

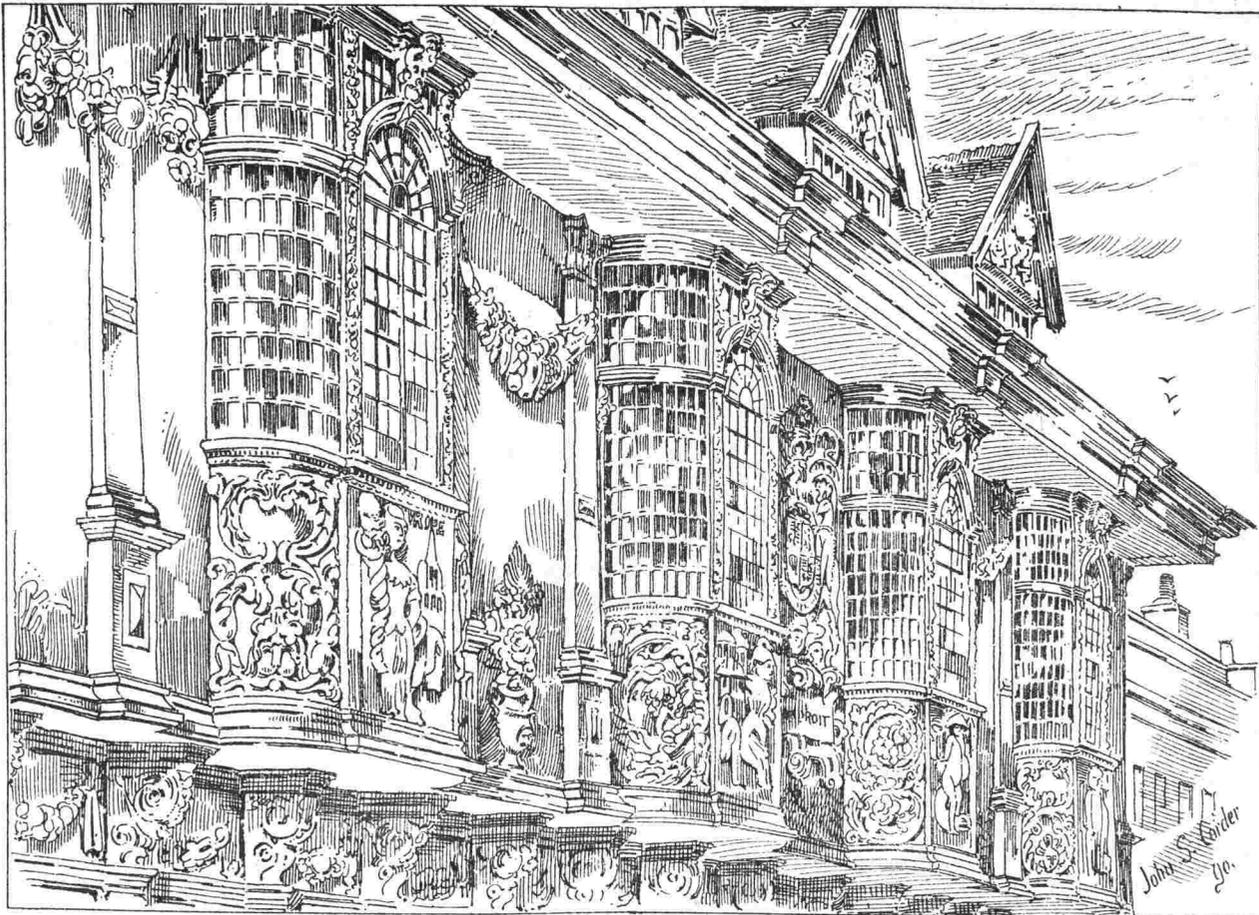
THE ALMSHOUSE CHAPEL, HADLEIGH ; AND
WILL OF ARCHDEACON PYKENHAM.

BY THE VERY REV. DEAN SPOONER, M.A.,
Rector of Hadleigh.

The Alms Row Chapel at Hadleigh having been recently restored, the Will of Archdeacon Pykenham was examined with a view to discovering the history of its foundation. No certain record however exists, and we can therefore only assign an approximate date by a study of the building itself. It probably had its origin from the common practice all through mediæval times, of building road-side chapels where Mass was said daily, for the benefit of travellers. In these chapels, the Sanctuary was screened off from the rest of the building, and kept closed, none but the Priest being allowed to enter. Such seems to have been the case here, as there are still remnants of the screen. Grooves may be observed in the tie-beam of the easternmost roof principal, which show its position, and probable shape ; the oak sill was found among the bricks of the old floor, and portions of the posts had been used to form seats. No traces were found of a bell-turret of any sort, but there undoubtedly was a bell to be rung at the elevation of the Host. The chapel was probably begun not later than the middle of the fifteenth century. The date 1498 was found very faintly cut upon one of the roof beams. This, however, could hardly have been the date of the completion of the building, but was probably scratched on by some man doing repairs to the roof.

A considerable amount of restoration and renovation has been necessary to save the chapel from falling into ruins. A good deal of the timber framing, though much decayed, still remained, and where sufficiently good has been preserved. The east end required special attention, and this part of the building has been strengthened. A new porch, vestry, and bell cot with bell have been provided.

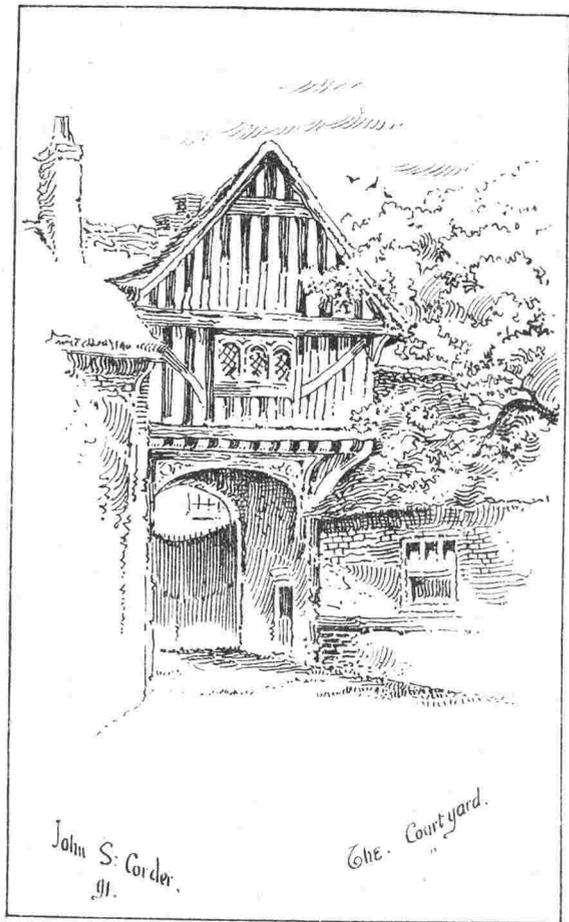
The old door frame was discovered, but in a dilapidated condition, and the present door into the chapel



THE ANCIENT HOUSE.



THE STREET FRONT.



John S. Corder.
91.

THE COURTYARD.

occupies exactly the same position. The floor, windows, and seating are all entirely new. The carved pulpit supposed to have been used by Dr. Rowland Taylor is an interesting piece of wood work. It is quite as old as the chapel, probably older, and it is more than likely that it was moved there from the church. The old carved benches have been adapted to form the prayer desks. In short, the greatest care has been taken to preserve everything ancient and of historical interest, and the building is now in a comfortable condition for the old people for whose use it was intended.

As to Dr. Pykenham, who provided in his Will for the maintenance of the almshouses, and the services in the chapel, particulars of his history are given in the third volume of our Proceedings, pages 87 and 274. He was appointed in 1472 to the Rectory of Hadleigh, enjoying with the same numerous other pieces of preferment, and among them the Archdeaconry of Suffolk. He resided at Ipswich, in Northgate Street, where are the remains of a house and gateway still known as the "Archdeacon's House," and the "Pykenham Gateway." This latter Kirby (p. 45) states was built by the archdeacon in 1471, adding "the initial letters of his name are still upon the gate-way." It is a fine example of brick work. Dr. Pykenham appears afterwards to have resided among his flock at Hadleigh, where he built the Rectory Tower, and also twelve Almshouses. He died in 1497, and an abstract of his Will is subjoined:—

Extract from the Will of Dr. W. Pykenham, formerly Archdeacon of Suffolk, and Rector of Hadleigh.

This is the last Will of me William Pykenham, Archdeacon of Suffolk, made the vj day of Aprill, the xijth year of Henry the Seventh, 1497, for and upon all these Lands and Tenements, Rents and Services, with the Appurtenances in Whatfield, Aldham, &c., &c.

After enumerating certain charges for life &c. made on his property, he proceeds to enumerate more particularly the items of which it consists, and where the lands and tenements were situated, and then names who shall be "seized & possessed in the same Lands and Tenements, amongst whom the Parson & Wardens of the Parish Church of Hadleg yearly for evermore, shall be ex-officio members, and shall well and completely repair, sustain, and maintain, as well all the said Land

& Tenements, as also the xij Tenements and the Appurtenances lately by me the aforesaid William Pykenham of new edified and builded for xij Alms Houses, set and being in the Town of Hadleg abovesaid, and lay out the remainder yearly for ever to and among the xxvj poor Persons Almsmen and Women, now being & which for the time shall in the xij Tenements or Almshouses abovesaid towards the Exhibition, Finding and Sustentation of the same xxvj poor Persons, Men and Women, that is to wit to every of the same poor Persons, man and woman like much in eschewing of warrants and stryffes."

"Also I will that every Holy day in the year from henceforth for evermore, the bell in the chapell be tolled every forenoon at eight of the clocke and in the afternoon at four of the clocke, by one of the said poor men." . . . "And then I will that immediately without any delay, every one of the said xxiv poor men and women, which now be, and which for the time hereafter shall be elect, chosen and admitted into any of the Alms Houses foresaid, by all the time hereafter that he, she, or they shall continue and dwell in one of the said xii Alms Houses, shall daily resort into the chapell, shall continue and remain in prayer every forenoon from the said hour of eight of the clocke on to nine of the clocke next ensuing, unless a lawful and reasonable cause as sickness, impotency, or such duly provided *lett* to the contrary, and that all and every one of them devoutly say every morning in the hour afore limited in the said chapell, xv Pater Nosters, and xv Aves with the Creed, so that every one of them in one whole year so continuing, may worship all the Wounds that our Saviour Christ Jesus suffered for the redemption of sinful man, and over that those that are learned shall say Mattens; Prime, and Hours of our Lady, and also the Psalm of De Profundis, and once in the week at their best leisure the vii Psalms and the Litany, and the Placebo and Dirige for the soul of me, William Pykenham, their founder, and of John and Catherine, my father and mother, and for the soul of Walter Lyard,* sometime Bishop of Norwich, and other benefactors, and for all Christian souls."

"And likewise every afternoon in the hours afore limited, v Pater Nosters, v Aves and a Credo; and Evening Song and Complyne of our Lady, with the Psalm of De Profundis as it is above rehearsed; and once in the week our Lady Sawterre. And that all such said Alms People as be not learned, shall say every afternoon our Lady Sawterre, besides the xv Pater Noster, and xv Aves, and Credo, as it is above rehearsed. And at every afternoon in likewise our Lady Sawtere with v Pater Noster v Aves and a Credo for the Souls above specified."

N.B. De Rock says—

"Our Ladys Sawterre, or Psalter, consisted of 150 Ave Marias & 15 Paternosters, distributed that after every 10th Ave came a Pater Noster. This form of devotion is now known as the Rosary. In old English times the Lady Psalter was the term used, and Rosary a foreign introduction."

* Walter Le.Hert, Bishop 1446 to 1472, *Blazon of Episcopacy*, by W. K. R. Bedford, p. 80.