

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

**Proceedings at the Spring Meeting held at Slymbridge,
Melksham Court, Brackenbury Camp, and Horton, 9 May
1932**

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PROCEEDINGS
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SLYMBRIDGE

The manor of Slymbridge was a Berkeley possession from very early times, it being the inheritance of Roger Berkeley of Dursley, whose son Roger in the reign of Stephen gave it to Alice on her marriage with Maurice, son of Robert, son of Harding. The rectory is said to have been given to Magdalen College, Oxford, by William Berkeley, Earl of Nottingham (d. 1491) but if so there was also a later gift made by Maurice, Lord Berkeley in 19 Henry VII, 1503-4. (Smyth, *Hundred of Berkeley*, p. 324).

The historic facts of Slymbridge and its church are given in the *Notes, Historical and Architectural*, published in 1845, which were written by Rev. James Eccles Carter, minor canon of Bristol and one time curate of Slymbridge. The 'Notes' are illustrated from drawings made by Mr Francis Niblett and reproduced from wood-blocks with the remarkable sharpness of detail for which the publications of J. H. Parker, of Oxford, are valued. Mr Carter used the records at Berkeley Castle, and particularly those of John Smyth for the history of the manor, but it is worth while to consult the latter's *Hundred of Berkeley*, published

by our Society in 1883, where Smyth's often racy comments are printed in full (pp. 324-47).

Canon Bazeley's paper in *Transactions* (1881), VI, 324, supplements Mr Carter's history.

A grant by Alice of Berkeley, c. 1200, by which she gave all her land at Berkeley to Thomas her son is witnessed by Gilbert and William, *chaplains of Slymbridge* (Jeayes' *Catalogue of Muniments at Berkeley Castle*, no. 57). In 1270 Walter of Berton was given custody of the church, together with the custody of Simon of Berkeley, being under age, who was presented by Sir Maurice Berkeley. (*Giffard register*, w.H.S., II, 44). This Simon was instituted 2 October 1274, and immediately granted dispensation to be absent three years for study. (*Giffard*, p. 63). The church was also 'in custody' during the minority of Anselm of Guise, who in 1289 was but 13 years of age. (*Giffard*, pp. 365, 422). He appears in Ginsborough's register (w.H.S., p. 114) in 1305 as rector of Slymbridge and was then given permission to study within or without England. On the death of Anselm in 1307 James Berkeley was instituted (*Ginsborough*, p. 178) and held the rectory until 1 January 1319, when he resigned, and William of Heyham was admitted on 9 March following. (*Cobham register*, p. 231). He was followed by William of Beryntone, 17 December 1320. (*Cobham*, p. 235).

THE CHURCH

Mr W. H. KNOWLES, F.S.A., described the church, and said that on plan it comprises a chancel with a sacristy with a room over it on the north side, an aisled nave of four bays, a south porch and west tower and spire. The nave-arcades were erected at the very close of the twelfth century, and the chancel, the tower and spire in the early years of the 14th century, interesting because infrequent in Gloucestershire. The spire too is uncommon in the county, although there are

examples at Berkeley, Frampton on Severn, and Standish, all within easy distance. The details of the nave-arcade at Slymbridge are of outstanding merit and an exceptional example of a particularly interesting period, for which reason he proposed to make minute examination of its details, and afterwards to offer a few remarks on the overlapping or transitional period (that of the 12th and 13th centuries) so aptly illustrated in the work before them.*

The arcades exhibit a standard of mason-craft superior to that generally observed in country churches and are set-out with extreme accuracy, denoting that they were designed and completed on a pre-conceived plan prepared by a skilled master. The pillars are compound, of a square pier with attached triple-nibbed shafts to the cardinal points. (Fig. 1). They have excellently wrought bases (a water-holding type) which closely follow the plan of the shafts; and capitals variously carved (many unfinished) under a moulded octagonal abacus. They support arches (fig. 2) of two orders, within a roll label to the nave. The inner order has two keel-shaped rolls to the soffit, within a deep hollow on either face; the outer is chamfered only.

But an additional interest attaches to the features, in that they combine in their overlapping elements—the survival of old and the introduction of new forms—a contribution to the story of the evolution of architecture. In the arcade the robust features of the 12th century are absent. The arches are pointed and not round, but their mouldings are transitional and have not attained to the delicacy and refinement of the 13th century. The piers are pleasing, but of embryo form, of keel-shaped attached shafts which do not approach the beauty of the later clustered shafts. The capitals retain an abacus that is

* At Winstone church are features combining the pre-conquest tradition with Norman details—*Arch. Jour.* (1928) LXXXV. 176.

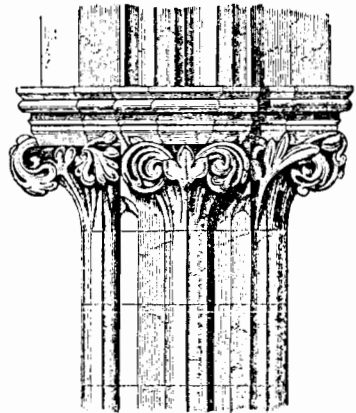
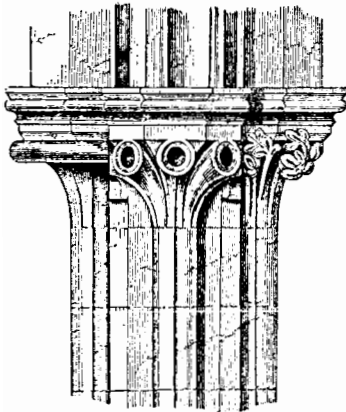
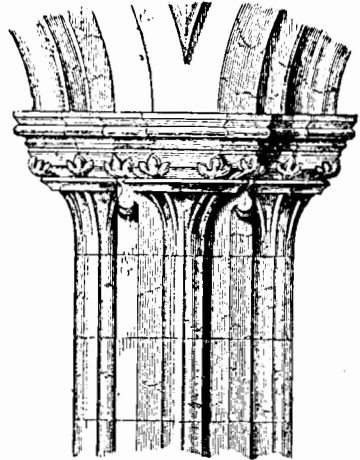
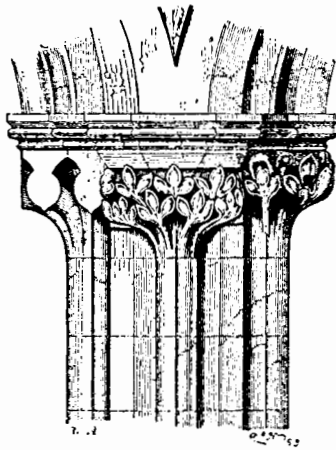


Fig. 1. Capitals in Slymbridge Church
(after Francis Niblett)

Norman in section, and some of them are carved with incurved scalloped or truncated cones. Others have crude foliage curled into knobs, or lobed and rising from stiff stalks ; a few are of delicate and refined treatment, and without necking mouldings. Similar capitals may be seen at Glastonbury and Worcester, and others (without the necking moulding) at St. Davids cathedral. The work was not accidental, but was that of an experienced man. Who was he ?

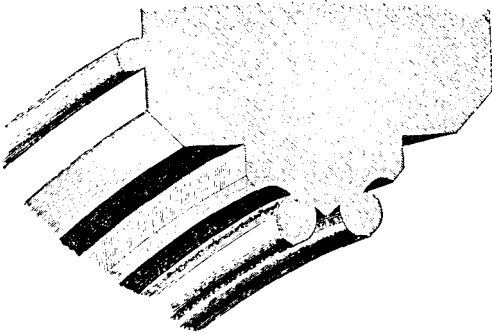


Fig. 2. Arch moulding, Slymbridge Church
(after Francis Niblett)

Much of the pleasure of our investigations is in observing the experiment ; the something that inspired the progressive stages in art. As bearing on the subject let us recall a few facts. During the century following the Conquest our architecture was based on an Anglo-Norman Romanesque, continuously influenced by the more advanced school of the Ile de France, especially in the south of England through Normandy. If then we are acquainted with dated buildings of the period, we are justified in assuming on examination and comparison that certain of our earliest English churches are inspired by one or other of the great Norman churches. Similarly, when,

after the middle of the 12th century, English architecture took on local characteristics such as distinguished Glastonbury and Wells, themselves possibly influenced by the work at Worcester, it is possible to suggest the source of inspiration or association with corresponding buildings.

In turn our parish churches were influenced or inspired by the architecture of the great monasteries in their vicinity. We know that master masons or architects were engaged on certain great churches because their names have occasionally come down to us. But the actual designers of our parish churches remain for the most part anonymous. The popular idea that the local craftsman designed the work as well as carried it out, can be true only of the poorest buildings. Those of our members who were at the Banbury meeting in 1930 may remember that the architect for the rebuilding of the chancel of Adderbury church, Richard Winchcombe, is recorded in the bursars' accounts of New College, Oxford, who were the patrons of Adderbury, and that the similarity of details at Bloxham and Broughton clearly demonstrate that these churches also secured Winchcombe's services.

Whence was the work before us derived? We have taken advantage of the opportunity afforded by our visit to Slymbridge to discuss the period of its erection. Now may I make a suggestion, namely that some of you should continue the investigation, noting the location of similar work to this and then endeavour to ascertain if a particular ecclesiastic or landowner can be associated with the places, remembering that the former was not always resident in one locality, and the latter may have had possessions widely apart, either of whom could be the patron of an architect controlling intelligent craftsmen.*

The chancel at Slymbridge cannot be regarded as contemporary with the nave inasmuch as the masonry of its

* Sir Harold Brakspear in his interesting paper 'A West country School of Masons' (*Archaeologia*, 1931, LXXXI, 1-18), deals with the question from another angle.

walls is unlike that of the nave, and that they are strengthened by buttresses which are elsewhere absent. Further, the doors and windows are too numerous to be considered as insertions. The chancel is in fact a rebuild. It is entered by a priest's door (with an earlier hood-moulding) and lighted by a three-light traceried window, and by five two-light windows, two in the north wall and three in the south. In the south wall is a piscina and triple sedilia with ogee tracery and a square head, which has suffered 'restoration'. The chancel arch is of two orders within a hood-mould with stops carved with female and ecclesiastical heads; the outer order is continued to the floor. The inner order springs from brackets whose carving is unfinished. Near the south jamb of the arch and in the north aisle are fragments of a piscina, and above the latter the rood-loft door. The vestry and parvise on the north side are of the date of the chancel, and are entered by a door of similar design to the priest's door exactly opposite to it.

The tower, with vaulted ceiling, is open to the nave where the pointed arch is moulded with three rolls, under a broad chamfered order dying into the jambs. On the exterior the tower is three stages in height, with a west door and large windows flanked and surmounted by niches, the centre one with crocketed shafts and shields without charges. The middle stage is without openings, and in the upper are tall two-light pointed traceried windows divided by a transom louvred above and solid below, and finished with an ornate pierced traceried parapet and pinnacle surmounted by a tall spire, slender but graceful in appearance with roll-mouldings to the angles and four small dormers. The porch, with parvise over, is entered by a pointed door, the ceiling of the porch is vaulted, and the room above is enclosed with solid arched timber.

In the 14th century the aisle roofs were raised and furnished with parapets and gargoyles. Supporting the roof timbers are a number of corbels of superior character

with carved heads of civilians and ecclesiastics. The leaden font is divided into compartments, and is embellished with cherubs and roses, the initials I.T. and W.S., and the date 1664. It is illustrated by Dr E. A. Fryer in *Transactions* XXXI, 280.

The weather moulding, indicating the pitch of the early roof, exists on the west gable. This was followed by a 15th century clearstory which was removed in 1814, and replaced by one of inferior character, again supplanted in 1845 by the present one. In 1880 the nave seating (part dated 1630) was removed, and some beautiful glass in the chancel destroyed.

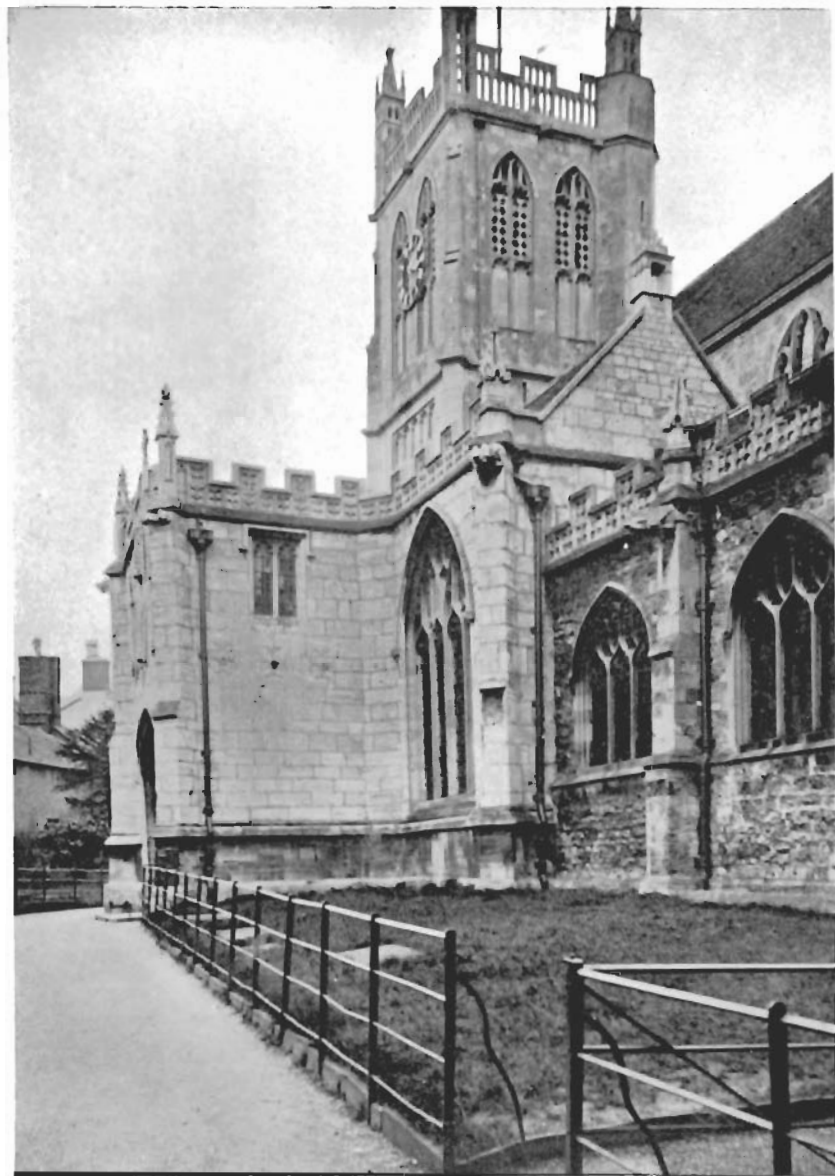
DURSLEY

Dursley has been an important town from early times and today is an industrial centre with a wide reputation.

In default of a really good history the best account of its historical features is the presidential address of Sir Henry Barkley on the occasion of the summer meeting of the Society at Dursley in 1886, in which he deals with the lords, the castle, the church and the borough. The address is printed in *Transactions* (1886-7), XI, 221-42, and in the same volume (pp. 191-204) is the report of the proceedings, which also gives much interesting information. Some notes at the next meeting in 1912 will be found in volume XXXV, 143-5.

THE CHURCH

Mr W. H. KNOWLES described the church, which he said does not, at first sight, appear attractive to the archaeologist but improves on acquaintance. The tall 15th century porch and aisle of agreeable proportions and fair detail are certainly pleasing and effective. The church has suffered more than is ordinarily the case by alteration and 'restoration'. The plan consists of a modern chancel, a nave with an arcade of five bays to the north and on the south a like number but irregularly distributed and of different dates, a south porch with parvise over and a west tower. (Plate 1).



DURSLEY CHURCH

There is literary evidence of the existence of a 13th century church, and if the chancel was always the width of the modern one then nave and chancel were continuous, and possibly without a structural division in the form of a chancel arch. In any case it is safe to regard the site of the division as that of the modern arch. It would appear that the first addition to the 13th century nave (co-extensive with the present) was, as at Beverston, Southrop and Eastleach, the introduction of a transeptal chapel at the east end of the north aisle. The arch is lower and wider than those of the other bays. It is of two chamfered orders, the jambs and arch being of the entire thickness of the wall through which it was cut, and with which the small ogee pointed door and three-light traceried window in the north wall are to be associated. The sedilia, with canopied triple-niches, was transferred to the chapel from the chancel in 1738. Next followed the north aisle with arcade of pointed arches of different character springing from octagonal piers. On the south side is an arcade of three narrow bays, part of an enlarged aisle with well-designed external features. A chapel (the Tanner's, on which there are notes by Sir John Maclean, *Transactions*, 1886-7, XI, 243, with illustrations) opening to the nave by two arches, and eastwards of it a space, now the vestry, in length corresponding to the transeptal chapel on the north side of the nave. The length of the enlarged aisle was determined by existing buildings to the east of it. The chapel may represent the width of the former aisle which it followed.

The aspect of the church was completely altered in the 15th century by the additions just recited. The porch with a room over it projects from the centre bay of the aisle, and is of pleasant proportions. Its pointed entrance has a panelled soffit surmounted by three canopied niches, and crowned with a panelled battlemented parapet. The aisle on either side is lighted by large four-light traceried windows. On the east gable is a sanctus bell.

On the interior the porch is vaulted. The corbels and the bosses at the intersection of the ribs have carved animals, grotesque heads and roses. The buttresses are satisfactorily managed and have huge gargoyles.

On the interior of the Tanner's chapel the roof was raised and the struts supporting it carried on reused corbels of earlier date. They are an interesting series, with a variety of female and ecclesiastical heads. The 15th century tower fell in 1699 and was rebuilt 1707-9. It is a fine example of this feature with a west door, has excellent windows to the upper stage, and open battlements and angle-turrets.

A petition to the King for a brief to assist in the cost of the work shows the small resources of the town at this time. It is dated 29 March 1699 and states :—

That on Satterday the seaventh day of Jannary last past the Tower and spire steeple of the parish Church of Dursley aforesaid with the Ring of Bells therein by casualty and great mischance fell downe and alsoe broke part of the west end of the said Church the Damage whereof and charge of rebuilding the said Tower and repairing the said Church is estimated by workmen to amount unto one Thousand Nynety Hundred Nynety ffive pounds at the least. And yo^r petition^{rs} shew unto yo^r Mat^{ie} that the said Toune and Parish is very small the whole yearly vallue of all the lands of the said Parish not exceeding six hundred pounds by Estimation and that greatly burthen'd with Numbers of Poore which takes up affourth at least of the yearly vallue of the said parish Whereby y^{re} Petit^{rs} are unable to bear the great charge aforesaid of rebuilding the said Tower and repairinge the Church without some Charitable assistance

Wherefore yo^r Petit^{rs} Humbly beseech y^r Mat^{ie} to grant to y^r Petit^{rs} your Gracious Letters patent to ask gather and receive the Charitable benevolence of yo^r Majestie's Loving subjects towards the great charge and Pious worke afores^d.

The chancel was rebuilt in 1866-7 and lengthened by 25 feet. The nave-roof and clerestory windows are of the same date.

After lunch at the Old Bell Hotel members visited

MELKSHAM COURT

by invitation of Mr R. H. B. Hotchkin. Melksham Court, Stinchcombe, is interesting for its long association with the Tyndale Family. It is a many gabled stone-tiled house, well placed in a sheltered combe, its winding steps and picturesque outbuildings forming a delightful group. Although similar to the manor houses of the Cotswolds, the architectural details are not unlike those of Somerset, an effect enhanced by the warmer colour of the stone. Until recently occupied as a farm-house, its present owner has restored it to a house of dignity. Melksham Court was the home of the Tyndale family for some 300 years.* They first appear in Stinchcombe in the last quarter of the 15th century: and soon after 1485, Richard Tyndale (*alias* Huchyns) was the copyhold tenant of Melksham Court. Another Richard Tyndale acquired the freehold in the time of Elizabeth, and probably built the present house, where his descendants remained till it was sold in 1768.

William Tyndale, the translator of the Bible, is said, on good authority, to have been the brother of Edward Tyndale, who appears as a trustee in connexion with the Melksham family. Both were probably brothers of the first Richard Tyndale. There were two other Williams in the family about this time, and one of them who lived at Nibley used to be identified with the Reformer, so that when a monument was erected to his memory in 1866, it was placed on the hill above North Nibley. But he was executed as a heretic in Flanders in 1536, whereas William Tyndale of Nibley was still living in 1543. The Reformer, after becoming an accomplished scholar at Oxford and Cambridge (1510-21), took orders, and was tutor to the children of Sir John Walshe at Little Sodbury Manor, but soon devoted himself to the task of making

* J. H. Cooke, 'The Tyndales in Gloucestershire', *Transactions* (1877-8), II, 29.

and publishing an English translation of the Bible, in which the rest of his life was spent. As is well known, the parts which he finished—the New Testament (1525) and the Pentateuch,—form the foundation of the Authorized Version.

BRACKENBURY CAMP

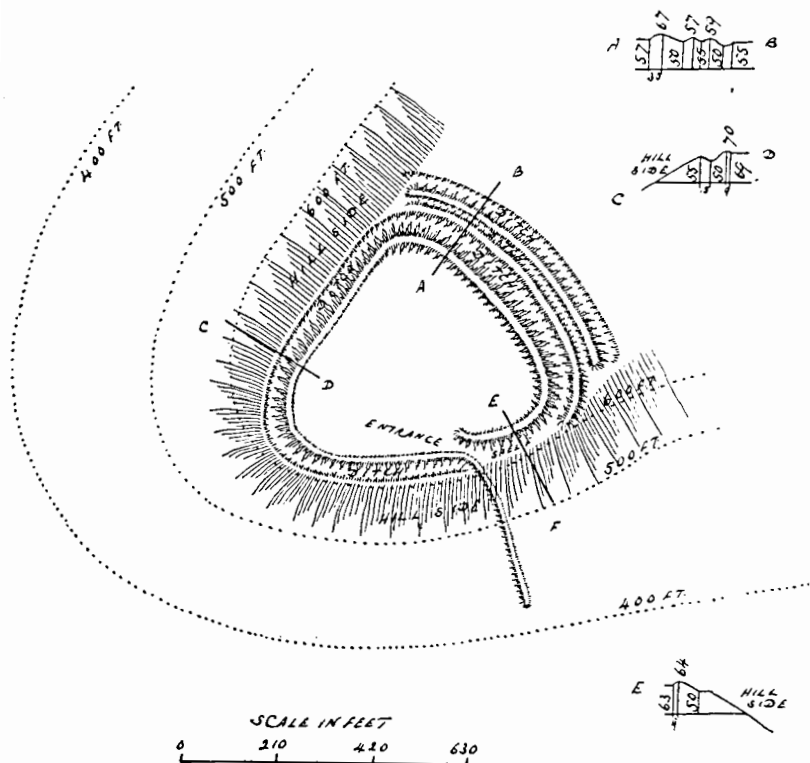
On leaving Melksham Court members walked to the Tyndale Monument on Nibley Knoll, where Mr G. McN. RUSHFORTH, F.S.A. had proposed to read some notes on the Tyndale Family and their association with Nibley but lack of time prevented and he subsequently communicated them at the Bristol meeting (see pp. 61-4, of the present volume). From the monument members went to Brackenbury Camp. An excellent opportunity was given for seeing the camp as recent cutting away the trees and undergrowth had disclosed its plan in a way which has not been possible for many years.

Taking advantage of the highest, or northeast, twin ridges of the Vallum Mr BADDELEY described Brackenbury as both a hill-top and promontory camp, commanding the spreading valley below its three steeply-sloping sides, while on the fourth side it presents extremely strong defences still well-preserved. Owing to its former name *Beckedsberie* (and with *Beckedescombe*,* lying next it towards Wotton), John Smyth had long ago imagined, though from hearsay, that the place might have figured in partisan-troubles over the tragic quarrel of Henry II and the famous archbishop, but, in addition to the clearly recognizable earlier character of this type of stronghold, to the modern eye, documentary evidence is sufficiently to hand showing us an early family of Becket as prominent tenants of the 12th century Berkeleys, both hereabouts and at Bitton, in the same hundred of Grumbald's Ash.

The camp cannot be regarded as having been a tribal-centre but rather as a chief outlying fort of such a one as

* Cf. *Select Charters*, 406.

most probably was neighbouring Uley-bury and, as such, it was no doubt entrusted only to especially experienced commanders. Although a bronze saw (now lost), and a



Plan of Brackenbury Camp, from a drawing by E. A. W. Downman (1915). The perpendicular scales are slightly exaggerated. The measurements of sections are in feet and start from an imaginary base 50 feet below the ditch

tanged dagger of bronze, were found here a couple of generations ago, the type of this camp, with traces of pit-dwellings, distinctly points to the Iron Age and it is, like Uley, considerably pre-Roman.

The nearest ancient roads are (1) the late-Roman Horseway (called Ridgeway, c. 1201) coming from Chavenage and travelling beneath Kingscote Park, and after reaching Ashelbarn (villa) passing as Whiteway down Bowcote to the Stancombe (villa) giving rise to a mile or so of parish-boundary ; (2) the old Bath road, *via* Boxwell, Badminton (villa), Sodbury camp, Doddington (villa), and Dyrham. If, therefore, one allows for natural wear and tear, or denudation, we may reasonably credit at least three feet more of height to these strong mounds of Brackenbury, and still more of depth to the silted ditches. Hence, the sheer strength of this Burgh was still greater than today appears, while in addition there were the stockades above the fighting terraces.

It is not too much to say that the recent exposure of this camp has very distinctly enriched the student of Gloucestershire archaeology.

Tea was taken at the Swan Hotel, Wotton under Edge and afterwards

HORTON COURT

was visited by the kind permission of the Hon. Mrs John Ward. Her very interesting residence is one of the few 12th century domestic buildings in England which has been continuously occupied. It was described by Mr St. Clair Baddeley, who has since enlarged the particulars given.

The Court has been the subject of an article by Miss Elizabeth Hodges in *English Homes* (1895), pp. 213-43, which was reprinted in the *Proceedings of the Clifton Antiquarian Club* (1897), III, 56-70. The house is also included in Parker's 'Medieval houses of Gloucestershire' (*Gent. Mag.* n.s. 3, IX, 336, 338), and was described in great detail by Mr Christopher Hussey in *Country Life*, 30 January 1932, to which journal we are indebted for the illustration of the Court. (Plate II, facing p. 16).

HORTON : THE ' GOLDEN PREBEND '

by St. Clair Baddeley

Whatsoever name this position bore in virtue of its early escarpment-camp (now known as ' The Castles '), it has taken its surviving one simply from the Saxon forest of Horwood (OE. Horu : marsh : (palustris) bog, mire) due to the tributaries of the Little Avon in this district. The wildering boggy woodland all around was part of the royal Forest of Kingswood that extended, more and more in fragments, between Wotton under Edge and Bristol, as the Norman days approached. As with its immediate neighbour Little Sodbury (Soppa's beorh, or stronghold), manor, church, and farm, nestle in the vale overlooked by the once formidable earthworks of an earlier age. The commencement of territorial monastic ownership, indeed, only comes with the late 10th century. King Edgar's charter of endowment to Pershore Abbey only dates from 972 : *dimidium mansi in loco qui dicitur Hortun* (the half of a farmhouse in a place called Horton), together with a grant of land and that valued concession to the monks of perpetual freedom in the choice of their abbot (Birch, *Cartularium*, no. 1282, III, p. 585). The land (10 hides in extent) was chiefly woodland needing drastic clearing, and probably (as Rev. Charles Taylor surmised) not a little of it lay beyond, though some was included in Hawkesbury.

We have no deed early enough to tell us how such a possession became lost to its monastic owners, within a bare century. Yet we venture to think this is not difficult to be guessed owing to the hands in which King William found it. In 1086 when he bestowed Great Rissington, Sapperton and Frampton (Mansel) upon a favourite, Robert de Toden (Thosney), a connexion of the late Earl William Fitz Osbern, and son of the Lord of Conches (near Evreux), these and Horton were taken from Ulf the Saxon owner. But here comes our enlightenment. Ulf was a grandson of Earl Godwin and Harold had been his father.

Hence, quite probably, he may have shared the spoils of the Nuns at Berkeley whom his uncles and their famous sire had both ruined and despoiled. It is not unfair to entertain the suspicion that this Pershore-land and Chase in the neighbourhood became a special prize for one of those ruffians, in the next Hundred of Grimboldstow. There, then, in its isolation, as a certain fact of possession we may leave this suggestion alone. Before turning to the devolution and development of the estate of Horton it will be convenient now briefly to notice the far more modern owners—that is—those upon whom it became bestowed after yet the far greater spoliation of church and monastic-land in 1540. For Horton, then a time-honoured prebend of the cathedral of Salisbury (like so much besides, in this and other counties), passed to the Seymours. Upon the execution of his uncle Thomas, of Sudeley, the husband of Queen Katharine Parr and destroyer of Winchcombe Abbey, Edward VI bestowed this estate upon Clement Paston of Norfolk, whose family mansion there had been burned. His descendants, and their heirs, possessed it and resided here until but a few generations ago : when they were succeeded by the family of the late Rev. Hubert Brooke, rector of Reading, and of Chipping Sodbury, as lord of the manor. He was followed by Rev. John Blackburne, who was rector here for 44 years (from 1848). The estate was thereafter purchased by the late Admiral Sir Frederick Richards, C.B., who lived here until almost twenty years ago, and for whom J. L. Pearson, architect of Truro, carried out both extensive repairs and improvements. This work was to them a labour of love, for Lady Richards was niece of Rev. Hubert Brooke and daughter of Fitz-Herbert Brooke, who had himself lived here. The Richards Family were followed for a few years (?) 1914-18 by Col. St. Maur of Stover Park (Devon), to whom is owing the massive stone fire-place in the hall and also much of the old panelling, brought from elsewhere. From them it passed



HORTON COURT

By permission of COUNTRY LIFE

to the Hon. Cyril and Mrs Dudley-Ward, the present possessors, whose taste and interest has happily added to, as well as revived, many of the charms of the place.

Let us now, therefore, return to the strange period in which, forfeited to the Conqueror and Crown, this estate entered upon a fresh manorial status, that of (as we are made familiar), becoming a prebend, or capitular property, enriching a great diocese in the county of Wiltshire. Hence, we shall see it as a manor diverted from the customary family-tenure and purposed to profit the later cathedral of Salisbury.

Before he died (in Aug. 1088), Robert de Todei, the Baron, had founded next his castle at Belvoir (co. Rutland) a priory, cell to St. Albans, to which land at Sapperton and later two parts of the tithes at Horton were appropriated. Besides sons, he left a daughter Agnes, wife of Hubert de Rye,¹ Constable of Norwich, formerly ambassador at the Confessor's court, by whom she was mother to Henry de Rye, while her sister Adeliza made an equally significant union with Roger Bigod (d. 1107) Dapifer to William Rufus and ancestor of the later Earls-Marshal.

Horton had been settled upon Agnes and Hubert, the Constable, and it thus went to Henry de Rye and (?) Avelina, mother of Hubert (2). It is probable, in passing, that a Norman chapel (possibly a Saxon) was already at Horton, though that could not have been the present Hall. But the latter possibly took its place, however, as a church,² in the second half of the 12th century. The acceptance of this view suggests complete revisal of former speculative descriptions of the outlay of the Norman Court here and its domestic structures.

It seems certain, merely, that the elder church here

¹ In 1096 he laid the first stone of the eastern church at Norwich.

² Mr Overbury, in our opinion, most correctly judged the present Hall to have been saved for its secular purpose, when the 14th century present church of St. James was built more conveniently a little to north of it.

after the deliberate completion of the present one, became appropriated by the prebendaries for their stately Hall : to which the successive later editions of the house were conveniently joined on, and thereafter modified to suit modern needs. The surviving barrel-roofing of timber is of the 15th century ; and it may have replaced original stone-vaulting. This was perhaps effected by Robert Neville, Bishop of Salisbury (1427-37), whose arms—*gu : on a saltire arg : two annulets interlaced*—appear above the north door. The blocked remains of an early window survive, and a splayed square light probably inserted when the former gallery was mangled by the Pastons in order to create an upper-storey chapel, that could communicate with the rest of the house by a small door behind the east wall³ (upper). The beautifully-preserved north door bespeaks its transitional Norman date (c. 1180-90). Near the south door is seen inserted in the stone platform the inscription *LAVS TIBI CHRISTE* with subscribed initials of Thomas Langton, Bishop of Salisbury (1483-85), and another, of w. b. (?) William Burton.

Henry de Rye died in 1158 (*Red Book Exch.* II, pref. p. ccix) leaving his son Hubert in wardship to Avelina whom we meet with in 1168 having to pay a serious fine for knighting her son without license (14 Henry II). About this period she probably made a gift to the new preceptory of the Black Knights of St. John at Quenington founded by the late Gilbert de Laci (d. 1163). It consisted of a Hay (haia) enclosure for game, later known as Friary Hay. It may be useful to recall that the prebendaries kept gallows and tumbrel at this manor of theirs, and that the neighbouring forest yielded its quota of outlaws and poachers.

When the fierce and evil reign of King John had drawn to its close and his son had been first crowned at Gloucester and had occupied its keep and castle, and moreover when this little Norman church had been but some 40

³ Discovered late 19th century.

years serving its purpose, an event supervened in the neighbouring county of Wilts fraught with especial significance to Horton and, indeed, with radical importance to the great diocese to which it had (as shown) come to belong: namely, as will presently be seen, the transference of the cathedral of Sarum the old (Sorbiodunum) to a totally new site near the confluence of the Avon, Nadder, and Wyley, a few miles distant from it.

Horton's connexion with Old Sarum, in truth, had steadily ripened during the previous century. First, there had been the confirmation by Queen Matilda (c. 1125)⁴ of the grant by Agnes and Hubert de Rye. There followed the re-confirming thereof by Henry II (c. 1158)⁵. Incidentally Bishop Jocelyn (De Bohun) in 1142 while confirming a grant to Salisbury of the church of All Cannings, mentions the life-interest of Robert de Beaufeu as prebendary both of that church and of Horton. Further, the charters (p. 86-95) clearly show that Richard le Poor (1215-17) and his successors (Bingham and William of York) also became prebendaries of Horton, which gave them special prerogatives in the Chapter of Old Sarum such as had been enjoyed formerly by Robert de Beaufeu⁶ of noble memory, and, in virtue of that prebend of Horton, in lieu of 'major pars altaris.'⁷ And so important was the bishop's own privilege in this prebendal stall that, later (c. 1219), any invasion of his prebendal rights became liable to a sentence of excommunication (*Charters*, p. 95). It may here be mentioned that in the 13th

⁴ Cf. Reg. Osmund Sarisb: or 'The Old Register'.

⁵ Cf. Reg. I, p. 208.

⁶ In the Treasurer's inventory (c. 1222) mention is made of Robert's precious cope while his name as a witness occurs in Registers, vol. 1, 241-244, 248 and vol. 2, 229, all pointing to his active importance in a then bygone day—sixty years back.

⁷ 'In quadam portione obventionum majoris altaris consistebat quod vel ratum sit et firmum presenti scripto sigillum nostrum duximus apponere'. By the Chancellor of Sarum: Hugh de Garherst, Ap. 11, 1219.

century the value of such a prebend varied from £20 downwards. The prebendary was bound to reside, serving the cathedral for three months every year. The prebend of Horton was confirmed to the bishop as being a canon of Sarum, instead of as pertaining to 'major pars altaris'.

There were many reasons that ultimately decided the church to effect the vast change to the See of Salisbury involved in the change of site, and besides the great inconvenience of the huge and awkward entrenchments of another age there, and the unreliability of the water-supplies, the clergy and inhabitants were seldom out of difficulties with one another. Yet, in all probability, the folk there fully believed they should be gladly rid of the authority and methodical administration of their clergy, as well as of the rowdy garrison of the stern old fort. Nothing could improve the cramped position of Old Sarum; The slate must be washed and episcopal life must be dedicated in future to a virgin site, a contingency that had no parallel in the church history here. The second Bishop Poore having at last joyfully obtained the Papal consent from Honorius III (Savelli) enthusiasm and devotion soon became concentrated on the gigantic enterprise and Elie de Dereham forthwith designed the first purely Early English cathedral unfettered by any of the usual restrictions of space, land-values, and older buildings. Possibly the only great church, even of that period of its rising, that formed a real and complete parallel was Richard Earl of Cornwall's Cistercian abbey at Hayles begun on a virgin pasture below the Cotteswold escarpment-slope near Winchcombe, with ample funds, with a first-rate travelled architect and backed by the enthusiastic devotion of an Order highly experienced in progressive monastic planning.

Funds were obtained from many different dioceses by the businesslike, or influential, prebendaries, while endless supplies of fine stone, Purbeck marble, and seasoned timber, were made over to the works by such helpers as Ela,

the Countess and William de Longespee, Earl of Salisbury, the living representatives of the original donors of Horton, the de Ryes, and many more, as it were that, with praise and thanksgiving, the veritable full inspiration of liberated Early English architecture should arise as by magic almost within sight of the mysterious, mighty and unique circle of the extinct ritual of Stonehenge.

Henceforward, therefore, the story of Horton forms a more or less continuous chronicle of successive prebendaries of varied merit and their individual recommendations for their appointment, and it is a natural corollary that not a few of them were men of unusual force or accomplishment and had occupied such responsible offices as King's Treasurer, or his Proctor, or had been Chancellors of the Diocese, that sometimes made them significant figures in current history.

In 1283 John Peckham, Archbishop of Canterbury, writes from Horton to the Proctor of Hereford citing Adam de Fileby, Archdeacon of Salop, for various misdoings revealed at the late visitation: together with certain others, to appear at the court at Canterbury 'and you will please to issue letters to that effect' (21 March, 'at Horton')⁸. Soon after this we find Ralph of York⁹ occupying Horton translated to the chancellorship of Salisbury cathedral (16 Kal. Sept. 1289). The vicars of Horton at this period were Henry of Derby following, in 1299, the long tenure by William of Tong, 1275-99, and presented¹⁰ by William Burnel (*Reg. Giffard*) who had lately been presented with the prebend of Horton by the bishop.

In 1292 the Taxation of Pope Nicholas tells us that Horton was rated at £5 for that undertaking, while the

⁸ *Regist. Epistolarum.*

⁹ Followed by one Henry de S. (*Cf. Giffard Reg. B.*).

¹⁰ 2 Ides of April. Perhaps it was following the demise of William of Abingdon who had been only just admitted.

portion of the prebend of Salisbury in tithes from advowson and manor amounted to £4 6s.

In the next, or 14th, century the prebend of Horton as a special ecclesiastical plum is found 1320-27 in the tenure of master Gilbert de Myddelton, succeeded upon Edward III's accession almost by Peter, 5th son of Maurice, Lord Berkeley, he being king's chaplain in the previous reign. This was considered to be distinctly irregular because he already held two canonries, at Exeter and Westbury, as well as the church of Bishopstone 'and is expecting a Canonry at Wells with promise of its prebend'. Further this precious clerk in holy orders was actually litigating for the prebend of All Cannings in St. Mary of Winchester. Peter held and hunted Horton and Horewood for twelve years and was buried at Horton church in 1341, it being probably new-built. His successor Stephen of Micheldever enjoyed the prebend for but a short while, dying on a mission to Avignon at the Papal Court of Clement VI in 1342.

Conveniently it happened that Richard de Thormerton (co. Glos.), canon, and a civil lawyer also, was there acting as the king's proctor. Edward's request to appoint him to the vacant prebend was acceded to and signed at Villeneuve les Avignons (9 Aug. 1344). The interval between the death of Stephen of Micheldever and the confirmation of Richard de Thormerton is accounted for by the intervening, but, to him, unwelcome, appointment of Gilbert de Myddelton, who appears to have been ousted by Peter de Berkeley in 1327. He, however, died soon after his re-appointment. Richard de Thormerton (*Feudal Aids*, 1349) held Horton for half-a-knights fee, paying the Aid of xx^s and he appears to have held it until 1362 when it passed to William of Longborough (co. Glos.) a canon lawyer, and upon his decease in 1364 to the king's treasurer Nicholas de Lyde, to whom the local Bradeston lady Agnes, had until her decease in 1369 to do fealty for her dower lands as lord of Horton.

It is obvious that this prebend remained, by consent of the See of Sarum, ear-marked for the king's advantage. No one is appointed to it if possible except by the king's favour and no doubt money flowed to Avignon for the successive confirmations. It was at this period we surmise that the old church by no doubt special permission was transformed into the prebendal hall of what became known as The Golden Prebend. The church-tower also received bells dedicated to SS. Katherine and Anne.

In 1401 Horton received for its lord Nicholas Daniel, chancellor of Wells and archdeacon of Winchester, who later was succeeded by a canon lawyer, John Norton, holding the archdeaconry of co. Berks.

By this date, and before it, it is certain that other dependent residences and the farm-vill existed at manorial Horton. We find Richard de St. Maur (1402) holding two messuages, and lands attached to these, as the heir of Ela, widow of Sir Thomas Bradeston and widow of Sir John de St. Loe.¹¹ That lady's daughter, Elizabeth, had married Sir Walter de la Pole, and we meet in early Henry VI (1435) the following evidence of their residing at Horton, no doubt at the Bradeston house there, messuage-court (*curia*), of which one third had belonged to Ela: and for her possession and its appurtenants she paid 6s 8d yearly to the chief lord of Horton (*i.e.* the prebendary-canon of Salisbury). Ela before her death had quit-claimed all her rights to Sir Walter and Elizabeth, Lady de la Pole, in the various premises and pastures.

Although the changes and expansion of the present court-house were no doubt wholesale during the Edwardian period, it underwent changes equally radical perhaps, under the first three Tudors 1485-1553, in days when the prebend was held by Thomas Langton, Bishop of Salisbury and Christopher Bainbridge, Archbishop of York: then

¹¹ She appears to have had property at Horton for dower, 1374 when marrying Bradeston. It included 60 acres, $\frac{1}{3}$ of a grange, $\frac{1}{3}$ of an ox house and $\frac{1}{3}$ of 'Incethous'. (I.P.M. Gloucs. pt. VI, p. 82-3.)

ambassador to the Pope (1509) and a cardinal (1511), who lies proudly in Rome under a very beautiful monumental effigy in the church of St. Thomas. But, especially was it glorified under the far-longer lordship of William Knight, D.C.L., later Bishop of Bath and Wells, who lived here for almost thirty years, and whose proto-notarial hat with three rows of augmenting tassels surmounts his shield of arms above the fire-place in the present dining-room—*per fess, or and gules in chief a half-rose conjoined to a half sun in base, or. From the rose a half-eagle, wingless sable.*

An interesting token of the latter's intimacy with Italian gardens and villas still survives in the open stone-loggia in the further garden and decorated with rather too crudely carven medallions of Julius Cæsar and other Roman worthies. To love anything in Henry VIIIth's reign and occupy a high position was usually ominous, or even fatal: but this was not so with William Knight. He had conducted very delicate business re 'the Divorce' and kept accumulating fresh honours, but he never lost the king's favour; and finally, relinquishing some of his crowded distinctions, at the Dissolution he retired from Horton, as Bishop of Bath and Wells, to that quiet moated palace in the Mendips, and after seven years peacefully breathed his last there, and was entombed in the cathedral nave; while Horton and all his improvements there were passing, but for a moment only, into the ill-fated hands of Jane Seymour's brother, Thomas Seymour, and thence from the king, her son, to Clement Paston and his many quiet descendants.

HORTON CHURCH

A short account of the church is printed in *Transactions* (1898), XXI, 16-17. On this occasion Mr Thomas Overbury, the meeting secretary, described it, and in the course of his remarks said that the plan comprises chancel with north chapel, nave of three bays, north aisle, western

tower, and south porch of two storeys placed opposite the centre bay of the nave. Externally the structure appears to be of one distinct build—15th century—but viewed inside the north arcade seems earlier and is generally assigned to the 14th century. It has cylindrical columns with moulded octagonal caps and pointed arches, the latter conspicuous in a building where all other arches are four centered. Constructionally it is difficult to understand how the church could have been rebuilt and these three arches left standing.

The porch has a good lierne vault with some beautifully carved bosses, including the Agnus Dei. Remains of the rood-loft staircase exist on the south side; the oak pulpit is of 17th century date; and some fragments of glass remain in the eastern window of the chancel. The tower is of five stages with a western entrance.