

NOTES ON ST. MARY THE VIRGIN, CODDENHAM.

The dedication of this noble church is to St. Mary* the Virgin. Its builders selected a fine site for its erection on the fringe of the village. The westward slope of the bank on which it is built will account for the chancel appearing low in comparison with the fine Nave.

The history of this fabric may be largely read in its walls. Under the N. wall of the chancel there is the appearance of a possible foundation of an earlier church. The same wall also contains the only remaining Norman light to be found. But the moulding of two of the stones in its frame seems to suggest that there was an earlier church on the present site. Could this be Saxon? †To this succeeded the present chancel, and a nave minus the aisles and clerestories, and with a lower roof. These were added and the roof was raised in the "Decorated" period, which inspired so many church builders to add to the glory of their Houses of God. The roof-slope of the narrower and lower nave may be noticed both outside and in of the West wall. At the Eastern extremity of the nave roof there is an empty sanctus-bell turret, and beneath it sunk in the east wall a framed recess for a figure. Along the face of the battlements of the north clerestory runs an inscription as follows:—"Orate pro animat Johannis Frenche et Margarete." French was an old family in Coddendam. The clerestories and open carved roof were probably added in his time, towards the end of the 15th Century.

* Gild of St. Mary Magdalene in Coddendam Church (will of John Coleman, 1445, Ipswich Probate Office, B.K.I. F 2A).

† Friebern the Priest is mentioned in Domesday.

The black flint work of the Tower battlements, the clerestories, and the porch, is a noticeable feature, and adds to the beauty of the church.

Passing into the church through the porch we notice that it is set obliquely with the N. aisle and tower, also we notice it contains two perpendicular lights and a holy water stoup, poorly restored. On entering the church the fine hammer-beam roof calls for first attention, the hammer-beams having carved angel terminals, and the whole presenting a beautiful combination of open timber work. The west window was formerly blocked with a gallery and an organ, happily removed at the Restoration of the Nave in 1886-7. The handsome font is quite modern, and no trace can be found of its predecessor. At this restoration the old pews were removed, and the better parts of the panels were placed on the N. and S. sides of the aisles as a dado. At the east end of the S. aisle is a side chapel, until recently occupied by a pew with a deal floor, fireplace, and flue. On the removal of the floor a depression in the ground was found, and an ancient slab without any inscription. Could this be a Stone Altar? Another slab was found elsewhere minus its 3 brasses. On removal of the fireplace and flue it was found that the E. wall had been cut away to make room for them. We are in process of restoring the chapel.

Attention may be called to the "Jacobean" pulpit—a fairly fine specimen of the confined pulpit of its day. The chancel lacks (at present) its once beautiful screen, erected early in the 16th century, with rood and loft. Some decayed shafts and panels, with original colouring, alone remain to bear witness of what once was in this church.

About five figures of the Prophets can be made out of the cut and gashed panels—found by the present

in the space once probably the site of an Easter Sepulchre.

It is stated that Mr. Gardemau's stone coffin was made 19 years before he died, and that he used to lay himself down in it, and meditate on his mortality. There are, besides, the black marble slab, two other mural monuments to later members of the Bacon family. In the vestry there is a rude carving of the Bacon coat of arms, with the pig above, all in wood, gilt and coloured. Over the Altar is a carving in alabaster of the Crucifixion, apparently of very early date, which was discovered some years ago in a house near the church, which probably formed part of the monastic buildings, traces of which are found in the village, in the high street above the Crown Inn, anciently the "Gryffon." James I. Also an iron bound chest with 5 padlocks.

THE VICARS OF CODDENHAM.

Leaving out "Friebern the Priest," the Vicars of Coddenham date from the 14th year of Edward I., with one Willelmus; to him succeeded in 1307 Adam, Vicarius de Lakenheith (as Sequestrator), and in 1308 Sym de Wycheford, also a Sequestrator. The first 50 years since Adam, saw no less than 9 successive Vicars of Coddenham—a strange fatality as compared with the last CENTURY, which witnessed 3 only! Of the long list of 35 Vicars one had reached episcopal rank—Florincius Wulley having been consecrated Bishop of Clogher 27 Nov. 1475, presented Vicar of C. 9 July 1481, and died in 1500 at Snape Priory, where his remains rest. Matthias Candler, who succeeded in 1629, has a slab in the S. aisle wall outside, testifying to his sterling virtues as a divine.

Two Bacons, John and Nicholas, held the Benefice for a period of 58 years; and two Longes, John and Robert, for 93 years. Baltazar Gardemau, its benefactor, was Vicar 50 years.

THE REGISTERS

date from 1539. Seven are in parchment. Ten in paper. The two earliest Registers* contain entries of christenings, marriages, and burials under one cover; and reach to 1757. The 3rd and 4th reach from that date to 1790 and 1812 respectively, but contain entries of baptisms and burials only. In the first Register of Marriages there is a blank between 1661 and 1664, with this entry. "The persons married since Willim Smith Cler took possession of the Vicarage of Coddendam, which was June 21 in ye year 1664; what are wanting in this Register let them look for them in the Cromelian Register." The same for Baptisms and Burials. Under date August 22nd, 1672, occurs the entry "Delivered two briefs one for Towcefter in Northamptonshire with two shillings tenpence and one for the Layar house in London with five shillings nine pence" over the signature. John Ling, of Woodbridge. Two of the Registers dating from 1784 are stamped, one being in parchment and one in paper.

There are several entries of Coddendam in the Bosmere Hundred of Domesday in connection with the lands of Earl Alan, Robert Malet, Roger Bigot, the Bishop of Bayeaux, Saint Etheldreda, Ranulph Peverell, Roger de Rheims, Ends son of Spirnic, and of Humfrey son of Aubrey.

RECORDS.

At the time of the Roman occupation Coddendam was, according to some authorities, known as Combretonium, the 2nd station from Comlodunium (Colchester) on the way to Burgh Castle, Caister, and Norwich.

* i., 1538-1706. ii., 1706-1754. In 1680 Crowfield is stated to be "in the Parish of Coddendam." but no entry for C till 1690.

Remains of a Roman Villa were found in 1823 near the river. An urn with some boxes, a pitcher, and some coins were also found, and are now in the British Museum.

The Rev. John Longe, then Vicar, describes "a mettalic mirror, enclosed in a circular bronze case (2-in. dia.) with the head of the Emperor Nero engraved on one side. At the bottom of the case were 2 figures of Roman officers. About 2 years ago remains of a Roman vase were found in sinking a gate-post by the side of an ancient roadway leading from the Lime Kilns to Coddenham, near the Vicarage.

Odo, Bishop of Bayeaux, was patron of the Vicarage of Coddenham in 1086.

In 1180 Eustace de Mere founded at Royston, in Hertfordshire, a Monastery for Canons Regular, in honour of St. Thomas of Canterbury. The great tithes of Coddenham formed part of the Endowment.

In 1204 the gift by Mrs. Lawrence of a manor and other lands at Coddenham was confirmed by King John to the Priory of Holy Trinity, Ipswich.

In 1481 the Clerestory and New Nave Roof were added, and the church beautified. In 1530 the Rood Screen and Loft were added.

In 1537 the Manor of Coddenham was leased by Henry VIII. to Sir Humfrey Wingfield and Sir Thomas Rushe by deed dated 10th March.

The Crown Inn" Coddenham, is probably the house described in the old Records as having been the winter residence of the family of Wodehouse, of Crowfield Hall. The founder of the family—an archer

of Crowfield—is said to have received knighthood at the hands of Henry V. after the battle of Agincourt. At the time of James I. it was licensed with the sign of "The Griffin."

At the beginning of the Civil War Col. Daynes went out of Coddendam as a Captain in the Parliamentary Army.

Will Dowsing (of axe and hammar fame) is recorded to have married Thamar, daughter of John Lea, of Coddendam. In January, 1643, he "gave order for taking down 3 crosses of the steeple and one of the chancel."

The Tenement Jordaine's is described by Mr. Chandler in 1655 as standing over against the Church gate, being built by Wm. Jordaines, and was bought by Col. Daynes, whose 1st wife was Dorothy, d. of Sir Richd. Broke, Kt., of Nacton. It is still standing.

MONUMENTS IN CHANCEL.

1489 Tho. Barnabo, Priest: under marble stone.
Inscription in brass.

1506 Edmund Jermy, Esq.: under marble stone.
Inscription in brass.

1500 Jno. French: his house, the tenement
Frenches, was in the middle of Coddendam
Street.

1638 J. Candler: lyes under a slate.

In 1893, when the whole chancel floor was re-laid, not one of these could be found.

THE BELLS.

Theodore Eccleston, in 1741, gave a peal of 8 bells to Coddenham. In the belfry his name appears on two Peel Boards (Sept., 1741, Nov. 9, 1742). He died in 1750, and was buried at Mortlake.

re Shrubland. Scrybe or Scrobe.
 First mention 2nd year Edward iii., 1326,
 Godmanstone.

John de Shrybland.

William Shrybland

daughter md. Oak Wm. at 4
 generations to Philip

Catherine md. Thos. Booth

Sir Wm. Booth,
 daughter md. Sir Thos. Lytton

daughter, Elizabeth, md. Thos. Lyttle

daughter, Ellene, md. Ed. Bacon, Esq.,
 3rd son of Sir Ni. Bacon,
 Lord Keeper of the Great Seal.

6 sons and 13 daughters,

Nicholas m. Margaret, d. of Sir Bingham of Bingham

Sir Nicholas Bacon, K.C.B. (Charles II.), md. Bridget,
 daughter of Sir Lyonell
 Tollemach

Nicholas m. the lady Catherine, d. of Ed. Montague,
 1st Earl of Sandwich,
 who at his decease m. Rev. B. Gardemau.