

## REVIEWS.

### THE LIFE AND TIMES OF GILBERT SHELDON,

Sometime Warden of All Souls' College Oxford;  
Bishop of London; Archbishop of Canterbury;  
and Chancellor of the University of Oxford.

[BY VERNON STALEY.]

Wells, Gardner, Darton, and Co. (1913), 10s. 6d. net.

Perhaps we may assume from the preface that, but for the happy chance of the appointment of Canon Staley to the rectory of Ickford, the life of his predecessor, Archbishop Sheldon, would still be unwritten. In this brief notice we offer our congratulations to the author, while making no pretence to an adequate review here of a book which should appeal to all students of the history of the English Church. We are concerned chiefly with Sheldon's connection with this county as rector of Ickford, all through the troublous times, 1636—1660.

Canon Staley's book is an appreciation of a remarkable man who, he thinks, has been in turn both unjustly ignored and attacked. It is certainly strange that no biography should have appeared until now.

Gilbert Sheldon owed nothing to the accident of birth. He was born at Ellastone, Staffordshire, June 19th, 1598. Admitted a commoner of Trinity College, Oxford, when only 15 years old, he took his M.A. degree in 1620. He was elected Fellow of All Souls in 1622, and about this time took Holy Orders. About 1634 he became Chaplain-in-Ordinary to King Charles I. In 1635 he was elected Warden of All Souls. In 1636 he became rector of Ickford, and continued so, ignoring his rejection and the intrusion of some Puritan later, until his preferment to the See of London in 1660. According to Anthony à Wood, he was ejected from the wardenship of All Souls April 13, 1648, and presumably from the rectory of Ickford, and was imprisoned. But Canon Staley tells us that the entries in the Ickford parish register for the three years 1648, 1649, 1650 "are without any possibility of doubt in Sheldon's handwriting." To explain this it may be

that his ejection from his rectory did not follow immediately upon that from the wardenship. He was translated to the primacy in 1663, on the death of Archbishop Juxon.

It has not been claimed for Gilbert Sheldon that he was a man of exemplary piety or an eloquent preacher. The Lord Keeper Coventry commended him to the King as "a person well versed in political affairs." That he was a pluralist, holding at the same time the wardenship of All Souls' College and the benefices of Ickford, Oddington, and, later, Newington, was only according to the custom of the times. The large income he derived from these sources he did not hoard, for he was famous for his unbounded liberality. Evidence of his courage and independence may be found in his opposing even his friend and patron Archbishop Laud, who would have irregularly appointed Jeremy Taylor to a Fellowship of All Souls. Charles I. employed Sheldon to meet the Parliamentary Commissioners at the Treaty of Uxbridge, and in April, 1646, he attended the King as his Chaplain and Clerk of the Closet at Oxford, "where he witnessed a remarkable vow made by the King." This vow Canon Staley prints *verbatim et literatim*, with the certificate following the King's signature: "This is a true cōpye of the Kings Vow w<sup>ch</sup> was preserved thirteene yeares under ground by mee.

"Aug. 21st, 1660." "GILBERT SHELDON.

He remarks: "It is quite extraordinary that no historian of first-class note has even referred to this vow, important as it is in more directions than one. It was left to Lawrence Echard, who became Archdeacon of Stow in 1712, to publish to the world, in 1718, in the Appendix to his *History of England*, the vow of Charles I."

Sheldon's liberality has been alluded to. He built the Sheldonian Theatre at Oxford at a cost of £25,000. He spent a considerable sum on the chapel of All Souls' College, and £2,169, representing about £10,000 of our money to-day, upon the old cathedral of St. Paul, London. Canon Staley says that in appointing Wren architect of the new theatre he gave him his

first opportunity. But according to Mr. Reginald Blomfield, Wren's first work was the chapel of Pembroke College at Cambridge, begun in 1663. Architecturally, the Sheldonian compares badly with Wren's later work, and badly also with the beautiful Ashmolean Museum, closely adjoining. The span of the roof, sixty-eight feet, was probably greater than had previously been attempted in carpentry. It was through Sheldon's influence that Wren was appointed to re-build St. Paul's. During the plague of 1665, when almost everyone who could had fled from the terrors of the doomed city, Gilbert Sheldon remained faithfully at his post. Not only did he never leave Lambeth, though victims were dying at the very gates of the palace, but he ministered to their needs of his own wealth.

Amongst the illustrations are: A reproduction of the portrait of Sheldon in the Theatre, of which Malcolm wrote (Lond. Redivivium, 1803): "He has heavy eyebrows, and not a very prepossessing countenance. We do not find in it an index to his exalted goodness and unbounded charities:" Reproduction of a page from the Ickford Register of Baptisms in Sheldon's handwriting: Also of David Loggan's engraving of All Soul's College, 1675: Title-page of the folio Common Prayer, 1662, engraved by the same artist and adorned with a circular temple: The Bishops' signatures to this book: Charles II. seated on a throne, resting his right hand upon Sheldon, his left on Clarendon, as Lord Chancellor, these two supporting between them a scroll bearing the legend *SCRIPTURA & LEGES SUNT FUNDAMENTA CORONAE*; below a bust of General Monk, with trophies, an army in the distance: two views of the Sheldonian Theatre, by Loggan: Views of the Old and the Re-built Cathedrals of St. Paul: Photo print of Sheldon's Tomb in Croydon Church with its fine protecting grille; Cloisters of Lambeth Palace Library, from an old engraving: Communion Plate at Ickford, the gift of Gilbert Sheldon. There are besides views of Ickford Church, which was described in our last issue of RECORDS.

W. N.

## BURNHAM CHURCH DEEDS.

TRANSCRIPTS AND TRANSLATIONS BY MR. WALTER H. GUTHRIE. PREFACE BY MR. W. H. WILLIAMS, CHURCHWARDEN.

CHURCHWARDENS' ACCOUNTS, 1549,  
With Facsimiles.

Privately Printed, 1913.

[By C. TRICE MARTIN, ESQ., B.A., F.S.A., LATE OF  
THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE.]

The facsimiles of the Church deeds at Burnham have been very well executed, and the transcripts and accounts of them are very accurate.\*

It is matter for reflection in such cases what has become of the rest. When a piece of land changed hands there were delivered to the new owner, besides the clot of earth handed over as a symbol of the estate, quite a number of deeds. At some colleges and similar institutions, which were founded perhaps in the fifteenth or sixteenth centuries, there are still preserved, nearly as clean as when new, documents which must have been handed over to the bursar on the transfer, and show every transaction connected with the land, in many cases from the twelfth century, that is, many hundred years before the land became the property of the College. Burnham Church must have once have had such a collection. Where are they all now? No doubt they were once packed up what was thought to be safely, but as it was felt that any dispute about the tenure of the lands was most unlikely, the parson took no trouble, and perhaps never even thought about them. Some may have had to be produced in Court during the proceedings for sale mentioned in the preface and never returned. Others may have simply rotted through dampness or been destroyed by vermin, some perhaps taken or given as curiosities by the parson.

Disappearances such as these may explain the existence of deeds which apparently have no connection with any church lands now. The lands

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\* The volume will be found in our Library at Aylesbury.

mentioned in Nos. 1 and 2 may perhaps have been the same, for the road which passes near Brightwell House might as well be described as going from Wycombe to Windsor as from Burnham to Haymill. The earliest document which mentions the church at all is a grant dated 1349 of a rent of  $6\frac{1}{4}$ d. from an acre of land at Le Longworthe to the Churchwardens for the keeping of a taper before the image of St. Anne, mother of the B.V.M. Whether the taper was to be perpetually lighted the deed does not say, but as the price of a pound of wax in the fourteenth century was about  $6\frac{1}{2}$ d., this rent could not have gone far towards meeting the expenses. Can it have been lighted only on St. Anne's day?

The first deed mentioning land as belonging to the church is dated 1400, but the endorsement making this statement is no doubt later, added when the land became the property of the church. It adjoins the cemetery on the south side, bordering on the road from the Church to the Vicarage; but there is not apparently proof that this piece of land is John Berton's tenement called "Ropers" with the acre belonging to it adjoining the Vicarage, which he granted in 1489 to John Selly, clerk, probably the parson and two others, who re-granted it to the grantors and others two years later; and which was leased for 21 years by the Churchwardens to Thomas Whytte, husbandman, and Alice, his wife.

Any addition to the number of original churchwardens' accounts which we have is always valuable. There are so many matters on which they throw light—the condition of the working population as shown by the state of wages, the relation between the parson and his flock, and, perhaps most important of all, items which tend to show the condition of the church during the period which they cover. The date at which this account was made up was a period of change, and of a change which no one in the parish could help seeing. The images on the walls were supplanted by texts of Scripture and a painting of the King's arms. Stone altars were taken down, and 4d. paid for removing the rubbish. This item shows that the accounts are not quite so early as the Editor

suggests, for though Richard Nedham may have been churchwarden in 1549, it does not follow that he should not have continued so for another year or more. The cost of breaking down altars occurs early in the account. The first injunctions, I think, issued for this purpose were by Nicholas Ridley, who was Bishop of London in April, 1550. The new altar of wood, which the other party called "an oyster board," in derision of its material and also of its moveability, was soon set up and two mats bought "to serve for the communion." The next word is lost, but was probably "table," the piece of furniture changing its name as the doctrines concerning it changed, but the word "altar" was retained in the First Prayer Book of Edward VI. in 1549. I may mention that in Item 41 the word printed "sve" is correctly "serve." The "Paraferesis" mentioned in Item 68 is Erasmus' Paraphrase of the New Testament, which was translated by Nicholas Udall, master of the Schools at Eton and Westminster, by request of Queen Catharine Parr in 1547, and ordered by the Injunctions issued by the Privy Council in 1547 to be set up in churches, together with an English Bible, for common reading. The "Paraphrase" only went as far as the "Acts of the Apostles," and the mention of "the pystles" is very probably an error. The new Bible mentioned in Item 67 is no doubt the edition which was revised by Coverdale and published in August, 1549, and "the boke of all manere of sarvyss for the cherche" the Prayer Book of 1549. "The massboke in Englysshe" is probably the same, as the word "mass" is used in that book for the communion service.

The work done on the king's highway must have extended some 16 miles or so, and perhaps a good deal further, considering the amount spent between "Droppyng Well Hyll" and Burnham, but "Droppyng Well Hyll" I cannot discover. The day's wage for digging gravel was 5d., and for gathering stones 1d. a load.

There are a few small errors which it is perhaps worth while to mention. In Item 20 "xxiiiij" should be "iiij<sup>xx</sup>," that is "four score." The same error occurs in Item 36. The correct amount is "iiij<sup>xx</sup> x,"

that is "90." In Item 2 the amount of lime mentioned is "one quarter," the flourish which is printed as an apostrophe being the contraction mark for "er." In the first entry on Plate IV. of the Accounts, the gentleman named is not entitled "Squire," but "Mr." In Plate II. of the deeds "Bertam" is more correctly "Bertram," and in Plate IV. "Fitzwater" is spelt "Fizwater." The parish is to be congratulated on having a churchwarden whose ideas of his duties are sufficiently wide to stimulate him to bring out a book like this.

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### ROYAL COMMISSION ON HISTORICAL MONUMENTS.

AN INVENTORY OF THE HISTORICAL MONUMENTS IN  
BUCKS, IN TWO VOLUMES, 1913, WYMAN & SONS.

The recent issue completes the Report on this county, and we offer the congratulations of the Bucks Architectural and Archæological Society to the Commission and their able assistants. It is well done, as one felt sure it would be, the Commissioners selecting, of course, the most competent agents available. The Chairman, in his preface, says: "There must be mistakes," adding that he "will heartily welcome any corrections." The foolish remark has been made that these "Reports" will leave little for local Archæological Societies to do. It is more likely to add to their work. This is a business-like list of what the "investigators" employed actually found in the different buildings surveyed. Nothing is said as to monuments of the past that have disappeared, little in the way of conjecture or deduction is indulged in. Fresh discoveries are constantly being made which upset the conclusions arrived at previously, and perhaps justified upon the evidence then available. Moreover, some omissions are inevitable. So there is still plenty of work for the local antiquary. One of the charms of these volumes is the entire absence of what has been entitled the "Gossiping Guide" element. For the first time we read, for instance,

an account of Olney without mention of William Cowper, the shortcomings of inns or other difficulties or delights of the road.

This second volume contains a Historical Summary (for which the Commission is chiefly indebted to Mr. W. Page, F.S.A.) which might more appropriately have been included in the first; also five photo-prints of the Hambleton Roman Villa or Farm, about which more below, and a plan of that at Chenies—both in the Southern division; remarks on the Castles, now chiefly remarkable by the absence of their remains, Homestead Moats, Religious Houses, the Black Death in the 14th century, Chantries and Chapels, etc. In the Civil War of the 17th century the county was, of course, prominent, and she has to acknowledge several of the regicides as her sons.

In the way of architecture Bucks compares badly with the wealth of its neighbour Northants, and none too well with Oxfordshire. We look in vain for the goodly stone-built manor-houses, large and small, and the church spires for which the former is so famous. In the way of spires we have to make the most of Hanslope. In a general classification of the churches in this division three only are said to contain definitely pre-Conquest remains: Wing, the most complete, of the 10th century or even earlier, the tower of Lavenodon, and very scant vestiges at Hardwick. There is a useful note on building material also in this "Sectional Preface," suggesting that it cannot be entirely due to the scarcity of building stone that we owe our poverty as compared with our neighbour. Doddershall House is claimed as a brick building in error. Little beyond the great chimney breasts of the original Louse is of brick. It is, as one would expect it to be in this heavily-timbered district, a timber construction with brick filling. Creslow Manor House, c. 1330, is given as the earliest example of secular work; Gayhurst as the best specimen of Elizabethan. Winslow Hall is attributed to Sir Christopher Wren on insufficient authority.

Then follows the excellent illustrated "Inventory," of which the plans, not only of buildings, but of villages, taken from the large scale Ordnance maps,



are valuable, and a new departure. After this a "List of monuments selected by the Commission as specially worthy of preservation"—not a very long one. Then a Glossary of Technical Terms, and finally a copious index referring to both volumes, that printed in Vol. I. being incorporated here.

Of memorials of the dead the earliest brass is said to be that of Joan Plessi, c. 1350, at Quanton; the earliest of a knight, Sir John Reynes, 1428. Of sculptured effigies the unknown knight at Twyford is said to be circa 1230. The four fine sculptured wooden effigies at Clifton Reynes are illustrated only by small scrap views, of which as many as eight or nine are included on one page. No more is accorded to the beautiful crown to stair turret at Hillesden, showing the 15th century builder's instinct for placing and designing pinnacles—to which William Morris declared no modern architect could attain.

Wall paintings are not overlooked, and it is noted: "Some of the paintings have suffered apparently since they have been exposed," which is, we fear, only too true, showing the need of making accurate drawings to scale and photographs of these interesting works while it may still be done.

Fittings and Furniture are very properly included. Edlesborough is probably the richest of all Bucks churches in its mediæval survivals. Its very complete screen with stalls and traceried desks on its eastern side are well illustrated, and it has one of two pre-Reformation pulpits in the county, and a canopy over it. There are three lecterns, all of wood, prior to A.D. 1700. One of these, attributed to the 15th century, is at Ivinghoe, and will be found illustrated under Mr. Gurney's account of this church (excursion this year). In connection with furniture the limit of date, 1700, may be regretted. Much valuable furniture, even into the mahogany period, is still to be found in our churches, and especially in vestries where it has offered temptation to exchange which has not always been successfully withstood. Fifty years ago it was quite a common practice to take down a handsome old pendant brass chandelier from a church and replace it with what was called a "corona" or other

design supposed to be gothic, prickly in its thin and unquiet lacquered brass, many of which, even in this short time, have, happily, crumbled to bits. It does not follow, however, that because not printed here no note has been taken of these later moveables. Much material collected and not printed here will probably be available to searchers in course of time at the Record Office or elsewhere.

Perhaps especially in this county has this 1700 limit its inconveniences. Thus the palatial Stowe, with the numerous temples, monuments, and sculpture by the best men of the 18th century, is ruled out, though in that century it was thought more worthy the attention of the cultured than anything else in the county. Chicheley Hall, one of the most complete and untouched country seats we have, might strictly have been included, for the re-building scheme was made in the 17th century, and much building done by Sir John Chester in 1699. Moreover, much of the older building is said to have been included in the new one. There are fine photo-views of this house and surroundings in "Country Life" (April 29, 1905).

The writer of these notes has made no search for mistakes or omissions in these two volumes, but those which he has noticed or have been pointed out to him should be mentioned. A proof of the whole Historical Summary was sent to Mr. A. H. Cocks, F.S.A., who corrected it, he tells me, with the exception of the Yewden Villa, which he returned marked "Uncorrected and very incorrect," feeling surprised that, after what had passed between himself and the writer, this account should have preceded that upon which he has long been working. About Fingest Church (p. 157) the rather surprising discovery is made that "part at least of the nave originally served as chancel, the tower being used as the nave; the chancel was added in the 13th century." It is more likely that this 13th century work was not an addition, but an alteration to an earlier chancel which ended in an apse. The gabled roofs of the tower of the same church are said to be 18th or 19th century. They have been repaired from time to time, and the view of them from the churchyard

might give that impression, but Mr. Forsyth, architect, got up into them and pronounced them probably 14th century. The gateways into the churchyard, on the other hand, are given an undeserved antiquity. Those who have had to renew field gates and fences on an estate know to their cost how soon the weather not only removes asperities, but reduces to tinder even heart of oak. No mention is made of the Bishop of Lincoln's country-house which formerly stood here, and of which part of a garden wall remains. Fingest Manor Farm might have been included. May we ask why the hideous "Marlow Urban?" Why trouble about a division made less than twenty years ago by the Local Government Board for the purpose of defining the authority of the Urban District Council? This county has often been said to be fortunate in having about the best and most complete book on church bells that has been written; yet there are very numerous errors on this subject which a reference to the "Church Bells of Buckinghamshire" would have prevented. Thus Henry Deane, yeoman of Medmenham, is stated in error under that parish and again in the list given p. 345 to have been a bell-founder. There was no bell-founder named John Carter, as mentioned, at Weston Turville; nor any named Richard March, as mentioned p. 366. Stone sculptured effigies are uncommon in this county. That of a priest now lying in the recess in the north wall of the chancel of Ivinghoe Church (described elsewhere in this issue) is attributed to the 15th century. Though of rather rude sculpture it ought to have been recognised as 13th century work. The arched and cusped recess is no doubt of the later period. Mr. E. Swinfen Harris, architect, who has long practised in this part of Bucks, remarks that the east window of the south chapel at Moulsoe is *old*. I cannot myself find this place in the index.

W. N.