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An Architectural Account of the Churches of Great and Little Coxwell, Coleshill, Inglesham, Buscot and Eaton Hastings

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(Continued from page 9.)

A DRIVE of about seven miles through Highworth, where is a good Church, mainly of the Early English and late Perpendicular period, and with a late Norman sculptured tympanum with representation of David killing the lion, also an early tithe barn, will bring us to Inglesham, with its little Church full of interesting details. The Church is in Wiltshire, situated on the west side of the river Cole, and stands right apart from the main portion of the village, which was till recently in Berkshire. It was granted with the Manor by King John to his new foundation at Beaulieu Abbey, and the monks seem to have taken special pleasure in beautifying and adorning this most interesting little Church. This, till quite recently, was unrestored, and in consequence possessed a fascination for the lover of true mediæval work, but it has been proved to be in a very unsound condition, and some restoration is necessary to its preservation. The heavy coating of whitewash is being removed, and mural decorations and other interesting details are now being brought to light. Under the vigilant eye of the present Vicar, who is keenly sensible of the merits of the edifice, there is little cause for

fear, and one may reasonably expect that only necessary work will be undertaken to maintain the pristine beauty of this charming structure.

The Church (Fig. 33) is dedicated to St. John-the-Baptist; and consists of a nave, with western bellcote, aisles, south porch, chancel, and south chapel. The south arcade of the nave and the chancel are of the late Norman period, the north arcade being a little later. In the thirteenth century the chancel seems to have been reconstructed, and other alterations were carried out in the fifteenth century. The south chapel is now mainly of the Elizabethan period.

Commencing, as is our wont, our survey in the interior of the chancel, we notice that the walls have been liberally coated with whitewash, and no doubt interesting mural decorations exist here, which have only been partially brought to light at present. The east window (Fig. 34) has three trefoil headed lancets within a containing arch with elegant cinquefoiled fringe. Below have been uncovered two semi-circular headed openings, a good deal of colouring, vermilion, &c., some black letter inscriptions, and part of an eighteenth century text. On the floor is part of the reredos (Fig. 35) found in one of the semi-circular openings. It is of the perpendicular period, and has two traceried compartments, with two tiers of figures, the heads of the lower and the drapery of the upper ones, painted within them. There is also the picture of an angel. At the side of the east window is a masonry pattern in double red lines. In the south-east angle is an early Decorated piscina, with trefoiled arch, stone shelf, and circular basin. There are considerable remains of colouring on the canopy and at the back. On the south side is a two-light window, transitional from Early English to Decorated, with a quatrefoil in the head. There is a small fragment of old glass, with cruciform nimbus, the only portion remaining of the head of our Lord. The containing arch has a fillet band sculptured on it. The arch opening to the south chapel is debased of the Elizabethan period.

On the north side of the chancel are two lancets, with a chamfered hoodmould (Fig. 36) coupling them together and continued east and west as a stringcourse. The heads of the containing arches are cut off by the wallplate of the later roof. A roll stringcourse runs below them, and above an arcade of

three semi-circular arches (Fig. 37) in the wall space from the west of the sanctuary to the west end. They have a continuous undercut hoodmould and a roll with fillet band on the angle, supported on two central shafts with rounded abacus and early foliage on the capitals. The western arch dies into the west wall, the eastern has the moulding on the east side continued without impost down the jamb to the ground. All this work dates from the early part of the thirteenth century. The east bay of the roof is panelled, and probably part of the fifteenth century restoration. On the chancel floor has been a very fine brass, but all the metal has been removed. It shows the outline of a figure of a knight, full size, with bascinet, feet on a lion, and sword at his side. There have been shields at the corners, and an inscription round the verge. The date is early fourteenth century, and this must be a memorial of some distinguished benefactor to the Church, or Beaulieu Abbey. On the floor are also some old ledger stones, (1) to Mary Bab, wife of Mr. Robert Bab, minister, died January 15th, 1654, aged 29, (2) to Bernard Babb, vicar, 1702, (3) Robert, son of Mr. Bernard Babb, and (4) the wife of Robert Babb. The south chapel was built or wholly reconstructed in the Elizabethan period, and has a debased east window. There is a two-light Perpendicular window on the south side, probably the former east window of the south aisle. On the floor is a small brass to Patience, widow of Robert Bates, died 1783. Let in to the interior of the south wall is the interesting sculptured stone panel (Fig. 38) formerly in the exterior wall of the porch, representing the Blessed Virgin and Child. It is traditionally stated to have been brought from an old chapel on the bridge over the Thames at Lechlade, and is certainly much older than any portion of Inglesham Church. The Virgin is seated with hood and long cloak, Our Lord is sitting on her knee, with right hand partly raised in the attitude of benediction and the left on a book. He has the nimbus, and a long robe down to the feet. Above His head is the dexter Dei, and above the head of the Virgin, the name, 'Maria,' in large capital letters and part of another letter. On the lower part of the cloak of the Virgin is a rude scratch dial, with a large hole for the gnomon. The figures are carved out of a hard white stone, and are gracefully portrayed. In Murray's

Guide for Berkshire, a date, 1250, is assigned to them, but this is far too late, and they may have been executed in pre-Norman times.

The chancel arch (Fig. 39) is segmental headed, early Decorated, with the roll moulding with fillet band on the hood-mould, and two plain chamfered orders dying into the wall. There is a large space above, on which are depicted the ten commandments, where it is probable that a painting of the Doom may be discovered under the thick coating of whitewash.

There are two arches on each side of the nave, those on the south (Fig. 40) are transitional Norman, semi-circular with chamfered hoodmould and two chamfered orders supported on a round column and half-round responds with an octagonal abacus to the central column, and semi-octagonal to the responds, and stiff-leaved foliage on the central capital, and late form of scalloping (Fig. 41) to those of the responds. The bases are nicely carved. On the north side the arches (Fig. 42) are Early English with chamfered hoodmould and two chamfered orders dying into the wall on the east and west, and resting on central circular columns with undercut octagonal abacus, and bold conventional foliage on the capital. Attached to the column is a small iron hour glass stand. The nave roof is high pitched, Perpendicular, repaired in 1897. The eastern bay is panelled. The west window of three lights is of the Perpendicular period, and contains some fragments of ancient glass. The eastern bay of each aisle is divided off from the western bay and the nave by screens (Fig. 43) forming parclooses, as at Greywell, Hampshire, Guilden Morden, Cambridgeshire, and Marston Moretaine, Bedfordshire, preserving what was no doubt a common feature in our Parish Churches prior to the Reformation. The pulpit is Elizabethan or Jacobean, with sounding board and reading desk. There are also some old pews of seventeenth century date.

The north aisle has a good Perpendicular screen separating the eastern bay from the western bay, and the nave. The upper portion of the west screen is gone, but that on the south has a rich cornice still remaining. Some good traceried work also remains on the lower panels, though those on the west are plain. This was probably the lady chapel. In the south wall is a rounded trefoil arched piscina with stone shelf, quatre-

foil shaped basin and considerable remains of colouring. The east window is Perpendicular of two lights with some fragments of old glass. There is a large corbel for an image on either side of the window. The north wall is choked up with whitewash. There is a semi-circular arched recess (Fig. 44) with mutilated fringe, widely splayed. It is brought down to about two feet from the ground, and has been richly coloured. It has been blocked up, and has only recently been partially cleared out. It does not appear to have gone through the wall, as there are no traces of it outside. Could it have been a reliquary? The interior arch of the north doorway has a trefoil head. There is a two-light squareheaded Perpendicular west window.

The eastern bay of the south aisle is enclosed within parclose screen with richly carved cornices enriched with roses, &c.. The west door still remains. On the south side is a small squareheaded two-light perpendicular window containing some fragments of old glass. The piscina has small round trefoil headed canopy with projecting bowl and octagonal basin. The font (Fig. 45) is very fine Perpendicular, octagonal with a rose within a quatrefoil enclosed within a circular medallion on each face of the bowl and elegant ornamentation below. It is supported on a slender stem and moulded base. It has a wooden Jacobean cover. Various fragments of pinnacles, &c., are preserved in the north chapel and south aisle.

The south doorway (Fig. 46) is semi-circular with roll moulding in arch, continued as an engaged shaft to the ground, plain rounded abacus and no capitals. The door is old. In the interior east wall of the porch is a blocked recess with remains of red colouring. These recesses or niches in this situation are commonly found in East Gloucestershire and the adjoining counties, and probably contained a crucifix, or some other sacred sculpture. All have been coloured, and several are richly carved. In an example at Aldsworth, near Bibury, the holes for the candles still remain, and it has been suggested that in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries some special services were celebrated in the porch. The outer arch of the porch (Fig. 47) is plain four-centred late Perpendicular. There is a large niche with trefoiled canopy for an image above. There is a plain parapet to the nave

aisles and chancel, and low buttresses at the several angles. Small four-centred doorway to south chapel. Well moulded hoodmould to east window (Fig. 48). On a stone at the west end, north side of chancel, are two votive crosses. The north doorway (Fig. 49) is trefoil headed with plain chamfered arch and jambs, dating soon after the year 1200. The door is old with good ironwork. The western bellcote has two trefoil headed arches under a triangular pediment enclosing a large circular opening. There are two bells. There are undercut labels to the Perpendicular west windows.

The Church is built of stone, and mainly covered with roughcast.

The interior measurements are roughly as follows:—

Chancel, 23 ft. by 12 ft. 9 in.

Nave, 26 ft. 8 in. by 15 ft. 7 in.

North aisle, 25 ft. 9 in. by 10 ft. 10 in.

South aisle and chancel, 38 ft. 4 in. by 9 ft. 9 in.

To the south of the Church stands the old cross (Fig. 50) of fifteenth century date, with base and slender stem, and plain carved finial at the top.

A drive of between two and three miles will bring us to Lechlade, where the fine Perpendicular Church is well worthy of a visit. Thence we get back from Gloucestershire to Berkshire, and in a little over a mile arrive at the Church and Rectory of Buscot (Fig. 51). These are situate close to the rapidly flowing Thames, and some distance from the village and Buscot Park. According to Lysons, the Manor belonged in 1479, and probably long before that, to the Stonor family, and in 1557 it was purchased of Sir Francis Stonor by Walter Loveden, Esq. It remained in this family till recent times, when it was acquired by Mr. A. Henderson, now Lord Faringdon, who has been a munificent benefactor to the Church and Parish. There were also the Manors of Mychells Court and Paynells Court, so named after their former owners, and of Philpots Court, once in the possession of 'Baron St. Philibert, lord of the adjoining manor of Eaton Hastings, and took its name, though now strangely transformed, from him. William De la Pole, Duke of Suffolk, died, seized of it by the name of Phelberdes.' It passed through the hands of the Becking-

hams, Windsors, Yates and Throckmortons, from whom it was purchased by Mr. Loveden, and was in his possession in Lysons' time.

The Church (Fig. 52) and Rectory stand, as has been stated, close to the river, and a long way from the nucleus of the village. The Rectory is a plain square edifice with high pitched roof, and is said to have been built by Inigo Jones. The Church, dedicated to St. Mary (Fig. 53), consists of a west tower, nave with south porch, chancel, and modern vestry on the north side. It has been severely 'church-wardenized,' but much improved and beautified under the auspices of the present Lord of the Manor. It is rather difficult to diagnose this Church, as many alterations have been made to the original structure. The chancel arch is transitional Norman, and there are lancet windows in the chancel, and there was till recently one in the nave, proving the existence of the whole of the Church, with the exception of the tower, early in the thirteenth century. The tower and south porch were added in the late fifteenth century.

Commencing our inspection of the Church in the interior of the chancel (Fig. 54), we notice that the east window is a large segmental headed lancet within a pointed containing arch. (The glass is modern, by Burne Jones, representing the Good Shepherd.) On the north is a lancet within a segmental headed containing arch, and further west a wide single light with foliation, a cinquefoiled fringe, to the containing arch. There is a carved seat against the north wall, with eagle and ox (evangelistic emblems) on the elbows. On the south side is a wide lancet (Fig. 55) with cinquefoiled fringe to the containing arch, and small trefoil headed niche in the east splay, and further west is a long narrow lancet, the lower part probably a low side window. In the south wall, to the east of the east on south window, is a shouldered arched piscina with slightly projecting basin. In the sill of the window is a plain sedile, and to the west another piscina with trefoiled canopy and quatrefoil shaped basin. The ceiling is underdrawn, but one tie beam and king post of the old roof remains. The wall plate, both on north and south, is old. On the south wall are the effigies in brass of a civilian and his lady (he has lost his head). They have their hands clasped on their breasts, and

date from about 1510. On the north wall is a fine sculptured marble tablet to Margaret Loveden Loveden, who died January 30th, 1784. She is represented as dispensing charity to the poor. On the floor is a large ledger stone with shield and inscription to the Rev. Walter Hungerford, D.D., died 1681. The ancient altar stone is on the floor by the step leading up to the chancel. The chancel arch of transitional Norman date (Fig. 56) is plain on the east side, but very richly sculptured, though somewhat over-restored, on its western face. It is obtusely pointed with undercut hoodmould terminating on a mask on the north and a bunch of foliage on the south side, and three recessed orders. On the outer are two courses of bold raised zigzag, with smaller band of zigzag on the upper face and between and on the lower side of the bolder mouldings. The middle and inner courses are plain with chamfered edge, the latter carried down the jambs without imposts to the ground. To the outer and middle order is an undercut abacus, and detached shafts with foliated capitals, all much renewed. The bases, with the exception of the outer on south, and the plinths are old.

The nave has been much altered and restored. The roof is underdrawn. There is a debased two-light window on the north, and two modern two-light windows on the south side. The lectern is gilded and richly carved (?) Italian of early eighteenth century date. The pulpit (Fig. 57) has three painted panels, formerly a triptych, and reputed to be the work of Andrea Mantegna. On the central panel is the Adoration of the Magi (Fig. 58B), Balthazar, as usual, depicted as a black man, but with white knees. On the left panel is the Annunciation (Fig. 58A), and on the right the Virgin and Child (Fig. 58C). This was presented to the Church by Lord Faringdon. The font (Fig. 59) has a cup-shaped bowl on a square stem and base with angle shaft. It seems to be a composite construction, the bowl perhaps being of Norman date. The tower arch (Fig. 60) is Perpendicular, with plain outer order and jambs; the inner is supported on slender engaged shafts with large capitals. The west window is good Perpendicular of three lights.

The south doorway within a porch is segmented headed Perpendicular within rectangular label with fluted and quarter-

round mouldings to arch and jambs. The timbers of the porch are partly old. The stone bench remains on each side. The outer arch is semi-circular headed of debased date. On south of chancel is a blocked-up squareheaded doorway with plain jambs and lintel, probably of transitional Norman date. The hoodmould of one of the windows on the north side of the nave terminates on heads of king and queen. The tower (Fig. 61) is embattled Perpendicular in three stages, with two-light squareheaded belfry window with undercut label above. There is a single light in middle stage on south, enclosing a series of stone quatrefoils. The west doorway is segmental headed with hoodmould on heads. There are angle buttresses to the tower. There are three bells. The weathermould of the old roof still remains on east face of the tower. There is a buttress to the north aisle and several putlog holes in the wall. The south side of the nave and the chancel are covered with roughcast. The roof is composed of stone slabs.

The interior dimensions of the Church are as follows:—

Tower, 11 ft. 6 in. by 10 ft.

Nave, 51 ft. by 20 ft. 8 in.

Chancel, 31 ft. by 14 ft. 3 in.

A drive by a somewhat circuitous route of between four and five miles will bring us to the Church and Vicarage of Eaton Hastings, situate close to the river Thames, and some distance from the rest of the village, which has sprung up on the Lechlade and Faringdon road. The manorial history is treated very briefly by Lysons. William de Hastings died seised of it in 1270, but in 1298 it was conveyed by Benedict Blakenham to Hugh St. Philibert. After the death of John Baron St. Philibert it reverted to the Crown, and was granted by Edward III in 1358 to Sir William Trussell, in whose family it continued above a century. It was afterwards held by the Wenmans and Martens, then by Lord Barrington, and now by Lord Faringdon.

The Church (Fig. 62), dedicated to St. Michael and All Angels, consists now of a western bellcote, nave and chancel, with vestry on the north side of the nave. The north wall of the nave is the earliest part, of the Norman period. In the thirteenth century the chancel was reconstructed, and soon

afterwards a south aisle was added, or possibly only projected and never completed. The bellcote is new. The chancel was restored in 1870 and the nave in 1872.

Taking up our position in the interior of the chancel, we notice that the orientation of the chancel is considerably to the south of that of the nave. The east window has three trefoil headed lancets within a single chamfered containing arch, of the type common to churches in this district. On the north is a large plain lancet, and farther west two trefoil headed lancets within widely splayed containing arches with fluted arch and jambs. On the south is a blocked-up window (Fig. 63), but the containing arch remains resting on small shafts with foliage on the caps, supported on brackets with the head of a man on one side, and lady on the other. In the east splay is a piscina with trefoil headed canopy and octagonal basin, and there is a plain sedile in the sill of the window. On the north side is a plain oblong aumbrey, with rebate for the door. On the south side is a trefoil headed lancet with segmental headed containing arch, and close to the west end a plain lancet brought down as a low side window, with the hinges for the former shutter still remaining. There is a modern seat within the window sill. The roof, with tie beams and kingposts, seems to be a restoration of the seventeenth or eighteenth century.

The chancel arch (Fig. 64) is plain pointed Early English with chamfered edge, supported on the plain piers of the former Norman arch, with the star ornament on the abacus, continued as a stringcourse, both in nave and chancel, to the north and south walls. In the nave is on the north (Fig. 65) a trefoil headed lancet within segmental headed containing arch, and farther west on a higher level a very widely splayed semi-circular headed Norman window. The north doorway now opening to the vestry is Norman with plain semi-circular arch and jambs on the interior side. Walled up on the south side are three arches dating from about the year 1260, with two chamfered orders supported on circular columns and capitals, the eastern arch dying into the east wall. Within the eastern arch in the south wall is a small semi-circular headed arch (Fig. 66) about four feet high, just above the ground level, and farther west a triple trefoil headed lancet

within a containing arch; within the middle arch is a double trefoil headed lancet, and within the western the south and another blocked doorway. There is a trefoil headed founder's tomb in the wall within the middle arch. The tomb and windows are of the same date as the arches, and have either been moved to their present position, or suggest the idea that the scheme for adding the aisle was never carried out.

The west window is of three lights Decorated, with quatrefoils two and one in the head; the upper part has been restored. The font has an octagonal cup-shaped bowl with a band below and set on a large octagonal plinth. The bowl is of the Perpendicular period. The pulpit (Fig. 67) at the north-east corner of the nave is good Jacobean, with excellent wooden panelling. The nave is high pitched, with tie beams and king posts, and apparently of the same date as that in the chancel. There is an old chest.

The north doorway (Fig. 68) within the vestry is Norman with plain arch and jambs, recessed tympanum with traces of red colouring, and plain lintel. There is a small trefoil headed niche of later date above. The Norman window (Fig. 69) on the north side has very small exterior opening, with a quarter-round on the arch, and massive jambs. Both the window and doorway are of early date. There are several buttresses to the north wall. The windows are all flush with the wall and have no hoodmoulds. The east on north chancel window is earlier than those to the west of it, and its sill is on a higher level. The chancel buttresses have been renewed. On the south side of chancel is a plain semi-circular headed doorway with chamfered arch and jambs. The low side window on south is brought down to a lower level than those to the east of it. The south doorway (Fig. 70) is trefoil headed with two half-round mouldings with hollow between to the arch and jambs. It is of the same date as the arcade, of which there is no trace in the exterior wall, *viz.* circ. 1260. The west bellcote is new; there is only one bell.

The Church is built of the native stone. The dimensions (interior) are as follows:—

Nave, 43 ft. 4 in. by 20 ft. 9 in.

Chancel, 33 ft. 6 in. by 15 ft. 5 in.

On the chancel floor is a large ledger stone with the following inscription, somewhat difficult to translate, kindly copied out for me by the Vicar, the Rev. A. Hawkins:—

HENRICUS BECK

ECCLESIE HUIUS XXIV PLUS MINUS AN. RECTOR
EX CUJUS ANNUO MENSURÆ MEDIOCRIS PROVENTU
MENSURAM ULTRA MEDIOCRE AUXIT PATRIMONIUM
PROVIDE ELOCATIS NUMIS EMPTISQ LATIFUNDIJS.
QUORUM ALTERA SEMPER CÆLEBS FRATERNA
PARTE ALTERA SORORIAM DONAVIT DONUM
GRATIAM DIVINAM. PRORSUS GRATUITAM
QUAM VIVUS ALIJS PERSPICUE PRÆDICAUIT
SPERANDUM EST IPSUM SENSISSE MORIENTEM
MENS AUGUST DIE XXII ANO APART VIRGIN

MDCLXX ÆTAT LXXVIII.

The Octicentenary of Reading Abbey

The eight hundredth anniversary of the founding of the Reading Abbey is too important a landmark in history to pass unnoticed in our columns. The following article deals with a somewhat fresh aspect of the Abbey, namely, its connection with the reform of the Benedictine Order which originated at Cluny.

READING ABBEY AND CLUNY.

By JAMIESON B. HURRY, M.A., M.D.

THE year 1121 must for ever be an *annus mirabilis* in the history of Reading, for it witnessed, on June 18th, the foundation by King Henry Beauclerc of a famous Abbey which has filled an important rôle in the annals of England. William of Malmesbury, writing only a few years later, thus describes the historic occasion:

‘Henry I built this monastery between the rivers Kennet and Thames, in a spot calculated for the reception of almost all who might have occasion to travel to the more populous cities of England, where he placed monks