

## S. SEPULCHRE'S CHAPEL, SUDBURY.

As early as the commencement of the 13th century, and probably much earlier, there stood on one of the numerous "Crofts" of the town, at the intersection of S. Gregory's and School Streets, with Stour Street and S. Sepulchre Street, a church or "chapel," known as S. Sepulchre. The Croft had the same name, and is referred to in "A Rental of Rents and Assize belonging to the Mayor, and collected by his Bailiffs," drawn up in 1664. There being churches at each end of S. Gregory's Street, that thoroughfare was then more commonly known as "Church Street," and Walnut-tree Lane, as "College Lane," it being the principal approach to Abp. Sudbury's College.

William, Earl of Gloucester, granted to Stoke College, the messuage of S. Sepulchre, Sudbury, with 12 acres of land, and one acre of pasture, and about the year 1206, his daughter Amicia, Countess of Clare, confirmed the grant. The family of the De Clares were great founders of religious houses, and no less than sixteen monasteries were established by them. The same countess endowed the Hospital of the Knights of S. John at Jerusalem, situate near Ballingdon Bridge, with the tolls of the bridge and with houses and rents. In the British Museum (Add. MSS. 604, b. 66) is one entitled, "La Chartre Rogerè Wymarkes faite à Richard de Clare Comte de Gloucestre de certaines reliques d' être su la Chaple de Seint Sepulcre de Subbery donne en la fest d' Apostoles Philip et Jacobe, l'an de Grace M.CCLXII." The translation being, "The Charter of Roger Wymarkes, made to Richard de Clare, Earl of Gloucester, of certain relics being in the Chapel of Saint Sepulchre of Sudbury, given at the Feast of the Apostles Philip and James, in the year of Grace 1262." The Chapel is also mentioned in the Post Mortem Inquisition made 8 Edward III., respecting the lands, &c., of Gilbert de Clare, who fell at Bannockburn in 1314, and whose numerous manors and estates (he having left no issue) were divided amongst his three sisters and co-heiresses. In a

similar Inquisition taken 22 Richard II., 1398, "the church and chapel of S. Sepulchre" are stated to have been in the possession of Roger Mortimer, Earl of March and Ulster, the son of Edmund Mortimer and Phillipa, sole daughter and heiress of Lionel, Duke of Clarence. This Roger was the heir presumptive of the Crown, and in 1385 was acknowledged as such by the Parliament, and from him the House of York derived their title. In 1383, the trustee of Edward de Mortimer, Earl of March, the representative of a line of ancestors of Norman origin from the time of the Conquest, who died the year previously, presented to the Chapel, Joseph de Burton, who was instituted 5 September of the same year. He was succeeded by Joseph Stacey, the next incumbent being John Brokhal, instituted 20 April, 1403, presented by the Crown. The Church is mentioned in 1424, in the Inquisition ordered 3 Henry IV., as being of the annual value of 30/-, and in 1534, in the Ecclesiastical Survey of the 26th of Henry VIII., the annual value being then computed at 40/-. In the 5th of Edward VI. (1551) it appears that the chapel, messuage, and land, became the property of Sir John Cheke, Knt. The Cheke family were settled at Debenham from the time of Henry the Sixth, if not earlier. There appears no notice of the church after this date. Probably it became ruinous in the agitated times of the Reformation and was pulled down, there being ample accommodation at the three parish churches, at the Ballingdon and Priory Chapels, and at the parish church of Brundon, annexed to Ballingdon hamlet.

The *Monasticon Anglicanum* (1654), refers to a hospital situate in the messuage of S. Sepulchre, which was also endowed by the Clare family. There were three hospitals in the town; S. Sepulchre's, that of the Knight Hospitallers, near Ballingdon bridge (the site now known as "Hospital Yard"), and John Colney's leper hospital, dedicated to S. Leonard, situate near S. Bartholomew's Priory and Chapel on the Melford Road. S. Sepulchre's Chapel might have been built on the model of the Holy Sepulchre,

copied in the Round Church at Little Maplestead, a few miles distant, that building being erected by the Knight Hospitallers.

Remains of foundations and human skeletons have frequently been found on and near the site of the church. In 1800, when a cellar was being dug in one of the corner houses of School Street, abutting on Stour Street, many perfect skeletons and bones were discovered. In 1826, at the opposite corner, in Sepulchre Street, eight skeletons were found, and others in digging the foundations of Trinity Chapel. A portion of one of the northern buttresses in almost a perfect state was also discovered, and the core of a buttress is still to be seen in the cellar of a house on the south side of Sepulchre Street. In 1850 remains of 30 skeletons were uncovered, not far below the surface, and a silver coin of Henry IV. was picked up.

The Croft was, probably, a large one, for many of the present houses were not then built. From a date on a mantel-piece in a timber house, with rich "pargetted front," just partly demolished to widen the entrance to School Street, it appears that the houses there were not built till 1667. The *Rose Inn*, which stood opposite (pulled down a few years since—October 1887), was not built till 1807, "on waste in Stour Street." Sepulchre field, of three acres, is mentioned in the poor rate of 1730, and then belonged to Mr. Bernard Carter, Mayor, who lived at Salters' Hall (still standing), and was assessed at  $\frac{2}{3}$  per annum. A well called S. Pulcher's is mentioned in the rental of 1664, already referred to. Probably the word is a corruption of the name of the chapel, croft, and street. The field containing the well, was afterwards called "Springfield." Near the church was "Sudbury Hall," and nearly opposite "Salters' Hall," a fine timbered house with carved lintel, &c., probably erected about 1450. The church occupied a central and important position between the Collegiate church of S. Gregory, and the Archbishop's college on the one side, and the Free Grammar School (founded by Wm. Wood, rector and warden of the college,

1492), and the noted Dominican Priory, famous for its sanctity, founded 1272, on the other side. Sudbury was a prosperous, loyal, and religious town, and played its part well in the eventful history of those days. The rich woollen merchants freely gave of their wealth for religious and charitable purposes, and the clergy did not neglect the education of the young, and the improvement of those of riper years, advantages being provided for these purposes at College, Free School, and Priory. The records of the chapel, built in memory of the Holy Sepulchre, are very scant, but they throw some light on its history, benefactors, treasures, appendages, priests, and patrons, and are, therefore, worth preserving in a permanent form.

#### ANCIENT CARVED DOORS, SUDBURY.

As already mentioned there are in Mr. R. Ransom's house, two remarkable carved doors, one in a bed room at the top of the house, and the other leading to a wine cellar. The carvings are in high relief, and are probably 15th century work. In one of the panels are small human heads, or masks, very similar to those to be found on Transitional Norman, and Early English corbel-tables. The grapes and leaves resemble those frequently seen in the cornices of Perpendicular screens, the leaves being of the square crocket type. One panel is a very ornate one, containing a squarely cut monogram, "S.R.," and the national floral emblems, the rose, shamrock, and thistle, tied or joined together in the centre with a "love-knot." The interlacing scroll work is very fine, and regularly "struck" and cut.

The panels are older than the styles of the doors, and may have come from a hall or screen, being subsequently inserted in the doors. The mouldings are not mitred. An original hinge remains on one door. Formerly some of the rooms had panelled dados. Probably there was an older house on the same site, from which the carvings may have been taken.