

PENN CHURCH.

BY THE REV. J. GRAINGER, VICAR OF PENN.

THERE is no record of the date of building. The structure has been subjected to repeated alterations. In 1863 the interior was, to a certain extent, restored by the liberality of the first Earl Howe. The high irregular pews, together with a "three-decker" and two galleries, were removed. At that time it was found necessary to reconstruct some of the windows. In 1865, the east wall and window of the modern brick chancel (1736) were taken down, and replaced by a flint wall, with painted window, by the liberality of the same generous patron.

The first notice relating to the church which has come to my knowledge, is that—

"Nicholas de Langley vacated this living (then a Rectory), for the living of Hamsted in 1273."

The next is—

"The first *vicar* appears to have been Francis Henry de Erdington, presented July 4th, 1349, 'ad vicarium de Penne de novo ordinatum,' by Chacombe Convent. He died vicar 1361."

The Rectory of Penn, before the time of Henry VIII., belonged to the Priory of Chacombe,* in Northamptonshire, having been granted thereto by Lord Segrave (see Lipscombe), probably in, or shortly before 1349, when the first vicar is said to have been appointed. Its value, as recorded in the King's books, was £8 13s. 4d. After the dissolution of Monasteries it was given to David Penn, whose wife Sibyll had been nurse to Edward VI. The great tithes and presentation to the vicarage are still in possession of his descendants.

The state of the interior of the Church in 1637 is minutely described in the "State Papers (Domestic)" of Charles I.

"Mr. Pen's seat to be taken down to the mark, it being covered, and two yards and a half high A

* The following is the entry in Dugdale's "Monasticon" under the head of "Priory of Chancombe":—

"28 Henry VIII. Augmentⁿ Office.

"Com. Buk'.

"Pen Reddit Cotag 0 : 2 : 8

"Pen Firmæ Rector' 10 : 0 : 0"

high seat at the upper end of the S. aisle, viz., Mr. Carye's, built as high as Mr. Pen's. . . . Mr. Long and Mrs. Butterfields seats stand into the middle aisle, and are to be taken down to the mark. The pavement in decay. Two windows in the aisle in the chancel partly dammed up."

The old chancel, above referred to, was taken down in 1736. Why, is not known. The reason is more inexplicable by reason of the following entry in the Register, date 1714.

"Roger Penn, Esq., Patron of the Parish, caused the chancel to be wainscotted and railed in, at his own charge, and gave a new Table."

It would seem as if the body of the church originally consisted only of the nave and chancel. In the south wall of the nave are clerestory windows (at least perforations for the same), exactly corresponding to windows in the north wall. The roof of the nave (the pitch of which has manifestly been heightened) is now extended so as to cover the south aisle, and shut in the three windows. The arches opening the south aisle to the nave are manifestly made by breaking through the south wall. This is confirmed by an entry in the Register book.

"In February, 1733, y^e arch against y^e Pulpit was enlarged."

BRASSES.

1. The earliest is that of Elizabeth Rok, 9th August, 1540. She is represented in a shroud open in front down to the waist, so as to exhibit the face and upper part of the body.

The inscription is as follows, in a scroll, now imperfect, above the effigy:

of Judgement
 day lorde d*

Beneath the effigy—

"God whích art Creatour and Redemer of all faitfhull people ; Graunt unto ye soule of Elizabeth Rok thy serbaunt and also to the soules of all trewo hilebers deþtd remysson of all their synes that through debout prayours they may attayne thy gracious p̄don whiche they have alwey vsyed by crist our lord. Amen."

* Probably, "In the day of judgement lorde deliver me"; and not, as Lipscombe gives it, "In the day of judgement save me lorde."

2. The next slab, in point of date, contains mutilated effigies of John Pen, Esq., lord of this manor, and Ursula, his wife, and their six sons. He died in October, 1597, aged 63. For the date of the death of Ursula a blank was left, which was never filled up. At the bottom of the brass are these lines —

*Horum terreno clauduntur membra sepulchro,
Sed capiunt animas sydera sola pias.
Quos amor univit mortis superare potestas
Non valuit junctos cer(n)imus hoc tumulo.*

3. The next slab consists of the incised effigies of William Pen, Esq. (1638), and Martha his wife (1635), as also of one son and two daughters. The figure of the son is represented in a demi-suit of armour; he has a Vandyke falling collar and huge jack-boots.

4. Next, as to date, comes a slab bearing the incised brass effigy of Lady Susan Drury, wife of Sir Henry Drury, and mother of Mrs. Sarah Pen, wife of John Pen, Esq. Lady Drury died in 1640. She is represented by the incised brass as attired in the ordinary, but graceful costume of ladies of that period.

5. The last slab contains the incised effigies in brass of John Pen, Esq., and Sarah his wife, the daughter of Sir Henry Drury, and the effigies of their five sons and five daughters. He died in 1641, but the date of the death of his wife is not given. He is represented in body armour, but not in a complete suit. He has a Vandyke falling collar about his neck, and a pair of jack-boots with the peculiar shaped spur of the period. His lady appears in a bodiced gown with ample skirts, with full puffed sleeves close at the wrists, and a veil on her head thrown back. Of the five sons, the first is represented in a doublet, hose, and short cloak, with a plain falling collar. The second in a doublet, trunk hose, stockings, and shoes, falling collar, and cloak. The third and fourth are attired in a similar manner, whilst the youngest son appears in a child's gown with hanging sleeves. The effigies of the female children are represented in plain bodiced gowns and caps.

MONUMENTS.

Besides those in or near the chancel (too numerous for

special mention) to the Penns, Curzons, and Howes, there are two on the north wall to the Baker family.

1. To Daniel Baker, Esq., August 20, 1700, and Barbara his wife, obt. Aug. 3, 1710.

Their descendants were Daniel, an only son, and two daughters, one married to Narcissus Luttrell, of Gray's Inn, the other to Sir John Verney, of Claydon, Baronet, Viscount Fermanagh, and Baron Belturbet in Ireland.

2. To Daniel Baker, Esq., obt. 1727, and Martha, his wife, obt. 1753.

The monument was erected by their grandson, John Baker Holroyd, of Sheffield Place, Sussex, 1770.

This family had a seat in this parish at Tyler's Green.* It was sold by the above-named John Baker Holroyd, at what date I am not aware, but it was pulled down in 1822, or thereabouts. After the Bakers, it was occupied by General Haviland; and after he, his widow, and other members of his family had left, it was rented by Mr. Burke, and used as a place of education for the sons of French refugees. The school, or seminary, was under his personal care and supervision, and persons not very long deceased remembered him riding through the village to visit the school.

My predecessor (the Rev. J. Knollis) believed that Sir William Springett (father of Gulielma, first wife of William Penn, of Pennsylvania) † lived at Tyler's Green. If this be true, it could hardly have been in any other dwelling than that of the Bakers before their time.

3. On the west wall of the south aisle is a monument to General Haviland ‡ and two ladies of his family.

Here rest the remains of

GENERAL WILLIAM HAVILAND,

late Colonel of the 45th Regt. of Infantry.

An experienced and successful Commander without ostentation,

a firm friend without profession,

a good man without pretence.

He died Sept. 16th, 1784, aged 67 years.

* See page 279.

† In the Register of the Friends' Monthly Meeting (Walthamstow), December, 1671, she is described as Gulielma Maria Springett, of Tiler's End Green, in the parish of Penn.

‡ He served under Wolfe at the siege of Quebec.

Also of MARY,

Relict of Wm. Townley Balfour, Esq.,
of the Kingdom of Ireland,

who departed this life Aug. 2nd, 1789, aged 56 years.

After, by her exemplary patience, pious resignation under a long and severe illness, impressed a genuine value upon those amiable qualities, both of the understanding and of the heart, which made her the delight of all who knew her.

Also of MARY,

Wife of Samuel Rushton Fitzherbert, Esq.,
of the Kingdom of Ireland,

in whom simplicity of manners adorned a fine understanding—the love of her duty adorned the practice of it—and her affection was rendered inestimable by the sincerity and truth with which it was accompanied.

She died Sept. 13th, 1786, aged 39 years.

This Monument, sacred to the memory of the best of husbands, an affectionate twin sister, and a dutiful daughter, is erected by their disconsolate survivor,

SALISBURY HAVILAND.*

THE FONT

is a leaden one. In the Sussex Archæological Collections (1882), it is said there are only twenty-nine leaden fonts in England.

THE ROYAL ARMS

are those of Queen Anne, set up in 1709. The motto is "Semper eadem."

STONE COFFIN,

capacious, and in a very perfect state, having a cross marked into the whole length of the lid. There are no present contents.

VAULTS.

That of the Penns and Curzons is under the chancel. There is also a large one under the north-west side of the nave, made in the last century. It contains only six small coffins, holding the remains of grandchildren of William Penn, founder of Pennsylvania.

* Mrs. Salisbury Haviland was buried by her husband in the vault under his Monument, Oct. 6th, 1807. Her unmarried sister, Abigail Aston, who had lived with her, was also buried at Penn, Feb. 11th, 1814, aged eighty years.

COMMUNION PLATE.

1. A silver-gilt chalice, with a cover to it and an inscription, "Sacrum Deo et Ecclesiæ, de Penn C. F. 1617."
2. A silver paten, given by Rev. John Bennett, Vicar, 1712.
3. } A silver flagon, { given by Danl. Baker, Esq.,
4. } A silver alms plate, { Aug. 30, 1714.

THE TOWER

is 45 feet high, and the churchyard being 553½ feet above the level of the sea, the prospect from the summit, under favourable circumstances, is very extensive, portions of thirteen counties being visible.*

The five bells were cast by Samuel Knight, of Reading, on the 29th of December, 1702, and hung on the 5th of January following.

The clock was set up against Easter, 1715.

REGISTERS.

The earliest entry is dated October 30th, 1560, nearly forty years earlier than the oldest at High Wycombe (1598).

The usual substitution of births for baptisms lasted from 1653 to 1659. The only marriage recorded during that interval is one to which is attached the name of Mr. Francis Bassett, Justice of the Peace, before whom the marriage took place. There is no increase of burials in the year of the Plague. There are the usual affidavits of being buried in Woollen from 1678 to 1734.

There is no very old entry worthy of public notice, but there is a special one relating to our own days.

On August 17th, 1835, their Majesties, King William IV. and Queen Adelaide, with the Duchess of Saxe-Weimar, the Queen's sister, stood in person as sponsors to Adelaide Ida (now Countess of Westmoreland), daughter of Earl Howe.

* Bucks, Berks, Middlesex, Kent, Surrey, Sussex, Hants, Wilts, Oxon, Herts, Essex, Northamptonshire, Bedfordshire—three more than are said to be visible from the top of the Round Tower at Windsor.

VICARS.

There is a complete list drawn up from the Registers, *i.e.*, from the beginning of the reign of Queen Elizabeth. I appear to be the eighteenth vicar from that date to the present time (1558—1882), giving an average tenure of eighteen years.

The only vicar who is known to have achieved distinction (?) for himself was the Rev. John Davies. The first of the only three cases ever brought before the High Court of Delegates, in which the subject matter was a charge of heresy or unsound doctrine, was that of Salter against Davies, 1690.

“A business of the office of the Judge, promoted by Tristram Salter against John Davies, Clerk, Vicar of Penn, in Buckinghamshire, in the Arches Court of Canterbury, for omitting to read, within two months of his induction to his Vicarage, as required by law, the Thirty-nine Articles, for preaching in favour of Popery, and for neglecting cure of souls in that parish, together with other offences.” A sentence of sequestration followed.
—(*From a Return to Parliament*, 1850.)
