



## Some Berkshire Crosses.

*By John Denis De Vitré.*

*(Continued from page 101.)*

FARNBOROUGH.—On the north side of the church is the pedestal and two feet of the shaft of a cross; in the top of the shaft is a small hole about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches square, filled with lead.

GOOSEY.—On the north of the church is the pedestal and stump of the shaft of a cross.

HAGBOURNE.—This village contains no less than three crosses, or rather a complete one and the remains of two others. The one now complete stands near the church in its original position, and was probably the market cross of the village. This cross is mentioned by Lysons as a tall taper shaft on an ascent of steps; in the side of the shaft facing the church is a niche eleven inches long and six inches broad, and in the pedestal also facing the church is another niche eleven inches long and one foot seven inches wide at the bottom. The top of the shaft, which is ten feet high, is surmounted by a square stone, on three sides of which are sundials, and on the other side marks of an inscription and a date that seems to begin 17 . . . On the top of this sundial there used to be a large ball which was thrown down by a drunken grocer of West Hagbourne a few years ago.

Of the other two crosses, one stands on a mound of grass covered earth some six feet in height and eight feet across, at the entrance of the village coming from Didcot; it consists of three feet of the shaft standing on a pedestal buried in the earth.

The other cross, similar to the above, is placed on the bank at the corner of the road in the Hamlet of Coscot. Lysons notices a small cross at a place called Crosscot or Crostcot, which may be this one.

NORTH HINCKSEY.—In the churchyard on the south side are the remains of a good Early Decorated cross, with most of the shaft still standing, the top being missing as usual. By the side of the road from here to Botley is the base of another cross.

**SOUTH HINCKSEY.**—There is here on the north side of the church the usual remains of a cross, namely three steps and the pedestal with a hole in its top to receive the shaft.

**LAMBOURN.**—There are the remains of a fine cross in the Market Square, consisting of four steps, a pedestal and shaft. It is perpendicular in style, the base being octagonal, and has had a large canopy at the top in which were once figures, now, however, so defaced that it is impossible to tell what they originally represented; one idea is that they represented the Crucifixion, while Lewis in his "Topographical Dictionary of England," published 1849, says it is supposed to have been originally the figure of a sphynx. It has been suggested to me that the figure may have been a lamb, and had thus some reference to the name of the village, or else that being close to the church it might have been symbolical of the *Agnus Dei*.

There was formerly, it appears, another cross in this village, which stood on the site of the present weighbridge and was called *St. Antholin's Cross*; it was standing in 1673 as it is mentioned in an old deed of that date, but I have found no mention as to when it was removed; the churchyard cross from which excommunications, etc., were read, is also no longer in existence.

**NEWBURY.**—The town cross stood near the Town Hall, but I have been unable to discover any view of it or information relating to it.

**READING.**—The cross, or rather crosses, since there were probably several, have quite disappeared; in Coates' History of Reading it is said that when in 1552 Edward VI. was at Reading, the mayor and burgesses and others received the king at Colley cross, where the mayor gave up his mace to the king, who having received it handed it back again; this probably points to some ceremony similar to that which used to take place at Temple Bar when the Sovereign visited the city.

In a charter of Elizabeth dated February 23rd, 1562, several bridges are mentioned as being very ruinous and in need of repair, among them being two, situated between the old guildhall and a certain cross called *Gerrard's cross*.

**GREAT SHEFFORD.**—The cross here stands in the churchyard on the south side of the church; it consists of a pedestal and six feet of the shaft; the pedestal is curious in that it has a head carved at each corner, instead of the corners being cut off as is usual, and in

the top of each head is a small hole about an inch square, in some of which there is still lead remaining. I do not know what can have been the use of these holes, or whether they supported small shafts or a sort of railing round the main shaft ; if anyone can throw any light on their original purpose or give any other instance of their occurring, it might perhaps be interesting.

SHRIVENHAM.—The remains of the cross here are, as usual, the pedestal and stump of the shaft.

STEVENTON.—The cross stands on the north of the church, and is very similar to the one at Didcot, the top part being modern and the steps and base original. The corners of the pedestal have been cut off and on one of them is carved what looks like a rose, while on the others are shields, bearing a cross dividing them into the four quarters. On the east end of the pedestal is a niche four inches long and two inches wide, whether original or not is hard to say.

SPARSHOLT.—The cross is on the north side of the church, and consists of the usual pedestal and stump of shaft ; the pedestal, however, is square as usual, at the bottom, but the corners at the top are cut off so as to make it octagonal, and thus it may have belonged to the Perpendicular style like the examples at Lambourn and Eastbury.

THATCHAM.—I have been told there is here the pedestal and part of the shaft of a cross which was very likely a market cross, as the town had once an important market.

WANTAGE.—The cross formerly stood in the Market Place, and must have been of much beauty as appears from the fragment now in a garden in the town. Lysons says that round it was the following inscription : " Pray for the good Earl of Bath, and for good master William Barnabe, the builder thereof, 1580, and for William, Lord Fitzwarren."

The fragment that survives shews it must have been ornamented with half-length figures, each in an arched niche ; whether they extended all over the shaft or merely in a circle round the top is impossible to say, as I have been unable to find any view or description of it.

WALLINGFORD.—There was formerly a market cross here, and I am told there is a reference to it of the time of William Rufus, but have been unable to obtain any particulars.

WELFORD.—The cross stands in the churchyard on the south side of the church ; it is peculiar in that the shaft tapers much more than is ordinarily the case, as is shewn by a picture of it in Lysons' *Britannia*, where it is represented as surmounted by a ball ; at the present time, however, the top is so mutilated that it is scarcely possible to say what has been there ; the present height of the shaft is eleven feet, and it stands on a pedestal and one step.

WINDSOR.—This cross has, I believe, quite disappeared, but Ashmole has the following notice of it :—

"The High street and largest lies southward, where in 1380 was erected a handsome cross by John Sadler, which was much beautified and repaired and a crucifix placed on its top in 1635 by Godfrey Goodman, Bishop of Gloucester, which, as I have seen in letters to and from the said Prelate, gave great offence to some of the purer saints of those times, by whose endeavours, I presume, it was demolished in the most impious Rebellion, begun in 1641, there being now not the smallest vestigia of its existence."

LONG WITTENHAM.—The cross stands in the centre of the village, and consists of four steps, pedestal and shaft, surmounted by a cross. The shaft, which is ten feet high, and the cross on the top are new, having been restored about thirty years ago by a gentleman of Wallingford ; the pedestal and steps are original but have been re-set with cement ; near the cross is the Saxon burial ground, called "three acres," so that there has probably been a cross here ever since Saxon times, as early Christian teachers often erected a cross from which to preach and as a centre for religious teaching.

WOOTTON.—The pedestal alone remains here on the south side of the church ; it has the hole for the shaft, which has quite gone.