

DITCHLING.

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VICAR OF DITCHLING.

DIFFERENT localities have different objects of interest, some of a more modern, others of an earlier date, and while the learned antiquary adheres principally to the *litera scripta* of history, there is many a village and many a town that has each its unwritten traditions, which the archæologist will find not undeserving of his notice—traditions, which have been handed down from father to son, until traditionary lore is stored up in the memory of the people, and becomes to them the staple history of the place. It is the nature of these historical reminiscences to increase in each succeeding generation, until what they have lost in truthfulness they have gained in mysticism. Hardly is it possible for us to dwell among scenes and relics of bygone days without being led very frequently to call up the memories of former years, and to muse upon the things of old ; that thereby discovering whatever is good, and great, and lovely, in the character and bearing of the noble, the generous, and the brave in preceding ages, we may profit by their example, and be induced to keep alive in our own days the remembrance of their chivalry, their daring, and their enterprising conduct. The knowledge which we thus gain of the exploits by which the worthies of olden times achieved for themselves an enduring name, as well as of the every-day habits and manners of our forefathers, may, I presume, be reckoned among the practical benefits of archæology.

To increase the interest which attaches to the history of Ditchling, neither written records are wanting, nor unwritten tradition; and from both one and the other I shall draw very

freely;—subjoining references in confirmation of the documentary parts, and detailing some few stories of the old inhabitants, of which there is a plentiful supply.

Centuries gone by, this neighbourhood was not unfrequently favoured by the presence of Royalty. The greatest of England's great monarchs is reported to have held a very extensive range of land in this parish; and in the county many royal villes, which he frequently visited. His friend, instructor, and biographer, whom he had invited from his hermitage or monastery in Wales, to aid him in the acquisition and diffusion of religious and general knowledge, tells us that his first visit to the King was at his royal ville¹ "quæ dicitur Dene"—that after a lapse of some months he was again honourably entertained by him at his royal ville² "quæ dicitur Leonaford." By his will King Alfred gave to his cousin or kinsman, Ditchling, by the name of Deccalingum. The will runs thus—"Et Osfertho cognato meo do villas de Beccaule, et de Rotheranfield, et de Deccalingo. . . . necnon et omnes terras ad illas pertinentes." This takes us back to very early times of England's history. Indeed, the name of this place carries on its fore-front an evidence of its antiquity, and helps to prove the fact that a royal park once formed a part of this parish. It is variously written in old records as, "Dickninge," "Dycheninge," "Dychelinge," and "Decelinges;" which seem to spring from the Saxon "Dyce," or "Dykening." Now this word Dyke is quite familiar to North-country people, as signifying any kind of partition or separation of land, whether it be by a wall of earth or stone, a ditch of water, or fence of paling; and this word "Dycheninge," now transmuted into "Ditchling," alludes not improbably to the Royal Parks belonging to the Saxon or Norman Kings here, which were fenced round, and so gave name to this place.³

From Osferth, the Park came back into the royal possession, for we read in Domesday Book that King Edward held it.

¹ "His temporibus ego quoque a rege advocatus de occidente et ultimis Britanniae finibus ad Saxoniam adveni ibique illum in villâ regiâ, quæ dicitur Dene, primitus visi. Asserius, De rebus gestis Alfredi." p. 487. Mon. Hist. Brit. Petrie.

² "Cum igitur ad eum advenissem in villâ regiâ quæ dicitur Leonaford." Ibid p. 488.

³ It was probably within this ancient royal park that Edward Prince of Wales (afterwards Edward II.) kept his stud. See Mr. Blaauw's paper in Suss: Arch: Coll: II. 32.

It is well known that before the Norman William came to our shores, to claim the crown which Edward had bequeathed to him, and which Harold, Godwin's son, had usurped, William de Warren had married, or was the accepted suitor of his daughter Gundrada, and that he accompanied him to England in his successful expedition, not only in the capacity of a valiant fellow-soldier, but also in the position of a near relation. We cannot then be surprised, that in the distribution of the land the King was unbounded in his liberality to his son-in-law, and that no mean share of the forfeited possessions of the brave, but unfortunate, Harold was awarded to the husband of the King's daughter; and so⁴ history tells us that William the Conqueror included Ditchling in the territory which he lavished on his son-in-law, William de Warren, in whose family it continued many years. He was descended from an ancient family of Normandy, St. Martin by name; Warren being, according to the copy of a MS. in the Heralds' Office—"in that part of France, which was Neustria, now Normandy; it belonged to the noble family in France named 'de Sancto Martino.'"⁵

This William de Warren, at the instigation no doubt of his noble Countess, gave and confirmed to God and St. Pancras, and the Monks of Lewes, in pure and perpetual charity, a free pasturage at Ditchling for their cattle, with his own.

Again, at the close of the reign of Richard II (1398), the Confirmation charter of Thomas, Duke of Norfolk, to the Monks and Monastery of St. Pancras, Lewes, contains recitals of almost all that had been given to Lewes Priory by the first and second Earls of Warren, and by the several freeholders holding under them, among whom was the ancestor of the present possessor, the⁶ Earl of Abergavenny.

The confirmation part of this grand charter notices, that

⁴ Mr. Rowe, in his MS. history of the Manorial Customs of the Barony of Lewes, mentions Ditchling first, as once in the possession of the Earl of Warren.

⁵ For Mr. Lower's account of Bellencombre Castle, the seat of the De Warrens in Normandy, see *Suss: Arch: Coll: Vol. III, pp. 29 to 34.*

⁶ George Nevil, Lord Abergavenny, by his deed, dated June 27 (2 Henry VIII), 1511, enfranchised Andrew Borde, son of John Borde, his native or villain, belonging to his Manor or Lordship of Dycheninge, in the county of Sussex, and him the said Andrew Borde made free from all bondage, villainage, and servile condition. For an account of the Borde family, and the "Merry Andrew," see *Suss: Arch: Coll: Vol. VI, pp. 197 to 214*; also a subsequent paper in the present volume.

the Priory of Lewes came to the hands of King Richard II., by the forfeiture of Richard, then Earl of Arundel and Surrey ; and that the same King, by his letters patent, granted the Castle, Priory, Barony, and Manor of Lewes, unto this Thomas Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, and his heirs, upon the attainder and execution of the said Earl of Arundel, sacrificed by a faction of which the Duke was the head, although he had married the Lady Fitz-Alan, one of the Earl's daughters. This accounts for the existence of this Confirmation Charter, but in it mention is made of a grant of Ditchling not by the first, but by the second Earl, his son. It runs thus:—

“As I was desirous and ought (as it seemed to me) on my part to increase my father's alms and mine for the safety of his and my mother's and my own soul I appointed and gave to God, and St. Pancras, and the Monks thereof for ever (and here is a long enumeration until we come upon) the Church of Dychening with one hide of land and the garden with the houses and land which are between the two highways.

According to a deed in the Monast. Anglic. the Church of Ditchling was given with a hide of land to the Priory of St. Pancras, Lewes, by William, the second Earl “pro Rainaldo fratre suo, ad opus anniversarii Rainaldi.” Dug. Mon. Anglic. fol. 908b.

This gift made by the second Earl, was confirmed by Seffrid II. Bishop of Chichester, consecrated in 1180, died 1204, by an instrument now amongst the Episcopal records of Chichester ; which after the preamble goes on thus:—

“We grant and confirm, and by our Episcopal authority strengthen, to the said Monastery and Monks there for ever serving God, all the Churches and Tythes, and all the Ecclesiastical goods, which in the times of our predecessors unto our own times, they have possessed.”

Amongst which Dicheninge is enumerated. Again—

“Manerium de Dicheninge cum Parco voc: Dycheninge Park, cont. 300 ac. extended parcel of Lewes Barony, Beatrice Comitissae Arundele.”⁷

In another deed in the Bishop's registers, dated 1392, the property of the Priory in Ditchling is thus described:—

“A portion of the tythes of sheaves, hay, and pigs, of the Manor of the Earl of Arundel, with the small tythes of some of his tenants ; and with a portion of the tythes of sheaves of the land called Anthony's land, Daw's land, and Stochfysche ; and a portion of the tythes of Frekebergh.”

With the exception of Frekebergh now called Frankborough, and perhaps Stockfysche now called the Stocks, I am unable

⁷ Tower Rec. Nos. 27, 28. 18 Hen. VI.

to identify these lands. Ditchling-Garden Manor belonged to the priory of Lewes.

Some disputes having arisen in the year 1392 as to the right of the Priory to the Churches of Patcham, Ditchling, with the Chapel of Wivelsfield annexed, and Westthothly, Richard (Mitford) Bishop of Chichester, upon the occasion of a visitation of the Priory in that year, (July 2nd) summoned the different parties before him, and after hearing the evidence on both sides, confirmed these churches to the Prior and Monks of St. Pancras. (Reg. c. fol. 81.)

From the Register of Lewes Priory we learn that Alfrey de Falmer sold to John Todeherste a moiety of his mill, on the lands of the Monks of Lewes at Ditchling, for 8 marks and 5 shillings. The witnesses are Hugh de Plumpton, Philip de Rottingdean, Alexander de Ditchling, Alexander, son of Sade, &c. The deed is without date.

The following case of assault connected with Ditchling and its immediate neighbourhood, which took place in the reign of Edward I., is recorded in the Hundred Rolls, Vol. II. p. 213. It is there reported that upon the occasion of some official visit made by Matthew de Hastings, sheriff of Surrey and Sussex the 1st of Edward I. (1272), to the neighbourhood of Ditchling, when he came below Hayle (Hayley in Westmeston) there met him on the King's highway John de Niwent, Master of the Foresters of Clers, and Walter de Haldeleye, Master of the Foresters of Waldon, who arrested the progress of himself and his men, and, forcibly took their arms from them, and carrying them off, still retained them. After this, when the sheriff sent his horse to Dichening to be shod, Walter Parker, of Dichening, accompanied by other men of the parish, beat and wounded the boy riding upon it, and deprived him of an implement of iron (*de quâdam gorgeriâ ferri*) and other things. And as the sheriff proceeded onwards, and had arrived at Pokehole, John Bacun, with his own men and the Foresters of the Earl of Warenne, met him in the King's highway, and again arresting his progress, violently forced from his custody Amicia, the wife of William Hocote, and carried her, together with the horse on which the sheriff rode, to the house of Master John de Ferryng, at Chiltington; at whose instigation, and that

of Alexander de Shyre, the assault is declared to have been perpetrated.

As these visits of the sheriff were seldom made, except for the purpose of some obnoxious exercise of his authority, we cannot be surprised to find that they were often met by very violent opposition, on the part of the residents of the neighbourhood thus officially visited. Other instances of opposition and assault are recorded to have happened to the same sheriff in the performance of his duty in this neighbourhood; but no other in which Ditchling was concerned.

We may now venture to reach on to the days of Henry VIII. who, we all know, was especially generous in appropriating others' rights to himself, as well as in giving to others, what was his only by right of plunder.

This many-wived Monarch acted in this respect with right royal liberality towards one, who, as he civilly said,⁸ was

“Willing to yield to the laws of the realm, to discharge even her own conscience from this pretended marriage, to enjoy her own liberty, and to remain in our kingdom.” And so, taking into consideration these things, he gave to her what he had plundered from the church—“manors, and lands, and tenements, for the sustentation, maintenance, and augmentation of the noble rank of Lady Anne, of Cleves,” amongst which was included the “Manor of Ditchling with all and every of its members and appurtenances, besides all those our rectories of (with others enumerated) Dychening, lately belonging or appertaining to the Monastery of Lewes, or parcels of the same Monastery, and the rents of assize to our said Rectory of Ditchling, in our said County of Sussex.”

In which deed of gift Dycheninge and its possessions, whether in land, or tenements, or tythes, or advowson, as belonging or appertaining to the Monastery of Lewes, are enumerated over and over, and over again; so that whatever, by the piety of its original founder, had been dedicated to God and God's service, was, by the rapacity of this licentious monarch, appropriated as a dower for one of his repudiated and maltreated queens; and, thus, Ditchling, with its pastures and other possessions, was vested in Anne of Cleves.

In various parts of the parish objects of interest present themselves to us.

If we turn our steps southward, a steep winding ascent, called “The Bostall,”⁹ will bring us to the highest point of ground in the County of Sussex, the summit being 858 feet

⁸ Grant of Henry VIII. to Lady Anne, of Cleves.

⁹ For an account of the Saxon derivation of Bostall, see Vol. II., p. 292, note 7.

above the level of the sea. Here are the remains of a Roman encampment of considerable extent, the entrenchments of which are still in a tolerably perfect state. The original approach to it exists to the west of the present comparatively modern road. It consists of a narrow fosse-way cut to the depth of about 12 or 14 feet, so as to be a complete protection, and from it, about half-way up the hill, the way branches off to the right for about one hundred yards, running round a high mound of earth formed by the accumulation of soil when the way was made, and returning nearly to the same point again. This was manifestly done for the purposes of observation, for it happens at a point of the Downs, the nearest to the adjacent coomb to the west, so that when you reach this coomb, with which the way was evidently intended to communicate, a most extensive view of the Weald of Sussex breaks in upon you. A more complete point of western observation cannot well be conceived.

Here too, in later times, was erected a Beacon, the blazing fires of which, in days gone by, were intended, had it been needful, to have communicated important information of the approach, the landing, or the position of an invading army to its nearest northern neighbour erected on Crowborough Mount; and from thence, by a continued line of beacons, the news would have been passed onwards till it reached the metropolis. Happily, however, their services were rarely required.

The Downs form a bold and distinct feature in the scenery of this neighbourhood, and with the ever-varying light and shade on their slopes, this extensive range of hill and dale presents a very pleasing picture to the eye.

It may not be altogether alien to the subject of this paper to record, *en passant*, the almost forgotten existence of a chalybeate spring on Ditchling Common, which in days of yore was frequently visited for medicinal purposes, and which in our own days, has this peculiar property, that, in the wettest season it never overflows, nor in the time of drought does it ever fail. In the immediate neighbourhood of this spring, was found, some years ago, a brass celt; and near it several masses of molten copper; one of which, weighing nearly half a stone, bears distinctly the form of a crucible; from which we

may reasonably infer that the manufacture of celts was carried on hereabouts. This celt and a coin of Tiberius, the only Roman coin known to have been found in this neighbourhood, are no longer in the possession of any inhabitant of Ditchling.

A coin of James I. and several silver spoons were found at the north-western extremity of the parish, about thirty years ago, in grubbing up the stump of an old tree; where they had doubtless been deposited for safety during the troublous times of the Commonwealth. The spoons are of the Apostle shape and are marked on the top, which is silver-gilt, with the letters $\begin{smallmatrix} G \\ II \end{smallmatrix}$. These are probably the initials of John and Jane Godman, of Oathall, Wivelsfield, by the marriage of whose only child with William Shirley, Esq., the estate passed into that family, and since into the family of Tanner, of More House. Thomas Godman built the present house in 1600, as appears by his initials and this date in front of it. The spoons and coin are now in the possession of N. Borrer, Esq., of Pakyns, Hurstpierpoint.

At the northern extremity of the parish, near the turnpike road leading from Ditchling to Wivelsfield, are the remains of a gibbet, known as Jacob's Post; Jacob Harris being the name of a Jew pedlar who committed a very barbarous murder near the spot. Being convicted, he was hanged at Horsham, and afterwards brought and suspended in chains here in 1734.

This Jew, having put up his horse at the public house close by, attacked his host, a person named Miles, whilst he was engaged in cleaning his horse, and cut his throat. In the same way he destroyed the servant maid, who, it is supposed, had been disturbed by the noise in the stable, and was descending the staircase to see what was the matter. He then went up stairs and cut the throat of poor Miles' wife, who was lying on a sick bed. Both the women died the same night, but Miles lived long enough to identify the murderer. The memory of this atrocious act is kept alive in the neighbourhood, by some rude verses still preserved among the people, which conclude thus:—

“ At Horsham gallows he was hanged there,
The 31st of August that same year;
And where he did the crime, they took the pains,
To bring him back and hang him up in chains;
It is a dismal sight for to behold,—
Enough to make a heart of stone run cold.”

Some few years ago—at the western extremity of the parish, the foundations of a mansion house were discovered, which is supposed to have been the residence to which the park was attached. Nothing was discovered to enable us to assign a date to the house, except some paving tiles of a pattern quite unique, and of the time of Henry VIII. Two perfect types, with many fragments of others, are now in the possession of the Rev. Edward Turner, rector of Maresfield. One of the tiles is in the same rough state as when it came from the hands of the maker; the other is perfectly smooth from being frequently trodden on; the figure upon it, thus brought out most distinctly, being singularly beautiful. As these tiles, with an account of their discovery, will probably form the subject of a paper in some future volume of our Collections, I shall say no more of them here.

That Ditchling was, in earlier ages, a place of much greater importance than it is at the present time, is evident from the fact that John de Warren, Earl of Surrey (1312), sought and obtained from the King¹⁰ a grant for a weekly market at this his Manor on Tuesday; and a fair, which was to last three days, viz., the eve, the day, and the morrow, of the Feast of St. Margaret the Virgin (July 19th, 20th, and 21st).

How and when this market and fair came to be disused we know not; possibly to supply this neglect, the two fairs which are now held here annually—one on the 6th April, the other on the 12th October—were established.

There are four Manors in Ditchling, viz.,—(1), Ditchling Manor, which is held by the Earl of Abergavenny; (2), Ditchling Rectory, or ¹¹Dimock's Manor, which is held by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners; (3), Ditchling-Garden Manor, which is held by James Ingram, Esq.; (4), Camois-Court Manor, which is held by Captain Richardson.

Ditchling, at the time of the Norman Survey, is stated to have been in the Hundred of Soanberge, now Swanborough.

Of the 181 burgesses declared in that ancient and invaluable record to have then belonged to the Borough of Lewes, six were attached to the Manor of Ditchling, and paid

¹⁰ The Charter is preserved among the Rot. Cart. of the Tower.—6th Edw. II., No. 66.

¹¹ Might not the Ditchling Rectory Manor have been called Dimock's, from its having belonged to John Dymock, one of the Jurors in the nonæ return?

its Lord forty-three pence per annum. There were also 180 *hagæ*, or houses with shops, in this borough, many of which belonged to manors and freeholds in the neighbourhood.¹² Of these none are particularized in Domesday, except eleven which are assigned to Ditchling Manor, and which paid its Lord twelve shillings a year.

Both the improper and appropriate tithes are in the hands of the Lay-Rector, having been purchased by him of the late possessor of Oldland, who held them on lease for three lives under the Chancellor of the Cathedral of Chichester. A few years ago he became possessed of them in perpetuity by purchase from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners.

The vicarage is now in the gift of the Lord Chancellor. By the Act, 3 and 4 Vict., c. 113, the right of presentation to the livings belonging to the suppressed prebendal estates was vested in the Bishop, subject to the provisions of 6 and 7 William IV.

When, therefore, the patronage of the Cathedral Chancellorship was suppressed, the living of Ditchling, aforesaid a part of it fell to the Bishop, who, according to a scheme prepared by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners in accordance with the above mentioned Act, 6 and 7 William IV., and which scheme received the approval of Her Majesty in Council, May 15th, 1852, was called upon to cede to other Bishops the right of presentation to a number of livings, whose aggregate value should reach a certain amount. Among these, Ditchling was given up to the Bishop of Oxford, who has since exchanged it with the Crown for other preferment in his own diocese; and so the living of Ditchling is now in the gift of the Lord Chancellor. All rights, other than the presentations which attached to the several prebendal stalls, fell to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, who thus became Lords of the Ditchling Rectory, or Dimock's Manor.¹³

Such is the history of Ditchling as we have been able to

¹² How it was that Hagæ came to belong to manors and freeholds, I have never seen satisfactorily explained.

¹³ The Ditchling Rectory, or Dimock's Manor, is belonging to and a part of the improper Rectory; and lands held of it by copy are called "the Glebe Lands" thereof; and in the leases made of the Rectory by the Chancellor, the said Manor hath been from time to time excepted in the last lease made of the Rectory, and so to be in present possession as aforesaid.—BURRELL MSS.

collect it, from which it may easily be imagined, that many wondrous stories would arise, and that they would lose nothing by frequent repetition. As we shall see in the sequel, this was the case, and yet whilst the recorded facts may be the parents of these oft-told tales, the legends themselves help to strengthen the history; and although what is so handed down to us must be received "cum grano," I suppose we shall none of us be inclined to do such violence to the veracity of that "venerable chronicler," the oldest inhabitant, as to shrug our shoulders at the recital, and to mutter very knowingly, "Credat Judæus."

The Church is a very conspicuous object to all the surrounding country. It is not known with any certainty to what saint it is dedicated. Lewis's Topographical Dictionary says to St. Margaret, which seems to be confirmed by the fact of the ancient chartered fair being held on the day dedicated to this saint.

It is situated on rising ground in the heart of the village, and for architectural beauty and imposing effect would be unrivalled if duly restored. In all the deeds of an early date referring to Ditchling, it is invariably described as "Dychening with the chapel of Wivelsfield annexed." Wivelsfield, then, was originally a chapel of ease to Ditchling; but was separated, and became an independent church, by an ordinance of Bishop Praty sometime between 1438 and 1445.

It is cruciform, and belongs to the 13th century. It is generally admitted to be a very beautiful specimen of the Early English style: the just proportions and adaptation of the different parts, and of the minutest details and mouldings, will amply repay a careful study of them. The chancel has some peculiarities worthy of notice. On each side of the East window is a niche; the one is trefoil, the other cinquefoil, but surmounted with an ogee. A single shaft runs up on each side of the three-light window, with a bell-shaped capital, covered with foliage, curling gracefully over, beneath the upper mouldings of the capital. The same character of shaft runs before the jambs. In the North wall is a trefoil-headed niche. The piscina is cinquefoil, and by the side of it is a locker, (probably an aumbry) beyond which is a stone seat under a plain pointed arch.

It is a peculiar feature of this chancel that the original

pillars and shafts are of chalk; and the exquisite workmanship of the ornamental parts of the tracery, the headings, the mouldings, &c., may still lay claim to unrivalled beauty of execution. The three lancet windows in the North wall deserve particular mention. The splay is unusually large: the mouldings are plain round members, relieved by deep narrow hollows, and their appearance is very bold and effective. Slender detached shafts, surmounted by small knots of foliage, adorn the sides of these windows.

The drip-stone or label over two of the windows terminates with corbel heads, also of chalk; in the third is no corbel. A circular string-course runs horizontally below the windows, but internally only. The doorway has no ornament whatever about it, but the mouldings, which consist of bold rounds and deep hollows, produce very striking effects. Internally it is almost hidden by a pew, and outside it is nearly stopped up by the accumulation of soil against it.

Many of the family of Turner, of Oldland, in the adjoining parish of Keymer, as I have already said, formerly possessors of the impropriate tythes, have found a last resting place in the chancel. Oldland has been the residence of this family since the 34th of Henry VIII., when it was purchased of the Michelbournes by John Turner. In that year John Michelbourne conveys to John Turner "*certas terras vocatas Oldland in Keymer, cum mansione, &c.*"

The tithes of Ditchling were purchased of Sir Richard Michelbourne in 1637, by Thomas Turner, grandson of the above John. Having thus become possessed of the chancel, he was the first to be buried in it, and from that time it became the burial place of the Turner family.

To collect monumental memorials of the dead, and more particularly of such as have long been resident owners of property in a parish or neighbourhood, has of late been considered a part of the duty of our Society. I will, therefore, here give copies of the inscriptions on the slabs of such of this family as are interred in the chancel. That to the memory of the above Thomas Turner is as follows:—

"Here lyeth buried the body of Thomas Turner, late of Keymer, aged fowr score and fowr years. He departed this life the aythe day of February, in the year of our Lord, 1671."

Whether his wife, whose maiden name was Smythe, and who died Oct. 2nd, 1664, was buried in the chancel, there is no incised slab to show. That she lies interred by the side of her husband, with whom she had lived in wedlock fifty-five years, and by whom she had twenty-three children, does not admit of reasonable doubt.

This Thomas Turner was one of the "Sessors" under the Subsidy Roll of the 19th of James I. (1621), and is himself the highest rated of any landowner in Keymer. See Vol. ix., p. 83.

Their son Thomas, who died in his father's life-time, is supposed to be the person alluded to in the following remains of a memorial:—

“Sonne of Thomas Turner, who dyparted this life the 2nd of February, 1667.”

He was the Incumbent of Keymer and Clayton, “having begun his Rectory,” according to a memorandum entered in one of the Keymer Register Books, “the 20th of November, 1653.”

The next memorial records the burial of Richard, brother of the preceding, and eldest son and heir of Thomas Turner. It is as follows:—

“Here lyeth buried the Body of Richard Turner, late of Oldland, in Keymer, who was the Sonne of Thomas Turner, being aged Sixtye four yeeres, and departed this life July 1st, Anno Domini, 1681.”

His wife Frances, who was the daughter of the Rev. John Bysshe, Rector of Piecombe, and sister of Sir Edward Bysshe, Kt., Clarenceux, King-at-Arms, in the reigns of Charles I. and II., lies interred by his side.

The next inscription is to the memory of Richard, the eldest son of the above, and is as follows:—

“Here is interred the Body of Richard Turner, gentⁿ., late of Oldland in Keymer, who departed this life Oct. the 2nd, Anno Domini, 1720. *Ætatis suæ* 68.”

By his side lies the body of his wife Sarah, who was the daughter of Mr. Thomas Chatfield, an old resident and landowner of Balcombe, and whose son, grandson, and great-grandson were successively rectors of that parish. This Richard was a Lieutenant in one of the six regiments, which (Clarendon tells us) John (afterwards Sir John) Stapley of

Patcham, was commissioned to raise at the time, and in furtherance of the restoration of Charles II.¹⁴

Two of their sons were also buried here, viz., Thomas, who was in holy orders, and Rector of West Hothly, having previously been the curate of Buxted, to Dr. Anthony Saunders, the Incumbent, and William, who is described on his tomb as "Citizen and Apothecary of London," whose wife was a daughter of Sir John Rous, Bart., of Henham Hall, co. Suffolk, ancestor of the Earls of Stradbroke.

The next memorial is:—

"Here lies the body of Richard Turner, of Oldland gentⁿ. eldest son of Richard and Sarah his wife, who departed this life the 14th of May 1748, aged 59 years."

He married Jane, youngest daughter of Thomas and Amy Gratwicke, of the Ham in Angmering, who died September 21st, 1728, aged 37 years, and is buried by the side of her husband. They had issue three sons and a daughter. Of the Sons, Richard, the eldest, and Thomas, the third, were buried in the Turner chancel, as the following memorials testify:

"Here lies the Body of Thomas Turner, youngest son of Richard and Jane his wife, who departed this life the 24th of feby. 1745, aged 21."

"Here lies the body Richard Turner of Oldland, gentⁿ. eldest son of Richard and Jane his wife, who departed this life the 17th of April 1754, aged 36 years."

This Richard having died a bachelor, his next brother, William, inherited, who was a Fellow Commoner of Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, and married Sarah, the eldest daughter of the Rev. Edward Wilson, rector of Westmeston and Ashurst, of the latter, for the long period of 63 years, of the former, not quite so long. William died June 26th, 1786, and his wife May 3rd., 1802. They were the last of the family buried within the walls of the Ditchling Chancel. The epitaph to William Turner's memory is as follows:

"In memory of William Turner, late of Oldland, in the Parish of Keymer, in the county of Sussex, gentⁿ. who was the second son and the survivor of the children of Richard Turner, formerly of Oldland, gentⁿ. by Jane his wife, before Jane Gratwicke, spinster, and died the 26th of June 1786, in the 66th year of his age."

He left five children, viz.—Mary Jane, who died unmarried; Thomas, who inherited; Sarah Frances, who married—first, Mr. Attree, of Ditchling, and secondly, Mr.

¹⁴ See Vol. II., p. 117.

Thompson, of London; Richard, who was in holy orders, and rector of Grately, in Hants; and Elizabeth Anne, who died unmarried.

Of these, Mary Jane, the eldest, and survivor of the family, who was well known in Ditchling for many years of her long life as Mrs. Mary Turner, died here in 1857, in a green old age, after a life of unostentatious charity, and uninterrupted striving after holiness for more than one hundred years; and whose simple conversation, and primitive manner of life, had a charm in them to win all eyes, and to warm all hearts. She is buried in the same grave with her youngest sister, in the churchyard, where suitable memorials mark the place of their repose. Thomas, Sarah Frances, and Richard, were not buried at Ditchling.

Another stone in the chancel, the only one not placed to the memory of one of the Turner family, marks the burial place of Dr. James Hougham (1700), and Mary, his wife (1688), who is described on it as "of the ancient family of the Culpepers."

By his will, dated Nov. 3, 1688, Thomas Turner bequeathed to his nephew, Roger Turner, a house and land in Ditchling, then leased to James Hougham, gentⁿ. which seems to account for Dr. Jas. Hougham and his wife being buried in the Turner Chancel. The Culpepers were of Wigsell, in Salehurst.

Between the two chancels there is also a slab whose inscription, from its position, is nearly effaced, but which I make out to be—

1598

HERE LIETH CONSTANC
HAVSE WIDOW WHO
DIED the 3. of IAN^y.

This accords with the register of the burial.

Between the two chancels there was a low coped wall, perhaps a parclose, about four feet high, in which an opening is left for access to each chancel from the other.

The East window of the South or Abergavenny Chancel is three-lighted, having angular jambs, and in the head three quatrefoils. A trefoil-headed piscina is in the south wall. There are two two-light windows in the same wall; the one with a cir-

cular arch, angular jambs, and a single quatrefoil in the head, having light shafts surmounted by clustered foliage, and ornamented with deep mouldings; the other without mouldings, and having an obtusely-pointed arch. The font, which is of chalk, is too small to admit of immersion: it is hexagonal, and stands on a hexagonal pillar. On the North wall of the nave is a small pointed recess. The square-headed window which is modern, is a fac-simile of the original one. The North transept is reported to have been built by the Ranger of the park, who inhabited the old house to which this chancel, is attached, (the West window exactly synchronizes with this date). At the north end of it there is a monument erected to his memory, with this inscription in capital letters: "Here lyeth Henry Poole, Esquier, who dyed the 28th daye of Marche A^o Dⁿⁱ 1580." It is a mural half-table monument containing two shields of arms under niches of Grecian architecture. It is to be regretted that this memorial is now much obstructed by a pew.

On the East side of the chancel is a narrow lancet window of long and short work—now filled up.

The Registers contain baptisms of the following members of the Poole family:

1576 Frances. D^r. of Thos. Poole.

1590 Thomas, son of the same.

1590 Walter, son of Francis Poole;

which prove that there must have been more than one family of this name resident at Ditchling.

The tower (with which we will conclude our notes of the church) is surmounted by a shingled spire, and supported by four strikingly beautiful Gothic arches with elegant shafts and deeply cut mouldings.

The Nonæ return for this parish is as follows:

"This indenture witnesseth, that at an inquisition taken before Henry Huse, and his associates, collectors of the ninth of sheaves, wool, and lambs in the County of Sussex, at Lewes, on the feast of St. Gregory, the Pope, on the oaths of John Dymok, John at More, (Morehouse) John de Otchehall, (Oathall) and Richard Baker, parishioners of Ditchling, who say, that the ninth of the sheaves, wool, and lambs is worth this year 20s.; and that although the church is taxed at 25 mares, the Rectorial house with its curtilage, garden, and croft is valued at 6s. per annum; and that there are belonging to this church, arable and meadow lands, with pasturage for sheep and other animals, as glebe, which are worth 3^{li} 16s.; that the tithe of hay is worth 10s. and of doves 5d.; that the oblations of the chapel appertaining to the church (Wivelsfield?) are worth 20s.: the tithe of fruits of gardens and curtilages, including flax and hemp, is worth 10s.; of calves, and pigs, and geese, and other small tithes,

10s. and of the pannage of hogs 20s. The sum total of which is 16^{li} 14s. 8d., which exceeds the taxation of the church by 16d. And they further declare, that the Prior of Lewes has a certain portion of the tithes of sheaves in the same parish, the worth of which is 45s per annum, and that there are no persons in the parish possessing chattels of the value of 10s but such as gain their livelihood by the cultivation of land. In witness whereof, &c."

In Pope Nicholas' taxation the church is valued at 25 marcs. It is a discharged benefice, its clear yearly value according to the Liber Valorum being £47 0s. 8d., and the yearly tenths, to the payment of which the vicar is liable, £1 2s.

Besides the vicarial tithe, the vicarage is endowed with a small farm in the parish of Chiltington, whether by gift of some pious individual, or purchased by grants made at different times from Queen Anne's bounty, is not known.

The Registers commence in 1551, and though for the first few years they are rather faded, there is hardly one which, by diligent perseverance, might not be deciphered. The writing is singularly beautiful. The first entry of a funeral, after the Act passed in 1678, requiring the corpse to be wrapped in woollen, runs thus—

"Thomas the son of Richard Hayward and of Ruth his wife, was buried on the first of October, and on the fourteenth day of this instant month of October, affidavit was made before Thomas Beard, of Hurst-pierpoint, one of His Majesties Justices of the peace for the County of Sussex (y^t the above said Thomas Hayward, deceased, was buried according to the late above-mentioned Act of Parliament, for burying in woollen) by Ann Goddard, of the Parish of Ditcheling, sworn in the presence of Richard Hayward and Richard Morise, who were witnesses of the same, and have set thereunto their hands and seals in testimony thereof.

Octob: 8: 78: recorded by me,

John Nichols curat: ibid.

Besides this, three more are similarly registered. Afterwards it was sufficient to state that affidavit had been made, &c.

There are two instances in which the burial took place without the affidavit. In the one case the omission seems to have been overlooked, probably from the circumstance of its referring to an infant a few days old only, in the other the penalty of the law was inflicted—the first is

"1681.—A male infant of Michael Martin, unbaptized, buried April 13, and no affidavit presented to me, as the Act appoints, within eight days after its burial."

The other—

"1688.—Mary, wife of Thomas Dansy of Keymer was buried on 12th of May, and no affidavit made, or brought to be recorded, y^t she was buried in woollen, according to y^e Act of Parliament for burying in woollen: and on 19th, I John Nicols sent out my information thereof to Thomas Beard, of Hurstpierpoint, Esq^r, one of his Maj: Justices of y^e peace, delivering it to Nicholas Marchant of Ditchalling, one of y^e Church Wardens, to deliver to the above s^d Thos. Beard, &c., which he delivered

to him on May 24: and then he ordered Thomas Dansy to pay 50s. into the hands of the Overseers of Ditchalling, to distribute to the poore thereof."

I find nothing very particular or unusual recorded, except perhaps the following:—

"1698.—Mary, daughter of Edward Geer, jun^r, and of Mary his wife, baptized on March 27: born before the King's tax on births and burials."

In the case of illegitimate children, they were registered without any mention of the mother's name.

"1686.—Anne Brooker, filia populi, baptized May 18."

"1689.—John Wheeler, filius populi, baptized July 26."

And a funeral in like manner, thus—

"1713.—Filius populi, buried March y^e 29th; affidavit made April y^e 26th."

About this time, and onward, it was usual to insert the name of the mother, thus—

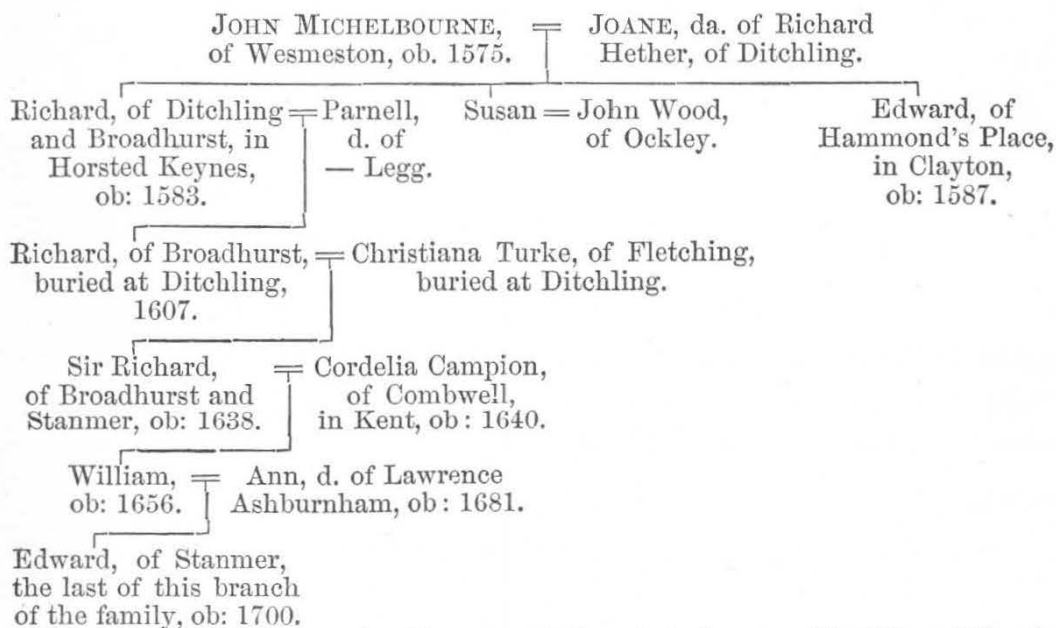
"1712.—William, son of Elizabeth Kneeler of Rottingdean, filius populi, baptized April the 8th."

"1714.—Gatland, daughter of Mary Holder, filia populi, baptized February the 27th."

It may not be amiss to give a copy of the following burial, the description being the only one throughout the whole registers which I find so recorded.

"1679.—Elizabeth Harris, virgin of Westmeston, buried Feb^y 17th, and affidavit made on 21st of the same month."

The following pedigree shews the connection of the Michelbourne family with Ditchling and its neighbourhood:—



Edward M., of Hammond's Place, married and had a son, Sir Edward M., also of Hammond's Place, who died in 1610.

Of Richard, the son of John Michelbourne, I find the registers of baptisms of the following children:—

| | |
|---------------------------|------------------------|
| 1563 Richard—buried 1607. | 1573 Anne—buried 1579. |
| 1567 Hether—buried 1570. | 1574 Henry. |
| 1568 Mary. | 1576 Thomas. |
| 1569 Joane. | 1578 Drew. |
| 1572 Pamele—buried 1575. | |

Besides the family of the Chatfields, well known in Ditchling as early residents, Richard Chatfeild or Chatfylde, as the name was sometimes spelt, being described as living here in 1547 (and he had a house at Treyford as well) there are registers of others of some standing in the neighbourhood.

“ In 15.—Buried at Ditchling, Richard Hall, physician.”

“ December 31, 1612.—Mrs. Anne Colborne, the wife of Mr. John Colborne, Esquier.”

“ June 19, 1618.—Mrs. Mary Chambers, Wydow of Mr. Richard De la Chamber.”

The De la Chambres were an ancient family resident at Rodmell, descended from Sir Hugh de la Chambre, of Chambers' Court, in Laughton, who was living 6 Edward II. Chambers' Court in Littlington was long their residence in after times. The connection of these parties with Ditchling it would now be difficult to discover.

These two early wills of persons connected with the parish (kindly abstracted from the Lewes Registry by M. A. Lower, Esq.), may not be without their interest.

“ 16 Sept, 1545.—Nycholas Whytyng of the parishe of Dychenyng.

First Icomyt my sawle unto Almighty God, o^r Lady St. Mary, & all the company of hevyn, and my body to be buryed in the Church of Dychenyng. . . . Item, I bequeath unto the Mother Church of Chichester iiij^d.

Item to the Church of Dychenyng iij^s iiij^d.”¹⁵

He calls John Mychelbourn his father-in-law, and mentions many of his other relatives. One of the witnesses is John Cooke, vicar of Dychenyng.

“ 25 Dec., 1549.—Stephen à Wood of Dychenyng, leaves his body to be buried in the Church or churchyard of Ditchling, and bequeaths as follows—To the poore men's box there iij^s iiij^d; to Julyan my wife iij kyne of the best she can chuse, and one horse beast, the best save one, and half my hoggs and di' (dimidium half) my bees. . . .

¹⁵ Liber A, p. 120.

Also her third parte of all such howsehold stuff as she browght wth her." He mentions his godson Stephyn à Tree,¹⁶ his daughter the wyf of John Okenden, his son Stephyn Wood, and his son-in-law Richard Godley. He makes Mr. Thomas Nudygate the overseer of his will. Among the witnesses is Sir Peter Hale, Clerke.

For the following list of the incumbents of Ditchning, *alias* Ditchling, vicarage, extracted from the Episcopal Registers at Chichester, I am indebted to H. W. Freeland, Esq., M.P.

| DATE OF ADMISSION. | INCUMBENTS. | HOW VACANT. | PATRONS. |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| ... | John Chapman | ... | ... |
| 1442 Decr. 20... | John Rysshton | res. John Chapman | { Prior and Convent of the Monastery of St. Pancras, Lewes, ord. Cluniac. |
| 1444 Decr. 15... | Ralph Wode | res. John Rysshton | The same. |
| 1478... .. | Robert Funderay | ... | ... |
| ... | Richard Feyrher | ... | ... |
| 1513 Aug ^t . 4... | John Geymyshe cap. | d. Rich ^d . Feyrher | The same. |
| 1514 Feb ^y . 13... | Sampson Michael | d. John Geymyshe | The same. |
| 1534 Decr. 28... | John Coke | res. Sampson Michael | The same. |
| 1552 April 20 | John Rose | d. John Coke | { The Lady Ann of Cleves. |
| ,, Octob. 7 | John Ferris | d. John Rose | The same. |
| 1554 Sept ^r . 22 | Thomas Gurnell | dep. John Ferris | The same. |
| 1565 June 9 | Humfry Higgons | d. ... | { William Bradbridge Rector. |
| 1566 Jan ^y . 16... | Edw ^d . Linfeild | d. Humfry Higgons | The same. |
| 17 | Edward Denton | ... | ... |
| 1589 April 26 | Hugh Rawood | res. Edw ^d . Denton | { John Threede of Arlyngton. |
| 1604 July 31 ... | Anthony Mattock, A.B. | ... | John Rootes. |
| 1606 June 18... | Thomas Price, A.B. | res. Anth ^y . Mattock | John Sherrle. |
| 1664 August 15 | John Crumpe, A.M. | ... | ... |
| 1666 January 9 | William Willis | ... | ... |
| 1674 March 30 | John Parker, A.B. | d. William Willis | { William Saywell, Chancellor of the Cathedral. |
| 1692 July 20 ... | John Nicholls | ... | The Bishop by lapse. |
| 1715 August 10 | Elnathan Iver, A.B. | d. John Nicholls | { John Wright, Chancellor. |
| 1721 Decr. 11... | William Lamb | d. Elnathan Iver | { Rob ^t . Rawlinson, Chancellor. |
| ... | Edward Powell | ... | ... |
| 1746 June 3 ... | Daniel Walter | d. Edward Powell | The same. |
| ,, Mar. 3 ... | Samuel Jefferis | cess. Dan ^l . Walter | The same. |
| 1777 May 16 ... | Joseph Bailey | d. Sam ^l . Jefferis | { Thomas Williams, Chancellor. |
| 1794 Sept ^r . 5... | John Hanley, A.M. | d. Jos. Bailey | The same. |
| 1795 May 19 ... | Thomas Hudson, LL.B. | cess. John Hanley | The same. |
| 1820 March 27 | Denny Ashburnham | ... | { John Ashburnham, Chancellor. |
| 1843 Sept ^r . 28 | Julius Nouaille, A.B. | d. Denny Ashburnham | The same. |
| 1855 April 16 | Thos. Hutchinson, M.A. | d. Julius Nouaille | { Samuel Lord Bp. of Oxford, in right of his see. |

¹⁶ Hodie Attree.

¹⁷ 1583, August 22nd. Hen: Pye, presented by the Crown. See Vol. xii., p. 257—removed to Pesemarsch the following year.

The old timber-framed buildings at the western entrance of the village deservedly attract the attention of all visitors. They are the sole remaining evidence of the antiquity of the place. Whether they formed but one house, the part filling up the intermediate space having been removed, as some have rather absurdly imagined, the distance between the two houses being a sufficient refutation of the supposition, or whether they were a series of such houses, I shall not pretend to determine.

Here indeed history ends, and tradition begins. Very plentiful and often ludicrous are the stories current in the place, of which we shall omit the marvellous and allude only to the probable, which by various parties have been detailed to us, leaving the reader to assign to each such credit as his own judgment may accord to them. But first, there cannot, I think, be a question but that the range of these ancient buildings extended from one end to the other, for within the memory of many inhabitants, several of the intervening houses have been erected in the place of others of the same character as the old ones now remaining at each end.

The house at the western end is externally beautified. Of this, one person declared to me that it was built by Alfred, and when I told him that to be so "it must be more than one thousand years old," he seemed to see the fallacy of his own statement. Another asserted that Gundrada built it for stabling, and that Mr. Poole, whose monument is in the north transept of the church, was master of her hounds and was its first inhabitant, without for a moment considering that in that case he must have lived to a greater age than even Ditchling people ever attain unto, viz.,¹⁸ 500 years. Lastly, it has been thought to have been built by Anne of Cleves, and to have been the entrance to the park of which we have

¹⁸ The great age to which many people in Ditchling have lived is very remarkable. In accidentally opening the Register of Burials for the year 1857, I find, of sixteen funerals, there are registered—

| | | |
|---------|------------------|---|
| | Infants | 4 |
| | Up to 20 | 0 |
| Between | 20 and 30 | 1 |
| | 30 and 40 | 0 |
| | 40 and 50 | 0 |
| | 50 and 60 | 0 |
| | 60 and 70 | 3 |
| | 70 and 80 | 2 |
| | 80 and 90 | 4 |
| | 90 and 100 | 1 |
| | Above 100 | 1 |

before spoken, and the residence of the Ranger. As this date and the time of Anne of Cleves correctly synchronize, this tradition I take to be the nearest to the truth. Other wonderful stories are told, few of which will bear repetition, and these only to refute themselves.

A connection from the east to the west end of the village by an underground passage was at one time very fully believed, but this rumour had almost died away, when on the sinking of a well lately at the west end of the village, it was suddenly revived, from the circumstance that, in digging out the soil, the workmen suddenly came upon some old brick-work, and as the mason was putting together the new, he slipped into the shaft of the old well, which he supposed to be the subterraneous passage in question.

Among the letters of Edward Prince of Wales, afterwards Edward II., which are given in vol. ii., pp. 80 to 98, from a MS. in the Chapter-House Westminster, is one in which "Brother John de Burne and Sir Oliver de Willet, executors of the Lord Earl de Warren, are entreated, for the love they bear the Prince, to give assistance more speedily to John de Dycheninge, keeper of the Prince's colts (running at large probably in the Park), in those matters in which the said Lord Earl was bound to him concerning the time in which he had served him." The plain interpretation of which is, that he would be obliged to them to pay up the arrears of his groom's wages. It had been shewn in a previous letter that this Prince kept his stud of horses at Ditchling.

The farm which occupies the enclosure of the ancient Park is still called "the Park Farm."

Every story connected with this Park and the old timber-framed houses has reference either to Alfred, Gundrada, Anne of Cleves, or the Ranger; and these legends, however improbable, if not altogether impossible, tend nevertheless to confirm the opinion, that these great personages were directly or indirectly associated with this place.