

Notes and Memoranda on some Hertfordshire Churches at  
the beginning of this Century.

BY H. R. WILTON HALL.

Mr. Cussans twenty years ago wrote:—

“At Essendon Place is preserved a large collection of local sketches, the value of which it would be difficult to over estimate. They were made about the year 1797, by a schoolmaster of Tewin, named Pridmore, and are bound in nine thick volumes. The collection consists of coloured views of nearly all the Gentlemen’s Seats in the

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County; all the Churches, and principal monuments within them, together with objects of antiquarian interest, such as old stained glass, windows, rood screens, fonts, etc. One volume is devoted to the Coats of Arms of Hertfordshire families. These volumes bear witness to the fearful destruction of ancient monuments which has taken place during the last eighty years. Modern restorers have as much to answer for as the popularly abused soldiers of Cromwell, destroyers as they were. It seems incredible that scores of Churches in this County, which now possess as much Archæological interest as the waiting-room of a railway station, should less than a century ago have been rich in brasses, stained glass, and exquisite carvings in wood and stone: yet such is the case.\*

In the year 1884, Baron Dimsdale allowed the Rev. Dr. Griffith to have copies taken from the collection, relating to his Parish of Sandridge. It was my good fortune to try my hand at making these copies for Dr. Griffith, and I thus had an opportunity of examining this Collection of Views to which Mr. Cussans refers. I found that there was no Catalogue of the Views, or Index, and that a very large number of the drawings of the Arms were unidentified.

On talking the matter over with Dr. Griffith, he suggested the desirability of a careful examination of this Collection being made, a description written, and an Index compiled. Baron Dimsdale most kindly gave his consent, and I was permitted at my leisure to go carefully through the whole Collection, and draw up an outline of its contents, noting what was depicted on each page, and any information given by the Artist concerning the same; further, to supply as far as the Arms are concerned, what the Artist had omitted, viz., to give the Blazon of the Arms, and where possible the names of the families to which they severally belong. This, of course, involved a considerable amount of labour: still, it was satisfactory up to a certain point, in that I was able from various sources to identify the Arms in a large number of cases; leaving, however, a considerable number still awaiting identification. It was a most delightful occupation, and I shall always feel most grateful to Baron Dimsdale for giving me such ready access to the collection during such a lengthened period.

It is from the Notes and Memoranda made at the time of going through this unique collection that my Paper this evening is mainly compiled. As it is now some

\* Hundred of Hertford, page 155.

seven or eight years since I last saw the Collection, I cannot of course speak with the authority of one who has the volumes open before him; still, the impressions given at the time were so vivid, that, allowing for errors arising from want of sufficient specific knowledge, and lack of discrimination on my part, and a less intimate knowledge of the County than I now have, I hope that on the whole, I have fairly summarised this matchless Collection.

As you have already heard in the quotation from Mr. Cussans, there are nine volumes in the Collection, with an average of considerably over 500 pages in each. Volume VIII. is devoted wholly to the City of St. Albans. Volume IX. consists of only about 200 pages.

The Drawings are on ordinary cartridge paper, about 14 inches by 11 inches. The Notes, which are not very full as a rule, are on a sheet of paper similar to that on which the drawing is made, and face the View to which the Note or Notes refer. The Views of Churches, Houses, and Monuments are for the most part in water colour: some are in sepia, some in black and white; the brasses are in black and yellow colour; other interesting features in pale brown or yellow.

Taking the sketches as a whole they have no claim to artistic beauty—they will probably be voted crude and puerile—they seem to be the work of a self-taught Artist. Pridmore evidently aimed at making a complete Collection of views of the County with his own pencil, and when we consider the tremendous difficulties in the way of travelling which existed 100 years ago, we must confess that he succeeded most admirably. His aim was evidently to give some clear idea of what the Church or Building or Monument looked like; not to produce a pretty picture.

Of exterior Views of Churches there are 129, and in four cases two views are given from different standpoints. Nearly all these Views of Churches are in colour, and measure about eight inches in length by six inches in breadth. A small number measure about half this size, viz., four inches by three inches, and these are for the most part in sepia: some few have had a yellow wash laid over the darker colour.

Every old Church is represented, including the ruins of

Ayot St. Lawrence, Chisfield, and Minsden Churches, except Ashwell, Aspeden, Chipping Barnet, East Barnet, Cheshunt, Hunsdon, St. Margaret's, and Totteridge.

Of Parsonage Houses there are 27 views:—Aston, Baldock, Bennington, Bramfield, Clothall, Cottered, Datchworth, Digswell, Graveley, Hitchin, Ickleford, Ippolitts, Kelshall, Letchworth, Norton, Radwell, Sheephall, Shenley, Stapleford, Stevenage, Walkern, Welwyn, Westmill, Weston, Willian, Great Wymondley, Yardley.

Of Manor Houses, 20 views are given, and in the case of Kingsbury, and also of Gobions (North Mimms) there are two drawings:—Abbot's Langley, Brent Pelham, Chells, Chisfield, Fairlands, Garston, Gobions, Ickleford, Kingsbury, King's Langley, Lanock, Letchworth, Maiden-crofts, Pulter's, Radwell, Renesley, Rickmansworth, Sandon, Weston, Great Wymondley.

Of Houses, including those specifically called Parsonages and Manor Houses, there are no fewer than 222 views in all.

These do not by any means exhaust the Drawings. There are 40 Altar Tombs, 194 Brasses, 34 Gravestones, 61 Monuments (that is, structures built against the wall and rising upwards from the floor level), 195 Mural Monuments (that is, slabs of all descriptions built into the wall, but not reaching the floor line).

No fewer than 530 pages are devoted to drawings of Shields of Arms, the majority of the sheets containing several Coats, immense numbers of them fully coloured.

Of Fonts, Screens, Stained Glass, Bench Ends, and Doorways, I shall have something to say further on in the Paper.

These do not comprise all the drawings, or exhaust the range of information conveyed by Pridmore's active pencil, but they serve to show something of the tremendous industry of the man who drew them. There can be, I think, no doubt but that they were all the work of one man; and as they present but little variety of treatment, one is led to infer that their execution was not extended over any great number of years. Nearly all of the drawings appear to be original; the copies of other drawings, so far as I can gather, are one each of Aldenham House, Bramfield Place, and Cassiobury, and two of Ashridge. There is one coloured lithograph included in the Collection.

I am aware that to Archæologists the study of the aspect of Churches and Houses only a hundred years ago at first sight is not a very fascinating subject. To the latter-day Ritualist, who delights in the modern imitations of so-called "correct" mediæval "Ornaments of the Church and of the Ministers thereof" which fill the showrooms of Ecclesiastical Furniture Dealers, the aspect of our Churches a hundred years ago is "the abomination of desolation;" but to a society such as this, which reverences the past, and would carefully preserve its records, nothing connected with that past "useless is, or low."

I do not think that there is at the present time one of the 129 Churches which Pridmore drew, which has not undergone "Restoration" in a greater or a lesser degree. Of the arrangement of these Churches previous to restoration, there no doubt exist records and notes, but so far as I know, no systematic attempt has been made to preserve faithful records of the Churches of the County. It is not too late yet, but every year which passes without an attempt being made to bring together these notes on our Churches as they existed before Restoration, will help to make the task an impossible one some day.

A hundred years have passed since Pridmore began his sketches. In very few instances does he give us an interior view: all the 133 views are taken from the exterior. From these views one can see the general style of our Churches; Chancel, Nave, and Tower at the West End.

He shows 39 Churches with Towers, without Spires, and the only two Cross Churches in this group are Great Berkhamstead and Northchurch.

*Churches with Tower and no Spire*:—Aldbury, Ayot St. Lawrence, Aston, Broxbourn, Buckland, Bushey, Berkhamstead (cross), Bovingdon, Caldicote, Digswell, Little Gaddesden, Hinxworth, Hormead Magna, Ickleford, Kelshall, Kensworth, Markyate, Long Marston, Newenham, Northchurch (cross), Norton, Offley, Puttenham, Reed, Ridge, Royston, Rushden, Sacomb, Sandon, Sarrat, Tewin, Throcking, King's Walden, St. Paul's Walden, Wallington, Walkern, Walton, Willian, Great Wymondley.

In 47 instances the Churches had both Tower and Spire.

*Churches with Tower and small Spire*:—Albury, Aldenham, Anstey (cross), Baldock, Barkway, Bennington, Bishop Stortford, Datchworth, Eastwick, Essendon, Flamstead, Great Gaddesden, Gilston, Hadham Parva, Hertford All Saint's, Hertford St. Andrew's, Hertingfordbury, Hexton, Hitchin, Kimpton, Knebworth, King's Langley, Abbot's Langley, Layston, Much Munden, Furneaux Pelham, Brent Pelham, Pirton (cross), Radwell, Redbourn, Rickmansworth, Sawbridgeworth, Standon, Stevenage, Thorley, Thundridge, Ware, Watford, Westmill, Weston (cross), Wheathampstead (cross), Widford Wyddial, Yardley, St. Alban's Abbey (cross), St. Peter's, St. Albans (cross), Amwell.

Of the whole number, 8 only are cross Churches—St. Alban's Abbey, St. Peter's, Anstey, Hemel Hempstead, Northchurch, Pirton, Weston, and Wheathampstead.

In very few instances does the Spire seem to have been of any great height; apparently the tallest were at Braughing, Cottered, Great Hadham, Hemel Hempstead, and North Mimms. All the others seem to have been of the ordinary "dwarf" character, frequently termed "extinguisher" or "spike." At Codicote, Graveley, Harpenden, Ippolitts, and St. Michael's, the "shaft" or "spike" proper appears instead of a "spire" or "spirelet." The most peculiar spirelet was at Therfield, which had a good deal of open work about it.

Some few Churches had a kind of "stable bell" erection on the Tower. Barley and Hatfield were the two best instances. Sandridge had a rather tall erection of this character at the west end, on the Nave roof; while Welwyn had one much smaller, and uglier, in a similar position. "Welwyn people sold their bells to build the steeple." Their taste first of all in selling their bells at all is not to be commended; and secondly, spending the money thus realized on such a queer piece of work is still less worthy of commendation.

There were not many wooden Towers. Elstree had one, Old Flaunden Church had one, and Shenley had one; but all have now disappeared—that at Shenley since Mr. Cussans wrote. He describes it as "a low tower of 'feather edge' boarding, painted white, in every respect resembling the 'hoist' of a flour mill."\*

\* Hundred of Dacorum, page 314.

There seem to have been only two instances of Towers detached from the Church, and only one exists, I believe now; viz., that at Standon. The other was at Ayot St. Peter, of which I shall have something further to say.

There was a wooden erection for the bells at the west end of the Nave in twelve instances:—Bengeo, Little Berkhamstead, Bayford, Bramfield, Hornead Parva, Lilley, Northaw, Stocking Pelham, Sheephall, Stapleford, Wormley, and at St. Stephen's. This feature has very largely disappeared. They had all much the same character. Facing page 91 of our Transactions for 1887, is a view of one on old Bengeo Church, which still exists. That at Bayford was one of the largest, and seems to have been tarred like an ordinary barn or cattle shed, as in fact most of them appear to have been. The erection at Bramfield has been gone this 50 years, while that at Little Berkhamstead was restored; and I imagine considerably modified some 40 years ago.

In most instances, the walls of Tower, Nave, and Chancel alike seem to have been covered with plaster, and in some cases from the appearance of the drawings, they seem to have been colour-washed as well. As a rule the Chancels were tiled, while the Nave and the Aisles were covered with lead.

The brief note which faces the view of every Church in most cases is a transcript from Chauncy or Salmon, and frequently the note and the drawing do not agree. As the two historians wrote about a century before Pridmore's time, this is rather a gain than a loss, as by this means we are able to see roughly the changes made during the 18th century.

There are very few Churches in the County with apsidal Chancels, and the only instances shown by the Views in this Collection are at Amwell, Bengeo, and Great Wymondley—that which existed at St. Andrew's, Hertford, has disappeared.

So far as I have been able to test the accuracy of Pridmore's drawings, I am led to believe that he copied the details which he saw accurately, but it would of course be impossible to determine positively from them the dates and styles of the various portions of the buildings. Dilapidations, blocked windows, patched buttresses and so forth, he draws stiffly, but there is no difficulty in understanding what he aims at representing.

The most peculiar Church depicted is that of Ayot St. Peter. It is an octagonal brick structure after the style of Rowland Hill's Chapel in the Blackfriars Bridge Road. The Tower was detached from the Church, and seems to have stood at the entrance to the Churchyard, where it formed a kind of lych-gate. It was a two-storied structure, something like a Chinese Pagoda, only uglier: the top storey formed a kind of obelisk, crowned with a big ball, on which was a weather vane. It was built by Ralph Freeman, in 1732, and pulled down in the summer of 1862.

Offley Church is shown with a square Tower, at the four corners of which are pinnacles—a very unusual feature in this county—but *the* feature of the Church is the Chancel, which was built by Sir Thomas Salusbury in 1750. It has a leaded dome with a skylight. Our Artist describes it as “the very elegant chapel.”

The view of Radwell Church from the south-east has puzzled me. It shows a Chancel with high-pitched roof, and a Nave with flat roof, very much lower than the Chancel roof. There is a Spire at the west end, and the base of the Spire seems to rise immediately from the wall at the end of the Nave. In fact, the summit of the Spire is apparently very little higher than what ought to be the ridge of the Nave roof. From a note in our “Transactions” for 1885, I gather that Radwell Church is now regarded as “a bijou ecclesiastical edifice, and a model Church for a population of 101.”

It is curious that our Artist takes no notice of the Chancel of St. Paul's Walden Church. The screen is the handsomest of its kind in the County; and, in fact, the general arrangement of the Chancel hardly deserves the condemnation which it has frequently received.

Sandridge Church is altogether unrecognizable; both the views given are very small, and the tall open bell turret gives it certainly a very striking appearance.

Of post Reformation Churches there were very few in Pridmore's time; there are but four drawn by him, viz., Buntingford Chapel, Hoddesden Chapel, Markyate, and the new Church of Ayot St. Lawrence. Mr. Cussans calls this last building “a disgrace to the disgraceful period of British ecclesiastical taste.”\*

\* Hundred of Broadwater, p. 236.



The following account of its Consecration is worth repeating, as it does not quite agree with the extract from the Gentleman's Magazine (vol. 47, p. 374) quoted by Mr. Cussans:—

“28 July, 1779, a new Church on the Grecian Model, lately built at Ayott St. Lawrence, at the sole expense of Sir Lionel Lyde, Baronet, was this (day?) consecrated by the Bishop of Lincoln. On this occasion the neighbouring nobility with their Ladies attended together with many hundred persons of all denominations from different parts of the County. The procession was preceded by a band of music; upwards of 20 Men and Women dressed in a neat uniform at the expense of Sir Lionel, followed the Music, and after them the Bishop, Clergy, and rest of the Company in regular procession. When they arrived at the Church, the doors were thrown open (each of the populace eager to into [? enter] first), when the usual service was performed: after which the Company were regaled (under tents fixed for the purpose) with wine, cakes, &c. They returned to the mansion House where an elegant dinner was provided, after which the Company dispersed themselves in the adjoining fields where they diverted themselves in innocent rural Games till the close of the day, and at last parted highly delighted with the pleasure they had received. A wedding was the only thing wanting to complete the festivity, which was intended, but the consecration of the Church was not over till past Twelve.”

As an example of a complete Churchwarden renovation of a Church, I think Essendon Church stood out the most prominently. In 1777 it had a “thorough restoration,” and was probably regarded as “a bijou ecclesiastical edifice” at that time, and “a model of what a village Church should be.” The view given by Pridmore tallied exactly with the Church when I became acquainted with it in 1877. I must confess that I remember the destruction of the old Church with a pang, as it certainly was a unique specimen of 18th century skill in obliterating every ancient feature. We continue now-a-days, I am sorry to say, the obliterating process, only we adopt our favourite “correct” period of Gothic Architecture in place of Churchwarden Classical.

The following Churches have been completely, or almost completely rebuilt since our Artist took sketches of them:—Ayot St. Peter's (twice), Bayford (twice), Bovington, Bushey, Eastwick, Elstree, Essendon, Flaunden, Harpenden, All Saints' Hertford, St. Andrew's Hertford, Hertingfordbury, Hexton, Lilley, Northaw (twice), Rickmansworth, Therfield, and Thundridge. I am sorry to say that the list is far from complete.

Our Artist does not give many drawings of interiors of Churches. Pirton Church was once a cross Church, but it had lost its Transepts. A view is given of a "Room under the Tower, between the Church and the Chancel." Three of the interior walls of the Tower are shown. On the right is a plain pointed archway with double doors and a fanlight above; sky and clouds can be seen through the fanlight. Seated on a chest near this door is a man in a blue coat. Immediately opposite to the door is a similar archway, and on the floor there is a gravestone. In front is a smaller archway, very dark, apparently leading into the Chancel, or possibly into the Nave. There is a smaller door in the angle to the right, leading apparently to the Tower stair. This is particularly interesting, as the Tower was re-built from its foundations in 1877.

The view of the Chancel Arch in Great Wymondley Church shows the Chancel Window, square-headed, and apparently of late date, the Altar rails, but no Altar.

The Chancel Arch appears to be Norman work; a drawing is also given of a similar Arch in Little Wymondley Church. He also gives a drawing in colour of the Room under the Chancel of Hitchin Church. A low room, with arched doorway, and four steps leading down to it is shown on the left-hand side, and also an arched fire-place; two windows are shown in the wall opposite the spectator. There is also a sketch of the door from the outside, and a plan of the Chamber. These are the only interiors of Churches given, except one or two in the Abbey Church.

#### FONTS.

Of Altars he gives only one sketch, to be noted presently, but of Fonts he figures no fewer than 58. St. Alban's Abbey, Aldenham, Aston, Ayot St. Lawrence (old), Baldock, Bengoe, Bennington, Bygrave, Bovingdon, Caldicote, Cheshunt, Clothall, Codicote, Datchworth, Digswell, Elstree, Flamstead, Graveley, Hexton, Hitchin, Ickleford, Ippolitts (two drawings), Kelshall, Kimpton, Knebworth, Abbot's Langley, King's Langley, Letchworth, Lilley, St. Michael's, Newenham, Norton, St. Peter's, Pirton, Radwell, Ridge, Rushden, Sandridge, Sandon,

Sheepall, Shenley, Standon, Stapleford, St. Stephen's, Stevenage, Throcking, Thundridge, St. Paul's Walden, Walkern, Wallington, Welwyn, Weston, Wheathampstead, Willian, Wormley, Great Wymondley, Little Wymondley, Yardley.

### SCREENS.

There are not as many sketches of Screens as Mr. Cussans' note would lead one at first sight to expect—there are 16 only in 12 Churches. They are all drawn in colour.

*Aldenham* has two. The one in the North Aisle shows four bays, the second from the left being the doorway; while in the South Aisle Screen there are three bays, the doorway being in the centre.

*Aston*. A central doorway is shown, with two narrow compartments on either side, each with tri-cusped heads, and two pierced quatrefoils.

*Baldock*. The Chancel Screen is of ten bays; the two central bays forming the doorway. The North Aisle Screen shows two tiers of small Arches, twenty in each, with doorway in the centre. Very elaborate work is shown in the South Aisle Screen: there are six bays on either side of a central doorway. The Perpendicular fan tracery is enriched with colour, blue and gold.

*Hexton*. A Chancel Screen in colour shows five panels of equal size, including the door. On either side of the door are narrow pointed openings with seven cusped heads. I do not know whether this screen is still existing or not. The Church was re-built except the Tower in 1824. Mr. Cussans does not note the Screen, so that I conclude that it no longer exists.

*Hunsdon*. There is a plain pointed central Doorway shown, with four five-cusped openings, on either side; six shields bearing arms are shown along the top beam.

*Ippolitts*. The Chancel Screen is here shown. There is a depressed Arch in the centre, with richly cusped (five cusps tri-cusped) head. The two openings on either side are simply plain oblong openings, without tracery.

*Kimpton*. A wide central Arch, much depressed, has two narrow lights on either side, with obtusely-pointed Arches.

*Ojley.* The Screen shown in this case is drawn in a dull yellow tint, and shows three narrow lights, with a double row of quatrefoils above; the doors are larger and have heads with Perpendicular tracery. Pridmore's note reads:—"Screen formerly between the Church and the Chancel . . . . but taken away when the new Chancel was built, and now partly remaining in the lower part of the Tower."

*Rushden.* A plain square-headed Doorway, without tracery or doors, shows two openings on either side, with flamboyant heads.

*Stevenage* has two Screens. That at the end of the North Aisle shows four narrow openings, with Perpendicular work above. The central doorway is more ornate. Three shields are on the top beam. At the end of the South Aisle is a very similar Screen, but the details are more ornate still.

*Wallington.* The doorway is not in the middle, but between the 7th and 8th compartments, reckoning from the left. There are nine compartments, and the character is Perpendicular.

*Willian.* Either there is no Chancel Arch here, or the opening above the Screen has been filled in, for on the plain wall surface above the top beam is a board bearing the arms of George III., and on either side of it, also on boards, are the Ten Commandments. The woodwork of the Screen appears to be Perpendicular.

#### DOORWAYS.

Twelve sketches of Doorways are given, nearly all of which are what he terms of "Saxon" work; *i.e.*, Norman. Those showing Norman details are from Datchworth, Hemel Hempstead, Little Horstead, Ickleford, Royston, Stapleford, and Thundridge. The others figured are from Amwell, Caldecote (showing the Holy Water Stoup in the angle), Knebworth, Stevenage, Wallington, and Willian.

#### AUMBREYS AND PISCINAS.

Aumbreys and Piscinas are shown at Baldock (2), Clothall (2), Knebworth, King's Langley (2), Offley (showing the "Offa" tiles), Rushden, Stevenage, Wallington, and Little Wymondley.

## BENCH ENDS.

Interesting sketches of Bench ends are given from Anstie, Ashwell, Baldock, and Great Berkhamstead.

## STAINED GLASS.

Mr. Cussans speaks especially of the Stained Glass. In most cases, the Glass drawn by our Artist consists of Coats of Arms.

At *Broxbourn* he gives a drawing of which appears to be an Ecclesiastical Banner, with the foot within a mitre: this is in a pale blue colour.

*Clothall*. A female figure in a hood, the back-ground red.

*North Mimms*. There is a figure, half-length, of a man, holding an arrow in his right hand, point downwards. He wears a shirt of mail, scale pattern, and a cloak or mantle with an ornamented border. On his head is a kind of barret cap, with a rose and three plumes on the left: the head is surrounded by a nimbus.

*Stevenage*. A demi-figure of an ecclesiastic with cowl and frock, in blue colour, and an open book at his side. Pridmore says "supposed to be a Friar of the Order of St. Bennet."

*Wallington*. A figure of St. Katherine.

*Willian*. *ihc* in colour.

That in St. Peter's Church, I shall refer to later.

The other 77 instances of Stained Glass, are Coats of Arms, not all of them in the Churches, some being in old Inns and Houses.

There are many other interesting features connected with this collection worth notice, but time fails for dealing with them all.

## MEMORIALS OF THE DEAD.

Our Artist made a special point of recording with pen and pencil, the *Memorials of the Dead*. These may be classified as Brasses, Altar Tombs, Monuments, Mural Monuments, Gravestones, and Hatchments. Of *Brasses* he gives 194 Drawings; of *Altar Tombs*, 40; of *Monuments*, *i.e.*, structures rising from the floor and built

against a wall as a rule, 61; of *Mural Monuments, i.e.*, tablets built into the wall above the floor line, 195; of *Gravestones*, 31; and *Hatchments*, 148.

He was particularly fond of drawing in colours the Arms which he found on these Memorials, and the Coats of Arms must number over a thousand. When we remember that the "Hatchments" or "Atchievements" as he invariably calls them, have almost entirely disappeared from our Churches, we may form some idea of the value of this man's work, from an heraldic point of view. And they are not rough trickings of the Arms; in almost every instance they are beautifully finished, and the colours almost as brilliant as when first laid on.

The *Monuments* which for the most part attracted his attention, were those of the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries, and these have suffered greatly during the Restoration epidemic. Some, I know, which once occupied honoured and dignified positions are now thrust away in odd nooks and corners, stowed away behind organs, where they are chipped and battered and abused. I have in my mind's eye two very handsome 17th century Monuments with recumbent figures, which once occupied positions one on each side of an unusually spacious sacrarium. Now they stand in the basement of the Tower, where a Choir of 25 or 30 men and boys struggle into their cassocks and surplices, in a very confined space, and use these stately Memorials of the Dead, as convenient resting places for hats, caps, coats, umbrellas and walking-sticks.

*Mural Monuments* have suffered even a worse fate. They have been voted ugly and out of place on the walls of our Churches, and so sadly maltreated. Robbed of their borders, which were almost invariably of costly stone and marble, they have been inserted "higgledy piggledy" in the walls of the Tower, or behind that Moloch of our modern Churches—the Organ—where no one can see them, and the walls they once occupied are covered with a drab, dreary plaster, not more comely than the Slabs, and certainly giving less variety to the bare surface of the wall. Stained Glass Windows have been voted as the "correct" memorials of the dead, and already we have tired of the "beautiful" windows erected 30 years ago, and think them hideous. Ought we therefore to smash them all?

Very little protection is extended to these Memorials as a rule. Most Faculties specify that those removed in the course of the Restoration shall be replaced as nearly as may be in their original positions, but nine times out of ten nobody takes any particular note of the Monuments likely to be disturbed, or the exact positions which they occupied. The builder is allowed a free hand, and when once they have been removed it is a rare thing indeed to find them replaced in their proper positions.

“To lie like an epitaph” is proverbial; but Restorers frequently have out-Heroded Herod and transformed a truth into a lie, by placing the Memorials anywhere, without any regard for the position of the graves which they were intended to mark. I am afraid that it is too much to hope for, but I feel very strongly that no Faculty should be granted until plans have been made showing exactly what graves and Memorials of the dead will be interfered with, not only by the proposed restoration but also on the ground which the builder is going to use during his operations, and accurate copies should be taken of the inscriptions on the Memorials disturbed. Many instances have come to my notice of Memorials which have been ruthlessly smashed and used for “filling-in” by the builder.

Of all classes of Memorials our Artist has preserved the Inscriptions, either by drawing or writing out in no fewer than 477 cases. We may not admire these Memorials, but they are worthy of preservation: they do no harm to the living and are links with a past daily becoming more remote. To my mind it is a scandal that such slight care should be taken of them. We have no right to expect that those who come after us shall respect the works of our hands while we wink at such indecent practices. We may cynically comfort ourselves with the cant phrase that it will make no difference to us a hundred years hence, but the principle is as wrong as it can be.

#### CHURCHES OF ST. ALBAN'S.

The Churches in St. Alban's naturally claim some attention. As I have said, Pridmore devotes one whole volume to St. Alban's, and he is very particular to give

very full notes, much fuller than the notes accompanying the views of other parts of the County.

THE ABBEY CHURCH. Only one small view of the exterior is given. This is in grey and yellow, and the building is almost hidden by trees.

A drawing of the West Door, and of the panels of the door is given in colour; there are two of the Slype, one of the Abbot's Doorway in the South Aisle of the Choir, and a "Sketch of the inside of the Transepts and Tower, with the parts which have been altered and restored to their original Norman Architecture as erected soon after the Conquest."

This last view is fanciful, and shows three queer little figures of men evidently inspecting the building. In the course of his notes he gives us some interesting particulars. "The picture of the Lord's Supper," he says, "which till lately hung over the Altar, is now fixed up over the Watch Loft." "The Flag of the late Association of St. Alban's is hung up at the West end of the Choir." He gives a very full description of the carvings on the Watching Loft and also drawings of them.

There is also a very valuable list of Gravestones in the Abbey in his day, occupying ten closely written pages. He specifies the parts of the Church where these stones lay, and they number no fewer than 199. The latest date on any stone which he notes is that of the year 1802, so that we may gather that his list was made in or about that year.

A view of the *Font* shows the basin which is now in the Workhouse Chapel, standing under a triangular, wooden canopy. He says:—"The Font is a white marble basin, ornamented on the outside with flutes and cablings, and standing upon a moulded and carved base . . . over it is a canopy of wood upon a triangular plan, supported by three columns with their Pedestals, Architrave, Frizz and Cornice, and above the Cupolar are three very small pillars upon the triangle, which make legs to a small Pedestal on which is perched a Dove, with an olive branch in his mouth, which finishes the summit of the Canopy, the pillars, &c., are painted white, and the Dove overlaid with gold." The drawing is in colour, and shows a very primitive-looking screw attached to



one pillar, evidently intended for use in raising and lowering the Font cover.

There is a most interesting drawing in colour of the *High Altar* and Screen. This is the only instance he gives of an Altar in the whole Collection. Whether he drew upon his imagination or not in this effort I am unable to say, but if to a certain extent it is an ideal picture I am afraid that he had somewhat Ritualistic proclivities. It is a standing witness at any rate to the fact that certain adjuncts were not regarded as being antagonistic to the Protestant Views which then dominated the Church. The Screen is very faithfully drawn, and shows the 13 niches above the altar. Below these is a Dossal of violet colour, with a gold fringe. The Altar itself is vested in a loose covering of the same colour, and apparently of the same material as the Dossal, and on it are displayed two Altar Candlesticks, with Tapers, two Flagons, two Chalices and a large dish heaped up with flat Altar breads. At the North and South ends of the Altar are high kneeling stools. I do not know whether the good man ever saw this display of Altar Furniture, but there can be little doubt but that he thought that those "Ornaments" ought to be there, and that they were thoroughly in keeping with the building and its associations.

Apparently the Church never had many Monuments; he only gives a list of 18. They are as follows:—Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, John Gape, Robert Nichols, Barbara Griffith, Chas. Maynard, Ralf. Maynard, Margery Rowlatt, John Thrale, Wm. Atkinson, Wm. King, John Jones, J. J. Wallus, Rev. Edw. Carter, Christ. Chamberlaine, Chris. Rawlinson, Jos. Handley, John Handley, and Ptolemy James.

Drawings are given of the Front of Abbot Ramridge's Chapel; the Thrale Monument, the Maynard Monument; the *Mural Slabs* to John Handley and Wm. Atkinson; the North side of Duke Humphrey's Monument; the sketch of the Coffin, Vault and Mural Painting; the South side of what he calls Wheathamstead's Monument, and another view of it from the Presbytery; the wall Slabs to Joseph Handley and Archdeacon Carter, Robert Nicholl, Christopher Chamberlain, Christopher Rawlinson, Chas. Maynard, John Gape, William King, Barbara Griffith.

There are drawings of 10 of the *Brasses*: Abbot de la Mare; Earl of Kent; Civilian and Wife; Rauff Rowlatt; Bartholomew Halsey; Robert Beamer, Thomas Fayreman; Monk with label; a Saint with cross in right hand; another with short stick resting on the right shoulder.

He gives drawings of 203 *Coats of Arms*, some with many quarterings: 47 of these are in plain colour, and 156 fully coloured; and 8 Hatchments coloured.

There are 21 drawings of the quaint carvings on the Watching Gallery.

Only three specimens of Coloured Glass are given; one Az. a saltire Or for St. Alban's impaling Arg. on a bend Sa. three eagles displayed Or for De la Mare. The second shield is Or, two bars Gules; and the third, Az. a saltire Or, within a bordure charged with 8 garbs Arg.

Ten *Inscriptions* existing in the Church are drawn or written out, and 28 are given from Monuments. A lengthy description of Abbot Ramridge's Chantry Chapel is given, and another of the Watching Gallery. He gives an extract from Gough respecting the Wheat-hamstead Monument, a note on Mr. Robert Shrimpton, and another on Mr. John Kent.

ST. STEPHEN'S CHURCH. The view given of this Church is only a very small one and is taken from the South-west. It is in gray, with a yellow wash over all, and shows the Chancel Aisle, Nave, South Porch, West Front, and Wooden Bell Turret. From the Notes furnished we learn that the Chancel Aisle was called St. Mary's Chapel. There were three entrances, one through the South Porch, another at the West End by means of a "pair of folding-doors," and the third was through the North Wall into the Nave; an opening now blocked. Four bells were in the wooden belfry, which was surmounted "with a very small spire."

The *Pulpit* stood against the North wall, and the Font was standing between the pillars towards the West end of the Nave.

He notes the *Brass Eagle Lectern* and says it should be looked upon as a great curiosity, in so small a Church. A drawing is given of it, and also a description. It stood within the Altar Rails, "on his wings lay Fox's Book of Martyrs."

The *Monuments* are then noted: Jas. Rolfe, 1630, Thomas Kentish, and Wm. Chaplin. There was but one Brass and 13 Gravestones having Coats of Arms, and he gives a further list of 15 other Gravestones without Arms, and specifies their positions in the Church. He says that there were several stones which once had had brasses attached to them, but he gives no particulars concerning them. He notes that there was a Hatchment, for Mrs. Olave Montgomery against the North wall of the Chancel, and "Another against the North Aile" for Mrs. Ashurst.

Commenting on the fact that so many of the Kentishes are buried here he says: —

"Of the name of Kentish, in and about St. Albans there are several distinct families who absolutely deny all manner of Relationship, but it is natural to suppose that they were originally all one. There are here at this day:

Gentlemen Kentish's  
Tradesmen Kentish's  
Husbandmen Kentish's  
Labourer's Kentish's."

A drawing of the *Font* is given, and in the middle one of the three niches shown, is a woman with a staff in her right hand, and a book in her left; men in armour are in the niches on either side.

He draws in colour the *Mural Monuments* of Wm. Chaplin, 1719; Thomas Kentish, 1712, and James Rolfe; the Brass of Wm. Robins is shown; the two Hatchments are given in colour, eight shields of Arms in plain colour with the accompanying Inscriptions are given, and also drawings of the Inscriptions on the four bells.

ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH. The view given is similar in character to that of St. Stephen's, and is taken from the South-east, showing Chancel and Chancel Door, the Nave, with a flat roof; the South Chapel roof is high pitched, and apparently higher than the Nave roof; the South door is shown, and the square Western Tower, with shaft thereon. From the Notes it appears that there were doors on the North and South sides of the Nave and in the Chancel two doors also. At the North-east corner of the South Chapel, "is a small staircase which originally led up to the Rood Loft, at the upper end of the middle aile. Over where the Rood Loft used to be

the ceiling is richly carved and painted and gilt, and here is placed the King's Arms, dated, C.R. 1660, on one side a rose crowned, on the other a thistle; below the King's Arms is the Crest of Bacon, dated 1625. . . . The roof of the middle Aisle is timber and has some open work, carved on the upright posts."

The *Pulpit* stood on the North side of the Nave, and a Gallery brought from Gorhambury, occupied the Western end of the Church. On it in gold capital letters was the Inscription "This Gallery was the gift of Viscount Grimstone, 1787." It was supported by four "elegant Corinthian columns of brown wood."

The *Font* stood at the end of the North Aisle. There were two handsome brass chandeliers, one to hold 14 candles, and the other capable of holding 10. On the last was the inscription "Thy Word is a Lanthorn unto my feet, and a Light unto my Paths." This was given by Mrs. Ann Marston, April 28th, 1748. This lady who died in 1759, was "apprehensive of being interred alive." She left a considerable sum of money in her will to Mr. Smith of Kingsbury on condition that he should daily visit "her body whilst placed in the Vault." The Vault was not closed until the specified time had elapsed.

A list is given of 20 *Monuments*, and the Inscriptions on them are written out: Sir Thomas Meauty (no inscription); George Grimstone; Henry Gape (brass); John Mason (brass); Francis, Lord Bacon; Margaret Lowe; Amos Marten; Jane Atkinson; John Bressie; Mary Martin, 1703; Amos Martin, 1706; Ann Carter, 1719; Thomas Hall, 1710; Mary Smith, 1722; Henry Smith, 1768; Christopher Topham, 1725; Susanna Williams, 1758; Rev. Wm. Marston, 1726; Wm. Smith, 1758; Henry Dowdall, 1776.

There is a drawing in colour of Sir Francis Bacon's Monument, and also of the Dowdall Mural Monument.

Drawings in colour of five Hatchments belonging to the Grimstone family are given in colour, viz., William, 1st Viscount; James, 2nd Viscount; Mary, wife of James; Harriet, wife of 3rd Viscount; Samuel, son of William, 1st Viscount; and there are four belonging to the Lomax family. There are drawings of nine Shields, one in plain colour, and eight coloured. These last he

says belong to the Maynard family and were painted on the wall.

ST. PETER'S CHURCH. He gives two small views of St. Peter's Church, in grey and yellow; the one from the North-east shows the Tower with Turret, Spire, Chancel; the other view is from the West end.

In his Notes he says that as it lately stood it was built Cathedral fashion. He says the Tower and the Transepts were the oldest, next came the Chancel, and lastly the West end. The Communion Table stood at the East end of the Chancel within a railing, and the sides of the Chancel were fitted up with ancient stalls of oak, "but very plain." Under the Tower and part of the three Aisles were the "Pews and other accommodations for Public Worship." At the West end stood a Gallery, "upon eight fluted pillars, containing a very good organ." The *Font* stood still further to the West. He describes a Chandelier which bore the date 1717.

Of the *Stained Glass* he says:—

"In the three most Eastern windows, in both North and South Aisles, are remains of painted glass principally in the upper compartments, but each of the middle divisions of the lower part is a piece of it."

And so he goes on at considerable length, furnishing a very complete account of what the Church was like before the present Tower was built.

The havoc wrought among the *Monuments* and grave-stones must have been most greivous. He gives a list of eight Monuments: Lt.-Col. Wm. Dobyns; his 2nd daughter; Robert Rumney, S.T.P.; Thomas Arris; John Rudston, LL.D.; Mary Tombes; Robert Clavering, B.M; Edward Strong.

Of *Brasses* he gives the following list: Seven. A Priest; Priest with a Chalice; John Atkyn, glover; Skipwith; Roger Pemberton and John Ball; Wm. Victor or Mitor; John Spencer.

A list of 18 *Gravestones* some with and some without Arms follows: William Dobyns; Abraham Dobyns; Robert Rumney, D.D.; Sir Richard Lee; Robert Robotham; John Robotham; Ann Jenyns; John Coxe; Robert New; Edith L. Vineter; Elizabeth Palmer; Jasper Arris Borradale; Mr. David Tombes; Mary Strong; Margaret New; William Thomson; Edward Strong; Robert Clavering.

He says that the first two brasses were lying in the Chancel under a pile of stones; that that of John Spencer was in the North Transept in the same condition; and that the gravestone of Edward Strong was covered with timber.

The *Inscriptions* are written out for: Rob. Rumney, 1743; John Robotham, 1675; Ann Jenyns, 1656; Rob. New, 1762; Jasper Borradaile, 1774; Mary Strong, 1741; Margaret New, 1773; William Thomson, 1768; Robert Clavering, 1747; William Clarke, dean of Winchester, 1679.

Drawings in colour are given of the Monument to Edward Strong, 1723; and of the Mural Monuments of Thomas Arris, 1726; Elizabeth Dobyns, Rev. Rob. Rumney, 1743; Mary Tombes, 1779; Rev. John Rudston, 1691; Robert Clavering, 1747; and Lt. Col. Wm. Dobyns, 1738; in all, eight.

He gives drawings in colour of the Brass to John Ball, which he says is on the back of Robert Pemberton's Brass; Roger Pemberton's Brass; also the two Ecclesiastical Brasses. These two are now lost; and no wonder. The drawing of the Brass to William Mitor and Grace, his wife, 1486, shows the figure of the man, the inscription, and the space for the wife. Chauncy also gives the Inscription. It, too, is missing. A drawing of another missing Brass, that of John Atkin, glover, and Johanna, his wife, 1449, is also given. Haines has noted the shield and says the figures are gone. Our Artist does not draw the shield, only the figures of the man, his wife, and the inscription. A shield bearing . . . three bars . . . . . and on a chief . . . . . a lion passant . . . for Skipwith, is also drawn. This brass is also missing, but we learn from Chauncy that Richard Skipwith died in 1420. The last Brass shows a man and wife kneeling on either side of a desk, and gives an inscription for John Spencer and Margaret his wife, 1622; with the Coat of Arms. Eight Drawings of Brasses in all.

There are drawings of three Gravestones with their Inscriptions, viz., Edith le Vineter; Robert Robotham, 1672, and Edward Sadleir, Richard and Margaret Lee, on one stone. He gives one also to John Coxe, 1630, of which he says that it was described in Salmon's History

as lying in the middle Aisle. Further he notes that it was lately discovered broken in many pieces, lying about a foot below the pavement, immediately over the leaden coffin. A note on the Cox family informs us that they held Beaumonds, Kingsbury and Butterwick. In Pridmore's time he says it belonged to Mr. Thomas Kinder, whose father married the widow of Archdeacon Cole. Through this marriage Beaumonds passed to the Kinder family.

Drawings are given of four specimens of *Stained-glass*. The first in colour gives the Arms of France and England quarterly, over all a label of three points Arg. each charged with three toretaux. The next, also in colour, is he says, by tradition the portrait of John Wheathamstead, "the initial letter J, with a crown over it repeated upon the garment gives some probability to the account." The third, also coloured, represents an Angel, with a thurible. In the last is a figure, apparently that of St. Peter, seated on a throne, a key in his right hand, and a clasped book in his left.

Drawings are also given of the *Font*, which appears to be a dwarf Corinthian pillar; the heads of a King and Queen from the label over the North Door; some capitals, Norman; some cable mouldings; the top of a floriated cross, which he says were taken out of the solid walls in pulling down the Tower; and four stone coffin lids, wedge-shaped, and with crosses extending the full length, also taken from the walls. He gives but one Hatchment, that of Elizabeth Dobyns.

These closing years of the 19th century show the wonderful advancement we have made since the closing years of the 18th century. Our taste, we claim, is more refined, and founded on sounder principles than those which obtained in Pridmore's day. Every town has now its School of Art in connection with South Kensington, and pretty and correct drawings of plums and apples and conventional ornament are made from plaster models, which have the *imprimatur* of the Science and Art Department, are produced wholesale all over the country; but the interesting old buildings and vanishing landmarks of our country are flagrantly neglected. So far as my own observation goes, I am compelled to own that there are fewer boys now-a-days, who try to draw from

what they see around them, than there were some five-and-twenty or thirty years ago. Every little gutter snipe must draw as *per pattern*, whether he will or no. I am of course bound to believe that South Kensington is working at first principles and by right methods to make us an Art-loving Nation—it would be rank heresy for me to believe otherwise—but in the vast majority of instances, it leads on to nothing beyond copying a few plaster casts, and gaining such and such certificates. The “first principles” have not yet led on to the second.

The picturesque, the beautiful is around us in many a quaint nook and corner of such an old-world place as St. Alban's; picturesque and beautiful not merely as studies in light and shade, effective grouping, and delicate and varied tones, but because of its vital connection with a living past. “Your fathers, where are they?”—Around us on every side in the good and bad work which they have left behind—work with its faults and conceits, but with its high aspirations and conceptions as well: we without them had not been; we without them cannot be made perfect.

So much is vanishing of the past and we as an Archæological Society must “Gather up the fragments that remain that nothing be lost.” The camera, the pencil, and the cycle are within the reach of everyone now-a-days. I should like to see them enlisted in a systematic and enthusiastic survey of every nook and corner of this beautiful and interesting little County of Hertford.

To observe accurately and to record correctly and systematically memorials of the past is in itself an education, and calls into play that which is best and noblest of our faculties, ever opening out wider and deeper interests.

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