

*Notes on Anstey Castle.*

BY THE REV. CANON DAVYS, M.A., RECTOR OF WHEATHAMPSTEAD.

After the luncheon on the Castle Hill, Canon Davys read the following notes on the Castle and Manor:—

Where we are assembled, and around us, are the remains of three distinct mounds of earth, marking ancient fortifications. The largest, that on which we stand, is called "The Castle"; it is 30 feet high, and its summit is nearly a quarter of an acre in extent. The work is, according to Chauncey, that of Eustace de Boulogne, in the eleventh century. The place became a chief stronghold of the Barons, and gave King John much trouble. On the accession of King Henry III. he ordered "Nicholas de Annesty" to destroy some portions of the fortifications, probably those recently added during the wars between King John and the Barons; for we find that the Castle was in existence till 1400, or later. It is probable, as we shall see presently in the examination of the Church, that the chancel was built of the materials removed in King Henry the third's time from the Castle. We find that later Edmund, Duke of York, held Anstey Castle by grant from his father, King Edward III., together with the advowson of the Rectory, but that his son alienated it to Sir Roger Cobham. The Manor was afterwards resumed by the Crown, and was granted by King Edward IV. to his mother. It was afterwards granted by King Henry VII. to his wife Elizabeth. In 1509 King Henry VIII. granted it successively to his wives, Catherine of Arragon, and Ann Boleyn; but he afterwards sold the Manor to John Cocks for £615 14s. 10½d. After other vicissitudes it became in 1666 the property of Sir Rowland Lytton, who sold the advowson to the Master and Fellows of Christ's College, Cambridge, with whom it still remains. The present Lord of the Manor of "Annesty ad Castrum" is Allen Alexander Bathurst, Esq. For my authorities in this sketch, and fuller particulars, I must refer you to our various county histories, and other documents bearing on the question.

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