

CONSECRATION OF FULMER CHURCH:

1610.

For the following interesting account of the Consecration of Fulmer Church, evidently written by an eye-witness, the Society is indebted to D. P. King, Esq., Buckingham. Mr. King has kindly presented the original document to be added to the muniments of the Society.

“Fulmer Church being thus finish'd and adorn'd was consecrated the first day of November this year one thousand Sixe hundred and ten by the right Revd. Father in God Doctor Barlow then Lord Bishop of Lincoln the manner whereof breifly followeth and the first Church-Yard was hallowed which the Bishop and all the assembly compassed and as they marched they sung the 100 Psalmc: this Circuit Finish'd the Bp made a compendious Speech expressing the Reasons of this, and the like Enclosures about Churches two whereof were cheif; the one was to give due distinction State and Reverence to the Temple of Almighty God from all prophane wayes and base places and that no other building shou'd be near unto it, and to this purpose He cited the 43 Chapter of Ezech: The other Reason is because the Church-yard is a Dormitory or place of rest for Christians to sleepe in untill the Resurrection for so much the word in Greek and Latin signifeth, in this Speech He distinguish'd all differences of places and persons &c with the divine Reason Cause and holy Institution of these things in the primitive Church and duly observed by all the holy Fathers &c. This Done the Bishop say'd to the Founder, this parcell of Ground which we have compassed for the buriall of the Dead within your parish is yet your own, is it therefore your free mind to give it for ever to this use, wherunto He answered, I give it freely and with an Earnest Desire to that purpose: the Bishop likewise asked the parish Priest and the church wardens of the same parish Church if they all had the same Desire and they all answered affirma-

tively, humbly beseeching the Bishoppe to persist in what He had so well begun, then the Bishop read the Instrument of Consecration wherein was contained an Interdiction that the olde church yard shou'd not be lay'd open to any prophane use then the Priest with due reverence read the 90 Psalm and the 23 chapter of Genesis Then the Bishop prayed saying: O Blessed Jesus our onely Saviour and Redeemer who being the Resurrection and the Life hast of thy mercy promised and by thy power art able to raise again unto life the Bodies of the Dead that lie in their Graves whether rotted with corruption or consumed to Dust wee humbly beseech thee of thine Especiall favour to vouchsafe that all those thy Servants which shall within this Circuite be buried may leade their lives in thy Fear and leaving them in thy faith may rest in peace within their Graves untill the great Day of thy Second Coming and may then bee rayssed a new in assured hope to raigue with thee in that Everlasting Glory which with thy most precious blood thou hast purchased for them and for all that love thee and look for thy appearance. Heare us O Blessed Jesus for thy passion sake Heare us O Loving Father for thy Son's Sake to whom with thee and the holy Ghost three Equall Persons and one Eternall God be rendered all thanks Praise and Glory. Amene.

Then the Bishop entred into the church porch and turned his Face to the founder that was lead in thither betwene two knights and said unto him now verily this Church-Yard is exempt and free from any Challenge of you or yours but this house as yet remaines wholly your owne say now therefore if you renounce all your right claim and Interest to the same He answered affirmatively: then the Bishop asked him if his hearts Desire were to have it dedicated to the Almighty God and consecrated to his Divine Service only, whereunto the Founder answered saying, most joyfully and willingly. Then the Bishop required the Founder to read this Psalm viz: One thing have I desir'd of the Lord, which I will require that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the dayes of my Life to behold the fair beauty of the Lord and to visit his Temple and so read on to verse the 7th which done the Bishop took him by the hand and said going forward I was glad when they said unto me, we will go into the house of the Lord. And at the Second verse of this Psalm

they both kneeled towards the East and devoutly said the rest with Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the holy Ghost &c after this the Bishop made a devout prayer acknowledging God's omnipotence and divine power and that heaven is his Seat and the Earth his Footstool So that his majestic and glorious presence cou'd not be confined within materiall Temples &c and prayed that it wou'd please his Fatherly Goodness that his Servants might assemble together in that place to heare Divine Service and to make their humble and devout Prayers and Supplications and to heare his Will and Word revealed unto them and that this place consecrated to his Service and Severed from all prophane Employments: that it wou'd please his Divine Majesty to bless it and accept it at their hands as a fit place for the usual Assembly a house wherein his Sacred word shou'd be reverently read and truly preacht his holy Sacraments truly administred with fear and reverence &c which most Excellent prayer and benediction ended hee turned to the New font and prayed likewise saying. Almighty and everlasting God whose most dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of our Sins did shed out of his most precious Side both water and blood and commanded his Disciples that they should goe teach all nations and baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy Ghost, and to that purpose did Sanctifie not only the flood Jordan but all other waters also to the mystical washing away of Sin, we beseech thee hear the Supplications of thy Congregation and grant that all thy Servants which shall be baptized in the water of This Font may receive the fulness of thy grace and may evermore remain in the number of thy Elect Church through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Then the Bishop and the Founder went up the middle Isle and between the chancell and the Body of the church the Bishop turning his Face to the people read the Instrument of Consecration and dedicated the church to God in the memory of Saint James the Apostle for so was the name of the old church. After this the Parish Priest say'd the divine Service and instead of the Psalmes appointed for that Day he read the 26 the 87 and the 134 Psalmes and for the appointed Chapters the 2 of Samuel the 6 Chapter and the 10 Chapter of Saint John verse the 22 and so read to the end and in place of the Collect was

said this Prayer. We beseech thee O Almighty God that thou wilt be pleas'd continually to dwell in this house which this day we have dedicated to thee and vouchsafe to receive the Sacrifices of thy Servants whether of alms or Prayers or Thanksgiving which shall be offered herein grant also a blessing to thy Sacred word herein read or preach'd that like Seed sown on good Ground it may fructifie in those that shall be here assembled to the Instruction of their Understanding the comfort of their consciences the amendment of their Lives and the Saving of their Soules to the glory of thy blessed Name through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

This Ended then began a Sermon his text Psalm 5 Verse 7 the People sang 2 Psalms viz the 27 and 113 the Sermon being ended Then the Bp celebrated the Communion where the Founder by the Bps direction knecled by himself in the middle of the Quier right before the altar and being a Collection for the poor he offered a piece of gold and toward the End of the Celebration the Bishop prayed as followeth—Most gracious God after the religious Example of those holy Prelates in the Primitive Church which in celebrating the holy Communion rememb'ed the Saints departed and their benefactors living, wee humbly beseech thee to accept in good part our Commemoration of this worthy Gentleman thy Servant here present by whose means and at whose Charge in these demolishing and destroying dayes this house was translated reedified enlarged and dedicated to thy Service bless him we pray thee with his whole offspring and Family Establish him and his Seed upon Earth and when that House of clay his Body shall be dissolved clothe him with Immortality and give him an everlasting habitation in the heavens with thee and thy Son Jesus Christ to whom with the holy Ghost be all glory honour Praise and thanks now and for ever Amen. And so the Communion being ended and the benediction pronounced the Congregation was dismissed."

Lipscomb, who does not notice the preceding Document says, "The Church was built by Sir Marmaduke Dayrell Knt., about the year 1610. In the pavement of the aisle is a large slab, covering the entrance to the vault of the Dayrell family, and against the wall are suspended

the 'tattered remnants' of banners, with their crests and arms; the sword of Sir Marmaduke Dayrell, Knt., being still preserved in an ancient chest under the belfry."

The Ecclesiastical Topography states that the Church is dedicated to St. James; "is built of brick with stone quoins;" that "several of the windows have painted quarries;" and that "on the south side of the chancel is a fine monument of the Founder, Dec. 1630."
