

A Plan of Wendling Abbey.

COMMUNICATED BY

THE REV. JAMES BULWER.

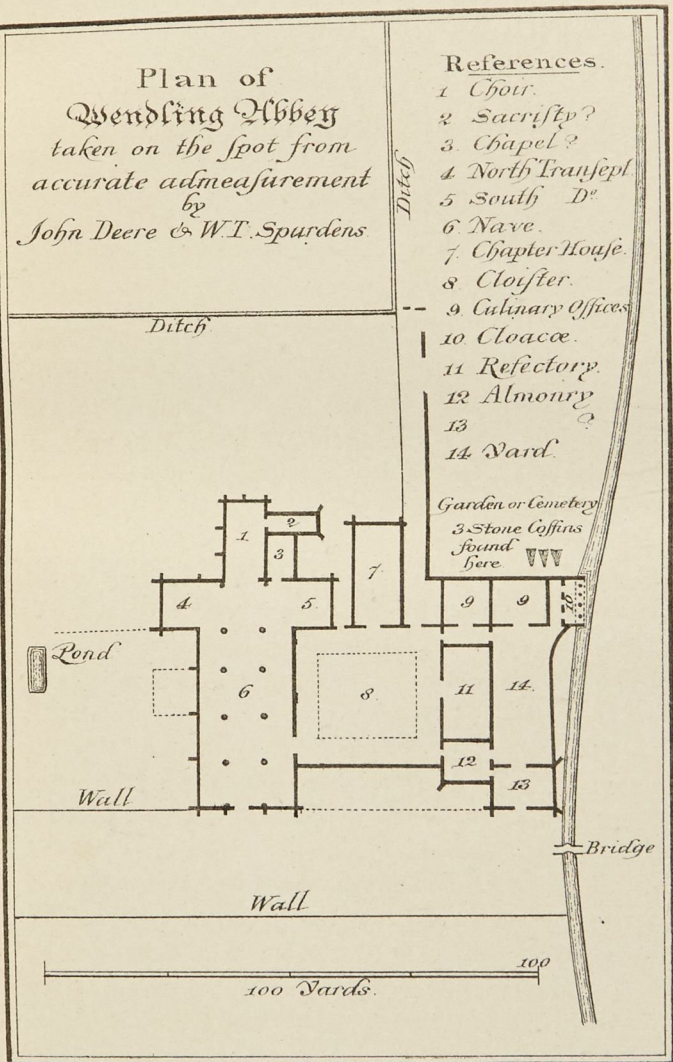
AMONG the manuscript papers relating to the antiquities of this county, by the late Rev. W. T. Spurdens, now in my possession, I find a plan of the Abbey of Wendling, in the hundred of Launditch, with a short note appended to it of the circumstances under which it was made. As neither Dugdale, Blomefield, Tanner, nor Taylor have printed more than lists of abbots and benefactors, and the sum of the revenue at the dissolution, it appears to me that the plan at least deserves to be perpetuated among the Society's papers. "This abbey was seated," says the continuator of Blomefield (Vol. V. fol., p. 1091), "in a marsh or low ground, with a small rivulet to the South. The entrance into the court was to the West, which court was on the North side of the conventual church and the churchyard, both of these taking in about two acres of ground." Even when this was written, more than a century ago, the church was more than a ruin; for Parkyn adds, "the church, as well as it can now be traced (most of the very foundation stones being dug up and carried away to mend the roads) was, together with the presbytery or chancel, about seventy-two paces long, and, with the north and south aisles, about eighteen broad; and the wall of the churchyard was close to the river, which runs South of it." The site of the cemetery seems to be clearly

Plan of
 Wyndling Abbey
 taken on the spot from
 accurate admeasurement
 by
 John Deere & W.T. Spurdens

References.

- 1 Choir.
- 2 Sacristy?
- 3 Chapel?
- 4 North Transept
- 5 South D^o
- 6 Nave.
- 7 Chapter House.
- 8 Cloister.
- 9 Culinary Offices.
- 10 Cloace.
- 11 Refectory.
- 12 Almoury
- 13
- 14 Yard.

Garden or Cemetery
 3 Stone Coffins
 found
 here



proved by the stone coffins* found since his time, and all the buildings appear to have been on the North side of the stream.

Mr. Spurdens says with respect to the annexed survey † that, "In 1810, travelling through the village, I was just in time to take a ground plan of the ruins, none of which stood more than about a yard above the ground, and the whole were then being picked up by day-labourers, from their very foundations, for repairing the roads. I suppose there is not a fragment now ‡ visible. The pillars of the nave had been erected upon a *continuous bed* of very hard concrete. The whole was in a condition to be very intelligible. The entire length of the church, from the West to the East, was about 184 feet within the walls. There remained not a fragment of an arch, pillar, string-course, or moulding, to indicate the character or date of the edifice, or any of its parts."

Dugdale tells us that this was a small society of Premonstratensian § canons, to whom William de Wendling gave ten acres of land for their precinct, and endowed the Abbey with divers lands and possessions in other places, which he and

* See Plan.

† It is suggested by Mr. Harrod that the passage between Nos. 7 and 9 led to the infirmary, which in ancient times, as now, generally stood apart; traces perhaps might still be found East of the cemetery; and he also observes that the rooms marked 9 were probably under the dormitory, and used as the *winter parlours* by the monks; that 12 and 13 were the cellar or buttery and kitchen; and that possibly the hall for strangers ran along the West side of the cloisters.

‡ One of our members who resides in the neighbourhood tells me that a mass of masonry covered with ivy still remains to mark the site.

§ The founder of this Order was a priest of Lorraine, named Northbertus; who formed the rule for his new order out of that of St. Augustine, which was afterwards approved and confirmed by Pope Calixtus II. Their *Habit* was a long white cloth coat, open before, and a linen surplice over it, and above that a long white cloak, a corner cap or a hat when they went abroad, white also; and underneath all, doublets, breeches, linen shirts, shoes, and white stockings. They began about 1120 at a place called Præmonstratum in Picardy.

Blomefield enumerate, and that these and subsequent benefactions were confirmed by Edward III. in 1332.

The Arms are engraved by Tanner and Taylor; the Seal is not known.

With respect to the derivation of the name of the parish Mr. Spurdens has this observation: that if the stream, passing along the valley in which the Abbey was situated, ever bore the name of the *Wandle*, as I have heard asserted, the name of the village is clearly derived from it, and ING, meadow: and means Wandle-meadow. But if there is no sufficient authority for giving this name to the rivulet, then Blomefield's conjecture may stand until a better be found.

To this notice by an old and valued friend, I may be allowed to add my tribute of respect to his memory, and express the regret, in which many of our readers will join, at the loss of one to whom all subjects connected with the antiquities of this county were of interest; and which, from his learning and varied acquirements, he was so well fitted to illustrate and explain.

Hunworth Rectory,
December, 1855.
