Redbourn Bury.

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On looking at the Ordnance Map we are attracted by the name of " Aubury Camp" in the north-western corner of the parish as designating the most primitive locality. In the Tithe Map I see a field within the earthworks is named " Great Aubreys." I am informed that in some old rolls " *Arborries* " is the name given to it. I believe the first syllable *Ar* points to a Celtic origin; so whatever may be its later associations we have here, I think, the indication of the dwelling place of the earliest inhabitants of Redbourn. What I wish to observe is, that the oldest part of the English village, Church-end, lies very near the ancient camp. This, I believe, is rather unusual. Our Saxon forefathers seem generally to have planted their dwellings well away from British fastnesses. At Dunstable, *e.g.*, the old English town is a long way from Maiden Bower, the British earthwork, which Dr. Griffith pointed out to us a few years ago. The same also is the case, I believe, at Ashwell. When the Britons had their hunting grounds here " The Camp" was surrounded by forests ; the district was notorious for its forest depredators in later times, till the arrangement was made by Abbot Leofstan, which we shall probably hear of at Flamstead. When some of the woods were cleared, there was a considerable heath called *Redburne's* Heath, which, as a name, has now almost disappeared.

Another Celtic designation is the Ver, our familiar stream, which is twice crossed by Watling-street within this parish at the points where Abbot Leofstan made his bridges in the time of Edward the Confessor. † As far as this parish is concerned, to the best of my belief, Watling-street is nearly on the line of the modern coach road. After leaving the parish towards St. Albans the site is in the fields, passing on to Gorham Block. The little brook, which gives its name to the locality, the *Red*, is conjectured by Mr. G. L. Gomme (in his book, " Primitive Folk Moots ") to be called from Ráed, the Anglo-Saxon word for *council*. Bourn or Burne means stream, so that Red-bourn is *council stream*, so named from a village moot (according to Mr. Gomme) held near it, at certain mounds [called afterwards the " *Hills of the Banners*"]. I think this etymology is extremely doubtful, because most of the names of our streams are Celtic. The only Celtic word like Red which I can find, is *Reidh*, meaning a piece of moor land lying amongst hills. (See Joyce's " Origin of Irish Names ").

There was probably a parish here, and a church, long before the parishes of St. Albans were established by Abbot Wulsin, which was in the middle of the tenth century. The patronage of the Rectory was in the Saxon owners of the Manor, and passed from them to the Abbots. We learn from the Gesta [Gest. I. 39] that the Manor of Redbourn was given to Abbot Leofstan and the Church of St. Alban by Ailwin the Swart and Winefleda his wife. He also gave the adjacent Manor of Childwick, in the time of King Ethelred. The manor was assigned to the Chamberlain of the Abbey for the clothing of the monks [Gest. I. 54] ; the main portion of the rectorial tithes was then appropriated to the Chamberlain, who became the rector of the parish, as far as temporalities were concerned. In later times we hear of the tithe barn, in which were stored the rectorial tithes of grain and hay. Some portion of the tithes was reserved for the Almoner. Another part of the tithes

† From subsequent investigation, I am of opinion that the oldest Watling-street entered Redbourn from the north on the line of Lybury-lane, crossed the avenue and common, and proceeded by the *Chequers*-lane to the modern road. Its site is then lost in the fields, and appears again in the Back-lane leading from Redbourn Bury to Shefford Mill.—I have to acknowledge my obligation to Mr. J. Harris for his interesting investigations of these ancient trackways.

was assigned by Abbot Paul for the maintenance of writers in the Abbey Scriptorium, the assignment is stated to be for transcribing books ("ad volumina facienda")—[Gest. I. 57].

The manor was soon alienated to Stigand, Archbishop of Canterbury, but was recovered by Abbot Paul. Half a hide of land in Redbourn was given to the Abbey by Rodbert, Earl of Moreton [Trokelow, 446]. This was perhaps the same half hide which was bestowed by Abbot Richard d'Albini on the cell of Bynham (in Norfolk)—[Gest. I. 68].

The Domesday Survey informes us that the Abbot held seven *hides* one *virgate* in Redbourn, of which three hides were in demense ; arable land 16 *carucates*. There were 16 villanes, who had 12 *carucates* (they had to do a certain number of days ploughing and reaping on the Abbot's demesne as tenure service in lieu of rent). There was pasture for cattle, and pannage for 300 hogs ; total value £30. There were two mills, called afterwards the Chamberlain's Corn Mill and Malt Mill. One of them was burnt down in the time of Abbot John de Berkhamstede. A Saxon underholder, who had $3\frac{1}{2}$ *virgates* was Amelger. The survey may perhaps include the small Manor of Aygnell or Agnnalls in the north of the parish, which was held by a Norman family of that name, at least till the end of Edward III.'s reign. It was acquired by Abbot Wheathampstead in 1455.

We may now glance at a few field names given on the Parish Map.

There are several Crouch fields, and a Crouch Hall, denoting the sites of crosses. The parish is full of *ends*, Church End, Wood End, South End, Revel's End, Dean End, and several others. The Anglo-Saxon word *ende* has the sense of *corner*, so these are corners or turning points. Dean end means the *corner of the dale*, the word *denu* or *dene* signifying a vale or dale. There are a number of small hills and dales in the parish. Revel's End is the place where the *revels* or *wakes* were held at certain parish festivals, as that of the Dedication of the Church. We have perhaps a hint of this dedication in the field called " St. Mary's Butts." The butts, I suppose, mark the archery ground. There are several *slypes* and *pightles* ; both words signify narrow slips of ground. *Copt Hall* is a puzzling name. *Pancake* wood

reminds me of the pancake bell, said to be rung in some parishes on Shrove Tuesday ; some profits of the wood perhaps had to do with paying for the bell. A grass field, numbered 124, is called *Starve-all*. We may hope that Mr. Arnold has no such field on his farm.

There is, in the north of the parish, the *Lye Common-field*, in which perhaps the primitive folk cultivated their *strips* by a common plough. *Library orchard*, in the north of the parish, has a strange sound ; it may easily mislead us. It is very near the *Lye Common-field*. I believe the word is a corruption of *Lye-bury*, which has an intelligible meaning. *Lye* is probably the Anglo-Saxon word *lic*, which means a *corpse* or *grave*. The field may be the site of a Saxon burial ground.

We must now come to *Redbourn Bury*. The Anglo-Saxon word *byrig* or *burh* is derived from *burian, to raise a mound*, and signifies " a fortified enclosure." The Bury then denotes the fortified dwelling place of a Saxon landowner, and, with the name of the manor prefixed to it, would designate the abode of the *lord* of the Manor. I believe Redburn Bury by its name claims to be the site of the manor house of Anglo-Saxon times. The surrounding manors have each their Bury. We have Sandridge Bury, Harpenden Bury, and Childwick Bury. As Ailwin the Swart held Childwick as well as Redbourn, we cannot say in which Bury he lived ; but if he did not live here, he would have held his courts here. At Ashwell we found that courts-leet had been held at the Bury up to recent times. We find no records of courts here in the county historians. In modern times, it appears, they have been held at the Bull Inn in the village, and perhaps no homagers have assembled here since the conquest.

The Bury is some distance from the old village, but it is a convenient position for defence ; the river and watercourses around would form an excellent moat (we hardly expect to find remains of the earth rampart). Old manor houses are often found protected by moats, as Burston Hall. The ground in front is called " The Grove." You would hardly expect to find here the Isle of Wight, but there it is amongst the watercourses.

We will now look at the house. This has been carefully described in a very interesting article written by Mr. J. Harris. I will only say that his interpretation of

its ancient associations is altogether different from that which I venture to submit.

It has a modern appearance, all external features having been altered, but the central portion is of considerable antiquity. It is contained by four walls of flint rubble-work, of great thickness. These are probably much older than the roof of this part of the house, and that may be of the 15th century. The roof is of high pitch, constructed of thick oak timbers : the arched *principals* rest on moulded *corbels*, which may be seen in the upper story. I believe this central building was once open from the basement to the roof, and formed the hall of the mediæval manor house. The stone-arched doorway of the entrance still remains in the west wall, it is now enclosed in the wing, which has been added here. What was the external wall of the hall is now inside the house.

The Mediæval country houses consisted of little more than a *hall*, a *kitchen*, and a *bower*. Here there is nothing left of the ancient building but the hall, and that has been made into two stories. In early times the fire was made in the middle of the hall, the smoke escaping through *louvres* in the roof. There is no sign of that arrangement here. There is an old chimney, but no remains of the chimney canopy. The kitchen would have been at the east end, where there is still a Gothic stone arch. The *bower*, or women's apartment, was usually a separate building, connected by a *pentice* or covered way. The hall here might once have been hung with tapestry ; of course the floor was strewn with rushes, on which the male members of the household slept. In the monastic times a steward, or bailiff, would have lived here to look after the *desmesne* farm. The Chamberlain certainly had farm stock, for when King John with his army came to Redbourn the Chamberlain lost three good horses, two asses, and one new waggon, besides other gear [Gesta. I., 297]. When the Abbot paid his visits to the Cell of Tynemouth the Chamberlain had to provide one horse out of the *dispenser's* land at Redbourn.

Various visits of the Abbots to Redbourn are recorded in the documents, but they are mostly in connection with the Priory, and after that was erected the Abbots would have lodged there. But there is one ecclesiastical

visit, of which I believe Redbourn Bury was the scene, because it occurred in the reign of King Stephen, before the time of the Priory. As the story is very characteristic of monastic times I will give it up. The distinguished guest was Thurstan, Archbishop of York. While visiting these parts, the *Gesta* informs us [Gest. I. 100] he was persuaded by Roger, the famous Hermit of Markyate Cell, to grant an interview to Christina, the prophetess, who aspired to be his successor at the hermitage. The Archbishop appointed to see her at Redbourn. The hermit accordingly sent for a venerable neighbour, Godescall of Cadyngton, with whom he arranged that he and his wife should be the lady's escort. He gave them his benediction, and promised to pray for their safe return. [Cadyngton is some few miles from Markyate Street towards Luton]. As they were on their way from the cell both mounted on one horse, in ascending a hill the saddle-girths broke, the saddle slipped off, and the riders were thrown into the road. The horse galloped away : it was now dark, and the poor old couple began to complain bitterly of their sad plight, exclaiming, " Where is the promise of the man of God ? " No sooner are the words uttered than the horse returns saddled and bridled, and stands by a stump. They mount, giving thanks to God and his servant Roger, and are soon safe at home. The next day the Anchoress is conducted to the Archbishop, who it is said, was being entertained at Redbourn.

I think this conference must have been held here at Redbourn Bury. The result, we know, was the establishment of the Nunnery of Markyate by Abbot Geoffrey, and the instalment of the ascetic lady, Christina, as the first Prioress.

I have only time now to add in reference to the manor, that it passed from the Abbots to the Crown in 1544 (being then valued at £84 6s. 8d.) King James I. assigned it for the use of his son Charles. In the time of the Commonwealth it was conveyed to Sir Thomas Meautys, the possessor of Gorhambury, and his brother sold it to Sir Harbottle Grimston, the distinguished ancestor of the present noble possessor, the Earl of Verulam.