

of the repairs has been entrusted, was an active helper with the boys at the chapel in the days when S. Alkmund's Church had its mission there. For his loving care and for the careful work of his foremen on a rather tedious job we can never be too grateful.

We now await the time when the ground may be decently enclosed, the little bit of garden laid out, and the buildings once more restored to their ancient use.

ADDITIONAL NOTES ON THE BRIDGE CHAPEL.

By the Editor (F. Williamson).

In spite of Dr. Cox's statement that there was a bridge rebuilt or repaired on this site in the reign of John (1199-1216), there is absolutely no evidence to support this.

During the reign of John the only information is contained in a charter granted to the burgesses in 1204, which allowed them to levy toll at five bridges outside the borough, which are all named. It would be singular therefore if a bridge at Derby were omitted had it existed.

The phrase "passing over the Derwent" seems to imply fords and ferries rather than a bridge. While the Charter of Henry III, dated 15 May, 1229, uses a similar phrase, "all men crossing the Derwent," again no mention of a bridge.

The relevant part of John's charter is as follows:—

1204—Charter of John—Granted to the burgesses of Derby, "toll and theam, and infangenthef and tolonea from Duvebruge (Doveridge) as far as the bridge of Cordy (Swarkestone) and from the bridge of Cordy as far as the bridge of Bradeford (Bradford, Youlgrave), from the bridge of Bradeford as far as the bridge of Estweit (Eastwood, Notts.), and of all things passing over the Derwent in as full manner as in the borough of Derby."

For the earliest reference to a bridge we have to go to the Darley Abbey chartulary, where on folio 90, there it is mentioned in a grant made before 1287 by Henry, abbot of Darley to Richard f. Hugh de Morley, of a plot of land with a building thereon near the Great Bridge in Derby. This plot of land, as we know from later evidence, was in Bridgegate near St. Mary's Bridge. This description indicates that the bridge was a stone bridge, and it must have been built sometime between 1229 and 1287, which is a date quite consistent with what little we know of the bridge, and is confirmed by the later pontages.

The next reference to it is in a charter dated 1298 quoted in Jeayes' *Derbyshire Charters* (No. 2586), which was sealed and witnessed in Derby at "Pontechester." Chester Green came right up to St. Mary's bridge on the left bank of the river.

There is also a reference to the bridge of Derby in the 13th century chronicle of Dale Abbey (*D.A.J.*, v, 7, 20).

It may be inferred from the above that the bridge up to the end of the 13th century had no distinctive name, and later references support this, because the chapel is usually called St. Mary's of the Bridge, and only later did the bridge become St. Mary's.

As to who built the original bridge there can be no doubt whatever, it was the burgesses, and they also built the first chapel on the first bridge. Derby was always a royal borough, and never anything else, and a portion of the town's dues went to the king's exchequer. It has been seen that as early as 1204 the burgesses collected toll from all who crossed the river, and it is inconceivable that they would allow this custom to be usurped by any other body, ecclesiastical or secular, in fact the king would not have permitted this. In any case we have the distinct statement that it was 'their' bridge in the pontages quoted below.

These pontages show that by 1325 the great bridge

required repair, and the earlier ones are sufficiently interesting to be quoted in full.

15 Sep., 1325. Grant to the bailiffs and good men of the town of Derby of pontage for three years for the repair of their bridge.

7 Sep. 1328.—Grant to the bailiffs and good men of Derby for the repair of the bridges of the town, of pontages for three years, to be taken by Master Thomas de Goldyngton and William de Notyngam, burgesses of Derby.

9 Mar. 1329.—Grant to the bailiffs and good men of the town of Derby that they may appoint other collectors of the pontage for three years from September last, lately granted to them; Master Thomas de Goldyngton and William de Notyngam, burgesses, having shown themselves untrustworthy.

25 Oct. 1331.—Commission of oyer and terminer to Robert de Notyngam, Robert de Sallowe, and Adam de Agmadesham touching the accounts of the collectors of pontage in Derby. (*Cal. Pat. Rolls*).

Dr. Cox tries to make out that the Bridge Chapel did not come into the hands of the burgesses until after the Reformation and that it was by grant of Queen Mary, whereas there is no mention of it in Mary's charter of 1554 to the burgesses. In order to make out his case Dr. Cox discredits the decision of an Exchequer Commission which sat at Derby on March 12th, 1592, when the arbitrators were John Harpur, Francis FitzHerbert, Henry Duporte, esquires, and Lawrance Wright, Robert Newton, gents. If we are to disbelieve the findings of a commission such as this, then history must be founded on imagination rather than facts.

The arbitrators, "having heard the evidence of both parties, fully and at large," decided that "the church Lands and the Chapell on the Bridge" belonged to the bailiffs and burgesses of Derby as they had for six or seven score years last past. On the smaller computation this

takes us back to 1472, that is for three generations, which would be all that was necessary to prove ownership.

Richard Doughty, aged 77 years, one of the witnesses for the burgesses, said, that during all the time of his remembrance the Chapel on the Bridge, and the house, orchard and yard adjoining, had been let by the Chamberlains of the town, and the rents collected by them, with the consent of the bailiffs and burgesses, and for the benefit of the latter. Doughty was one of the town bailiffs (equivalent to mayor) in 1558, 1567, 1579 and 1588, and must be credited with some knowledge of the town's affairs.

Although the bridge chapel lay in the parish of St. Alkmund's, it was not a chapel attached to that church, but a Free Chapel, and would be served from the king's Free Chapel of All Saint's, which accounts for documents relating to it being found among the papers of the latter church.

One point needs to be mentioned namely the question of a gateway to the old bridge. Dr. Cox assumes that originally there was a stone gate-way on the town side but of this there is no evidence. A few years ago (in 1922) a large water-main was laid across the present bridge, and excavations were then made which ought to have revealed the foundations of a stone gate-way if such had ever existed, but no trace of anything of the kind was found. There is strong reason to believe that the gate-way was of timber, for on the north side of the chapel is a slot running down the wall about two feet wide, which would have served the purpose of supporting one of the gate-posts. It is difficult to see how a stone gate-way could have disappeared without leaving a trace and without being mentioned by any topographical author during the past four hundred years.

We should say then, that the bridge with its small chapel was built by the burgesses of Derby during the second half

of the 13th century, that they took all tolls and dues, and were responsible for the upkeep of the fabric, and that the chapel was served from All Saints', until the dissolution of the College of the latter in 2 Ed. VI, 1548.

The way in which the reparations have been carried out should not be allowed to pass without comment. The illustrations indicate the remarkable transformation that has taken place, but in actuality the change is far more striking than the photographs would suggest. A building that had become an eye-sore has been transformed into a medieval gem, and has given back to Derby a rare relic, the loss of which would have been deplored throughout the country. The work of Messrs. P. H. Currey and C. C. Thompson deserves the heartiest commendation, it has been carried out in the most approved manner, nothing of the old material has been removed, except where absolutely necessary and the spirit of the old work has been retained where new material has been used.