

BARNARDISTON VAULTS IN KEDINGTON CHURCH.

Kedington Church, built about A.D. 1300, and styled by many the "Westminster Abbey of Suffolk," possesses many interesting features of antiquity, including Saxon Stone Crucifix (found buried about 50 years ago, and placed on East end of Church), Ancient Sundial, 1590; Three decker Pulpit and Desk with hour glass stand; and others too numerous to mention.

About three years ago it was decided to try and raise sufficient funds to repair the ancient edifice, and a Committee was formed, including, in addition to the Church officials, Sir W. H. St. John Hope, Sir Peile Thompson, Bart., and the Rev. J. R. M. Vatcher, R.D.

It was decided to ask the advice of Mr. Detmar Blow (Architect to Society for Preservation of Ancient Buildings), who, after thoroughly examining the Church, gave a full report on the work necessary to be done, the first items being, digging and concreting a wide trench around the Church to protect and dry it, and ventilating the extensive vaults of the Barnardiston family (which were hitherto unventilated). This work was carried out in the Spring and Summer of 1915. The vaults had not been opened since 1855, when the body of Sophia Barnardiston (grandmother of the present Major-Gen. Barnardiston) was deposited in the North Vault. The entrance to the vaults is in the centre of the nave, outside the reading desk. Stone slabs beneath the brick floor being removed,

a flight of seven stone steps, five feet wide, led down to what was the entrance hall (10 feet by 6 feet) of the four vaults—North vault on the left, East vault opposite the steps, South vault on right, and S.E. vault leading from South vault.

In 1838, the oldest coffins were removed from the North and East vaults and placed in South and South-East vaults, the entrance to the latter being bricked up, and room left in the N. and N.E. vaults for future interments.

The North vault (measuring 16 feet by 9 feet) contained nine coffins, all being of lead, evidently enclosing shell of wood, and were in a very good state of preservation; the oldest were "Mr. Thomas Barnardiston of St. Edmundsbury" and his two wives, dated 1700, 1704 and 1728.

In the East vault (11 feet by 8 feet) were eight coffins of lead, which had formerly been enclosed in outer ones of wood, and with two exceptions no inscriptions were visible.

The South vault (12 feet by 10 feet) and the South-East vault ($6\frac{1}{2}$ feet by $7\frac{1}{2}$ feet) contained 37 coffins, the majority of which were in a dilapidated condition, no dates visible, and probably of the 16th century period. Among the better preserved were found those of "Sir Nathaniel Barnardiston," and "Lady Jane," his wife (parents of Sir Samuel Barnardiston, the originator of the name of "Roundheads," who is believed to have been buried at Kesgrave Church), the inscriptions being, "Sir Nathaniel Barnardiston, Knight, died 25th July, 1653," and "The most pious and prudent the Lady Jane, wife to the religious Knight, Sir Nathaniel Barnardiston, who died ye 17th

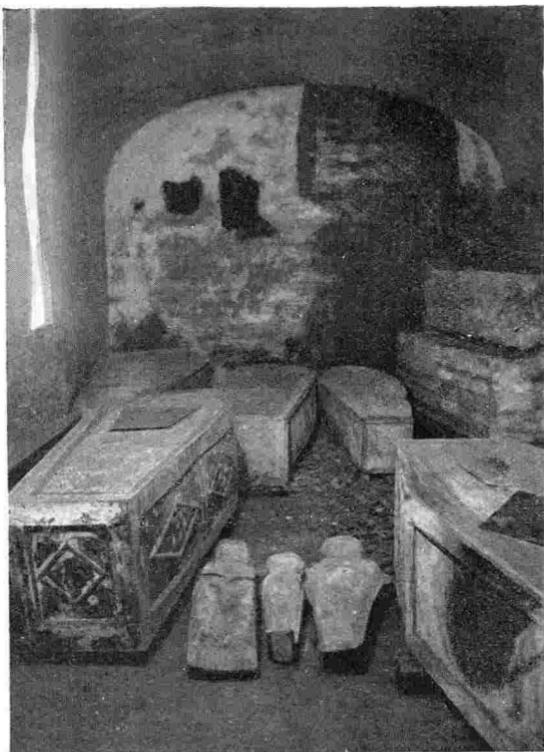
August, 1669, in ye 78 yeare of her age ”; the latter inscription was in raised letters of lead, and covered the whole lid of the coffin. A very fine monument on the North wall of the Church shows the pair sitting side by side.

Many of the coffins found in these vaults had formerly been enclosed in oak, which had decayed or fallen away, leaving the inner shell of lead, which in several cases had been moulded to exact shape of body. Among these was the “Viscountess Wimbaldon” (whose daughter married Sir Thomas Barnardiston, M.P. for Suffolk in the reigns of Charles II., and William and Mary), the inscription being raised (as in others) as follows:—“Heare lyeth Sophia, Viscountess Wimbaldon, Obit. Nov. the 12th, 1691. Etat. 74” (see photograph).

The second photograph is of three babies’ coffins, viz., “Martha Barnardiston, daughter of Mister Pelatiah Barnardiston, departed this life, July the Fifth, 1671,” and “Martha Barnardiston, 8th daughter of Nathaniel Barnardiston, deceased the 15th of December, Anno Domini 1667”; the smallest of the three bore no inscription.

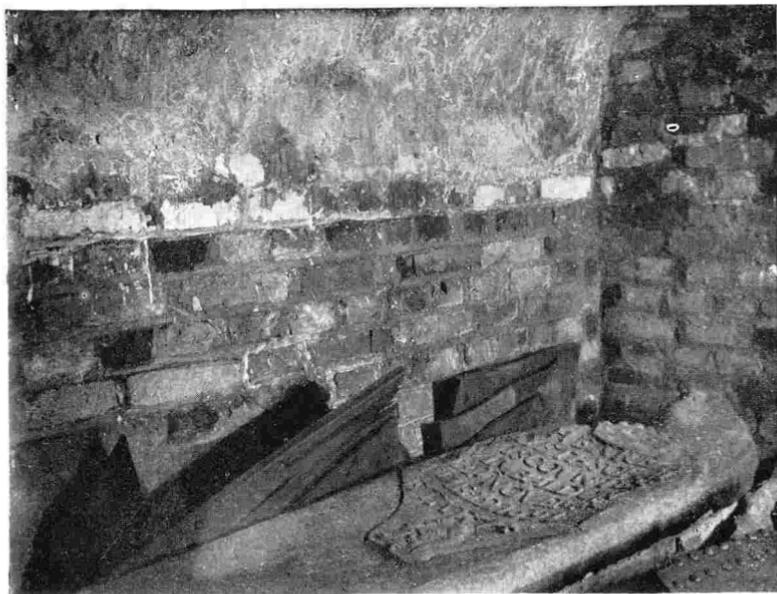
All the coffins which had an outer case of lead, were much better preserved than those which had been enclosed in wood.

In a former article, in the “Proceedings” on “Kedington and the Barnardiston Family,” mention is made of a fireplace in the vaults, and in the S.E. vault a shaft was found which had the appearance of an ancient chimney; this is now used as a ventilating shaft.



VAULT No. 1.

Coffins as found, with the exception of the three babies' shells.



VAULT No. 2.

Shell of Viscountess Wimbalton, 1691.



VAULT No. 2.

Three Babies' Shells. Date 1657, 1671, one not dated.

From the Church registers (dating back to 1654) it is evident that many burials took place in the Church other than those of which remains were found; also from the will dated 2nd June, 1467, "Walter Barnardiston, Rector of the parish church of the blessed Peter the Apostle of Kedyngton, to be buried in chancel of the said Church." Members of the Barnardiston family were Rectors of the parish from 1443 to 1555, and it is thought that another large vault exists, probably beneath and in front of the altar, but for this no search was made.

In excavating the trench outside the Church, remains of foundations of the former Saxon Church were found.

W.H.B.

January, 1917.

Extract from Kedington Church Registers of Burials in Barnardiston Vaults, from 1654.

Dec. 15th,	1657	Ann Barnardiston.
Jan. 29th,	1664	Jane Barnardiston.
Dec. 24th,	1667	Martha Barnardiston.
Sep. 10th,	1668	Nathaniel Barnardiston.
Sep. 15th,	1669	Lady Jané Barnardiston.
Oct. 14th,	1669	Sir Thomas Barnardiston.
July 7th,	1671	Martha Barnardiston.
Aug. 25th,	1671	Lady Anne Barnardiston.
April 24th,	1673	Jeane Barnardiston.
April 10th,	1677	Armyne Barnardiston.
Feb. 15th,	1678	Nathaniel Barnardiston.
March 15th,	1678	Sophia Barnardiston.
March 25th,	1678	Nathaniel Barnardiston.
June 17th,	1679	Michael Barnardiston.
July 23rd,	1679	Pelathiah Barnardiston.
April 13th,	1680	Nathaniel Barnardiston.
Jan. 5th,	1681	Ann Barnardiston.
May 20th,	1681	Thomas Barnardiston.
June 29th,	1681	Mrs. Martha Barnardiston.
March 22nd,	1682	The Lady Jane Bloys.

June 8th,	1683	Elizabeth Barnardiston.
Oct. 11th,	1683	The Lady Anne Skippon, wife of Sir Philip Skippon.
Dec. 7th,	1683	William, son of Sir Philip Skippon.
May 19th,	1687	Mary, wife of Arthur Barnardiston.
Nov. 30th,	1687	Margaret, wife of John Barnardiston.
Aug. 14th,	1691	Sir Philip Skippon and Mistress Mary Skippon, his daughter.
Nov. 19th,	1691	Sophia, Viscountess Wimbaldon.
Jan. 7th,	1692	Arthur Barnardiston.
July 23rd.	1692	Mrs. Jane Mann, daughter of Nathaniel Barnardiston.
Oct 25th,	1692	Mrs. Elizabeth Barnardiston.
Oct 15th,	1698	Sir Thomas Barnardiston.
June 27th,	1699	Samuel Barnardiston.
Nov. 18th.	1699	Rt. Worshipful, Mr. Arthur ? Barnardiston.
Jan. 14th.	1700	John Barnardiston, of Bury.
Feb. 14th.	1700	Elizabeth, wife of Thomas Barnardiston, of Bury.
Nov. 21st	1700	Sir Thomas Barnardiston.
Feb. 25th,	1701	Lady Anne Barnardiston.
May 7th,	1701	Elizabeth, daughter of Sir Thomas Barnardiston.
June 16th,	1704	Jane, daughter of Arthur Barnardiston.
Nov. 5th,	1704	Sir Thomas Barnardiston, of Bury.
July 10th.	1707	Martha Bird, of Hackney.
Oct. 21st,	1707	The Lady Elizabeth Barnardiston.
Jan. 11th,	1709	Sir Samuel Barnardiston.
Feb. 4th,	1710	The Hon. Lady Jane St. John, relict of Sir St. Andrew St. John.
May 13th,	1712	Sir Pelatiah Barnardiston.
Aug. 13th.	1712	Mr. Arthur Barnardiston.
March 9th,	1728	Mary, wife of Thomas Barnardiston, of Bury.
July 24th,	1728	Sir Robert Barnardiston, Bart.
Aug. 7th,	1731	Mr. Clark Barnardiston.
Dec. 11th,	1731	John Barnardiston, Esq.
Feb. 13th,	1735	Sir Samuel Barnardiston, Bart.
Nov. 30th,	1737	Lucy, daughter of Thomas Barnardiston.
Sep. 29th,	1745	Sir Thomas Barnardiston.
Dec. 3rd,	1757	Lady Katherine Barnardiston.
Feb. 8th,	1832	Ann Sophia Barnardiston.
Dec. 30th,	1837	Nathaniel Barnardiston.
March 21st,	1843	Elizabeth Joanna Barnardiston.
May 14th,	1855	Sophia Barnardiston.