

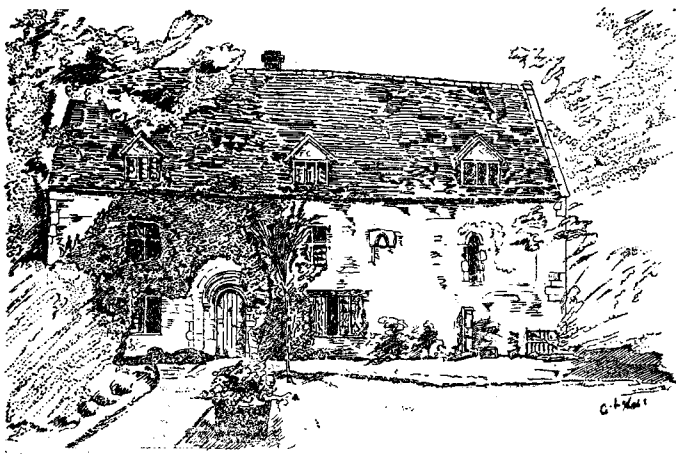


Sutton Courtenay.

By C. Lynam, F.S.A.

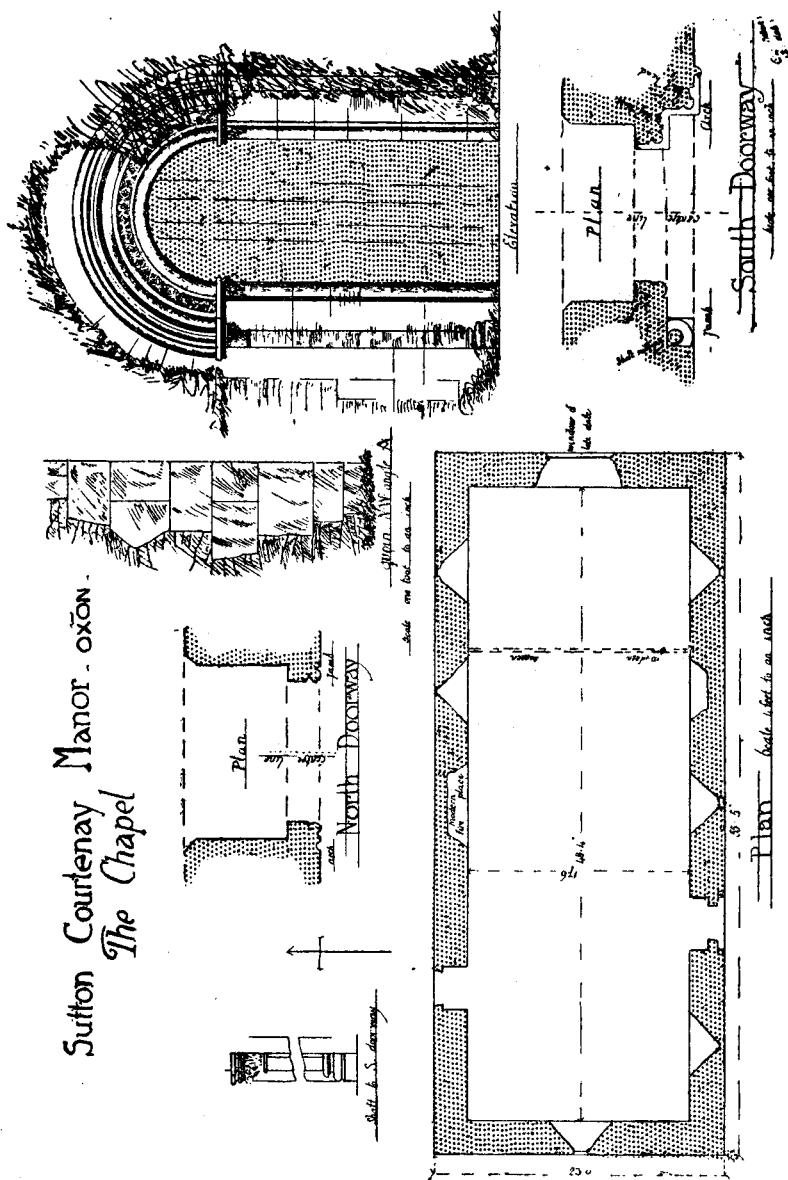
MANOR FARM.

AS part of the work of the British Archæological Congress, 1905, this remarkable building was visited under the auspices of the Rev. P. H. Ditchfield, F.S.A., and an examination was made of it in the presence of the current owner, Captain Lindsay. The original building has become so much disguised and altered that its present aspect is very markedly that of a domestic character. Windows have been inserted in the walls and roofs shewing that a ground floor, first floor, and attics have been comprised within the



structure, and the ancient features have for the most part been obliterated. Under these misleading circumstances it has become an accepted opinion that this is one of the few dwelling houses of Norman date remaining in England, and, considering its present condition, such a view is not to be wondered at: but a careful scrutiny of the general proportions, its substantiality of structure, its orientation and the details of its smaller features lead without doubt to the conclusion the building was erected not for domestic but for ecclesiastical purposes, that it was in fact a Church.

Its plan is a simple parallelogram 48ft. 4in. long by 17ft. 6in. wide inside measurement with a height of 19ft. 0in. to the plate in the flank walls and a thickness of 2ft. 8in. in all the walls. The length



was no doubt divided by a screen for the chancel at the east end, and the very late fireplace in the north wall did not exist originally. Present evidence shows that all the windows were narrow lancets of the earliest type. The glass plane being very near to the outside face and the internal splays running from the glass to a great width. One of these windows still exists on the south side, and the head of another, and also one of great beauty in the west end. The east gable has had an inserted perpendicular window of three lights, now much mutilated. Of doorways there are two, one in the north wall and the other in the south, nearly opposite to one another. The north doorway has moulded and rebated jambs on the outside and chamfered angles inside, the extent of moulding being increased in the arch on the outside.

The south doorway is very beautiful in its proportions, and is elaborated with jambs having nook shafts with carved caps and moulded bases and arches richly moulded and carved with the dog tooth and nail head-ornaments.

Altogether the architecture of this building is such as well befitted its sacred purpose and fell in with the delightful art prevalent at the time of its erection. Now, it behoves us to say, what date the building fixes for itself. To anyone who has studied it, measured it, and drawn its details, there can be no hesitation in saying that a Norman date does not fit it, but the earliest Early English does, and the year A.D. 1200 may be named with safety as the period of its erection. But perhaps the semi-circular arches of the doorways may be thought to be inconsistent with this date. Not at all, there are many Early English doorways with semi-circular heads, but there is no Norman work with mouldings and carvings and windows having pointed heads as we see them here. A sketch of the south side accompanies these notes, and also drawings of the plan and the doorways and of one quoin of the building. From these it will be seen that the walling is of rubble work and the dressings of fine jointed carefully worked stone.

ROMAN RELICS AT WATCHFIELD.—Traces of Roman occupation were recently met with at Watchfield, near Shrivenham. In cleaning out an old well a quantity of broken Roman pottery was found and twenty-four bronze coins, fourteen of which were identified as belonging to the reign of Allectus, the independent Emperor of Britain A.D. 300. The coins were all 3rd Bronze.—W. H. HALLAM.