
EXCURSION TO DUNSTABLE.

Nearly twelve months ago the members of the St. Albans Architectural and Archæological Society had a very pleasant excursion in the neighbourhood of Sandridge and Wheathampstead. So greatly was this enjoyed, and so much was the information obtained with regard to the district visited, that the programme of another excursion, this time to Dunstable and Totternhoe, was warmly welcomed. Thursday in last week was the day chosen for the outing, but unfortunately the weather was unfavourable. St. Albans was left amidst a heavy shower, and the thick clouds which hung all around promised anything but a comfortable ramble on Dunstable Downs. The ranks having been reinforced at Luton by the arrival of a number of ladies and gentlemen from Wheathampstead and the neighbourhood, the party now mustered upwards of thirty archæologists. Having alighted at the Church-street Station at a little before eleven o'clock in the morning, the Priory Church was first made for. Here Major Benning and Mr. Saunders, the two churchwardens, were in attendance, and most courteously opened the building, and allowed the church registers to be inspected by the visitors. Assembling within the sacred edifice,

The Rev. Canon DAVYS read the following interesting paper on the Priory Church of St. Peter: The members of the society, and all who are with us to-day, will, I feel assured, deeply regret that our visit to this most interesting Priory Church should be made without the presence among us of its venerable and respected rector, who is, I regret to say, suffering from a serious illness, and I am certain that we shall all join in every expression of sympathy with him and his family at this time of distress and anxiety. We are assembled in a Priory Church, built and endowed by King Henry I. towards the latter end of his reign. The King died in 1135, and there is evidence that the foundation charter was drawn up soon after 1131. I must not trespass too much upon the documentary history of the Priory, which will presently be treated of by Mr. Lloyd, but I must give dates here and there, for it is a most fortunate thing that at Dunstable, as at St. Albans, very many parts of the building, which we see, are dated by written documents, which yet remain. The character of the Norman portions of this church is of the period I have just mentioned, and we have, therefore, at Dunstable Norman work to which we may, without hesitation, give the date commencing, let us say, at 1132; a most valuable point, when comparing it with other buildings of much the same character. But, if the work of building the whole Priory Church was commenced in 1132, or thereabouts, we must remember that the structure would be begun, as usual, at its eastern end, and that it would then take some time to complete the presbytery, the transept, and central tower, so that twenty years at least might well elapse before the work of the actual nave could be completed. It is not surprising that a town containing within it a great religious foundation should have sprung up under Royal patronage soon after the establishment of the Norman power in England, at Dunstable, for the place was an important centre of communication. The great Roman north-west road, the Watling-street, running from London to Chester, was intersected, nearly at right angles

here, by the Icknyld-street running from Salisbury to Bury St. Edmunds. These roads, though now doubtless much changed from their original appearance, still cross each other in the midst of the present town, and besides these two, the Fosse way also passed through Dunstable. The town itself is supposed to have been built at the junction of all these ways for the protection of travellers against highwaymen, and to have derived its name from a celebrated character in that fraternity, Thomas "Dun."* Thus the original church here as designed by the builders probably employed under Henry I., consisted of a choir with apsidal termination, transepts with apsidal chapels, and central tower, and the constructive nave, of which we see the remains. I say the "constructive" nave, for there can be little doubt but that the choir enclosure with its western stalls and screen, extended some bays into the constructive nave, as at St. Albans, Westminster, Norwich, and elsewhere. It would be very interesting by excavation to try to make out the original plan of those eastern parts of this noble church, which are now no longer to be seen above ground. With regard to the elevation of the nave, what we see now are the pier arches, with the triforium arches above, the Norman clerestory having disappeared. The lines of the original roofs of the aisles including the triforium can still be made out in the ringing room of the tower, and would indicate a clerestory, giving much greater height to the nave than it at present possesses. The south aisle is vaulted, a recent restoration from the authority provided by the original vaulting found in its two easternmost bays. When the work of the nave drew near completion, and the western wall was required to close it in, Norman work was being superseded by the more elaborate style, which is called, and I think well called, by Mr. Bloxam semi-Norman. We see some of this transitional work in some interesting arches, very much resembling those in the slype on the south of the south transept of St. Albans, in the existing west front here. The Dunstable west front of this period, judging from these remains, must have been remarkably rich of its kind, and we learn from the chronicle that it was flanked by two towers, for in the month of December, 1221, they both collapsed, the south tower falling upon the Prior's Hall, a great part of which it destroyed, and the north tower falling upon the church, and demolishing the parts where it fell. The Norman and Transitional church of Dunstable Priory then must have been a three-towered structure, of which the western towers and the front which they flanked must have been of very rich character; but the building must have been singularly unfortunate, either in its foundation or construction, for not only was there ruin at the west front in 1221, but it may be inferred from the Chronicle there had been occasion to renew the eastern parts of the church before 1213, since in that year mention is made of a great dedication of the *ecclesia* proper, or choir, which must have been the second on the former site. Early English builders soon after this

* According to the Rev. Isaac Taylor (*Words and Places*, 2nd Edit., 223, 233, 374), the name of this town is taken from the Celtic *dun*, a hill fortress, and the Anglo-Saxon *staple*, a market town.—[Editor's note.]

occurred must have set to work to repair the fearful damage at the west front of the church caused by the fall of the towers in 1221, and they conceived a design of singular beauty. It was my happiness, some little time before his lamented death, to be talking with Sir Gilbert Scott about Dunstable west front, when he took out his pencil, and sketched upon the back of a pamphlet, our only drawing paper at hand, what he had discovered to be its Early English design from investigations which he had made here. That design did not include large towers, but the new west front was flanked by turrets crowned by pinnacles. It was a front very much of the same character as Sir Edmund Beckett's new west front at St. Albans, or like Lincoln without the towers which now rise behind its Early English work. In this west front the great central door of the transition Norman design was retained, and side doors of extraordinary richness, and of pointed form, were arranged to lead into the aisles; of which that at the north side still remains, the walls being enriched with elegant flat diaper carving, much like that in the choir at Westminster Abbey. Above these doors are lines of arcading of extraordinary beauty, and a west window of two lancet lights, with a niche of great richness between them. Within this window is what we see, three noble lancet arches taking the lines of the windows and niches without, which are flanked by two openings with arches descending on either side. It is by no means easy now to trace the intended sky line of this front; it appears to have risen in stages, after the manner of steps, as the west front of Wells does, and I should conclude that there were windows, probably triplets or more, with arcading and niches above. But whatever the complete Early English design, this again was doomed to great obliteration in Early Perpendicular times. From an entry in the Chronicle, we find that the pinnacles of the west front were complete in 1289, and it is interesting to observe what the late Mr. Hartshorne used to call "the buckle" ornament, which he considered a certain mark of work done during the reign of Edward the First (who, I need not remind you, occupied the English throne from 1272 to 1307), used as the supporting corbels of the arches of the passage between the internal arches and the glass openings of the present west windows. The same ornament, I may mention, occurs in the neighbourhood, at nearly the same date, in the corbel table under the spire at Wheathampstead, which has been lately discovered in records at Lincoln to have been built in 1290. The Early English west front at Dunstable could not, therefore, have been finished till very late in that style; in fact, almost the richness of the Early Decorated seems to belong to it. The obliteration of so much that was beautiful seems to have happened when the idea struck Early Perpendicular builders that they should like towers again. They built one on the north side of the west front, walling up at the time the Norman arches of the western-most bay of the north aisle, which tower they made to receive the Early English turret as a staircase and buttress at the north-west angle. On the south side they did not make such progress, but they carried up a staircase turret, or probably remodelled an old one, on the south side of the central door. What with restorations and alterations, ancient and modern, the west front of Dunstable must always present a most interesting puzzle to architectural students. I should weary you at the very outset of our day's work if I went into the matter more at length now, also if I took you into the question of the central tower of the church (the remains of which we shall see presently), the design

and even position of which again appears to have been altered, when the Perpendicular work at the west end in the north aisle, and the triforium arches, then filled with window tracery, were in progress. One point, however, which I must for one moment refer to is the probable arrangement and apportionment of the principal parts of this church. Notices in the Chronicle speak of the great activity and generosity of the *parishioners* of Dunstable in repairing and rebuilding, notably in the western portions of the church, as well as of the work done by the monastic body in the eastern portions. Now it is well known that in not a few instances the western portions of large monastic churches, notably in the case of Wymondham in Norfolk and at Crowland and elsewhere, were in the hands of the parishioners of the parishes, and were in fact their parish churches under the usual control. I believe that the same thing goes on in the Collegiate Church at Lucerne in Switzerland at the present moment. Thus at the dissolution of the religious houses the portions of their churches reserved to the use of the parishioners were spared. It would apparently be so here. But the fact of this ancient arrangement is not only interesting but suggestive, where, in such cases as St. Albans, a parish church and a cathedral, though well divided by ancient screens, are covered by one roof.

Canon DAVYS said he regretted that Mr. Ridgway Lloyd was unable to be with them, in consequence of professional engagements of great importance. He had sent his paper on the Documentary History of the Church, which he (Canon Davys) would read to them.

Mr. RIDGWAY LLOYD's paper was as follows: The Priory of Dunstable was founded in honour of St. Peter, for Augustinian (or Austin), also called Black, Canons, towards the end of the reign of Henry I. These Canons, belonging to the class called "Regular," lived in common, having a cloister, refectory, and dormitory. The following information concerning the Priory (together with a few other matters) has been gleaned from the "Annales Prioratus de Dunstapliâ," edited for the Master of the Rolls by the Rev. H. R. Luard. 1207.—The altars of St. Mary, St. Frehemund,* St. Nicholas, and St. James were dedicated. 1208.—The almonry was begun in March, and finished before St. Luke's day (Oct. 18th). 1212.—Miracles ascribed to St. Frehemund, king and martyr. 1213.—On the feast of St. Luke the church was dedicated by Hugh II., Bishop of Lincoln, in the presence of earls and barons, abbots and priors, many nobles, and of common people without number. On this occasion 30 days' pardon was given to penitents making a true confession, who should come thither in 15 days; and there was also granted by the same Bishop 20 days' pardon, thenceforth for ever, to those who should come on the anniversary of the day of dedication, or within the octave. Relics of many saints obtained by the Prior from numerous friends, were by the Bishop deposited in the high altar. 1220.—On April 18th, the Bishop of Lismore dedicated the altar of Holy Cross in honour of All Angels, and the altar of the parish in honour of St. John Baptist. 1222.—In the month of June the

*NOTE.—The offerings at this altar would seem to have been somewhat liberal, for we read that in 1275 the canons took of the bent pennies of St. Freemund (or Frehemund) 100 shillings' weight, which they expended in oats. For examples of coin-bending see "Chronicon Angliæ," p. 17; Walsingham, "Historia Anglicana," I. 264; J. de Amundesham "Annales," I. 6, 54. It has been suggested that the practice of bending coins, during the Middle Ages, was the parent of the modern superstition concerning "lucky sixpences."

EXCURSION TO DUNSTABLE.

roof of the presbytery fell in, and it was repaired before the autumn of the same year. During a storm in the month of December, fell two towers in the west front of the church, one of which fell upon the Prior's Hall, and ruined a great part of it; the other struck the church, a portion of which it shattered. 1228.—A dispute arose between the Prior and ten of the townsmen in reference to offerings, resulting in the excommunication of these persons, who, nevertheless, persisted in entering the church, accompanied by the populace. In consequence of this, the convent and the parish priest ceased to celebrate solemn masses in the church from August 1st to the feast of St. Denys (October 9th); solemnly celebrating meanwhile in the Infirmary chapel. For this cause Hugh II., Bishop of Lincoln, came to Dunstable with a number of clergy and chaplains, and from the rood-loft in the church he solemnly excommunicated the aforesaid ten persons, unless they should make satisfaction before the feast of St. Martin (November 11th). 1228.—In this year was founded the chapel of St. Mary in the Canons' Cemetery. 1231.—In this year was dedicated the altar of St. Mary, by Hugh, Bishop of Ely, with the assistance of Thomas, Bishop of Norwich. 1247.—On the vigil of St. Lawrence's day (August 9th), the King (Henry III.) came to Dunstable with the Queen and their children, Edward and Margaret, to each of whom the Canons gave presents, namely, to the King a gilt cup, and to the Queen another; to Edward a golden buckle, and to Margaret another, at a cost of 22 marks. The King and Queen then offered eight pieces of silk, and the King gave 100 silver shillings for making a thurible and a pix. 1248.—In this year, on St. Simon and St. Jude's day (28th October), died Simon of Edelesbure, and was buried in the church of Dunstable before the cross. Of his substance was provided for the altar of the cross a silver chalice, a missal, a vestment, a lamp to burn continually, a light at two masses; namely, a wax taper from the Purification (Feb. 2nd), to the feast of All Saints (Nov. 1st), for which two candles were to be substituted from the feast of All Saints until Purification. It was also provided from his estate that a mass of Our Lady should there be perpetually sung, and a pittance granted for ever to the convent on every Monday which was not a feast day. And that on the day of his anniversary as much bread as could be made from five quarters (of wheat), together with a thousand herrings, should be bestowed on the poor for ever. 1250.—In the month of March was begun the inner gate within the Court of Dunstable, which was finished the same year. The refectory was roofed with ten loads of lead. 1251.—A new private dormitory was built. 1254.—Great stable built. 1258.—On Saturday in Easter week (March 30th) the great stable fell to the ground; it was repaired before the feast of St. Michael. 1272.—Simon of Weston, a blind cleric, was admitted into the almonry. 1273.—In this year the nave of Dunstable Church was restored at the cost of the parishioners; namely, from the altar at the cross as far as the west door towards the north (that is, the northern porch at the west end). The same year was erected a great dove-cot, near the tailors' workshops. 1275.—King Edward I. and his Queen were entertained here on St. Andrew's day (30th Nov.). 1276.—Dormitory mentioned. Great bells rung on the occasion of the murder by the King's falconers of the convent chaplain. 1277.—Two great bells given, and a third shortly after. 1282.—A new body to the bakehouse and a wall to the brew-house built. 1283.—A clock was made and placed over the rood-loft. 1288.—William le Breton, prior, buried in the Chapter-house. 1289.—The parishioners of Dun-

stable completed two pinnacles in the front of the church, towards the north, and they, in like manner, restored the stone carving in the north porch, which was ruinous throughout. 1290.—In December the body of Queen Eleanor was brought to Dunstable, and remained one night. In the middle of the Market-place a bier was set up, until such time as the Chancellor of the King, and other great men who were then present, had chosen a suitable spot, where, later on, was erected, at the King's cost, a cross of wonderful height; the Prior being present and sprinkling holy water. 1293.—The great cross in the church, and the figures of Mary and John, were newly painted, and many images of saints in the church were likewise renewed. 1295.—Two robbers escaped from the gaol, one of whom fled for sanctuary to the church; in consequence of this, the principal gaol was entirely rebuilt of stone and cement. 1302.—The old chapel of Blessed Mary, which was ruinous, and which had been built by Richard, 4th Prior of this church, was pulled down, and rebuilt from the foundations. 1349.—In the time of the plague, the parishioners of Dunstable made a bell, and called it Mary, and Prior Roger provided lead for roofing the bell-tower. Mr. Albert Hartshorne, in his most valuable "Notes on Dunstable Priory Church," printed in the Associated Architectural Societies' Reports and Papers for 1881, p. lxxv., mentions the refusal of Catherine of Arragon to come to Dunstable, followed by the sentence of divorce pronounced against her by Cranmer in 1533, in the Lady Chapel. The dissolution of the Priory took place thirty years later. In the foregoing notes I have made no comment upon the architectural questions which naturally would arise out of the extracts from the Annals; since this branch of the subject has been fully dealt with by my co-secretary, Canon Davys, in a paper which he has kindly read before the meeting, and of which these notes are intended to form the basis.

Dr. GRIFFITH then read some extracts from the church registers, which by the kind permission of the rector and churchwardens he was enabled to produce. In very early times, he said, few entries used to be made in the records and registers of monastic houses. They were extremely imperfect, but about the time of the Reformation an order was given that registers should be made in every parish. In the reign of Queen Elizabeth an Act was passed ordering that books of vellum should be provided in every church, and that entries in the old books, which were frequently made of paper, should be copied into these books. At Dunstable they had a vellum book begun in 1600, but entries were copied into it from the year 1558. This book appears to have been written by a man of the name of Willis, who was curate of the church. Before he had the book bound up he had written clearly in it some curious emblems—a font with its cover, a spade, and other tools used in burial. He called it "the terminus from which men start, and the end to which they go." The register also contains the following poetry which has been printed in Mr. Derbyshire's *History of Dunstable*.

By Houghton Regis, there, where Watlinge Streete
Is cross'd by Icknell way, once grew a wood
With bushes thick orespred; a covert meete
To harbour such as lay in waite for blood
There lurkte of ruffians bold an hideous rout
Whose captaine was one Dunne, of courage stoute.

No traveller almost coulde passe that way
But either he was wounded, rob'd, or kil'd
By that leude crewe, which there in secrete lay:
With murders, theftes, and rapes, their hands were fil'd,
What booties ere they tooke, ech had his share;
Thus yeere by yeere they liv'd without all care.

At last King Henrie, first king of that name,
Towards the northera partes in progresse rode;
And hearinge of those great abuses, came
Unto the thicket where the theeves abode;
Who on the comminge of the kinge did flie
Each to his house, or to his friend did hie.

Wherefore the kinge, such mischiefes to prevent,
The wood cut down; the way all open layde
That all trew men, which that way rode or wente,
Of sodaine sallyes might be lesse affrayde;
And might descrie their danger ere it came,
And so by wise foresighte escape the same.

This done, he rear'd a poull both houghe and longhe
In that roade-highway, where so manie passe;
And in the poul let drive a staple stronge,
Whereto the kinge's own ringe appendant was;
And caus'd it to be publist that this thinge,
Was done to see what thiefe durst steale the ringe.

Yet for all that, the ringe, was stol'n away,
Which, when it came to learned Beauclark's care,
By skylful arte to finde, he did assay
Who was the theife, and first, within what shyre
His dwellinge was, which this bould act had done,
And found it to be Bedfordshire, anon.

Next in what hundred off that shyre might dwell
This vent'rous wighte. Kinge Henrie caste to find;
And upon Mansfield Hundred, straight it fell,
Which beinge founde, he after bent his minde
To learn the parish, and by like skyl tride
That he in Houghton Regis did abide.

Lastlie, the parish knowne he further soughte,
To finl the verie house where he remaynde;
And by the preceptes of his arte he thoughte;
That by one widow Dun he was ratayned;
The widowe's house was searched, so wil'd the kinge,
And with her sonne was founde, staple and ringe.

Thus Beauclarke by his arte, founde out the thiefe;
A lustie tall younge man of courage good,
Which of the other ruffians was the Chiefe;
That closlie lurked in that waylesse wood.
Then Dunne, this captain thiefe, the widowe's sonne,
Was hanged for the feates which he had donne.

And where the thicket stooode, the kinge did build
A market towne for saulfetie of all those
Which travail'd that way, that it might them yielde
A sure refuge from all thievishe foes;
And there king Henrie, of his great bountie,
Founded a church, a schole, and priorie.

And for that Dunne, before the woode was downe,
Had there his haunte, and thence did steale away
The staple and the ring, thereof the towne
Is called Dunstaple untill this day;
Also in armes, that corporation,
The staple and the ringe give thereupon.

He wished every parish in the country had taken as great care of the records as Dunstable had. The first entry referred to was that of Gervase Markham, buried xxiii. September, 1561, the last prior of the Abbey, whose burial was recorded. There were some facts about him which they might like to know. He had not yet been able to find the burial of any other prior, but they might be there. Gervase Markham was prior at the time of the divorce or annulling the form of marriage between Henry VIII. and Catherine of Arragon. Queen Catherine was staying at Ampthill, about 12 miles off. The King had been there a few days before. Cranmer, who was supported by the Bishop of Lincoln, and others came to Dunstable and cited Queen Catherine to appear, on May 9th, 1553, at the Abbey. The rev. doctor then read extracts of letters written by contemporaries bearing on the subject. The Queen refused to attend and appeared by proxy. On the 23rd May, 1553, Cranmer wrote to the King, "I have given sentence in your great and weighty case," and she was pronounced no longer the wife of Henry VIII. At this court Gervase was present and, there was every

reason to believe, consented. Another entry in the book was that of the birth of Elkanah Settle, the poet, born February 1st, 1648, who by some political partizans was preferred to Dryden himself. He was of different politics from Dryden, and used to parody the writings of that poet (see Johnson's *Life of Dryden*). Dr. Griffith also mentioned that the first play in England is said to have been performed in Dunstable by Geoffrey of Gorham (see Warton's *History of Poetry*), and explained how the school-master at Dunstable became connected with St. Albans and eventually abbot of that Monastery. After having referred to other entries, the speaker led the way to the place where the "Fayrey Pall" was placed. This is a beautifully worked cloth which was formerly used as a pall. It was lost to the town for 150 years. A letter was received from a gentleman at a distance saying that he had received as security for some money a very remarkable cloth, which he had no doubt belonged to the town of Dunstable. If they liked to pay the money he would send it. This was not done, and some time after the gentleman, saying that he had satisfied himself that the cloth belonged to Dunstable, restored it to the town. It had the name of "Fayrey" upon it, and so it was known as the "Fayrey Pall."

A general meeting of the members of the Society was afterwards held in the vestry, where the following gentlemen were elected members:—Mr. Robert Burra, of Frogmore, and Mr. F. W. Silvester, of Hedges.

Leaving the church, the party proceeded to the Priory, where Mr. Cookson very kindly showed them "the vaulted chamber," the only part now remaining of the original structure. Some ancient wax candles found behind the wainscoting were inspected, and then the party proceeded down the High-street to the Sugar Loaf Hotel, where carriages were provided to convey them to the Downs. Jupiter Pluvius now proved more kind, and for an hour or so little or no rain fell. Having driven to the foot of the knolls, the party walked up to the ancient earthworks.

Dr. GRIFFITH said that there were two old Roman ways which met near this spot—he meant the Ichnield-street and the Watling-street. The latter street ran from Anglesea right through the country into Kent, and the other road ran from Totness, in Devon, to Bury St. Edmunds. Along both these roads marks of the Roman occupation were constantly found. The British ways were marked by a series of parallel tracts, similar to what they saw lower down the hill. No one could tell what the five knolls on which they were standing were. They had been examined, and marks of sepulture were noticed. It was a tradition in the neighbourhood that five kings with golden boots were buried beneath them—(laughter). There was nothing to make one think they were used for religious purposes. The earliest monuments in the world were mounds of this kind, and they existed in nearly every country. They would notice that one of the five was what was called "a long barrow," being of a different shape from the rest.

The carriages were then rejoined, and after a short drive Maiden Bower was reached. Before proceeding to inspect it, however, lunch was partaken of in the green lane hard by, which a farmer present informed the party was the old drovers' road, by which the Welsh cattle were brought up. After a picnic luncheon, Dr. GRIFFITH proposed the health of the farmers who were so good as to allow the party to cross their land.

Major BENNING also proposed "Success to the St.

EXCURSION TO DUNSTABLE.

Albans Archæological and Architectural Society."

At Maiden Bower* Dr. GRIFFITH pointed out that the place was probably an ancient British stronghold, and that flint implements were frequently turned up. They would not suppose a maiden ever made this her bower. She would like a smaller snugger place, and even if she had a friend with her she would not occupy that place—(laughter). The word "Maid" was most likely an old Celtic word, which meant "great," and occurs in names of ancient fortresses, as Maiden Castle, Maiden Bower, Maiden Bradley, Maiden Stone.

The quarries at Totternhoe were next visited, and on assembling in a shed to take refuge from the rain, which was again falling pitilessly,

Dr. GRIFFITH proposed that three meetings be held in the course of the winter of a social nature, to talk over any matters that might arise. He wanted someone to be appointed to take charge of these meetings.

Canon DAVYS thought if Dr. Griffith would be so kind as to undertake that they would be very grateful—(hear, hear). This Dr. Griffith consented to do, and the proposal was carried with acclamation.

Mr. A. F. GRIFFITH then gave a short lecture with regard to the section of Totternhoe stone in the quarry. Fossiliferous rocks were, he said, divided into three great groups—the Palæozoic, the Mesozoic, and the Kainozoic. The chalk which was all around them was at the top of the Mesozoic series. Just below the chalk was a bed of clay, called the Gault. Near the base of the chalk it became more and more clayey, and the last 100 feet or so was called the chalk marl. At the top of the chalk marl occurred a thin band of sandy chalk, which was about one-fifth sand and about one-fifteenth clay, the rest being carbonate of lime. It occurred in two thick layers with a thin band of very clayey material in between. That sandy form of chalk was used as a building stone, and was employed in St. Albans Abbey and many churches in the neighbourhood. It answered fairly well as inside work. At Dunstable it had been used for outer work, but there the sharpness of the decorative work had gone owing to the stone weathering. In olden times they quarried the stone, making galleries, and so getting out the stone which had not been exposed to the atmosphere at all. The bed had been traced a considerable number of miles, through Oxfordshire to Hitchin.

The party then left the friendly shelter of the shed, and crossed Totternhoe Knolls to the village. Totternhoe "Castle" was viewed, but the rain prevented anything beyond the mere pointing out the old British work, the well, and the Roman Camp there. Walking was found to be very difficult on the hills, the slippery nature of the sodden chalky soil affording very poor foothold, and not a few tumbles occurred in the course of the walk. However, the high road was reached at length, and here the carriages were in waiting to convey the party past the "Castle Yard" to the church. There the Vicar threw open the edifice for inspection.

The Rev. H. FOWLER read the following paper:—The church of St. Giles, Totternhoe, although not remarkably attractive architecturally, has a special interest for our St. Albans Archæological Society, because the

*"Maiden Bower, or the Maidning Bourne, seems to be a corruption of the Celto-Saxon name Magedburg"—(Rev. Isaac Taylor's *Words and Places*, 2nd. Edit., page 233). It may, however, be derived from the Celtic *Magh-dun*, the fort in the plain, (as suggested by Mr. James Wyatt in a paper read before the Bedfordshire Architectural Society, on June 29th, 1871), with the addition of the old English *burgh* or *byrig*, an earth-work, which has become corrupted into "Bower."—See Rev. I. Taylor's *Words and Places*, p. 486.—[Editor's Note.]

parish contains the quarries of *clunch*, which was largely used as building material by the Abbots of St. Albans. We know that Abbot Trumpington employed the Totternhoe stone in his Early English work of the nave, externally as well as internally. Abbot Michael de Mentmore acquired a quarry at Egelmont, which was probably the name of some locality in this parish, because his work is constructed of Totternhoe *clunch*; and Abbot John de Whethamstede purchased two quarries *apud Totharno*, for his building purposes (Regist. I. 464). We might call this the church of the quarries, for quarrying must have been the chief occupation of the inhabitants in the Middle Ages. The name itself is much more ancient than the quarries, if it is formed, as we are told by Mr. James Wyatt, from the Celtic word *Teotan*—burning, and the Saxon *hou*—a hill, and signifies "The Beacon-hill." The following particulars respecting the history of the church and parish have been gleaned chiefly from the Dunstable annals. The works on the county antiquities afford little information, for there appears to be no history of Bedfordshire corresponding to the compilations of Chauncy and Clutterbuck for our own county. From early times Totternhoe appears to have been closely connected with the neighbouring parish of Eaton Bray, the two manors having been possessed by the same owners up to the time of the Reformation. The chief residence of those owners was the castle of Eaton Bray, which, Lysons informs us, was built in 1221. It is also said to have been a grievance to the people of Dunstable. The authority is not given, but the existence of the castle is a well-known fact. Lysons states that the church of Totternhoe was given to the Priory of Dunstable by Walter de Wahul, of Shortgrave (*Scortegrave*), in Hertfordshire, was possessed by William de Cantelupe (steward to King John), with whom Prior Richard de Morins made a composition. We gather, therefore, that there was a church here at the beginning of the Early English period. We cannot infer that it was in the Early English style; it might have been a Norman church existing from an early date. The only remaining vestige of an earlier fabric is, I believe, a sepulchral slab sculptured with a floriated cross of Early English character, at the west end of the north aisle. The patronage of the church probably continued in the possession of the Priors of Dunstable up to the period of the dissolution of the Priory (A.D. 1539). We have an evidence that it was held by them at a late period, probably in Henry VII.'s reign, in a small brass at the eastern end of the north aisle, inscribed—*Hic jacet frater Thomas Greve, quondam presbyter istius loci*:—"Here lies brother Thomas Greve, formerly priest of this place." The term "frater" indicates that he belonged to a Monastic order, and there can be little doubt that he was one of the Austin Canons of Dunstable. We find the word "frater" applied to the Canons in the Dunstable Chronicle. "Frater" Stephanus, who held the cure of the church of Flitwick, is mentioned as a canon (*Canonicus*). A vicar was first constituted here under Prior Richard de Morins, in October, 1220, by an ordinance of Hugh de Wells, Bishop of Lincoln (the builder of a portion of the nave of Lincoln Cathedral), in whose diocese the church was situated. Five vicarages were established at the same time in the churches belonging to the Priory. The value of the whole church of Totternhoe is given as 10 marks, of the vicarage as five marks, consisting of the whole *altaragium*—altar offerings—a rent of 10d. from the

land of Richard Godwer, half the tithes of hay of the whole parish, and a parsonage-house (*mansum presbyteri*). Part of the vicar's maintenance, then, appears to have been derived from the offertories. The "tithes of hay" probably indicates that the land of the parish was nearly all in pasture, as we should expect in a parish on the downs. We have here no mention of the quarries, nor in any part of the Chronicle. The annals make no further allusion to the vicars of Totternhoe, and we can only learn the names of one or two of them from the memorial brasses existing in the church. A well-executed brass in the chancel commemorates John Warwekhyll, vicar, who died in 1524; he holds in his hands a chalice and the host. The inscription of Thomas Greve may be that of a vicar or a chantry priest. He was buried before an altar in a chapel, or chantry, in the south aisle; for the *piscina* exists in the wall, now concealed by the wainscot, as the vicar has pointed out. The altar may have been dedicated to St. Mary. There is one interesting allusion in the chronicle to the mediæval church ornaments and furniture. In the year 1293 (Edward the First's reign) there appears to have been a dispute between the parishioners and the rector—presumably the Prior of Dunstable—as to whose duty it was to provide in the church, *banners* (*Vexilla*), a *cross*, *wax tapers*, and a *missal*. The question was referred to the Archdeacon of Bedford, Master Roger de Rothewelle, and he decided that the parishioners were responsible for these things, the rector being exonerated. (Dunstable Chronicle, page 377). The *Vexilla* mentioned were what are termed in old church inventories "Rogation Banners," for use in religious processions, especially in the Rogation days; no doubt one of these bore an effigy, or emblem, of St. Giles, the patron saint. The vicar informs us that there is a locality in the parish called "Litany." This would be the spot where the Litany or prayers for a blessing on the fruits of the earth would be offered by the vicar and parishioners in the rogation perambulations around the parish boundaries. A pleasing use of banners as a wall decoration is exemplified in the present building. With regard to the manor and lands in the parish, the information is somewhat less scanty. It is noted in the "Domesday Survey" that in the time of King Edward the Confessor the manor of Totternhoe ("Totenehou") was held by the Saxon Thane Levenot; and after the conquest it was given to Walter of Flanders. Before 1209 it had passed to William de Cantilupe, and this powerful Norman family, who were Barons of Burgavenny (*vid.* Lyson's Bedfordshire), must have exercised considerable influence on the fortunes of the parish during the greater part of a century. Probably the vicar of Totternhoe was a frequent guest at the Castle of Eaton Bray as long as the Lord of the Manor was on good terms with the Prior of Dunstable; this, however, was not always the case. Several distinguished members of the Cantilupe family are mentioned in the chronicle. In 1237 Walter de Cantilupe (son of William named above) was enthroned Bishop of Worcester (page 146). In 1240 Simon de Cantilupe, Archdeacon of Norwich, was made Chancellor of England. In 1254 William de Cantilupe the third, Lord of this Manor, was buried with great pomp at Studley in Warwickshire, in the presence of many abbots and nobles—among them Simon de Montfort (page 192). Under the year 1287 there is a record of the miraculous hair-shirt (*cilicium*) of Saint Thomas de Cantilupe, in Hereford Cathedral. (page 339). Other persons held lands in Totternhoe during this period, for in 1234 Thomas of "Thoterho"

bequeathed his land here to the Priory; and, in the same year, Prior Richard purchased half a virgate of land here from Thomas Cnot (page 141). In 1257 John de Heltesdone mortgaged his estate in Totternhoe, lying "*sub duna et super dunam*." If the word *duna* is rightly explained to be the Celtic *dun* or *din*, signifying a hill-fortress, this is the only allusion in the document to the ancient earthworks, now called Totternhoe Castle (which we have just been inspecting); the word, however, may be the Saxon *dun* or *don*, meaning simply a hill. Lysons informs us that the lordship of Totternhoe, together with Eaton Bray, passed by an heiress in 1273 to the family of Zouche; and this agrees with the Chronicle, which records that George de Cantilupe died about the Feast of All Saints, 1273, and one-half of his lands descended to Eudo la Suche, who had married the eldest sister of George de Cantilupe (p. 256). The chronicler tells us that Eudo was at first on good terms with the Prior, but after a time it was unfortunately very much the reverse; and doubtless this was not for the comfort of the Vicar of Totternhoe. In 1274 a contention arose between the Lord of Eaton Bray and Prior Simon about the right to try a man accused of felony. At first Eudo's bailiff gave him up to the Prior, but Eudo sent an armed band who broke into the Prior's prison and carried off the felon. They also demolished the Prior's gallows at Edesuthe (p. 261). A long law-suit ensued, and a compromise was not arranged till the time of the next Prior, William (p. 262). Amongst the various complaints made by the chronicler against the family of Zouche, we find one relating directly to Totternhoe. In 1289 the Lady Milesent de Montalt caused a herd of the Prior's pigs, which were trespassing on her manor of Thoterho, to be chased to a place called Herthendene, the homestead of William Inge, and pounded there. This William Inge is mentioned above as the bailiff of Eudo de la Suche, and it seems probable that Lady Milesent was the wife of this Eudo, having been married previously to Roger de Montalt. The offended Prior prosecuted the lady in the Court of King's Bench, and at length obtained a verdict of 2s. damages (p. 343). In a second suit with the Prior the same lady is said to have produced, in vindication of her claims, the Domesday Record (*Recordum del Domesday*). She was, however, again defeated by the litigious Prior and incurred a fine of 40s. (p. 352). The Chronicle unfortunately (with the exception of a few scattered entries) comes to an end in the year 1297, more than a century before the present church was erected, and I have been able to collect but scanty information from other sources. The family of Zouche appears to have continued in possession of the manor till the end of Henry VII.'s reign. It is proved by a document (Esch. II., Edward IV.) that Katherine, widow of William Lord Zouch, died, seized of it in 1471. About this date we find from an entry in the "Liber Benefactorum" of St. Albans Abbey, that Lord William de la Souche and his son William were admitted to the Fraternity as lay-members. One of these was probably the person referred to. Lysons tells us that "the manor of Eaton Bray is supposed to have been forfeited by attainder, and to have been granted in 1513 to Sir Reginald Bray, when he obtained a grant of the neighbouring parish of Totternhoe, which had been also in the families of Cantilupe and Zouche." The family of Bray had probably held some possessions in the neighbourhood from early times, for we find several of this name mentioned in the Chronicle. In

EXCURSION TO DUNSTABLE.

1276 William de Bray is named as a "conversus," or lay brother, of the fraternity at Dunstable, and in 1289 Henry de Bray is spoken of as the King's Escheator and "Justiciarius Judæorum." There are two memorial brasses to this family in Eaton Bray Church. I am only able to add from Lysons that the manor has since passed with Eaton Bray, and when he wrote (c. 1801) was in possession of the family of Beckford; it is now held by Earl Brownlow. There are no memorials of these families in the present church. I am unable to learn to whom the rectory and advowson were granted at the dissolution of the Priory. In the beginning of the 18th century these were held by the celebrated Dr. Richard Meade, physician to George II.; he died in 1754. The patronage passed by marriage to Alderman Wilkes, of Republican notoriety, in whose family it remained when Lysons wrote. The present patron, I understand, is Lord Brownlow. S. Giles, to whom the church is dedicated, was the Patron Saint of Cripples. It is possible there may have been many persons crippled here by accidents in the stone quarries, and that this may account for the dedication. I believe churches situated near the gates of cities were frequently dedicated in honour of this Saint, as S. Giles's Cripplegate in London. A church or chapel of S. Giles in Dunstable is alluded to in the Chronicle. It is somewhat remarkable that the monogram on the present altar frontal is, as the Vicar informs me, the work of cripples. Probably an image of the saint rested on one of the brackets which we see in the north aisle. We see that the present edifice is a pleasing well-proportioned church of the Perpendicular style. I need not say that it is constructed of the native clunch. It has an ordinary arrangement of nave with clerestory and aisles, a chancel, western tower, a north porch, and a vestry (modern) on the north side of the chancel. There appears to be no documentary evidence to assist in dating it, or any part of it. The nave arcades obtusely pointed, resting on plain octagonal piers with stilted bases and moulded capitals, seem fair specimens of plain Early Perpendicular work. The Vicar has pointed out that the name of the builder or re-founder of the church is probably given by the *rebus* on the shield attached to the eastern pillar on the north side. The carving represents an ash tree (or what is traditionally considered to be an ash tree) and a well—giving the name of *Ashwell*. The sculpture appears to be an integral part of the capital. This same *rebus* exists on the corbels of the aisle roofs. We may infer with some probability that *Ashwell* was the family name of the benefactor by whom the nave and aisles were erected. Abbots and Priors frequently marked their work in this way by a *rebus*. If we could find any documentary reference to this family in the 15th century we might obtain a date; * unfortunately at present this is wanting. There is a place of this name near Baldock.

* On further search it appears that in 1389 (12th year of Richard II.) a William Ashwell was a lord of the manor of Gobyons, in the parish of Stapleford, Herts, and that he probably died about 1413, when the manor reverted to the family by whom the grant had been made to him for life (see Clutterbuck's *Herts*, vol. II.). The family of Gobyon resided at Higham Gobion, in Bedfordshire, and it is probable that William Ashwell was connected with the same county. He may have been the benefactor whose *rebus* appears in the Church, if so we should obtain a date for its erection between 1389 and 1413.

I believe a *rebus* is seldom met with before the reign of Richard II. I hope some more competent person will give us an opinion as to the date of the carving. The name of Ashwell does not appear in the list of the Priors of Dunstable taken from the registers of Lincoln, but this is not complete. If the benefactor was a layman, he must have been a person of importance, but not lord of the manor, as in the 15th century that was in the family of Zouche. [He may have purchased a life interest in the manor.] A family of Ashwell existed here in the Elizabethan period, for the Vicar has pointed out in the old parish register an entry of the baptism of William Ashwell in 1664. He may have been the son of a vicar of that period, as there appears to have been no manor-house in the parish. The axis of the chancel is not in a line with the axis of the nave, and this is probably intentional and symbolical. In the south wall of the chancel is a recess, apayed on both sides and at the bottom. It is evidently neither a hagioscope nor an aumbry. It was probably a low-side window, and is now blocked on the exterior; if so, it would have been originally closed by a shutter on the inside and grated externally. The piscina is not remarkable. There is a Jacobean brass to William Mitchell, dated 1621. The good *Perpendicular* screen appears too light to have supported a rood-loft; perhaps it was removed from the south aisle chapel, which may have been the Ashwell chantry. The east window in this aisle is a later insertion, a portion of the abutment of the chancel arch having been cut away to make room for it. The panelled ceiling of the chancel is modern, but the old bosses seem to be retained. The very low-pitch, open timber roof of the nave seems to be one of the best features of the church. It is believed to be of chestnut timber. It is simple and substantial in construction, with angel corbels, and the vicar has pointed out some sacred emblems carved on the bosses of the ridge-piece—the Sacred Heart, the "Lion of the Tribe of Judah," and the "Rose of Sharon." The time has only allowed us a very cursory inspection, but my impression is that the whole church may have been built, or rather rebuilt, at one period, with the exception perhaps of the tower, or the shell of the tower—this is massive and low. A vertical joint in the masonry at the west end of the north aisle next the tower has been shown me by the vicar; this probably indicates that the tower was left standing when the body of the church was rebuilt, the tower-arch and other features being remodelled. The belfry contains five bells. The oldest were recast in the time of the Commonwealth. The tenor bears the inscription—"Chandler made me, 1654." The ancient panelled oak benches remain. One of the clerestory windows contains some quarries of the old stained glass. The old Elizabethan register and a brass alms-dish of *repoussé* work are worthy of inspection. [Note.—The references in this paper are to the "Annales Prioratus de Dunstapliá," edited by the Rev. H. R. Luard, in the "Annales Monastici," vol. III., Rolls series.]

At the conclusion of the paper it was found that time would not allow a very minute inspection of the building, and the carriages had to be rejoined in order to catch the train.

Although so wet, the day was enjoyed, and many thanks are due to those who organised and so successfully carried out the excursion.

