

## X.

## CHERTSEY ABBEY.

By W. W. POCOCK, Esq., B.A., F.R.I.B.A.

READ AT THE GENERAL MEETING OF THE SOCIETY HELD IN THE TOWN-HALL,  
CHERTSEY, APRIL 27TH, 1855.

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ALTHOUGH situated close to the Roman, or more probably, the ancient British, road that crossed the river Thames, certainly at no great distance from Laleham, we search in vain for any mention of Chertsey, earlier than the seventh century, at which time, as we learn from Bede, a monastery was erected on "Ceroti Insula." Even he makes no mention of either town or village adjacent, but speaks of the site of the new establishment as an island, this being the most distinctive mark he could affix to the locality. From this we are led to conclude that the monastery, so called, was anterior to the town to which it gave rise, and which still survives, after its original, for many ages one of the largest and proudest establishments of the kind, has long ceased to shed its benign influence, or exercise its lordly sway, over the surrounding neighbourhood.

In Domesday Book the name is spelt Certesyg (with the final g), but on the conventual seal used in the reign of Henry VIII. the form of Ceretis *Ædis* is retained (see cut at page 114). The Anglo-Saxon original was evidently the name in common vogue, and is in Chertsey handed down, with singularly little variation in euphony, from the period of the Norman register.

The fact of the site of the abbey being an island, has puzzled more wise heads than one. Aubrey, followed by Salmon, seems to think that, prior to the formation of the causeway from Staines to Egham, Thorpe and the present locality of Chertsey, were both under water, and he adds that the streets of Chertsey, were "all raised by the ruins of the abbey," much above their natural level; and the abbey having been suppressed not more than 136 years when he wrote (1673), and the buildings probably, not having been entirely destroyed till some time after the suppression, he had far better means of ascertaining the use made of the rubbish, than we have now, unless by means of excavations on an extensive scale. This supposition is borne out, to some extent by Camden, who says that what Bede called an island, in his (Camden's) time (1600) "scarcely made a peninsula, except in winter." It is not unlikely that the tide of the Thames, so far from its mouth as Chertsey, may be lower than it was 1200 years ago, and that the land near it may have been somewhat raised by continual deposits, during so long an interval, left by receding tides. Or possibly after the destruction of the edifice by the Danes, who doubtless made the Thames their high road, a broad mote too shallow for the draught of their vessels, was considered so good an auxiliary in defence, as to cause its original course, on the south or land side of the monastery, to be diverted to its present position (where it is known as the Abbey River), on the north or river side of the supposed site of the conventual buildings of later dates. Or it may be, the original building was in what are now the Meads, which are indeed an island formed by the Abbey River, and in which tradition still points to certain irregularities of ground, as connected with the abbey.

But I shall presently, have to show that I prefer

another solution, to any of these—one which points out that Mr. Grumbridge's house, Mr. Lacoste's barn and farm-yard, with all the supposed remains of the abbey, are even now in an island, which was, I feel persuaded, more fully marked in ancient times.

This Ceroti Insula, with Surrey, of which it formed a portion, was, in the seventh century, a part or dependence of the kingdom of Mercia, or Mid Angles, which was converted to Christianity about the middle of that century, through the marriage of the son and heir of Penda, king of Mercia, to the daughter of Oswald, the zealous Christian king of Northumbria. It was about this time that parishes, as we now understand the word, were first formed in England. At first, each kingdom formed but one parish, which again was divided into what we should now call dioceses, the cathedral being for a time the only church, the bishop sending his priests travelling about the country, to instruct the people and administer the rites of Christianity. Theodore, archbishop of Canterbury, towards the close of the seventh century, was the great instrument of accomplishing the formation of parishes, to which the influence his great talents and learning gave him, contributed not a little. This was effected in great part, by inducing the great proprietors, to erect and endow churches, of which they retained the patronage.

Such seems to have been the origin of Chertsey Abbey. It appears from documents, purporting to be the deeds of foundation, that, in 666, Frithwold, petty king of the Surreians under Wulpher, king of Mercia, built the monastery in conjunction with Erkenwall, afterwards bishop of London; which means, no doubt, that Frithwold built a church of which Erkenwall was appointed the incumbent, and that to this church was

attached, at most, accommodation for the itinerant priests who circulated through the district. Monasteries, as we now understand the term, were not erected in England till the reign of Edgar, in the tenth century, when Dunstan introduced monachism as a system, and erected the first monastery at Glastonbury.

The original building at Chertsey, was probably, a simple structure after the type adopted by the monks of Iona, under whose instruction Northumbria had been Christianized, and from whom Diurna, first prelate of Mercia, received consecration. The Cathedral of Northumbria, built in the Island of Landisfarn, was a wooden structure covered with reeds, and Chertsey was probably the same. This supposition will not be weakened by the reflection that, like his northern predecessors, Erkenwall chose an island for his site, somewhat in imitation of their original seat, the island of Iona.

The Abbey seems to have received the bounty of several of the Saxon kings, not excepting Alfred.

During the incursions of the Danes in the ninth century, Chertsey suffered in common with similar establishments; from which, we may safely conclude, that at this comparatively early period of its existence, it already had the reputation of having accumulated considerable property of a portable character, as plunder was the main object of these marauders; or else we may suppose that the monastery, had become the asylum for the persons, or the property of the people around. At this time the monks, to the number of ninety, were slaughtered, and the buildings burnt, — no difficult matter, if constructed of the materials indicated.

In 964 the monastery was rebuilt by Edgar, and by him assigned to the Benedictines, under the influence of

Dunstan, who had assumed the habit of that order, and was now archbishop of Canterbury. It is impossible to say with certainty, whether any of the few remains that now exist, belong to this edifice ; but, from the small portions of sculpture that I have seen (vide pp. 113-114), I am disposed to attribute them rather, to the next building in the order of succession, which was begun to be erected in 1110, under the Abbot Hugh of Winchester, a relation of King Stephen de Blois. The mouldings are better cut, and the carving is more profuse, than would have existed in a building of so early a date as 964. To which I may add, that the use of polished Purbec marble for shafts, of which there are more than one example, was not, so far as I know, introduced at so early a period. And if I am right in concluding, as I think I am, that the stone for the exterior was from Caen or its neighbourhood, this will undoubtedly point us to a period subsequent to the Norman Conquest. And as we have no evidence, of any very extensive buildings, having been erected here long after that period, I think we shall not be far wrong, in assuming the style of that day, as the general style of the edifice. To this, however, I will revert presently.

The parish of Chertsey, whenever originally formed, seems to have comprised, at least, all that now constitutes the parishes of Chertsey, Thorpe, Egham, and Chobham, and in all probability the whole of Surrey as it then was, or, at all events, all the country bounded by the Hog's-back and the Wye, the whole of which, as late as 1673, was a king's chace, not afforested, but under the jurisdiction of the honour and Castle of Windsor, the whole or greater part having come to the crown, probably, on the dissolution of the Abbey. Egham and Chobham were both chapelries of Chertsey

until the time of Edward I., and Thorpe to a still later period. Within these limits the Abbey had large possessions, not only of manors and livings, but lands and rents of various kinds. Thus, from the manor of Egham the abbot received annually 50 fat, and 24 lean hogs, and from Chobham no less than 150—all in that sleek condition which promised the monks speedy opportunities of enjoyment. Another manor supplied them with 325 eels every year, and Petersham, near Richmond, with no less than 1,000 eels, and 1,000 lampreys.

Nor were their possessions confined to narrow limits, but extended to no less than twenty-five manors, mostly in the county of Surrey, and even to London and South Wales; so that, about the time of the dissolution of the monasteries, the annual revenue of the abbey was little short of £660 per annum,—or, according to Speed, £744. 18s. 6d., equivalent to about £13,000 or £15,000 per annum of our present money. No wonder that establishments so rich, and which had already become obnoxious to bluff King Harry, should excite his longing—and with him to long was to have. He seems to have experimented with the monks of Chertsey, before demanding a surrender; for he bought of them the manor of Chobham, doubtless at no very large price, the abbot preferring to part with a single manor, rather than allow his own precious person, to become a pendant to his church steeple.

This ornament to a throne, knew how to adapt his conduct and his speech to the occasion. When apprehensive that the Commons, would not pass his bill for the dissolution, he is related to have sent for them, and said, “I hear that my bill will not pass; but I will have it pass, or I will have some of your heads;” an *argumentum ad hominem* that must have been irresistible,

considering the fidelity with which he kept such promises.\* But how does he change his tone when "my bill" had passed! "I cannot a little rejoice," quoth he, "when I consider the perfect trust and confidence which you have in me, in my doings, and just proceedings; for you, without my desire and request, have committed to my order and disposition all chauntries, colleges, and hospitals, and other places specified in a certain Act, firmly trusting that I shall order them to the glory of God, and the profit of the commonwealth." One knows not which to admire most, the magnanimity with which he undertakes so heavy a responsibility, or the fidelity with which he executes his trust! Surely, much as we may rejoice in the results of the English Reformation, we have no reason to be proud of the auspices, under which it was inaugurated.

In point of rank, Chertsey Abbey was among the mitred abbeys, so called from their superiors wearing mitres, in token of episcopal authority within their own peculiar; and the abbot of Chertsey held of the Crown, as a military tenant, by barony. But there is reason to doubt whether he had a seat, at any time, as a lord of Parliament. He had exclusive civil jurisdiction within the hundred of Godley (probably thence so called), granted to him by Edward the Confessor, and confirmed by the two Williams, two Henrys, Richard, and John, together with the right of keeping dogs for hunting hares and foxes, a privilege carefully guarded by those lovers of the chase, the Norman kings. To the abbey also, belonged the privileges and profits arising from the holding of the two ancient fairs of Chertsey.

In the year 1537, the abbey and its possessions were surrendered to Henry, with the same willingness, no doubt, and under the same stipulations, as the Commons

had passed the requisite bill! And so speedy was its destruction, that in 1763, when Aubrey visited the spot, scarcely anything of the old buildings remained, except the out-walls about it. This destruction was hastened, or completed by the erection of a "fair house," out of the ruins, by Sir Nicholas Carew, master of the buckhounds to Charles II., which, after passing to various owners of motley hue, was pulled down about 1810, and the materials sold and dispersed.

The only historical incidents of any interest, connected with the abbey, that I have been able to trace, are the burial there of King Henry VI., of unhappy memory, after his murder in the Tower of London; and the subsequent removal of his remains to Windsor by Henry VII. On the former occasion the body was brought by water, with but small pomp, at an expense amounting to £24. 14s. 5½*d.*, for conveying and attending the body from the Tower to St. Paul's Cathedral, and thence to Chertsey, including wax, linen, spices, and other ordinary expenses; and £8. 12s. 3*d.* for obsequies and masses at London as well as at Chertsey aforesaid. Of his removal, Camden remarks that Henry VII. "was such an admirer of his (Henry VI.'s) religion and virtue, that he applied to Pope Julius to have him put in the calendar of saints. And this certainly had been done," he adds, "if the pope's avarice had not stood in the way; who demanded too large a sum for the king's apotheosis or canonization, which would have made it look as if that honour had not been paid so much to the sanctity of the prince as to the gold." He might have added that, Henry was as good a judge of the value of money, as the pious Pope Julius.

Of the exact position and arrangement of the conventual buildings, it is impossible to speak with any



degree of certainty. Though considerable remains of foundations have been discovered, they still are but limited, when compared with the probable extent of the abbey; and they are so completely denuded of all architectural features (except some loose fragments of sculpture), that no clue is afforded as to the use of each wall, not even as to which was the internal or external face of it, beyond what the collocation, judging from the analogy of other establishments, may suggest.

In each convent, of course, the church formed the most conspicuous feature; in plan it was usually cruciform, with a central tower and western entrance. To the north or south of the nave, lay the principal court, surrounded on one, two, three, or all four sides, by a groined ambulatory or cloister, giving access to the chapter-house on the east, the monks dormitory on the west, and on the side opposite to the church the refectory with its kitchens. A *locutorium* or parlour, the *scriptorium*, *lavatorium*, and other smaller apartments, filled up the intervals. Generally, attached to some portion of these buildings was the abbot's or prior's lodging, including a private chapel. Another range of buildings was allotted to the reception of visitors of importance, whilst others of an inferior grade, with those who sought charitable relief, were accommodated in other apartments, commonly provided in connection with one of the gate-houses. An infirmary, sometimes a complete establishment, with chapel, cloisters, dormitory, and refectory—and perhaps a range of farm-buildings, together with bakeries, breweries, and other offices of this character—completed the whole.

These were surrounded by a strong and high wall or a moat, or by both, having one or more entrances, of which the principal was a large erection, as already inti-

mated. The principal gate-house at Chertsey is said to have had a chapel over it, which was not by any means an uncommon appendage. This I believe to have stood opposite the end of Guilford-street, on or near the site of the present church, which (or rather its predecessor) was, I conclude, erected shortly after the suppression of the monastery, and evidently out of its ruins, close to, if not on, the actual spot where stood the chapel dedicated to All Saints, which we know existed, and to which, on ordinary occasions, the townspeople had been accustomed to resort.

In the map attached to an old record, called the Exchequer Leiger (see plate annexed), are shown two mills, one on the abbey river, and the other nearer to the church. This latter one, I imagine, stood where (in the direction of A.\*) there are still the remains of some old foundations, between which runs a stream now arched over, and continuing under or near the Town-hall across London-street, and so to the Bourne. This, I conclude, is the ancient river of Redewynd, a ferry over which was granted by Edward III. (in 1343) to W. Allegar. This ferry appears to have been in London-street, which in the map above alluded to has the name of Redewynd attached to it; and if (as is probable) the Redewynd continued on the east of Guilford-street down into the Bourne as it now does, but on a larger scale, we have a reason for the formation and location of that approach to the abbey-gate, from the country in which a large portion of its possessions lay. Whatever its present origin, this stream apparently once was connected with the Thames, and thus completed the insular character of the site of the abbey, as described by Bede. To have turned a mill, the Redewynd would probably

\* *Vide* the Plans.

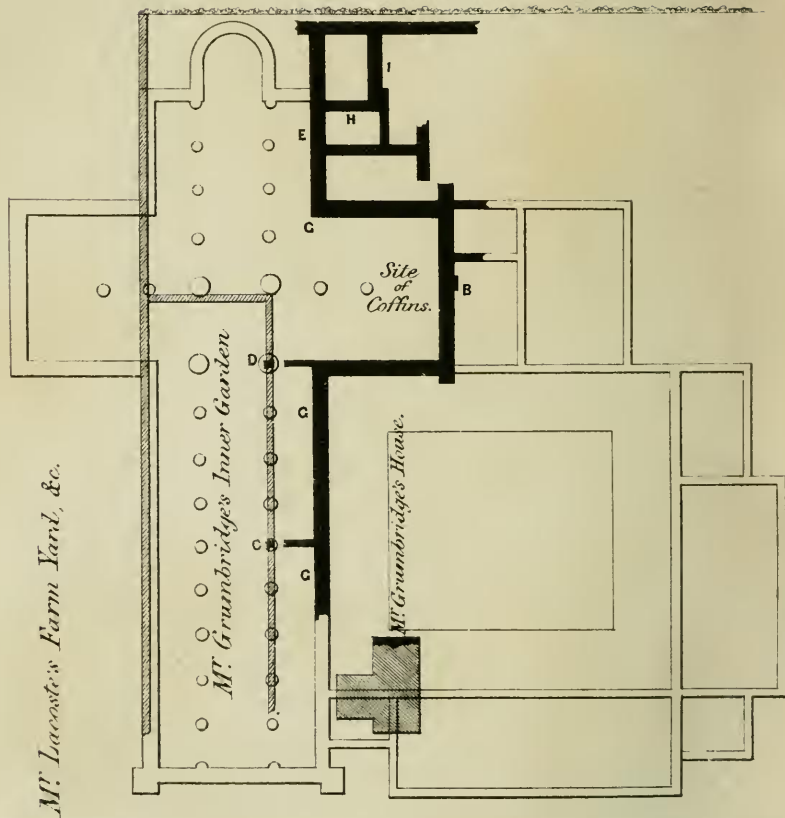






UNIVERSITY HALL.

East



The Dark Tint shows the remains discovered in 1855.

The Crossed lines, the existing modern erections.

The Outlines, the restorations suggested.



be large enough to require a ferry. But should it be concluded that the foundations to which I allude, are not those of a mill, then doubtless they are of a bridge which gave access to the abbey-close, at that spot; and if so, it must have been no mean stream, that required such a bridge to span it.

More to the north-east we come upon the excavations lately made, indicated by the dark tint in the plan, the most remarkable feature of which, is the discovery of several stone coffins with their original tenants. This would indicate that the spot where they were found, was a portion of the church or the chapter-house. I am inclined to consider this as the south transept of the church, which I imagine was divided into two aisles of equal, or nearly equal, width, as immediately south of these coffins, on what would then be the external face of the south transept (at B), is the only fairly-worked stone that I have seen *in situ*, and this appears to be the base of a buttress four feet wide by a projection of about one foot.

To the north of this, and at a distance of some sixty feet, has been traced a wall running east and west for several hundred feet, the foundations of which are as much as eight feet wide. This I take to be the south wall of the nave and choir; and eighty feet more to the north is the extreme boundary-wall of Mr. Grumbridge's garden. The foundations of this wall are said to be very deep, and though the wall itself is a modern erection, I conjecture it to have been placed upon the old foundations of the north wall of the church. If so, we must look on the north of it for remains of the north transept. In the lower part of the wall, dividing the inner from the outer garden, are at least two masses of masonry (C and D) that appear older than the rest of

the wall; these may possibly be remains of the south range of the internal columns of the nave, and would determine the main dimensions of the church. Directly east of the axis thus found, and at a distance of 80 to 100 feet from what I suppose to have been the transept, remains of a circular tower are reported to have been discovered some years ago. This may be an apsidal end to the presbytery, and if so, I should not be far wrong in the appropriation I have assigned to the foundations that have been found. Near (at or near E) was discovered, in what I presume to have been the south wall of the choir, a portion of "a stone sink or basin of circular form, 18 or 20 inches in diameter, with a portion of lead pipe attached." This looks very much like the description of a piscina, and as fragments of the same pipe were found, running nearly the whole length of what apparently, was the south wall of the nave (G, G, G), and on the north side of it, I conclude that it must have been on the inside of the building, or so expensive a drain would not have been employed. The reason for leading the water in that direction, cannot now be determined. To the south of the part last alluded to, were several walls, in one of which (H) were found two steps much worn, and in the south wall of the apartment to which these steps ascended, was what appeared to have been a fire-place (I), though it was not clear on which side of the wall the room to which it belonged had been built. I would therefore attribute it to the room toward the south, and assume that to have been the abbot's kitchen, the intermediate rooms being either chapels or vestment-rooms. I am not prepared to produce any authority for placing the kitchen so near the choir; but the abbot's or prior's lodgings were frequently to the east of the chapter-house. At Foun-



Villa de Klesm



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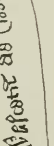
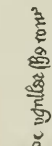
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tain's Abbey, and Rivaulx's such was the case, as also at Durham, Hereford, and elsewhere. At Buildwas, in Shropshire, the cloister being on the north of the nave, the abbot's lodge is to the north-east, and still remains as a dwelling. At Canterbury, where also the cloister is to the north, there are remains of very extensive buildings in that direction, some of which actually adjoin the chapels annexed to the choir and presbytery.

In the position thus assumed for the abbot's lodgings, I am informed that the soil and its crops, or rather want of crops, indicate considerable remains at no great depth below the surface; and on the spot where, according to my supposition, the dormitory stood, Abbey-house was subsequently erected, but in what direction the front of it was I have never heard. Dr. Stukeley, who visited it in 1752, writes, "Of that noble and splendid pile [the Abbey], which took up four acres of ground, and looked like a town, nothing remains; scarcely a little of the outward wall of the *precinctus*." He then proceeds to describe the position of the church, though upon what authority he does not say. "The gardener carried me," says the doctor, "through a court on the right-hand side of the house, where, at the entrance to the kitchen-garden, stood the church of the Abbey—I doubt not, splendid enough. The west front and tower-steeple was by the door and outward wall, looking toward the town and entrance to the Abbey." These would lead to the conclusion of, the entrance being towards the south-west of the church, as I have supposed. He speaks of the terraces on the back-front of the house, and I conclude that the north wall of Mr. Grumbridge's garden formed the boundary of the terrace, and consequently, that the court he alludes to, was on the east of the house, possibly some remnants

of the cloisters, which, he says, were on the south of the church, and would, as he stood with his back to the town, be on the right hand of the house. "The garden," [probably pleasure garden as well as kitchen], he says, "takes up the whole church and cloisters;" and as Mr. Lacoste's barn was no doubt standing in the doctor's time, and the moat still remains to the eastward, I think I cannot be far wrong in the general disposition I have adopted, though, confessedly, only worthy of reception as a probable conjecture.

But to return,—From the supposed fireplace before mentioned ran a cavity in a horizontal direction along the centre of the wall, westward, supposed by those who saw it to have been a flue, the more so as considerable remains of charcoal were found in it. I am more disposed to consider that this was the place of a beam of timber, which, becoming ignited, had burnt out, and left the charcoal and ashes remaining. This also makes me doubt the correctness of the supposition that the supposed fireplace was indeed such, though the hearthstone appeared much worn and reduced by the action of fire. I am more inclined to conclude it was a mere recess, which the destroyers of the abbey found convenient for lighting their fire in, for the purpose of melting the lead stripped from the roofs. At Fountain's, fires were made in many places for this purpose, and there are records still showing that the lead, was there melted into pigs before removal. An inhabitant of Yorkshire at the time of the suppression, or shortly after, has left a very affecting account of his trouble at seeing the devastation committed, especially at Roche Abbey, near which he dwelt. In a curious letter, published by Sir Henry Ellis, the writer says,—

"It would have made a heart of flint to have melted and wept to have

seen the breaking-up of the house, and their sorrowful departing, and the sudden spoil that fell the same day of their departure from the house. And every person had everything good-cheap, except the poor monks, friars, and nuns, that had no money to bestow of anything, as it appeared by the suppression of an abbey hard by me, called the Roche Abbey, a house of white monks, a very fair-built house, all of freestone, and every house vaulted with freestone, and covered with lead (as the abbeyes was in England, as well as the churches be). Some," he continues, "took the service-books that lied in the church, and laid them upon their waincoppes to piece the same; some took windows of the hayleith and hid them in their hay; and likewise they did of many other things; for some pulled forth the iron hooks out of the walls that bought none, when the yeomen and gentlemen of the country had bought the timber of the church. For the church was the first thing that was put to the spoil; and then the abbot's lodging, dorter and frater, with the cloister, and all the buildings thereabout within the abbey-walls. It would have pitied any heart to see what tearing up of the lead there was, and plucking up of boards, and throwing down of the spars; and when the lead was torn off and cast down into the church, and the tombs in the church all broken, and all things of price either spoiled, carped away, or defaced to the uttermost."

"The persons that cast the lead into foders plucked up all the seats in the choir, wherein the monks sat when they said service, which were like to the seats in minsters, and burned them, and melted the lead therewithall, although there was wood plenty within a flight-shot of them, for the abbey stood among the woods and the rocks of stone, in which rocks was pewter vessels found, that was conveyed away and there hid; so that every person bent himself to filch and spoil what he would. Yea, even such persons were content to spoil them that seemed not two days before to allow their religion, and do great worship and reverence at their mattins, masses, and other service, and all other their doings, which is a strange thing to say, that they could this day think it to be the house of God, and the next day the house of the devil; or else they would not have been so ready to have spoiled it."

He adds, his father, who bought the timber of part of the church, and the steeple and bell-frame ("in the which steeple hung viij yea ix bells," which "I did see hang there myself more than a year after the suppression"), and "thought well of the religious persons and of the religion then used," excused his participation in the spoil by arguing, "Might not I, as well as others, have some profit in the spoil of the abbey? for I did see all would away, and therefore I did as others did. And thus much," the writer adds, "upon my own knowledge touching the fall of the said Roche Abbey."—MS. Cole, vol. vii. Ellis, III. iii. 35.

This process—of which there are indications here—will readily account for the almost entire disappearance of any remains of the abbey of Chertsey, hastened, possibly, by the removal of the monks to Bisham in Berkshire, as they would endeavour to carry with them whatever was most valuable and portable; and the erection of the house for Sir Nicholas Carew, would complete the demolition of anything, that previous hands had left.

If we have little beyond analogy to guide us in determining the exact position of the monastic buildings, we have still less to assist us in arriving at any definite idea of their appearance.

In the annexed woodcuts, it may be seen that a representation of a building, occurs at the head of the seal of John de Medmenham, abbot of Chertsey about 1261, and a similar representation from the seal of his successor, Bartholomew of Winchester. Between these there appears this similarity, that they consist of three principal parts, finished with three gables; at the same time they are so far dissimilar, as to preclude the idea of the latter being copied from the former. I therefore, imagine them to have been meant for representations of the abbey church, though differently treated, both as to point of sight and conventional expression. I take the former one to be a view of the west front, with the two transept ends brought round so as to be both represented. This will give three large openings in the front, suggesting a resemblance to Peterborough Cathedral, and two in each transept, corresponding with what I have supposed to be the internal division of the south transept. At the angles of the west front are two large objects resembling horns, which I take to be conventional representations of purfled or crocketed pinnacles, each



CHERTSEY ABBEY

SEAL OF ABBOT MEDMENEHAM.







CHERISEY ABBEY

SEAL OF ABBOT BARTHOLOMEW

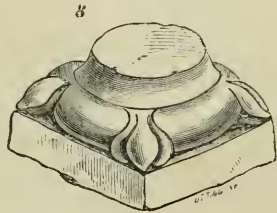
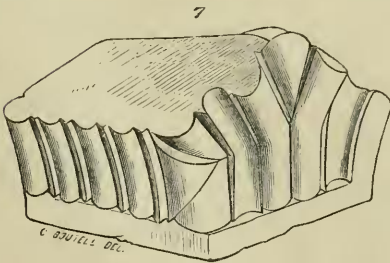
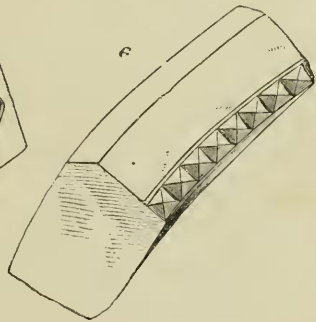
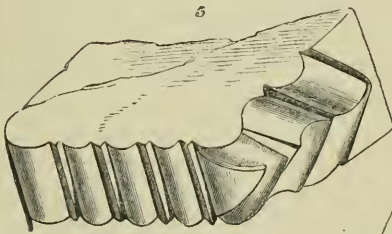
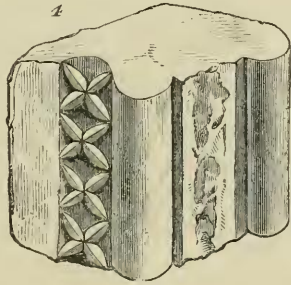
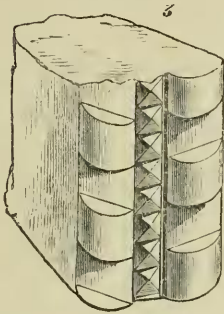
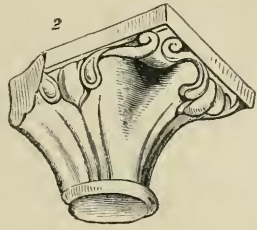
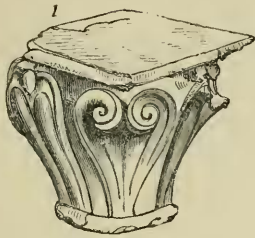




CHERTSEY ABBEY.

THE CONVENTUAL SEAL.





ARCHITECTURAL FRAGMENTS, CHERTSEY ABBEY.



gable being finished with a finial, and the wall pierced with a conventionalism for a rose window of some description.

The later seal shows but two openings in the central compartment, which I therefore conclude to be the transept, giving still three openings for the west and east ends.

The conventual seal attached to the deed of surrender, is shown by the third woodcut, and from this we may gather, that there was a western porch and a central tower and spire, as also a transept north and south, and some square turret or buttress running up the angles of the west front. The arrangement of the roofs in this seal I will not attempt to explain, but in the others the roofs are evidently sharply pointed ones.

Now Hugh of Winchester, a relative of Stephen de Blois, afterwards king, began a new abbey in 1110, and if we conclude that additions were made to his works by his immediate successors, the whole might well be complete and in good order in 1261, when the first of the said seals would be engraved. This directs us to a date not far different from that of Peterborough Cathedral, which was erected at various periods ranging from 1117 to 1220, the western front being the latest part added, of course excepting the presbytery, galilee, and insertions.

The foundations which have been discovered, were lying at a depth of five or six feet from the present surface; this has apparently been raised three or four feet by the *débris* of the old buildings, the soil for the whole of that depth, being composed almost entirely, of old mortar and fragments of freestone and flints. The illustration represents fragments of sculpture discovered and still preserved; 1 and 2 are capitals of shafts in Purbeck marble,

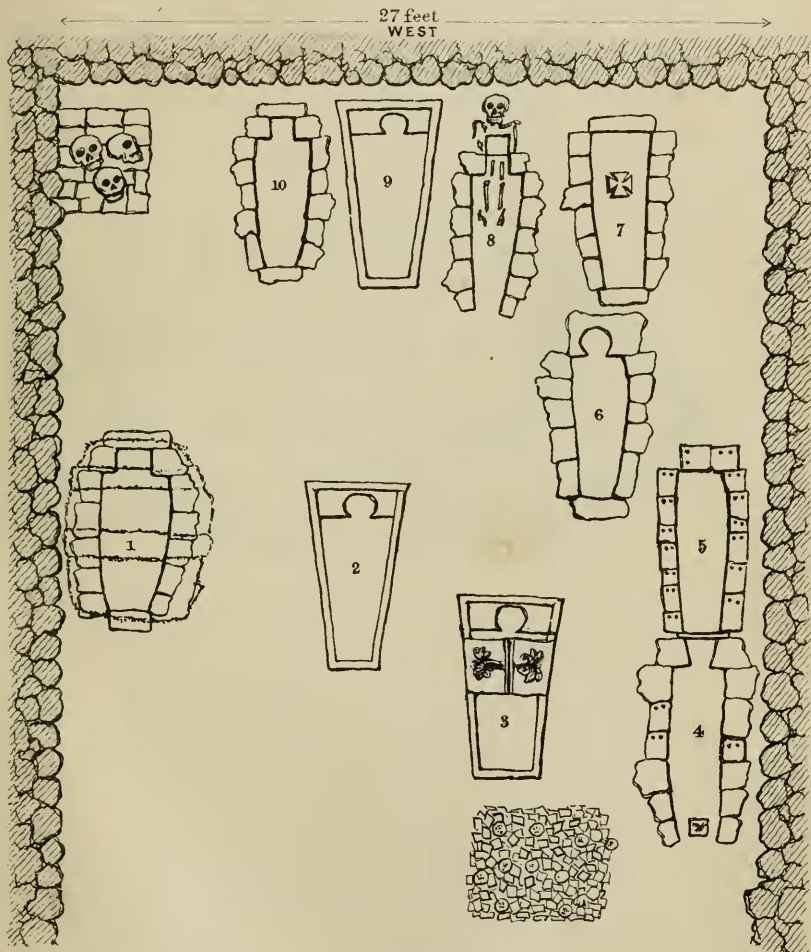
and 8, a base of the same material: 3 and 4 are jambstones, having the dog-tooth and nail-head mouldings well defined; 5, an arch stone with the Norman chevron; 7, a corresponding springing stone for two arches; and 6 also an arch stone exhibiting the nail-head ornament. All these five are of a greenish freestone, resembling Reigate stone. The woodcut annexed shows an inscription found on the same site.

These, with the tiles and coffins, and the few foundations indicated by the dark tint on the plan, are all the remains yet brought to light, of this once lordly and magnificent establishment. Three centuries have more than sufficed to dissipate and destroy, what it had taken nearly nine, to collect and consolidate. We do not find the monks or abbey of Chertsey, making much figure in history either good or bad; and whether they had completed, or failed to fulfil, the purposes intended by the Great Ruler of destinies; or what may have been its sin other than its wealth; or whether the delinquences of other similar institutions, caused the innocent to be involved in the common ruin; it was given over to a sudden and complete destruction. Suggestive as the subject is, I forbear to enter upon the train of reflection to which the catastrophe of Chertsey Abbey would naturally lead; and I conclude with the expression of a hope that further excavations may yet bring to light more, and more interesting remains of the buildings of this once magnificent establishment.



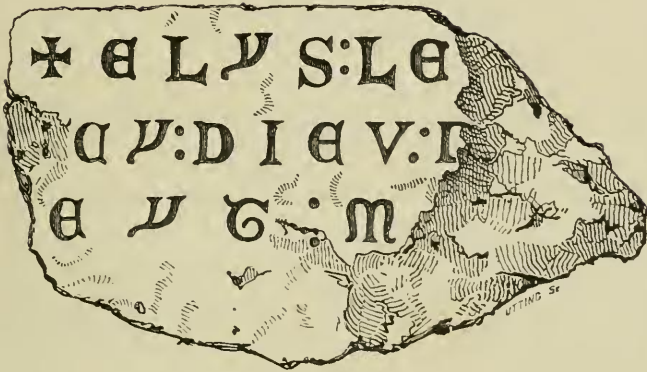
# QVERTSÆ ABBEY.

Plan of South Transept,  
Showing position of Coffins and Encaustic Tiles.



EAST





CHERTSEY ABBEY.

FRAGMENT OF A SEPULCHRAL SLAB

