

From the *Transactions* of the
Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society

Proceedings at the Annual Spring Meeting at Dursley

1912, Vol. 35, 143-152

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Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society.

PROCEEDINGS

AT THE ANNUAL SPRING MEETING,

AT DURSLEY,

Wednesday, June 5th, 1912.

DURSLEY was the centre chosen for the Spring Meeting of the Society. The name of Dursley appears at first sight to be a combination of British and Saxon, *Dur* being one of the many Celtic appellations for water and *ley* old English for a meadow; but *ley* in various forms is common to both languages. The early town seems to have grown up near the Broadwell, called in older times Ewelme, like the pretty village in Berkshire which the Society visited two years ago from Oxford.

The earliest record we have of Dursley is in the Domesday Survey of 1086, where it is mentioned as part of the royal demesne of Berkeley. All that is stated in Blunt's *History of Dursley* about its earlier existence is purely imaginary. The so-called Castle of Dursley, of which so much has been written, and of which so little is known, appears to have been a castellated and moated manor house, built in the fourteenth century. Leland, in 1540, speaks of it as "sumtyme longinge to the Berkeleys, syns to the Wiks, sens fell to decay and is cleane taken downe." The names of "upper and lower castle fields" are a clue to its locality, but the actual site is unknown.

Dursley is mentioned in the Survey as a *berewic*, *i.e.* a corn village, it ranked as *villata* in the reign of Edward I, and became a borough during the reign of his son, the unfortunate second Edward. Leland speaks of it, in 1540, as "a praty clothinge Towne privilegid 9 yers sens with a market," but this was probably a second grant, as Dursley got its market from Edward IV in 1471. It was no doubt the manufacture of cloth that made it a place of importance. One of the earliest

clothiers of repute was called Tanner. Another, Edward Webb, of Flemish extraction, built a mansion, now called the Priory, why does not appear, in the reign of Henry VIII, and it still bears the initials E. W. and the date 1539.

On arriving at the station members went at once to the parish church, where they were received by the Rev. A. Hassall, Curate, on behalf of the Rector, who was away from home.

The earliest mention of a church at Dursley is in the thirteenth century. In the Assize Rolls of 5 Henry III (A.D. 1221), criminals are said to have taken sanctuary therein. See Maitland's *Pleas of the Crown for the County of Gloucester*. In 1291 Dursley was the seat of a rural deanery, a privilege or honour it still enjoys. See *Taxation of Pope Nicholas*. The Berkeleys appear to have ceased to be patrons of the church at the close of the thirteenth century, but it appears that they founded a chantry of *our ladye service*, for the chantry certificate of Edward VI admits of the right of their representative, Nicholas Wyke, to a share of its endowments. There was also a *Trinyte service* of which Tanner is said to have been the founder. Rudder says he founded a chantry in honour of St. James. In connection with these chantries there were chapels and altars at the east end of the north and south aisles. Blunt says that the patronage belonged to St. Peter's Abbey, Gloucester, and was exchanged in 1475 for the archdeacon's residence near Westgate Street, Gloucester, on condition that the archdeacon lived henceforth at Dursley. There was a good deal of friction between the abbot and the archdeacon in those early times! But Dursley does not seem to be mentioned in any list of churches in the patronage of the abbey. The archdeacons became *ex-officio* Rectors of Dursley, and this arrangement lasted from 1475 to 1865. Blunt says that during the first sixty-five years five out of eight Rectors of Dursley became bishops. Since the Reformation only Richard Hurd has been made a bishop, *i.e.* of Lichfield, 1774-81.

A valuable paper on the Church by the Rev. W. T. Alston was read by Canon Bartleet. The church, dedicated to St. James, consists of a nave, with western tower, south porch and north and south aisles, and a chancel. All that remains, so far as appears, of the thirteenth-century church, where the criminals took refuge, are the walls of the Tanner Chapel, or eastern portion of the south aisle, and the return of the westernmost arch of the south arcade. The two arcades and the walls of the north aisle were constructed in the fourteenth century, the only window surviving of this period being that near the east end of the north wall, above the little doorway.

The beautiful sedilia of this period were thought unworthy, perhaps,

of a place in the new chancel, and have been built into the wall of the north aisle just beyond the Decorated window.

In the fifteenth century Perpendicular windows were inserted in the nave instead of the earlier Edwardian windows, the older tower was taken down and rebuilt, the fine porch with its upper room or parvise was added, and the south aisle west of the Tanner Chapel was widened. The panelled roofs of the nave and aisles also belong to this period.

In the sixteenth century a few changes were made in Tanner's Chapel, as may be detected by an examination of the two easternmost piers of the south arcade. Two buttresses were built outside the south wall, and the battlement was reconstructed. The merchant's mark or badge of Tanner, a cross within a capital T, records the builder. Within the chapel is a *cadaver* or corpse, which once had a canopy over it. This is assigned to Tanner; perhaps above the present weird figure was an effigy of the Dursley merchant as he appeared in his life-time.

The fifteenth-century tower fell down in 1699, and was rebuilt a few years later. In 1867 the chancel was rebuilt with larger and loftier proportions. The roof of the nave was raised, and a clerestory of sixteen windows inserted. Vestries and an organ loft were added on the south side of the chancel. The usual restoration losses were sustained through the carelessness or ignorance of the architect; the classical altar-piece, the Jacobean altar rails, and the Georgian brass candelabra vanished. The gratitude, however, of the parishioners will long be felt to their loved Rector of that time, the late Canon Madan, for his care and improvement of the church. Amongst more recent additions are the reredos, painted by Westlake, a fine organ, stalls for the choir and clergy, a peal of bells with clock and chimes, and a fine brass eagle lectern.

The doorway, which formerly led to the rood-loft, remains in the north wall, but the staircase, screen, loft, and rood were all removed many years ago. The north doorway of the nave has been blocked up in order, as I was told, to do away with a right of way which the inhabitants of Dursley claimed through the church from one part of the town to another.

Canon Bartleet said in recent years the plain glass windows which had existed at the church for many years had gradually been replaced with stained glass. Another feature of the church is that it possesses a complete set of churchwardens' accounts from 1566 to the present day.

The members afterwards inspected the unique spring of water known as the "Broadwell," situate in the centre of the town, the site

of the old castle of the Berkeleys at Dursley, and the mediæval parsonage, now a cottage, in the rectory garden.

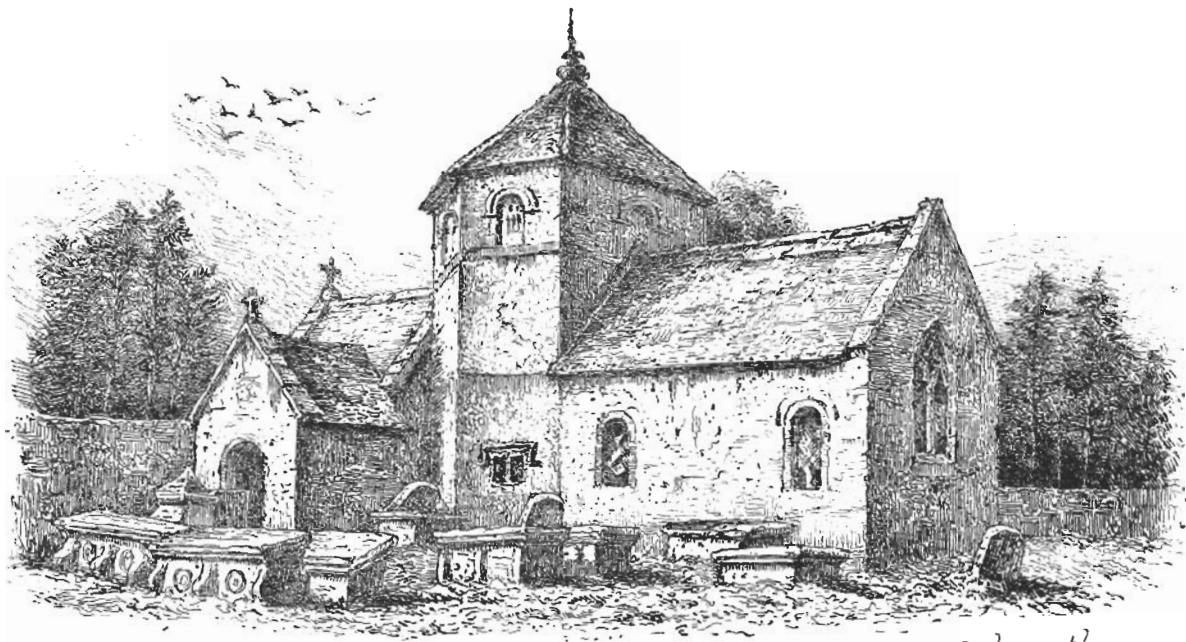
Luncheon was afterwards served at the Old Bell Hotel, when about sixty sat down. In the afternoon a short tour was made on the Cotswolds. An inspection was made of Ozleworth Church, where the party was shown round by the Rev. E. W. Place, Rector of the parish.

Ozleworth is mentioned in the Domesday Survey as a *berewic* belonging to Berkeley—"Half a hide in Osleuorde belongs to Berchelai." The Conqueror granted the manor to Roger de Berkeley, and he probably built the church early in the twelfth century. Before his death in 1130 he conferred the advowson on his new foundation, the Priory of Leonard Stanley. In 1146 Roger de Berkeley III transferred Ozleworth Church, together with Leonard Stanley Priory, to St. Peter's Abbey, Gloucester. Early in the thirteenth century the Manor of Ozleworth was sold by the Berkeleys of Dursley to the Rochford family, and they gave it to Kingswood Abbey. In 1272 Henry de Berkeley sold the Manor of Caldecote to Kingswood; and from that time till the Dissolution that monastery held all the land in Ozleworth. The advowson, however, remained in the possession of St. Peter's Abbey, Gloucester, till the Dissolution, when it was sold to Sir Thomas Rivet, and later on to Sir Gabriel Lowe.

In the eighteenth century the Clutterbucks became the patrons; and Mrs. Power Clutterbuck now holds the Manor and the advowson.

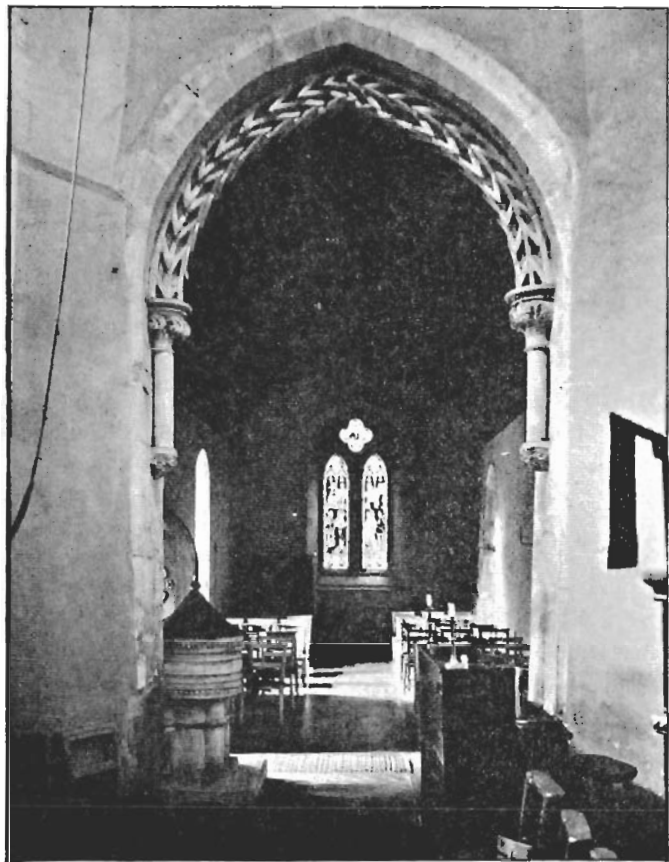
The Church of St. Nicholas, Ozleworth, has been described in our *Transactions*, vol. xi., p. 214, by Mr. Vincent Perkins, and in the *Proceedings of the Clifton Antiquarian Club*, by Dr. Harvey. The late Rector, the Rev. W. Gresley, wrote an account of the manor and church, based on the above paper, for the Diocesan Magazine, vol. 3, p. 37.

The sacred building consists of a central tower, a nave with south porch and a chancel, all without aisles. The tower is of great interest, being an irregular hexagon in form, and having the eastern side twelve feet long, whilst the western side is only about eight feet. Externally, it is divided into three stages by two string courses. The two lower stages are quite plain, with the exception of a geometrical window inserted in the south-west side of the second stage. There are also traces of narrow loops in the north-east and south-east sides of this stage. The uppermost stage has a two-light window in each of its sides, deeply recessed under a bold plain hood-mould. Internally, a good Norman string-course divides the lantern from the substructure, showing by its presence that the tower was always open to the roof.



OZLEWORTH CHURCH.

Ozleworth



OZLEWORTH, LOOKING WEST.

The Rector believes the tower to be of Saxon origin; but the architecture appears to have the usual characteristics of Norman work of the first quarter of the twelfth century. The arch in the western side, connecting the tower with the nave, is apparently more than half a century later. The beautiful moulding, which Mr. Petit tells us in the *Archæological Journal*, vol. iv., p. 107, "consists of a bold open work of cylinders forming angles with each other, but of different inclinations and indifferent planes," is really a combination of Norman chevrons or zigzags. Its general appearance has led some persons to speak of it as representing our Saviour's crown of thorns. The arch springs from capitals of an Early English character, which in their turn are supported by circular shafts, resting on brackets. The nave, which was lengthened in 1873, has a very pleasing south doorway of late Transitional Norman character. The rood-loft staircase, and the doorway which leads to it, remain.

The chancel walls are probably Norman, but the two-light east window is a fourteenth-century insertion.

The font is Early English.

Dr. Harvey contends, with satisfactory reasons, that the so-called tower was the original nave of the early twelfth-century church, and that the present nave was an after-thought. He thinks the same may be said of the tower of Swindon Church, near Cheltenham. If this surmise be correct, there was probably at first a low doorway in the west side of the hexagon nave, leading into a narthex, or vestibule.

When the present nave was built a much finer arch was constructed in the west side of the hexagon.

If the original builders had planned an arch as large as this, they would probably have made the west side equal in length to the east side. The pretty sketch of the church, which we are able to reproduce, was made by Mr. Petit for his *Architectural Notes in the Neighbourhood of Cheltenham*, and represents the church as it was in 1847, long before the nave was lengthened westward.

The party then drove on over a typical piece of Cotswold country to the gates of Owlpen New House, where they divided, some walking down the hill through beautiful scenery to the Old Manor House, while others went on to Uley Bury Tumulus and Camp.

Owlpen Manor House, the old home of the Daunt family, lies in a deep wooded valley close to the little parish church. The name of the village, *Uleypen*, signifies "the head of the water meadow." The corruption of the spelling must be very ancient, for a family who resided there soon after the Norman Conquest, and took their name from the place, adopted the canting armorial bearing of *sable, a chevron*

between three owls argent. Owls still appear on the gateways of the new mansion as the family cognizance of our kind hostess; and in the garden rockery of the old house four little owls of stone are piteously pleading to be restored to the finials from which they have been removed.

The many-gabled house consists of the most ancient part, in the middle, and two wings. The west wing, *i.e.* that on the left, has a series of oriel windows extending from the basement to the second floor; on a panel are the initials T.D., for Thomas Daunt, and the date 1616. This would appear to be the time at which this wing was rebuilt. On the second floor of this wing there is a small room without a fireplace which had the credit for being haunted, and which in consequence was kept locked up for many years—a sure method of producing ghosts of the ordinary four-footed kind, if they did not previously exist there. When it was opened it was said to have contained a large quantity of old papers. On the wall of the hall which occupies the ground floor of the middle part is an armorial shield bearing quarterly: 1st and 4th, Daunt, *Argent, a chevron sable between three Cornish choughs' heads erased proper*; 2nd and 3rd, Owlpen, as above. The same armorial bearings may be seen on the drawing-room mantelpiece at Prinknash, and on a Bridgman monument in Nymphsfield Church. See *Trans. B. & G. Arch. Soc.*, vol. vii., pp. 285 and 295. The east wing was apparently altered in the reign of Queen Anne, and the south front has large windows of that date. In the room on the ground floor are valuable engraved portraits of the time of George II, which look as though they had been there for 160 years.

The walls of the room above are hung with canvas, painted to represent tapestry. This is said to illustrate the life of Joseph: if so, it is very quaint to find some of the Biblical characters attired in long square-cut coats, breeches, stockings, and buckled shoes. The architecture, the fruit trees, and the hills in the background afford ample opportunities of antiquarian discussion.

Above the hall is shown the guest-chamber where Margaret, Queen of Henry VI, is said to have slept on the eve of the Battle of Tewkesbury. Even the bed and the chair which she used are still there! No doubt this tradition has arisen from the discovery of a letter, dated April 13th, 1471, and addressed by Prince Edward, her son, to John Daunt.

In the kitchen, still used by the custodian and his wife, is the ancient fireplace with a bracket from which the cooking vessels were suspended, and many polished steel spits. There is also a charcoal stove, such as is now rarely seen.



OWLPEN MANOR HOUSE.

The front garden, with its closely-cut yews, its dwarf wall and wooden railings, and also the walled garden in the rear with its steps leading up to the churchyard, were delightful, as belonging to a past age.

It has been stated that the dedication of the church is that of St. Cross. Owlpen was a chapelry of Newington Bagpath until about 1870, when it was united ecclesiastically to Uley. It is a separate civil parish levying its own rates.

The church, which was rebuilt, it would seem, in the seventeenth century, was restored in 1874, principally at the expense of the late Mr. T. A. Stoughton, the lord of the manor, who with Mrs. Trent Stoughton so hospitably received our Society in 1880.

The tower at the west end is now being rebuilt.

There are many memorials of the Daunts on the walls of the church. An ancient font, long misused as a trough, has lately been restored to the church.

Not much has been recorded of the de Olepennes that is of special interest. Their names appear as lords of Owlpen and Melksham Court in state documents of the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, in the *Gloucester Corporation Records* as patrons of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, and in the *History and Cartulary of St. Peter's Abbey, Gloucester*, as donors of a hide of land in Newington Bagpath in the middle of the twelfth century.

Early in the sixteenth century John Daunt married Margery, daughter and sole heiress of Robert Owlpen; and for the next three hundred years he and his descendants occupied the manor house. Late in the sixteenth century some members of the family settled in Ireland and became possessed of manors. From that time we find the Daunts at Tracton Abbey, Gortigrenane, as well as in Gloucestershire. In 1881 *Some Account of the Family of Daunt* was privately printed, giving many interesting details about the Irish branches of the family as well as the Daunts of Owlpen. In 1815 Thomas Anthony Stoughton, of County Kerry, married Mary, daughter and sole heiress of Thomas Daunt, of Owlpen, and he or his son removed from the old family mansion into a fine residence built hundreds of feet higher up, on the table-land of the Cotswolds, wisely preferring the keen air of the uplands to the more relaxing air of the narrow combe in which the Daunts had been content to live. The following is a brief summary of the lords of the manor of Owlpen from c. 1460 to the present time:—

Uley Bury is one of the finest of the many prehistoric British camps in Gloucestershire. Like the camps on Haresfield Beacon, it was also occupied by the Romans, and probably by other invaders. The hill on which the camp is situated is 823 feet above the sea level, and it slopes away on all sides, being entirely isolated from the neighbouring hills except at the northern corner, where a narrow isthmus connects it with Crawley Hill and the highway.

The camp occupies about 32 acres. It was defended by the escarpment and by two banks and ditches which ran all round it. The main entrance was at the north corner: there was another on the south-east. It is a proof of its occupation during the Roman occupation of Britain that Roman coins and pottery have been found in and near the camp—coins of Salonina, A.D. 265, and Victorinus, 265-7, etc., have been found within the ramparts. In 1872 a man digging on West Hill, near the footpath leading to Crawley, about $1\frac{1}{2}$ furlongs from the camp, found in a rubbish pit fifty Roman coins with Samian and commoner pottery. These coins were of the reigns of *Victorinus*, *Claudius Gothicus*, 268; *Tacitus*, 275; *Constantinus*, 337; and *Constantians*, 337. Some of these coins passed into the hands of Mr. W. P. Phillimore, and others belong to Canon Bazeley.

Uley Barrow, locally known as Hetty Peglar's Tump, lies between the highway from Uley to Frocester and the escarpment of the Cotswolds, above Coaley. The view from the barrow of the Severn Valley, Dean Forest, and the hills of Herefordshire, Monmouthshire, and Shropshire is magnificent. The barrow is about 120 feet in length, 85 feet in width, and 10 feet in height. Buried beneath the surface of the cairn is a dry wall, built in the shape of a heart, which encloses the sepulchral chambers. The entrance, formed by a large flat stone which rests on two upright stones set face to face, is about 25 feet from the east end, where the tump is higher and wider than elsewhere.

On passing through this entrance a gallery is seen running from east to west for about 22 feet. On either side of this gallery were two irregular hexagonal chambers, which contained human remains. The sides and roofs of the gallery and chambers are formed of horizontal and upright slabs of oolite.

The two chambers on the north side were discovered and destroyed by workmen digging for stones in 1820.

In the following year, and again in 1854, the barrow was carefully opened and examined in the presence of able antiquaries. Since the latter date it has remained unclosed, except by a small wooden door. It was evident in 1821 that the chambers had been previously searched by treasure hunters, and the skeletons displaced. Amongst the bones

were found a small vessel which might be Roman, and, if so, it must have been left there by some of these searchers many centuries after the original burials. There were also found the bones of wild boars, flint arrow-heads and pottery. Only two skulls remained intact, and these were of the long head and narrow forehead type.

On the highest part of the barrow above the roof of the chambers was found a skeleton, together with three coins described as being "of the time of the three sons of Constantine." I dare say they were of the well-known type of Constantine II, bearing on the reverse the legend, "Victoriae Caesarum Dominorum Augustorum quinque nostrorum," and struck in the later months A.D. 337, when the three sons and two nephews of Constantine the Great were reigning together. There was certainly some disturbance in this part of Britain at that time, for thousands of coins of the same date have been found buried at Uley Bury, Haresfield, Bishop's Wood near Ross, and elsewhere. This was probably the skeleton of some Roman soldier who was stationed at Uley Bury. A groat of Edward IV was also found in the barrow in 1821, showing that there were mediæval as well as Roman explorers. For further particulars of this interesting tumulus see *Archæological Journal*, vol. xi., p. 315; *Proceedings of Cotteswold Field Club*, vol. iii., p. 184; our *Transactions*, vol. v., p. 86; Blunt's *Dursley*, p. 227; Witts' *Archæological Handbook*, p. 88. And for details of the camp see *Archæologia*, vol. xix., p. 167; *Archæological Journal*, vol. xi., p. 328; *Proceedings of Cotteswold Field Club*, vol. vi., p. 213; Witts' *Archæological Handbook*, p. 50.

A short drive from Owlpen Manor House brought the party to Dursley Station, and there ended a most pleasant and well-arranged expedition, carried out in beautiful weather; the thanks of members being especially due to Mr. R. H. Penley, local Secretary, for his excellent arrangements, and to Canon Bazeley for the programme, which proved to be most helpful.