

THE MONASTERY OF BRUISYARD.

BY REV. FRANCIS HASLEWOOD, F.S.A.

Bruisyard, in Domesday written Buresiart, a small village in the Hundred of Plomesgate, about four miles distant from Framlingham, has this interest for archæologists—that it was at one time the site of a monastery, which was afterwards converted into a nunnery, and so continued until the dissolution.

The College, consisting of a warden and four secular priests, was originally established at Campsey Ash, but was removed hither by Maud de Lancaster, Countess of Ulster, in 1354; and the priests had in the manor place here a common refectory, dormitory, and a chapel, dedicated to the Annunciation of the Virgin Mary. This College was afterwards surrendered in 1366 to the use of an abbess and sisters, minoresses of the order of S. Clare. (*Monasticon Anglicanum*, Dugdale, vi., 1555.)

The manor place of Bruisyard, known as Roke Hall, is still a good family mansion, though a large portion has been destroyed. The moat remains on three sides, and a large piece of water at one time existed at the back of the house, which, no doubt, furnished fish on fast days for the monks and nuns.

The grounds exhibit many traces of former buildings, the foundations of a wall, running parallel with the moat, being clearly traceable.

A carved mantel-piece of stone was discovered a few years ago behind some wainscot. The staircase to the attics indicates antiquity, and there is an old clock, still in working order, which possesses this peculiarity—that it

has neither face nor hands, but strikes the hour on a bell at the top of the building.

Sir Walter Quynytyn in his Will, dated 1501, bequeathed to the nuns of "Brosyzerde a book called Legenda aurea in English." (Page 111.)

The complete Inventory of the goods and ornaments of the church, made by the Commissioners of King Henry VIII. in 1536, is preserved at the Public Record Office. As it has never been previously published, it is here printed in full:—

INVENTORY OF GOODS DELIVERED TO THE ABBESS OF THE MONASTERY OF
BRUSEYARD BY THE KING'S COMMISSIONERS.

MONASTERIUM DE BRUSYARDE.

An Inventory Indentyd made the xxijth daye of Auguste Anno R. Henrici viijth xxvijth (1536) Betewne Sir Antony Wyngefelde Thomas Ruffys knyghts Robt Southwell Esquire and Thoms Myldemaye Comissioners to the Kynge or Souayne lorde on the on ptye and Mary Page Abbesse ther on thoder ptie Wittenessyth that the daye ande yere aboue wrytten have delyued to the saide Abbesse those psells of goodes & ymplements hereaftr in thys Inventory conteyned to be savely kept to the Kyngs use.*

Videlt.

Ornaments of the Church

ffurst a cope a vestemente w ^t deacon & Subdeacon of Blewe Bawdekyn att	xij ^s	iiij ^d
Itm a lyke Sute very olde of White Sylke praysed att	x ^s	
Itm a Syngle vestemente of Crymson & blewe of velvett att	xx ^s	
Itm a Syngle vestement of olde violet velvett att		xx ^d
Itm a Cope and a syngle vestemente of blew & yellow sylke very olde att	ij ^s	iiij ^d
Itm a vestemente of redde		ij ^s
Sylke w ^t lytell vests very olde		
Itm a Cope of blewe bawdekyne w ^t orferos (orferays) of Clowdes very olde	ij ^s	iiij ^d
Itm a Cope of redde sylke the Grownde blew praysed att		xvj ^d
Itm iiij Alter clothes of Sylke very olde att	ij ^s	iiij ^d
Itm vj alter clothes of lynen callyd palls very olde att		xij ^d

* Miscell. Suppression Papers. T. G. 15,517. Exch. Q.R. Misc. ⁸³³₃₈ Endorsed
28 Hen. VIII.

In the plo^r Chamber.

Itm a fferther bede a Matteres a bōlstor a payer of blankett a Coveryng and a pyllow	vjs vijd
a Seler a tostor ij Curteynes to the same very old & lytell worth att	
Itm ij Chayers ij cosshens att	iiijd
Sm iijli vjs iiijd	

In the draught Chamber

Itm a ffetherbed a bolster a payer of Blankets and a coveryng wt a pyllow	iijs

In Yaxleyes Chamb.

Itm ij ffetherbeddes ij payer of Blanketts ij Bolsters & ij Coveryngs att	vs

In the geste Chambr

Itm a ffetherbed a bolstr a payer of blanketts a} coveryng a Seler and ij Curteynes of lynen att}	vs
Itm the came chambr hanged wt paynted Cloth att	

In the Chambr nexte the same

Itm a ffether bede a bolstor a payer of Blanketts a} coveryng wt a Seler and ij Curteynes att	iijs iiijd

In the Churche

Itm a Table of Alabastr att	xxd iijd xiid xs
Itm ij alter Clothes of lynen	
Itm ij greatt Candelstykes of latten att	
Itm a payer of lytell orgaynes very olde att	

In the Buttery

Item a basen and a Ewer of pewter att	vijd ijd vjd
Itm iij lytell Saltes of peweter att	
Itm iiij latten candelstykkes olde & broken att	

Napery

Itm iiij tabell Clothes playene ij towells vij Napkens olde & were worne att	xxd
Itm v payer Shetts ij pyllowes sore worne att	

Sm xxxvij*s* vdij*s*

In the plo ^r	
Itm the same plor hanged wt Steyned worke att	
Itm a Banker wt iij Cossdens att	xjd
Itm a Table & a payer of tressells, & a forme att	iijd

In the Kechin

Itm v brasse potts olde att	-	-	-	v ^s
Itm v Spyts great & small at	-	-	-	xij ^d
Itm an olde brasse pane att	-	-	-	iiij ^d
Itm vj platters vj dysthes and vj dysthes	-	-	-	

In the Bakehous & Bruhous.

Itm a leade meyesshe fflatte ii Snylde ffatts and a Keler	-	-	-	
Itm an olde Copper att	-	-	-	
Itm a horsse myll att	-	-	-	

Catall

Itm Kynne xvij & a bull for the payle att vj ^s viij ^d the pece att	-	-	}	vj ^{li} vj ^s viij ^d
Itm xx ^{tie} yeryngs for store att iiij ^s the pece	-	-	}	iiij ^{li}
Itm xij calves callyed Weuetts att ij ^s the peace	-	-	}	xxiiij ^s
Itm x horsse for the plough & carte olde att	-	-	}	xl ^s
Itm iiij plowghe steres att	-	-	}	liij ^s iiij ^d

Plate

Itm one Chalic of sy ^{li} pcell gilt p oz xxij oz at iijs iiijd the oz	-	-	}	lxxvj ^s viij ^d
Itm on other chalic of sy ^{li} gilt p oz xvij oz at iijs viij ^d the oz	-	-	}	lvij ^s viij ^d
Itm one chalic of sy ^{li} pcell gilt p oz vij oz at iijs iiijd	-	-	}	xxiijs ^s iiij ^d
Itm one other chalic p oz vj oz at iijs iiijd the oz	-	-	}	xx ^s
Itm ij smalle Chalices of syl ^{li} pcell gilt p oz vij oz at iijs iiijd the oz	-	-	}	xxv ^s
Itm ij paxes of sylu pcell gilt p oz v oz at iijs iiijd	-	-	}	xvj ^s viij ^d
Itm ij Crewetts of sylu pcell gilt p oz vj oz at iijs iiijd	-	-	}	xx ^s
	Sm	xxvijli	xij ^s iiijd	
Itm a Coope wt a cou ^r pcell gilt p oz iij oz at iijs iiija	-	-	-	x ^s
Itm ij pecs of sylu p oz xv oz at iijs iiijd the oz	-	-	-	l ^s
Itm a pece wt a cou ^r pcell gilt p oz vij oz at iijs iiijd	-	-	}	xxx ^s
Itm ij dosen of sylu spones p oz xix oz at iijs iiijd the oz	-	-	}	liij ^s iiij ^d
	Sm	vijli	vij ^s iiijd	

*Mary Page Abbess*Sm totlis xl xij^s vd

ABSTRACT OF PROCEEDINGS, 1891.

The Council met at the Town Hall, Ipswich, on Thursday, March 26, 1891. Upon Mr. W. Brown taking the chair, the Minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed. The subject of the Church Plate in the County was considered, and it was resolved that the Honorary Secretary should confer with the Rev. C. R. Manning, with a view to drawing up a form, in order to secure a uniform return.

A meeting of the Council was held on Thursday, May 14, 1891, at the Athenæum, Bury S. Edmund's, when Mr. E. M. Dewing presided. Eight members were present. Upon the motion of Lord John Hervey, seconded by Mr. Casley, it was resolved, that Rev. C. R. Manning, F.S.A., and the Honorary Secretary, be requested to draw up and print a scheme of enquiry with respect to Church Plate in Suffolk, and communicate with such gentlemen as may be willing to co-operate with them in obtaining such information. The subject of the summer excursion was discussed; and a programme approved for Thursday, July 2, 1891.

The annual General Meeting of the members of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology and Natural History, was held on Thursday, May 14, 1891, at Bury. The chair was taken by Mr. E. M. Dewing. Upon the motion of Mr. Casley, seconded by the Rev. C. W. Jones, the annual report was adopted. Bishop Harold Browne was unanimously elected an honorary member, and one of the vice-presidents, of the society. The Right Hon. Earl Cadogan was also elected a vice-president. Nine new members were enrolled.

The annual excursion was made on Thursday, July 2, 1891, when members and their friends assembled at the station, Bury S. Edmund's, where carriages were in readiness to convey the company to the places selected by the Council.

The first place upon the programme was

HAWSTEAD CHURCH.

Here the visitors were welcomed by the rector, Rev. Leslie Mercer, who read, from the pulpit, the following paper upon his church. "It appears from *Domesday Book* (compiled between the years 1081 and 1086) that there was a church here at that time: a benefit which, from

the silence of that record in this particular, probably several villages did not then in enjoy, but that *this* parish was so privileged might perhaps be owing to the neighbouring monastery of S. Edmund. The church is dedicated to All Saints, and is full of interest to the lover of architecture and archæology.



Of the exact age of the present structure there are no records, but the building speaks for itself, for we find in it examples of four different styles of architecture:—viz., Norman, Early English, Decorated, and Perpendicular. The arms of the Drurys, in stone, in the tower, will help us to decide its date, and also that of the nave. The manor

and advowson was not sold to the Drurys till 1505, and the arms of the purchaser (Sir Robert Drury) are over the west door of the steeple, and were probably placed there during its construction. Sir Robert died in 1520; the age, therefore, of the present building may be fixed at the beginning of the 16th century. Yet from records we find that Margery Muryell, of Hawstead, widow, by her will, dated 12th December, 1451, gave 13s. 4d. to the building of the church. In 1533 Alen Legget gave 40s. for the reparation of the church, and in 1552 Alice Semar, widow, of the town of Hawstead, bequeathed 10s. to the building of the roof. The walls of the nave for about two feet above the ground are of free stone, and project all round in the nature of a buttress, Sir John Cullum writes, "exactly like those at Windsor Castle, a particular which I recollect not in any other country church." The fine tower, 63 feet high, is surmounted by battlements embattled, enriched with shields and some initial letters on the east and west sides; there are also devices of a pelican and two cocks worked in flint; the base of the tower and the angular buttresses are ornamental with devices in flint work, amongst them quatrefoils and interlaced triangles. The north and south doors of the nave are Norman, the arch of the former having a single zig-zag moulding, and the latter a double one, both with columns on each side. No doubt these Norman doorways belonged to an earlier building, and were afterwards inserted in the present 16th century nave. The thickness of the walls of the building is as follows:—Tower 5½ feet, north wall 3 feet 1 inch, south wall 3 feet 7 inches. The fine oak roof of the nave is coeval with the windows and the chancel arch. The braces and principals are carved, of the latter every other is supported by an angel, but these were defaced by the ruthless hand of William Dowsing, of Stratford, in this county, who made his reforming circuit in the year 1643 and 1644. In the journal of his transactions, the angels and cherubims in the roof are constantly ordered to be taken down, but to have done so would often have endangered the roof; so defacing was thought sufficient. The thatched roof was exchanged for tiles in 1780 at the cost of £100. In 1858 the oak roof was restored, and the present benches supplied the places of the old pews, at the cost of £1,255. It is interesting to notice how the windows on the north and south side of the nave vary in their tracery. The chancel, divided from the nave by its original perpendicular screen (on the top of which may still be seen the sockets for the rood and the figures of the Blessed Virgin and St. John), is of an earlier date and inferior in work to that of the nave. It was originally an early English chancel, which may be seen by the lancet windows on the north and south sides, now stopped up to make room for the mural monuments. At the west end of the chancel, as well on the north as the south side, a window of two lights, with flowing tracery, was inserted in the 14th century, the window on the south side being much lower than the other windows, and having originally only the west light extended, which was fitted with a shutter

and a grating before it. This shutter, as far as recollection serves, was painted with the sacred monogram in the centre, and surrounding it, and nailed to the wood, ornamental twisted ironwork. The east window of five lights was inserted by the Cloptons or Drurys, the tracery being renewed in 1856 by the late Lady Cullum, and filled in with painted glass by Heaton and Butler, to the memory of her husband, the last baronet. The floor of the chancel has been raised to the same level as the nave, no doubt under Dowsing's directions, the object of so doing was to diminish the dignity of the Holy Table. Traces of the original floor were discovered in 1887 in making alterations for the organ, the level was the same as that of the tomb of the Crusader on the north side. In the earth that was removed several pieces of stained glass were discovered, and two Nurenberg tokens, also a small silver coin. That the national love of inscribing one's name on wood or stone or lead, which seems specially characteristic of the Britisher, was still in vogue in 1640, may be seen by the name of one of the sons of the then Rector cut in the chancel seat, "Benjamin Edgar, 1640," and the name of Drury also appears. Coming to the chief objects of interest—the font, which originally stood on a square base of brickwork covered with cement, a little to the east of the tower arch, was placed in its present position under the tower, with a new base and step in 1887. The bowl is of very early date and roughly cut, at the upper edge are traces of the iron fastenings by which the cover was formerly locked down for fear of sorcery. How long this custom continued is not known, but a lock was bought for the font in Brockdish Church, Norfolk, as late as 1553. In the tower stands the old church chest with three locks, one for the Rector, and the other two for the Churchwardens. It has a narrow hole on the top, exactly over the little box called the poor men's box, which served as the alms box of the church. The iron handle of the south door bearing the Tau and mullet of the Drury family, is no doubt of the same date as the nave. The pulpit is probably coeval with the nave, decorated as it is with the arms of the Drurys; from this same pulpit the good Bishop Hall, who was rector of Hawstead from 1601–1608, used to preach thrice a week, yet (he writes) "Never durst I climb into the pulpit to preach any sermon whereof I had before, in my poor and plain fashion, penned every word in the same order, wherein I hoped to deliver it, although in the expression I listed not to be a slave to syllables." The piscina at the east end, on the north of the nave, was discovered in September, 1890. It is 13th century work, of the same date as the chancel. The opening was filled in with flint and pieces of clunch, the mortar being almost as hard as flint. On the screen (south side) hangs the sanctus bell in its original position, it is about six inches in diameter. It is astonishing how it escaped all the spoliation that this church has suffered. In the chancel stands an old perpendicular lectern, on which lie Erasmus's Paraphrase of the Gospel, and the Book of Homilies, the former in black letter, and the latter a modern edition. It remains now only to describe a few of the sepulchral

monuments in chronological order. Within an arched recess, in the middle of the north wall of the chancel, lies a cross-legged figure of stone, the arch is boldly carved with oak foliage, one side of which is more, elaborate in design than the other. Upon the arch rests an embattled string-course pierced with small cruciform oylets. On either side is a pinnacle of square section, edged with a triple roll, capped with a moulding-like string-course, surmounted by a pedimental crocketed head. The string-course, as it now appears, is discontinuous, and does not extend as far as the pinnacles, showing signs of dislocation. The base of the monument is panelled with trefoil-headed arches of decorated work of earlier character than the arch. The recumbent figure of a knight in coat of mail and surcoat, in the act of sheathing his sword, with legs crossed (the left over the right), rests upon it. This is attributed by Gage, in his *History of Thingoe*, to Eustace Fitz-Eustace, who died 1271. But Sir James Burrough, in the appendix to *Magna Britannia*, in Suffolk, says: "I know not upon what ground, it is for one of the family of Fitz-Eustace, who were lords here in the reigns of Henry III. and Edward I." In the centre of the wall, under the arch, and over the figure of the knight, is a round disc of stone, about 11 inches in diameter, and slightly convex, with a hole in the centre. It has been suggested that it may be a conventional turban, one of those placed at the head of Moslem graves, and brought home as a kind of trophy, and placed by some friend over the tomb of the would-be Crusader. In the middle of the church, towards the east end (wrote Sir John Cullum) is a flat slab of Sussex marble, $8\frac{1}{4}$ by $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet; by its escutcheons in brass, it appears to be for Roger Drury, Esq., who died in 1500, and was buried here. When restoring the church in 1857, Mr. Collett, in his copy of *The History of Hawstead*, made a note as follows: "On lifting up the slab which covers the tomb of Roger Drury, it split into numberless fragments, so that it could not again be put down. It still had the arms in brass at the four corners, but the inscription in the centre was gone, which, has, however, been preserved by Chitting. The arms were placed on a fresh piece of stone, which is now in front of the seats at the north side of the nave. On a flat stone in front of the steps leading to the Holy Table is the portrait of a lady in brass, of the time of Henry VII.; at her girdle hangs a bag or purse by a long string, as also her beads, consisting of 30 small pieces and four large ones or gauds. On this stone are four escutcheons in brass, whence it appears that this stone is for Ursula, fourth daughter of Sir Robert Drury. At the head of this stone is another, with only one escutcheon in the centre, for Jane, daughter of Sir William Saint Maur, first wife of Sir William Drury. She died in 1517. All these three last had inscriptions, and probably "orate pro anima" was their ruin. Cullum's *History of Hawstead*. In the south-east corner of the nave is the fine altar tomb of Sir William Drury. He is represented in brass between his two wives, the one on his left is depicted with her eyes open, indicating that she survived her husband. The beads have