscription on a scroll "Scs Johan nes Evag." There are also some fragments in the side divisions. The colouring is very rich, and it is sad that more has not been preserved. The west window of this aisle is of Decorated date with single cinque-foiled light within a widely splayed containing arch. Here on the sill is preserved a quaint Norman corbel head and an Early English capital. On the north wall to the east of the doorway is a large painting somewhat obscure, but no doubt portraying the popular legend of St. George and the Dragon. St. George is about life-size with helmet and red armour and holding a long spear. The middle portion of the subject is destroyed, but below can be made out the lower part of the leg of the Saint protected by armour, and with long rowel spur. On the right may be discerned the upturned head of the dragon, and perhaps one of the fore legs of the horse trampling on it. The painting is probably of the 15th century, and was discovered during the 1903 restoration. The subject was a very popular one, and somewhat similar pictures have within the past few years been revealed at Warborough and Kirtlington, Oxfordshire, Ampney St. Mary's, Gloucestershire, and East Wellow, Hampshire. Painted on the south wall near the west end, in large black letters, is an inscription recording the benefaction of Edmund Scorier of land, &c., to provide a loaf and gown for six poor men of Sutton Courtney and 6s. 8d. for a sermon to be preached annually on Easter day. Below the inscription is a portrait of Edmund Scorier making his present to the six poor old men. The inscription is somewhat defaced, but can, it is thought, be still deciphered. His Will was proved in 1609.

On a corresponding position on the south wall of the south aisle a similar inscription runs as follows:—

"William Andrews sen gave eight Pounds towards the maintainance of six poor Widows of Sutton Court ney as followeth Every Sabbath day each of them to have a penny Loaf and yearly a Gown, and three certain days in the Year they are to have Money to buy Meat and for a Sermon to be preached by the Vicar on Corpus Christi day yearly he gave ten Shillings."

Below is the figure of William Andrews on the west handing a gown to the first of the six widows, each of whom has a crutch, and is advancing towards him. William Andrews' will was proved in 1641. Both of these bequests appear to have been lost.

The south aisle is 10 inches wider than the north, and this is perhaps due to the fact of its dimensions being made to accord with the Early English Chapel previously existing at the east end. The west window is of two lights of the Decorated period, but the east window and the three on the south side, all of three lights, are of late 15th century date, and of the same character as those in the north aisle. There are some shields of comparatively modern date in the east window, and fragments of ancient glass in those on the south side. In the eastern of these (Fig. 12) are some roundels with foliage, a white rose, parts of borders, etc., and in the two compartments above the central light very rich canopies and scrolls with the names in black letter "Andreas" on the east and "Scs Jacobus" on the west. This would suggest that the four compartments above the central light of each of the three south windows were enriched with figures of the Apostles.

The eastern bay is as in the north aisle partitioned off by an oak screen, which has $4\frac{1}{2}$ open canopied divisions and plain lower panels to the south of the doorway. At the east end is a stone altar (Fig. 13) with four quatrefoils enclosing roses within circles on the front, and large slab on which the crosses are still visible. This was removed to the north side of the chancel in 1878 when the chancel was restored, but was brought back to its proper situation in 1903. On the south side of the east window is a bracket on the head of a man, and another on the modern head of a lady on the north side. In the south wall is a piscina with plain chamfered arch partly in the sill of the east on south window. It had probably a projecting basin, but this has been cut away.

In the nave are several old oak benches, now varnished over. The font (Fig. 14), which stands at the west end of the nave, is very fine late Norman. It has a large circular tub-shaped bowl, divided into sixteen compartments by intersecting beaded semi-circular headed arches on slender engaged shafts with foliated capitals and well carved bases. Within each arch is an inverted trefoil, leaf, or other ornament, and within the lower spaces a series of fleurs-de-lys or lilies with the side leaves meeting over the shafts. The circular plinth is boldly carved. Three or four inches of the upper part with the heads of the arches have been shaved off. It is of a dark stone and in good preservation. The cover is of wood and of late 17th century date. Near the font are collected a few old encaustic tiles, and on the floor close by is the following brass inscription:—

“In memory
of Richard Trulock of
Appleford,
who departed this
Life 28 Feb. MDCCV.
Aged 77.”

Ashmole in the History and Antiquities of Berkshire, mentions the following: “Engraven on a Plate of Brass, nailed on a Grave-stone lying in the Body of this Church is this Inscription:—

Thomas Truloke the Elder, buried the XXIXth
of Aprill, Anno MDXCV. Thomas Truloke
his Son buried the Thomas
Truloke, the Son of Thomas Truloke
the Younger, buried the XIXth of
November, Anno MDXCV.”

There was also painted on the north wall of the chancel the following inscription:—

“Here lyeth the Body of Sir Richard Hyde, Knight,
late of Blaggrave, in the County of Berks, antiently
descended from the Worthy Family of the Hydes
of Denchworth; which Manor still continuing
in the same Lyne and Name, even unto this Day,
was bestowed upon the first Advancer thereof,
for his Vertue and Valour, by Canutus,
the first Danish King, who by Conquest
obteyned this Kingdom in the Yere of our
Lord This worthy Knight
a Branch of that Stock, deceased the XXIVth

"Day of Aprill, in the Yeare of our Lord God

"MDXCV., and in the Yeare of his Age 69."

There are other monuments to the Hydes which are also mentioned.

Between the font and the tower arch is a very fine old oak chest (Fig. 15) with panelling on the front and sides. On the front are four divisions with quaint heads within lozenge shaped panels and foliage, and at each side is a vine branch with leaves and fruit. There are two similar divisions on each end. The date is early 17th century.

The tower arch (Fig. 16) is plain Norman semi-circular with half-round on the hoodmould, two plain recessed orders, chamfered abacus continued as a stringcourse to north and south walls, and plain jambs. There is a plain deeply splayed window on the lower stage of tower on the north, west and south sides.

(To be continued.)

Shakespeare in Berks, Bucks and Oxon.

By Henry E. Bannard.

WARWICKSHIRE as Shakespeare's home in his earliest and latest years, and London as the field in which his working life was spent, have, of course, a special interest in those Tercenary Celebrations of one who in all other respects is the common heritage of the human heart and intellect. There are, however, evidences of Shakespeare's travels in many of the counties of England, and among them are Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire, in which counties his footsteps can be traced.

Shakespeare's movements in certain years can with a high degree of probability be traced by means of our knowledge of the year in which he left Stratford-on-Avon for London, and of the years in which visits were paid to certain towns by the company of actors of which he was a member.