

THE PARISH CHURCH OF HAREFIELD, MIDDLESEX,
AND THE MANOR OF MOOR HALL.

By W. F. VERNON.

The Church dedicated to the Virgin Mary, situated about half a mile from the village, in the centre of the park of Old Harefield Place, is built of flint and stone, with a square tower to the north west corner. When and by whom it was built is not known, but there was a church and cemetery at Harefield before 1200, *believed* to have been built by the Swanlands at a very early period. In the Cottonian MS., Nero E vi, in the British Museum, containing a large collection of documents concerning the lands of the Knights Hospitallers of St. John of Jerusalem, there are many referring to their property at Harefield, amongst them :

A Grant, by Beatrix de Bollers, sometime wife of Baldwin, the son of Geoffrey, with assent and consent of Geoffrey her son : to God and the Brethren of the Hospital of Jerusalem of the *advowson of the Church of Harefield* with all its appurtenances in pure and perpetual alms for the soule of Baldwin (son of Geoffry) her husband, her own soule, her son Geoffry and her other children, and her ancestors, into hands of *Richard Turcy Prior at Clerkenwell*. Also in augmentation of the said gift, one virgate of land half in the tenure of William de Conete, and half in that of Gladewin Fitzrobert.

Witness, Robert, Chaplain of Harefeld, and many others. There is no date to this document. But *Richard Turcy* was prior at Clerkenwell from 1180 to 1195.

Another Grant by Hugh de Clahull and Alina his wife, to God and Blessed Mary and St. John Baptist, and the House of the Hospital of Jerusalem and the Brethren of

the same, of 120 acres of land in Harefeld, that is to say, from Berdelesegrave to Pirifeld 30 acres of land; and all Bemerhurst as far as Burnam for 90 acres.

Witnesses	{	William Rector of the Church	} Chaplains
		of Quowilton	
		Robert Vicar of Cuting	
		Master Adam of Fountains	
		Valentine Deacon	
		Richard Giffard Clerk, and many others.	

Confirmation by Hugh de Clahull and Alina his wife of the *advowson of the Church* of Harefeld, and of one virgate of land in Harefeld, which the Brethren of the Hospital held already by the grant and alms of Beatrix de Bollers and Geoffry her son. Confirmation by Gilbert Bishop of London of the *advowson of the Church of Harefeld* to the Brethren of the Hospital of St. John. (Gilbert Foliot, the bishop here mentioned, occupied the episcopal throne of London from 24th March, 1163, to the 18th February, 1188.)

Confirmation by William, Bishop of London, of the confirmation of his predecessor, Gilbert, of the Church of Harefeld, at the instance of Geoffry, son of Baldwin, and of his mother, Beatrix de Bollers, then vacant by the resignation of Robert, priest rector of the same, that the prior and his successors should possess the said Church, but *providing a chaplain* in the same with adequate maintenance.—Dated at London, A.D. 1219, the 15th of the kalends of March, and of the bishop's episcopate the 21st.

This William of St. Mary Church was consecrated Bishop of London 23rd May, 1199, and resigned his bishoprick on the 25th January, 1221.

Thus the Church of Harefield came into the hands of the Knights Hospitallers of Clerkenwell. Many other grants of messuages and land were made to the knights, amongst others one by Alina de Clahull (now since her husband's death called Alina de Clere) of "One acre and manse next the *cemetary of Herefield, north of the Church*, which is called Ancrehaglie."

Witnesses, Sir William Gilbert, Baldric my chaplain, Augustus vicar of Rislip, Richard Giffard, Clerk, &c., &c.

Alina also grants divers homages and services for the *maintenance of a Chaplain* in Herefield, and directs that upon the death of the chaplain another was to be appointed within fifteen days.

In 1246 Pope Innocent (IV) confirmed the Knights Hospitallers of St. John of Jerusalem at Clerkenwell in all grants made to them, and gave them exclusive spiritual jurisdiction over all their ecclesiastical property, with appeal only to the Pope. Thus exempting them from all ecclesiastical interference in England.

In 1338, a return was made from the Prior of England to the Grand Master of the Order, of all the manors in England belonging to the Knights Hospitallers. *Moor Hall* was returned as follows :

“Camera de Herfeld, County of Middlesex. There is one messuage, three carrucates of arable land, twenty acres of meadow, four pound annual rent, a Church appropriated ; Pasture for twenty cows, twenty heifers and three hundred sheep, and the value is *Forty marks*. Nevertheless, it yields nothing, because in the time of Brother Thomas L’Archer it was granted to Brother William Brex for the term of his life, with no payment of rent.”

“The officer now (1338) in charge is Brother Simon, of Minewood, Chaplain.”

In 1516, at a Chapter held at Clerkenwell, on the 24th April, Thomas Dowra, Prior of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem in England and the Brethren of the same Priory, granted and leased to farm to Rose Assheby, of Herfeld, in the County of Middlesex, widow, and to her assigns “Our manor and rectory called Morehalle, in Harefeld aforesaid, with all and singular lands, meadows, grazings, pastures, rents, tenths, oblations, and other profits and commodities whatsoever to the aforesaid manor and rectory in any wise belonging or appertaining. All woods and underwoods, and trees, and escheats, beyond the value of forty shillings, goods of felons, &c., &c., excepted and reserved. From the Feast of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist next ensuing to the end and term of the following forty years. A yearly rent of nineteen pounds of lawful English money to be paid to us at our treasury of Clerkenwell at two terms of the year, to

wit, at the Feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and of St. Barnabas the Apostle in equal portions. The aforesaid Rose and her assigns shall find a fit *and proper Chaplain* continually performing Divine Service in the *Parish Church there*, and fitly ministering the Sacraments and Sacramentals to the parishioners there during the time aforesaid. They shall also support and undergo all other ordinary and extraordinary burdens incumbent on the manor and rectory aforesaid. The aids and other subsidies for the *Treasurer at Rhodes* only excepted. The aforesaid Rose and her assigns shall repair, sustain, and maintain, as often as shall be necessary during the term all the buildings and houses, as in roofing, thatching, and plaster work; and also all the walls, hedges and ditches, at their own proper cost and expense. The repairs of the buildings and houses in stone, timber, lead, glass, and covering of tiles only excepted, which are to be done at the expense of Us, the aforesaid Prior, and our successors. The aforesaid Rose and her assigns shall have in and of our wood and underwood there, housebote, haybote, cartebote, ploughbote, and fyrebote, within the said Manor reasonably without waste to be expended by the assignment and delivery of one of our servants to be deputed or assigned by us to this office. If it shall happen that the said farm of xix *lb.* a year be in arrear in part, or in all, after the term of payment specified above, for two months, then it shall be lawful for us and our successors to reenter into the said manor and rectory and into any part thereof, and to retain, hold, and repossess all and singular as in our former state; and totally to expel and remove the said farmers from the same, the present lease in aught notwithstanding. To all and singular payments as aforesaid, the said Rose and others oblige themselves to the aforesaid Prior and his successors in the sum of Forty pounds sterling by their bond, bearing the same date as these presents. In testimony whereof Our Common Seal and the Seal of the aforesaid Rose Assheby, widow, are to the present indenture alternately appended.

“Dated in our house of St. John of Clerkenwell near London in the year of Our Lord 1516 and of King Henry VIII, the eighth.”

Six years afterwards the above lease must have terminated in some way, for on the 18th September the 14th of Henry VIII (1522), the prior and the brethren granted another lease for forty-five years in the same terms (except that the rent was to be twenty pounds per annum instead of xix) to Rose Browne of Harefield, widow.

In 1534 the Order of the Knights Hospitallers at Clerkenwell was suppressed, and in 1538 a valor was taken of all the ecclesiastical property in the country, in order to enable the king (as it was expressed) to support the dignity of *Supreme Head of the Church*. The entry simply states that the yearly value of the property at Moor Hall was xx lb.

Attested by William Rugges, Auditor.

On the 18th August, 1542, the Commissioners of the Crown Office granted the manor of Moor Hall, together with Bayhurst wood, with all the messuages, grainges, mills, lands, meadows, pastures, &c., in the manor of *Moor Hall*; also the *advowson and right of patronage of Harefield Church*, and all tithes, oblations, &c., belonging to the same, to the king's beloved Robert Tyrwhitt, the same to be held in chief by the service of one twentieth part of one knight's fee, and an annual fee farm rent of forty shillings.

Witnessed by the king at Berehurst 18th August 1542.

In this grant there is not one word about a chaplain or that the grantee was bound to appoint one, or continue any spiritual privileges which the people had enjoyed under the Knights Hospitallers or their tenants.

The same year (1542) that Robert Tyrwhitt became possessed of this property, he sold the *manor with the advowson and right of patronage of Harefield Church with all the tithes, oblations, &c., and all other rights to John Newdigate, Sergeant-at-Law*, of Harefield manor and estate, which had descended to him by the death without issue of William de Swanland, whose sister Joanna had married (in the time of Edward III) Sir John Newdigate, who was knighted after the battle of Poitiers in 1356, and had a *fleur de lis* granted to him for a crest. From the year 1542 the Newdigates held both the manor of Harefield and the manor of Moor Hall, together *with the patronage of the Church of Harefield* until the year

1585, when the then John Newdigate, great grandson of the John Newdigate who purchased the manor of Moor Hall from Robert Tyrwhitt, exchanged his manors and estates of Harefield and Moor Hall and all his property in Middlesex except one farm called Brakenbury's, with Sir Edmund Anderson, Chief Justice of the Court of Common Pleas, for the estate of Arbury in the county of Warwick, where Sir Edmund had recently erected a quadrangular stone building upon the site of the dissolved Priory (of Black Canons) of Erdbury, which he had obtained from the heirs of Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, the grantee at the dissolution of the Priory (the valuation of the Priory at the dissolution was returned as £122 8s. 6d. per annum).

In 1601 Sir Edmund Anderson sold his estates and manors of Harefield and Moorhall to Alice, widow of Ferdinando, fifth Earl of Derby, who died in 1594, leaving three daughters but no issue male.

The Countess Alice had remarried in 1600 Sir Thomas Egerton the Lord Keeper, who became Viscount Brackley, and died in 1617. The Countess of Derby continued to reside at Harefield until her own death in 1637. She left by her will dated 24th December 1636, twenty-five pounds a year for ever (settled upon her estates) to the incumbent or curate of Harefield. She also built alms houses in the village for six old women, and left £36 a year for ever to be paid as follows: Five pounds per annum to each of the six old women; five pounds per annum to the incumbent as master, and one pound per annum for repairs.

The estate at Harefield with the manors and the *advowson and right of patronage of Harefield Church* went to Lady Derby's eldest daughter, Lady Anne Stanley, who had married Grey, 5th Baron Chandos, who died at Sudley 10th August 1621, and was succeeded by his eldest son, George Bruges, 6th Baron Chandos, who upon his mother's death in 1647, succeeded to the estate and manors of Harefield and Moorhall, for which he compounded with the Republican Parliament by the payment of £3,973.

In the MSS. at Lambeth of the Parliamentary Survey

of Church Lands returned in 1649, Harefield is stated to be:—

“ One parsonage impropriate to the Lord Chandos in fee, who hath the right of patronage, and we consider the same to be worth about £140 *a year* in small and great tithes, and find that by order of the Committee at Goldsmiths’ Hall upon the said Lord Chandos his composition, he is to allow towards the maintenance of an able minister amongst us the yearly sum of £100, which is of late settled upon one Mr. Hoare our present Incumbent and constant preaching Minister.”

This Lord Chandos, the sixth Baron, married, as his second wife, Lady Jane Savage, daughter of Earl Rivers, and dying of smallpox in 1655, left his estates and manors of Harefield and Moorhall, *with the advowson and right of patronage of Harefield Church*, to his wife, who in 1657 married George Pitt of Strathfieldsay. In 1673 she made over all her estates and manors at Harefield to her husband, and the following year (1674) George Pitt sold the Harefield estate, the manors of Harefield and Moorhall, and the *advowson of the Church and such tithes* as arose from George Pitt’s land, to Sir Richard Newdigate, Bart., of Arbury, so that after only ninety years alienation the Harefield and Moorhall manors and estates, together with *the advowson and right of patronage of the Church* again became the property of the Newdigates. But the *greater part of the tithes* were sold to different purchasers by George Pitt and his son between the years 1683 and 1695.

In 1674 Sir Richard Newdigate, after his purchase of the Harefield estate and the manors, &c., from George Pitt, altered the bequest of Alice, Dowager Countess of Derby concerning the alms houses at Harefield, and by deed enfeoffed several persons of Baldwin’s Hall, and certain plots of land (named) that they might receive out of the rents, thirty-six pounds per annum over and above all rates and taxes, &c., to be applied to the charitable use mentioned. Up to 1854 there was no residence for the incumbent, a subscription was then made for building a good parsonage house. Charles Newdigate Newdegate, the lord of the manor and patron of the advowson, giving nine acres of land as glebe and a

considerable sum besides. In 1857 the building was completed and conveyed over to the use of the incumbent for the time being for ever. The total outlay, including the value of the land, legal expenses, &c., amounted to a little over £3,000.

In 1878 Charles Newdigate Newdegate, M.P., sold his Harefield estate (with the exception of Conduit Farm) to Henry Cox, of Hillingdon, Esq., but retains the manors of Harefield and Moorhall, together with the *advowson and right of presentation to the Church*, and also the appointment to vacancies in the Harefield alms houses and all his other rights, church fees, &c., he having to keep the building in repair.

RISE AND FALL OF THE KNIGHTS OF ST. JOHN OF JERUSALEM IN ENGLAND.

1048. Some merchants from Amalfi purchased a piece of ground in Jerusalem near the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, where they built two hospitals. One for males, dedicated to St. John of Alexandria; the other for females, dedicated to St. Mary Magdalene. The persons who attended upon the sick were called "The Hospitallers of St. John." They followed the rule of St. Augustine.

1099. When Jerusalem was taken by the Crusaders these Hospitallers were looked upon with great respect.

1113. Pope Pascal II took them under his protection. Gerard, a native of Provence, was at their head called "Guardian of the Poor," to him succeeded

1118. Raymond Dupuy, a knight of Dauphiny.

1130. The Hospitallers having become a powerful body joined with the Knight Templars in Palestine in protecting pilgrims and making war upon the infidel, as well as nursing the sick.

1187. The Hospitallers suffered a severe defeat in Palestine, their Grand Master, Roger de Molines, was left dead on the field, and in the next battle their new Grand Master was wounded and died the following day at Ascalon. Jerusalem then fell into the hands of Saladin

who allowed ten Hospitallers to remain for one year to take charge of the sick.

1311. The Pope excommunicated the Templars, and in 1312 ordered all their property to be given to the Knights Hospitallers, who had just become extremely popular by the capture of Rhodes, Fulke de Villaret being the Grand Master. (In 1324 an Act of Parliament gave all the Knight Templars' property in England to the Knights of St. John at Clerkenwell, but such was the opposition made to this, that it was not till 1334 that by a second Act of Parliament the Knights of St. John got possession). They held Rhodes until the 15th December, 1524, when they were driven out of it by Soliman II (the Magnificent). The knights then retired to Castro, Messina and Rome, but six years after the Emperor, Charles V, gave them *Malta*.

1534. In the 25th of Henry VIII an Act of Parliament dissolved the Hospitallers of St. John in England and handed over their property to the Crown. A part of this was restored to them under Queen Mary, but the Order in England was completely broken up, and the whole of what remained confiscated in the first year of Queen Elizabeth.

1558. They continued in Malta till it was taken by the French 24th November, 1798.

The dress of the Knights Hospitallers in peace time was a long black mantle, on the left side of which was a cross of white linen. In war they bore a red flag with a white cross upon it, and they wore a surcoat of scarlet in the form of a dalmatic, embellished before and behind with a white cross.