



Notes and Queries

RELATING TO BERKS, BUCKS AND OXON.

Communications are invited upon all subjects of Antiquarian or Architectural interest relating to the three counties. Correspondents are requested to write as plainly as possible, on one side of the paper only, with REPLIES, QUERIES and NOTES on SEPARATE SHEETS, and the name of the writer appended to each communication.

Notes.

ST. MARY'S CHURCH, READING.—With regard to the antiquity of this Church, Dr. Joseph Stevens stated in a letter to me:—"It is quite my view that *St. Mary's is the Church of the town and people, and is the edifice referred to as a church and eight hides of land which were held by the Abbot of Battel, and which Leveva the Abbess held of King Edward.* The name *Battel* comes of course from association with *Battel Abbey*, both being afterwards spelt *Battle*. I have no doubt that a very large portion of Reading lay from the earliest times on the west. Associations with the name *Castle Street*, and *St. Mary's* being a separate parish with its separate church and burial ground, are all indicative of antiquity. And why should *Domesday* be so *markedly* (clearly) divided? The church in it is associated with the houses of the people. *And the church was a Minster. I have no doubt St. Mary's is the oldest church in Reading, and the evidence in almost every particular suggests that the Nunnery preceded it.*" This view is borne out in *Leland*, *Ashmole*, *Brown Willis*, *Cox* (1731), *Man*, *Coates*, *Doran*, *Pettigrew*, F.S.A. (1860), and I know in your own works on the subject.

Col. Cooper King wrote to me that he relied on *Kerry* for his information about *St. Lawrence's*, and that he did not know *St. Mary's* contained Norman work.

I think *Kerry* ought not to have inserted the *Domesday* entries as bearing on *St. Lawrence's*—*Battle Farm* is still in the ancient parish of *St. Mary*, and part of the manor of *Battle* appears on old maps in *Castle Street* (*St. Mary's* Parish again). *OLDE Street* (*Speed's Map*, 1610) is now *St. Mary's Butts*. *MINSTER Street* formerly included what is now *Gun Street*.

Note the proximity of *St. Mary's* to the ancient streets. Respecting the supposed destruction of *Elfrida's* convent by the Danes, it must have recovered somewhat by A.D. 1042 when *Leveva* was Abbess. The church only is mentioned in *Domesday*, therefore between 1042 and the years 1067 (*Foundation of Battle Abbey*) and 1087 (*Charter of Battle Abbey*) the convent at Reading was finally suppressed, and the name *Minster* was retained by the Church (as is often

the case) although the convent had ceased to exist, and its revenues had been transferred to Battle Abbey:—*Teste*.—10th century doorway in North Wall of St. Mary's, proving *that the convent stood on the N. side of the church*. I discredit the idea that St. Lawrence's Church was removed from any other site to its present one, and I do not attach any importance to the theory of its having had the right of sepulture at some distance from its present churchyard. St. Giles' has another ground besides the one around the church. I think the present site of St. Lawrence's is its original site.

A few weeks ago I wrote to Mr. Kerry and asked what date he assigned to the inauguration of Musical Festivals at St. Lawrence's. He replied as follows:—"June 28th, 1902. You may rely upon the dates of the festivals "given in my History of St. Lawrence's, and I am almost sure that history is "exhaustive. I should think the 1786 performance of the Messiah was the *first* "of the kind at St. Lawrence's." And yet he states in his book, p. 64:—"The great Musical Festivals held at Worcester, Gloucester and Birmingham "during the present (nineteenth) century were inaugurated at Reading, and the "performances were held in St. Lawrence's Church." In the first place they commenced as regards "three choirs festivals" not in the then "present century" but in the 18th century, viz., 1724; and as to Birmingham also in the 18th century, viz., 1768. And I replied telling him so.

I think my few remarks will shew how needful it is to be careful in writing histories, especially those of churches.—WM. T. BILSON.

HURLEY.—THE DIOCESAN HISTORY OF BERKSHIRE.—The following Epitome of Berkshire Diocesan History, and of the History of the See of Oxford, has lately been hung on one of the inside walls of the Vestry of Hurley Church. It has been recently compiled by the Rev. F. T. Wethered:—

The Diocesan History of Berkshire

From A.D. 635 to A.D. 1902; and the History of the Diocese of Oxford from the time of its creation A.D. 1542 to A.D. 1902.

A.D. 635—Birinus made Bishop of the great West Saxon Diocese, including Berkshire. Bishop's "Stool" [Sedes—See] at Dorchester, in Oxfordshire. See removed to Winchester by Bishop Heddi (in A.D. 683 ?)

A.D. 909—Berkshire taken out of the Winchester Diocese and transferred to the See of Ramsbury in Wiltshire, under Bishop Æthelstan, with Bishop's house at Sonning, near Twyford, Berks.

A.D. 1058—Bishop Herman (consecrated Bishop of Ramsbury A.D. 1045) obtained from Edward the Confessor the Diocese of Sherborne, which had been broken off from the Great Winchester Diocese in A.D. 705. He united the Bishopric of Sherborne with the See of Ramsbury and fixed the Episcopal seat of both Dioceses at Sherborne.

A.D. 1075—Bishop Herman removed his "Stool" from Sherborne to (Old) Sarum, in consequence of a decree in London, made by William the Conqueror.

[A.D. c. 1086—Bishop Osmund, of (Old) Sarum, came to Hurley and re-dedicated Hurley Church to the Blessed Virgin Mary.]

A.D. 1220—On April 28th Bishop Richard le Poor laid the foundation-stones (five) of the present Salisbury Cathedral.

A.D. 1542—King Henry VIII. founded the Diocese of Oxford, out of the Diocese of Lincoln, and gave the Abbey Church of Osney as its Cathedral. In A.D. 1546 the Cathedral was moved to the Priory Church of S. Frideswide [Christ Church], Oxford.

A.D. 1836—Berkshire was taken out of the Diocese of Salisbury and added to the Oxfordshire See.

A.D. 1845—Buckinghamshire was separated from the Diocese of Lincoln and added to the Oxford Diocese.

A.D. 1902—Bishop Francis Paget is our present Diocesan (consecrated on June 29th, A.D. 1901).

A Chart, containing the total populations of Hurley Civil Parish from 1841 to 1901, according to the ten-yearly returns made by the Census Office; the total populations of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Hurley and of the Ecclesiastical District (now Ecclesiastical *Parish*) of Knowl Hill, composed of portions of the Civil Parishes of Hurley and Wargrave, between 1851 and 1901,—was hung up in the Vestry of Hurley Church lately.

The Ecclesiastical District of Knowl Hill was formed in 1840; Knowl Hill Church (S. Peter's) was consecrated on August 24th, 1841; the Ecclesiastical District was assigned on September 6th, 1842; the Ecclesiastical District became a separate Ecclesiastical *Parish* on July 9th, 1863.

F. T. WETHERED, Hurley Vicarage.

Replies.

CRIBLINGTON CHURCH, BUCKS.—It appears that the author of the "Tour in Bucks" was quite right about the existence of a copy of Foxe's Book of Martyrs in this church. In the days of the late Rector it used to be kept in the Rectory. It has now been restored to its proper place in the Church.—EDITOR.

KENDRICK FAMILY.—Mr. Greene Kendrick seems not to be aware that the publication of the Reading Town Records was commenced in 1892 with the Corporation Diary; of which four volumes have already appeared 1431—1664. The following entries may be of interest:—

1533 Gulielmus Kenrick Guardianus, Alte Warde.

1545 Do. do. Scrutator piscium.

There is a gap in the Diary from 1561—5, but other muniments of the Corporation throw light on this period.—NATHANIEL HONE, 1, Fielding Road, Bedford Park, W.

Queries.

MANOR COURT ROLLS.—I am compiling a Calendar of the Court Rolls of Berks, Bucks and Oxon, their present place of deposit, &c., which, with the kind permission of the Editor, I hope to print eventually in the Journal. I should be much obliged for information as to the existence of such Rolls, especially where, as in many instances, they have strayed far from their original locality.—NATHANIEL HONE, 1, Fielding Road, Bedford Park, W.