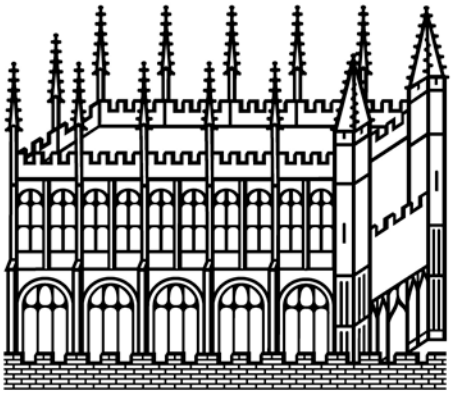

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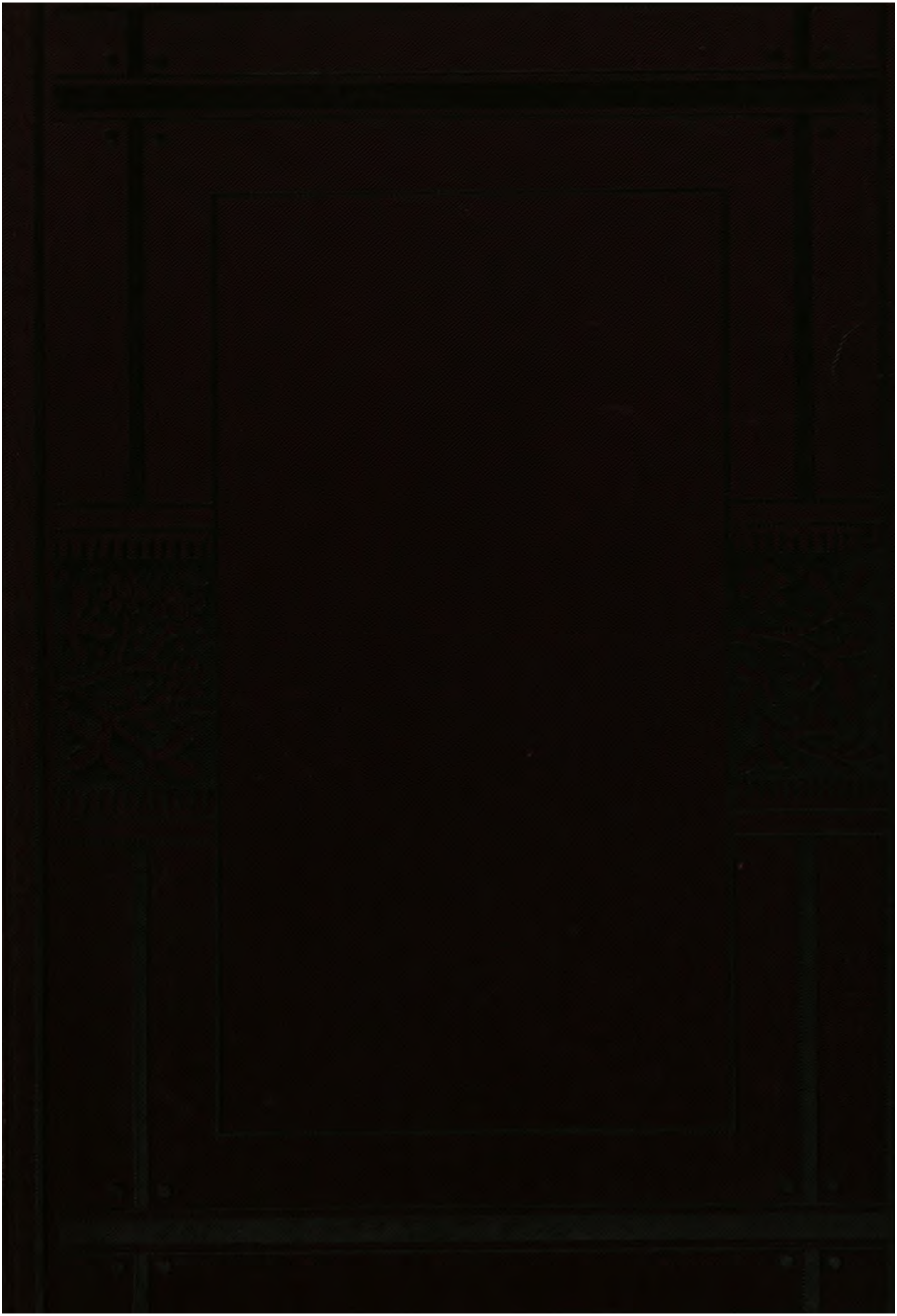

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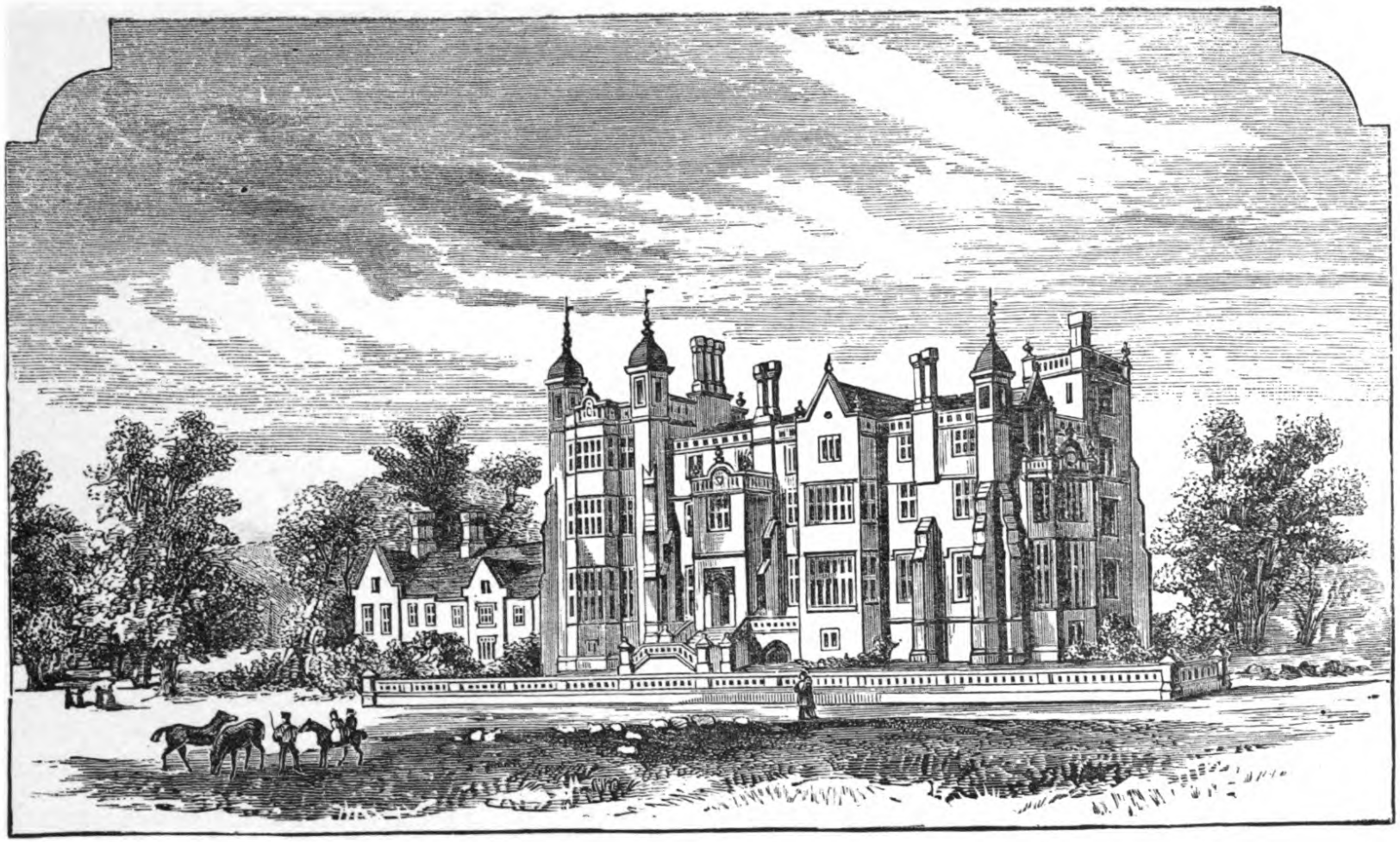

Ramsey Abbey,

The Seat of Edward Fellowes, Esq.

RAMSEY ABBEY

ITS RISE AND FALL,

TAKEN FROM THE

"RAMSEY HISTORY OR CHRONICLE,

AND

OTHER RELIABLE SOURCES;

ALSO,

AN ACCOUNT OF THE MANOR & PARISH

SINCE THE "DISSOLUTION,"

Some hitherto unpublished Documents respecting the Abbey and the Cromwells are given

BY

JOHN WISE, M.A.,

Vicar of Ramsey.

W. MACKRETH NOBLE, B.A.

Curate of Ramsey.

Dedicated by permission to E. FELLOWES, Esq.

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RAMSEY ABBEY.

"In the days of yore, when the Fen district resembled a great lake studded with numerous islands fringed with willow groves, it was the seat of numerous Ecclesiastical establishments of great wealth and influence—Peterborough Crowland, Ely, Thorney, Spalding, RAMSEY and others."

"Their traditional reputation has been handed down in an old rhyming legend:

RAMSEY, the rich of gold and fee,
Thorney, the flower of many a fair tree,
Crowland, the courteous of their meat and drink,
Spalding, the gluttons, as all men do think,
Peterborough, the proud, as all men do say,
Sawtry, by the way, that old Abbey,
Gave more alms in one day than all they."

RAMSEY VICARAGE,

September 1st, 1881.

DEAR SIR,

We thank you for permission to dedicate to you the following little book on RAMSEY ABBEY.

It is meet that it should be so dedicated. For your name must be inseparably connected with its later history.

In many ways you have conferred great and lasting benefits on the Manor and Parish of Ramsey.

You have promoted the drainage of the neighbouring meres and their transformation into fruitful fields.

Higher interests than material ones, you and yours have also sought to promote, by Church renovation and building, by providing endowments and Parsonages, by erecting Schools and liberally promoting Elementary Education, so that daily religious instruction is given in the Schools—and the Parish is not burdened with a School Rate.

We sincerely trust your life may long be spared to see beneficial fruits from such useful and philanthropic labours.

We are, dear Sir,

Yours faithfully,

JOHN WISE.

W. M. NOBLE.

E. Fellowes, Esq.,
Ramsey Abbey.

PREFACE.

"HISTORY OF RAMSEY," or "BOOK OF THE FOUNDATION AND BENEFACTORS OF THE CONVENT OF RAMSEY" is the name of the work, which furnishes much of the early part of the following narrative. The Book is still in MS. in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, and at Westminster Abbey or probably now at the Record Office. The Book is divided into four parts, the three earlier ones were printed by Thomas Gale, in 1691, in his "Historicæ Brittanicæ, Saxonicæ, Anglo-Danicæ Scriptores." The fourth part is a more detailed account of the preceding parts, with Charters in full, and specimens of accounts. All the important parts of this are given in Dugdale's Monasticon, p.p. 554-586.

Under the shorter title "RAMSEY ABBEY" we give the interesting story of its foundation and parts of the early history of the Monastery; also some account of its Benefactors and eminent members, of its dissolution and of the subsequent transfers of the contiguous Manor. Then, passing by the history of the drainage of the adjacent meres which is embraced in that of the well-known Middle Level, we

have added such information of the Parish Church, as is within our reach, and brief accounts of the daughter Churches which have been generously built to meet the wants of increased population on the now well-drained lands, over which abundance of fish were wont to swim and wild-fowl to build and fly within the memory of man. The wild-fowl have wholly disappeared and the large fish spoken of hereafter and even eels are but rarely and with difficulty obtained. Fogs too are fewer and lighter here than in many parts of the higher lands.

The extracts from various writers on the former and present condition of the Fens, will enable the reader to form some idea of the change which 100 years, or less, has made in this neighbourhood. Suffice it, on this point to say, the dwellers in the Fens are no longer amphibious, or "web-footed," as tradition held it necessary to affirm that they were.

We have searched many other books than the "Ramsey History," as, the Monasticon of Dugdale, and Stevens' additional Volumes, Brayley's History of Huntingdonshire, Noble's Cromwell, Fen Land Past and Present, and Freeman's Norman Conquest. The two last named modern works are of much interest and value. Besides we have had access to original MSS. belonging to the present owner of the Abbey. H. Staffurth, Esq., Barrister at Law, has also kindly searched after and obtained for us copies of Charters in the Record Office. These are very numerous.

We have diligently looked for information, and if our Book is not as complete as it might be, we hope we have done something to inform and interest the reader, respecting a name and place, which has been somewhat famous. For here Kings have tarried, have dwelt—it may be. Here relatives of the Protector Cromwell found more than one habitation and most of them, who dwelt in this neigbourhood, approved not of his doings. Here Dukes and Dames, Knights and Ladies, Bishops—Mitred Abbots—and Monks are buried. The dust of Nobles and Saints mingles in our Church Yard. In all this there seems cause sufficient why the story of "RAMSEY ABBEY" should be told again.

RAMSEY ABBEY.

I.—THE FOUNDATION.

Ramsey Abbey had its Chronicler more than three hundred years ago in the person of one of its Monks. He doubtless gathered up his story from old memoranda, for he treats mainly of circumstances and persons connected with the Abbey, though he has a few wonders to tell, in which his life's training would make him a devout believer. That old Chronicler's Manuscript is still in existence as stated above in the preface. There are besides other manuscripts still in existence about Ramsey, at Westminster, the British Museum and Oxford. For its Monastery made this a place of note some five hundred years before the Reformation.

Ramsey stands in that district, which once was regarded "as the *holy land* of the English"; "there were Ely, Ramsey, Crowland, Thorney and Peterborough, with their succursal cells." The district, so early renowned for its ecclesiastical establishments, has gained in recent times for itself the name of the "*Golden plain of England.*" For here labour, skill, resolution, and capital, have converted bogs, meres and fens into most fertile lands. The terrible ague of the marshes has also fled, and the healthiness of the *Great Fen District* will compare favourably with that of any part of England.

But whatever may have been the grandeur and usefulness of the great institutions above named, and whatever may be the glory of the Great Fen District now, it was no enviable place of residence when Guthlac and others began their work. Yet it fully met with S. Benedict's view of a fitting place for men bound to a religious life. "S. Benedict's Rule and Order was not by him instituted for cities, towns, and castles, but for places remote from concourse of people, and in poverty, for the monks thereof to live by their hand labour, and so as to be truly monks by his Rule, as it thus declareth, *Qui tunç vere monachi sunt, si de labore manuum suarum vivunt*, which is also confirmed by British and other writers, avouching that S. Benedict's Rule was instituted in poverty, and so continued in the beginning most laudable till riches and abundance corrupted it afterwards." (Richard Broughton's True Memorials, &c., A.D. 1650.)

In the history of an Institution so wholly belonging to the Fens, as Ramsey Abbey, it cannot be superfluous to call attention to the physical changes, which have passed over this important district. Very eminent writers—whose books are not accessible to many—have left on record their reminiscenses and opinions of Fenland; by the help of their writings we can best set forth the past and present aspect and condition of the Fens. The celebrity of the writers will atone for the length of the quotations.

In the 7th century, Guthlac, a monk of the Monastery of Repton, Derbyshire, desiring a more secluded home, more remote from the haunts of men, heard of the Fens, and moved thitherwards. "By divine guidance he came in a boat to one of the solitary islands called *Crulande*, on St.

Bartholomew's day." His biographer gives a deplorable account of the then state of Fenland. "For by the inundations and overflowing of the rivers, the water standing upon the level ground, maketh a deep lake, and so rendereth it uninhabitable, excepting in some places, which God of purpose raised (as may be thought) to be habitations for his servants, who chose to dwell there; for in such places within the fens, do they (viz:—the monks of Ramsey, Thorney, Crowland,) and many other beside, to which there is no access but by navigable vessels, except unto Ramsey, by a causey, raised with much labour on the one side thereof." Then we have a description of a "hideous fen of huge bigness oftentimes clouded with moist and dark vapours which beginning at the banks of the river Gronte, extends itself from the south to the north, even to the sea," and the horrors of Crulande itself, "for no countryman, before that devout servant of Christ, St. Guthlac, could endure to dwell in it, by reason that such apparitions of devils were so frequently seen there." "The Crulande devils of monstrous shapes are, we think, resolvable into hallucinations caused by periodical fever attendant upon fen ague." (*Fenland Past and Present, p.* 72.)

Let us hear next, De Foe, the Author of Robinson Crusoe. He saw and described the Fens in his "Tour through Britain."

"As we ascended westward we saw the Fen Country on our right almost all covered with water like a sea. The Michaelmas rains having been very great that year, sent down vast floods from the Upland Countries, and those Fens being the sink of no less than twelve Counties, they are often thus overflowed."

"As these Fens appeared overwhelmed with water I observed that they, generally at the latter part of the year, appear also covered with fogs, so that when the Downs and higher grounds of the adjacent country glistered with the beams of the sun, the Isle of Ely seemed wrapped up in mist and darkness, so that nothing could be discovered but now and then the Cupola of Ely Minster."

"One could hardly see this from the hills without concern for the many thousand families confined to these fogs, who had no other breath to draw than what must be mixed with the choaking vapours which spread over all the country. But notwithstanding this, the people, especially those that are used to it, live as healthy as those in the clear air, except now and then an ague, which they make light of, and there are great numbers of very ancient people among them."

Lord Macaulay in his History of England, describing the country between Cambridge and the Wash at the close of the seventeenth century, writes of it, as, "a vast and desolate fen saturated with all the moisture of thirteen centuries, and overhung during the greater part of the year by a low grey mist, above which rose, visible many miles, the magnificent tower of Ely."

"In that dreary region covered by vast flights of wild-fowl, a half-savage population, known by the name of breedlings, there led an amphibious life, sometimes wading, sometimes rowing, from one islet of firm ground to the other. The roads were amongst the worst in the island," (quoted in, "Fen and Mere," by J. M. Heathcote, Esq.)

Our longest quotation now follows, the greater part of it from a master's hand, worth re-printing for the information of the present and future generations of Fen folk, that they may not be ignorant of the past features of Fen land. After stating that, "the themes of Tennyson's earlier poems were drawn from the fens and meres and melancholy swamps of Lincolnshire," the Editors of "English Pictures drawn with Pen and Pencil" (p. 162) continue; "it must however be confessed that it would be difficult at the present day to find poetry or beauty in the Fen country. The meres have been drained, the swamps have been reclaimed. The profusion of aquatic plants and wild-fowl has disappeared. Whittlesea Mere and Ramsey Mere have been brought under the plough. Even the picturesque old windmills have given place to the hideous chimney-shafts of pumping stations worked by steam. We may almost parody the famous chapter of Olaus Magnus on "Snakes in Ireland," and say—there are no fens in the fen country. If we would know what the fens were once like, we must read some of *Tennyson's* earlier poems, or better still perhaps, one of *Kingsley's* prose Idylls:

"A certain sadness is pardonable to one who watches the destruction of a grand natural phenomenon, even though its destruction bring blessings to the human race. Reason and conscience tell us that it is right and good that the Great Fen* should have become, instead of a waste and

* THE GREAT LEVEL OF THE FENS, the largest plain in England, has Lincoln as its extreme northern point, it reaches nearly to Cambridge on the south, and spreads from Stamford on the west to Brandon on the east. The great Bay called the Wash, lying on its north-east border, receives the waters of this large tract of country.

howling wilderness, a garden of the Lord, where

> All the land in flowery squares,
> Beneath a broad and equal-blowing wind,
> Smell of the coming summer!

and yet the fancy may linger, without blame, over the shining meres, the *golden reed-beds*, the countless water-fowl, the strange and gaudy insects, the wild nature, the mystery, the majesty—for mystery and majesty there were—which haunted the deep fens for many a hundred years. Little thinks the Scotsman, whirled down by the Great Northern Railway from Peterborough to Huntingdon, what a grand place was that Holme and Whittlesea which is now but a black, unsightly, steaming flat, from which the meres and reed-beds of the old world are gone."

"But grand enough it was, that black ugly place, when backed by Caistor Hanglands and Holme Wood, and the patches of the primeval forest; while dark-green alders, and pale-green reeds, stretched for miles round the broad lagoon, where the coot clanked, and the bittern boomed, and the sedge-bird, not content with its own sweet song, mocked the notes of all the birds around; while high overhead hung motionless hawk beyond hawk, buzzard beyond buzzard, kite beyod kite, as far as the eye could see. Far off, upon the silver mere, would rise a puff of smoke from a punt, invisible from its flatness and its white paint. Then down the wind came the boom of the great stanchion-gun; and after that sound another sound, louder as it neared; a cry as of all the bells of Cambridge, and all the hounds of Cottesmere; and overhead rushed and whirled the skein of terrified wild-fowl, screaming, piping, clacking, croaking, filling the air with the hoarse rattle of their wings, while

clear above all sounded the wild whistle of the curlew, and the trumpet note of the great wild swan."

"They are all gone now. No longer do the ruffs trample the sedge into a hard floor in their fighting-rings, while the sober reeves stand round admiring the tournament of their lovers, gay with ears and tippets, no two of them alike. Gone are roughs and reeves, spoonbills, bitterns, avosets; the very snipe, one hears, disdains to breed. Gone too, not only from Whittlesea but from the whole world, is that most exquisite of English Butterflies, *Lycæna dispar*, the great copper; and many a curious insect more. Ah, well, at least we shall have wheat and mutton instead, and no more typhus and ague; and it is to be hoped no more brandy-drinking and opium-eating; and children will live and not die. For it was a hard place to live in, the old Fen; a place wherein one heard of unexampled instances of longevity, for the same reason that one hears of them in savage tribes, that few lived to old age at all, save those iron constitutions which nothing could break down." (*Prose Idylls, New and Old,* by Rev. C. Kingsley.)

Kingsley's eloquent description of Fenland in the past is worth preserving and putting within the knowledge of those living, and to live, in a country so wonderfully changed as the Fens are.

The above opinions of such eminent men will remove the idea of exaggeration, from the Chronicler's description of Ramsey Island and the adjoining Fens, both in his more and less favourable accounts of them.

It is, however, time that we now turn to the Ramsey Chronicler and hear him *on the situation of the Island called Ramsey.*

"Forasmuch, therefore, as this place, situate in the Eastern corner of Huntingdonshire, where the channel of the river Ouse restrains the bounds of the Fens, is, for its bigness, the fairest of the Fenny islands, and which many have endeavoured to extol, so that it needs not our commendation; nevertheless, we will not leave it wholly untouched. On the West side (for on all other there is no access to it by reason of the Fens) it is severed from the firm land, by certain deep and boggy quagmires, in breadth about two bow-shots; insomuch as, in time past, the access unto it was by navigable vessels, brought thither through a slow stream, with gentle winds; but now, by much labour and no small cost, there is, with wood, stones and gravel, a firm causey* made, so that people may come to it on foot. In length this Island extends about two miles; but in breadth not so much, being environed with alders, reeds, green canes, and bulrushes, which beautify it exceedingly; and before it became inhabited was full of all sorts of trees (especially wild ash,) the length and bigness whereof may be seen by the beams and rafters on the roof of the Church. But now through lapse of time, the woods, for the most part gone, the fertility of the turf is such, as that the land converted to tillage, bears corn plentifully, nor is it less profitable otherwise, being full of fair gardens, fat pastures, shady groves, and rich meadows; which in the spring time make a most beautiful show. Moreover, on the borders of it, there are several meres full

* The translation of this chapter is for the most part from Dugdale's "History of Imbanking and Draining," p. 364. In which book we find "a causey" is "a bank of six feet in breadth" (266.) Much such a bank probably as that called Northeye is.

of eels, as also spacious fens and pools, abounding with divers sort of fish and water-fowl; whereof one, called Ramsey-Mere, from the name of the Isle, much excels the other adjacent waters in beauty and profit; which lying on the largest and most woody side of it, and plentifully beating upon that sandy shore thereof called Mereham, makes a delightful object to the beholders: in the deep and great gulfs of which mere, there are frequently taken, by several sorts of nets, as also with baited hooks, and other fishing instruments, pikes of an extraordinary bigness, called hakedes by the country people: and though both fishers and fowlers cease neither day nor night to haunt it; yet is there always of fish and fowl no little store. Sufficient has been said for the information of those ignorant of the situation of the island and its adjacent waters."

Then on the *origin of the name Ramsey* the Chronicler dwells at length. "RAMSEY is fitly said to be derived from two English words *Ram*, and Eie or Eye—which means island—hence the compound Ramsey, the island of the Ram. The old fathers of this place used to tell their children, that formerly in the said island, before it was inhabited by man or domestic animal, a Ram was found cropping the grass amongst the wild animals; which—having strayed from its flock—when the clayey places on some side of the island were hardened by winter's frost or summer's drought, was compelled to remain like a hermit, by the ground resuming its accustomed softness and moisture. It was armed by nature with horns twisted and curved, and tho' but a temporary inhabitant has left an

undying name to the place. We may also derive the name otherwise, on the authority of the ancients *a ramis*, *i.e.*, 'from branches,' as if an island (*ramorum*) of branches, on account of the abundance of trees, which formerly stood there, as those which remain still testify. Likewise we believe, this name (RAMSEY) was given to the place, by Divine Providence, which foresaw that it would be inhabited by saints and religious men, who cut off from the barren wild olive-tree of a worldly life by the axe of a divine call being truly olives and as good branches partaking of the fatness, clinging to the graft of grace only, they brought forth the divers fruits of virtues and good deeds as flourishing trees. Further, that we may give the interpretation of that name a more figurative bearing, it may fitly be said to be from RAMESES, a wealthy city, situated in the remotest part of the Nile region, as Isidore says, which, we read, was the first resting place of the children of Israel on their leaving Egypt by Divine command, after the prolonged calamity of their hard bondage."

The inference from this "figurative bearing" of the name Ramsey, is that here religious men could find a retreat and resting place. The author gives yet another "figurative bearing," Rameses is interpreted 'a rushing or thunder,' and this he evidently cherishes as a pleasing and profitable association with the name Ramsey. For he says, "the name is therefore well-suited to this place, because holy men dwelling in it are kept from the evil (a malis)* by the sound of Psalmody or reading of God's holy word, as

* "A malis." This would seem to convey the impression that the early recluses of Ramsey thought that they, as St. Guthlac (above p. 10) were disturbed by evil beings. "sed libera nos a malo."—Vulgate.

by the terror of thunder. And sinners by the word of exhortation, bursting into tears and groans, are driven to repentance and condemnation of their acts, and are brought into the service of God."

The second of the above derivations of the name RAMSEY has some evidence of fact in its favour. For the island had on it abundance of wood. To this day, perhaps from the times of the old Chronicler, we have the names of "Wood Lane" and "Muchwood" in localities where are many fair and pleasant trees, especially of ash.

The Ramsey Chronicle now takes us to the persons who founded and assisted in founding the Monastery. It was a Benedictine one from the beginning and founded when that Order was being fostered and forced on the English by King Edgar, the noted Archbishops Odo and Dunstan of Canterbury, Oswald Archbishop of York, and by many influential laymen and their families. Amongst the latter Duke Ailwyn and his family were very conspicuous, as will be seen hereafter. It may be mentioned here as a matter of local interest, that, "Chatteris had its name, Chartreuse, from a nunnery founded there in 980 A.D., by Ælfwena, mother of Æthelwine, Alderman of all England; founder of the Abbey of Ramsey." (*Fenland Past and Present, p.* 30.)

This Ælfwena will afterwards appear as Alfwen, and Æthelwine as Ailwyn; the names are thus differently spelt, but we shall abide by the latter form. Of the great ones named above, Odo and Dunstan, energetic promoters of the Benedictine Order, are favourably noticed in the Ramsey

Chronicle, but they had very little to do with the Monastery here. Duke Ailwyn and Archbishop Oswald were its founders. King Edgar was a great benefactor to it. The parts which the last three persons took in founding and establishing the Ramsey Abbey will be given in detail.

As KING EDGAR is highest in rank so the grounds of his interest in Ramsey Abbey shall be first noticed. His name occurs again and again in the Ramsey Chronicle, not simply because he was a great favourer of the Monastic system—he is said to have built and restored 42 such institutions—but because he had been placed under and brought up and educated by Alfwen, the mother of the founder of Ramsey Abbey. He made Ailwyn her son Alderman of all England and probably Duke of East Anglia. Edgar was also a special benefactor to the Abbey of Ramsey bestowing on it gifts of lands and Churches, and he confirmed by Charter these and the numerous estates granted to it by others, in such terms as to make the Abbots of Ramsey almost absolute rulers in their own domain. The liberties which Edgar granted the Abbey of Ramsey were confirmed by subsequent royal charters.

AILWYN, AYLWIN, or ÆTHELWINE (in all these forms his name is found,) already mentioned, is our next chief personage, or rather he is the chief person in the history. Appropriately a chapter is given to the 'Genealogy of this illustrious man,' of whom EDGAR, in his charter to Ramsey Abbey, speaks as "a man most dear to himself and as a relation." The narrative of Ailwyn's Genealogy is as follows:—

"There was in the days of King Æthelstan or Athelstan

(A.D. 925-941) a Duke of the East Angles, of royal position and name, descended from ancient Kings by an illustrious line of unblemished succession; his innate liberality gained him much favour amongst his neighbours; his valour in war caused him to be feared by the enemies of his country. He was renowned for the nobility of his birth, his wealth in lands, and for his worldly prudence, but especially because his continued assiduity was so useful to the King himself, that all the affairs of the kingdom were submitted to the Duke's judgment, wherefore he was called Æthelstanus half-kineg that is Athelstan half-king. In his early manhood he married a noble lady, Alfwen. After this she brought up and educated with maternal care the renowned King Edgar from his infancy. Who, when King of all England gave her with royal munificence the Manor of Weston, which her son, the Alderman*, bestowed

* Alderman, or "Ealdorman." "But it must not be thought that full-grown local kingship was a thing which had been from the beginning. In the time of Tacitus some of the Teutonic tribes had kings and others had not: in the time of Cæsar it would seem that kingship was the exception and not the rule. The chieftains of the first settlers in our own island bore no higher title than *Ealdorman or Heretoga.* These two names express two different sides of the same office. The same man is Ealdorman as a civil ruler and Heretoga as a military chieftain. The former name survives in our language but with sadly diminished dignity; the title which once expressed a rank which, among worldly dignities was inferior to kingship alone, has taken refuge with a class of Municipal Magistrates, reaching down to the pettiest boroughs. The other name always much more rarely in use, has dropped altogether out of our tongue."

"The name Ealdorman is one of a large class; among a primitive people, age implies command and command implies age, hence in a somewhat later stage of language the *Elders* are simply the rulers, and the *Eldest* are the highest in rank, without any thought of the number of years which they may really have lived. It is not perfectly clear in what the authority or dignity of the King exceeded that of the Ealdorman, but it is clear the title of King did carry with it an advance in both respects. Even the smallest kingdom was probably formed by the union of the districts of several Ealdormen." "But at least from the time of Ecgberht onwards there is a marked distinction between the King and the Ealdorman. The King is a Sovereign, the Ealdorman is only a Magistrate."—*Norman Conquest*, vol. I. 75, 76, 117 and 589.

after his mother's death, on the Church of Ramsey as a perpetual alms for her soul, another Chronicle says, "quam illa postea Ramesiensi Ecclesiæ pro ejus amina donavit." She having married the aforesaid Duke Æthelstan became the mother of four sons. Who, united by the tie of nature, vied amongst themselves, and that without jealousy, in the pursuit of virtue. The first was *Æthelwold*, the second *Alfwold*, the third *Æthelsin*, the fourth AILWYN or *Æthelwin*. The last, although the youngest, far excelled the others in the habitual pursuit of morality and virtue. The father, the aforesaid Duke Æthelstan, when he had spent much of his life in works of piety and the exercise of virtue, became a monk of Glastonbury, and in his later life atoned for the faults of his youth. At length leaving his four sons to succeed to his estates and virtues he there died and was buried. But that most christian man lived from the time of the most pious King ÆTHELSTAN, to that of the grandson of his brother EDMUND, the illustrious King EDGAR, even in the reigns of four Kings. Some very old records, found in the archives of our Monastery prove the truth of this our narrative; these contain the names of the Kings and gifts of certain lands made by them to certain persons, which gifts by those same persons were conferred on the Church as alms in perpetuity with the title-deeds, in each of which Æthelstan's name amongst other nobles is found written as a witness."

A modern historian confirms the claim, made above by the Ramsey Chronicler, that the family of Duke Ailwyn was of royal origin. In Lappenberg's England under the Anglo-Saxon Kings, vol. II. 108, we find, "East Anglia was again

united with England and placed under the government of a relation of the royal house of the name of *Athelstan*, who on account of his influence, and perhaps as a ludicrous distinction between him and his royal name-sake, was called the half-king."

The third notable personage introduced in the Ramsey Chronicle, as indeed a joint-founder of the Abbey with Duke Ailwyn, is OSWALD, Bishop, Archbishop and Saint, according to the Chronicler. This Oswald was a remarkable man and must be somewhat fully noticed. He was of Danish origin and was first educated under Frithegod,* considered one of the most learned men in England, and he was afterwards placed under the care of his Uncle ODO,—24th Archbishop of Canterbury—who looked upon him as a youth of great promise, and desired to devote him to God.

Archbishop Odo, also of Danish origin, was a man of strong convictions and strong character. He was converted to christianity in England, and attempted to convert his father, who however disinherited the young proselyte. He was then taken up by a noble of Alfred's Court, named Athelm, who became Archbishop of Canterbury. By this prelate Odo was educated. He first served as a Soldier, and after ordination as a Naval Chaplain, ultimately he

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* This may have been, "Fridegod, Monk of *St. Saviour*, at *Canterbury*, a man, as Malmesbury says, learned in the *Greek* and *Latin* tongues, and much applauded for piety and regular observance, composed many works, but knowing how to make use of his learning, he so mix'd *Greek* and *Latin*, that his writings are not intelligible to such as do not understand both languages. He writ in heroick verse, *The Life of St. Wilfrid*; *The Life of St. Owen, Monk*; *The Sinner in the Gospel*; *Of the Vision of the Blessed*; *Of the Heavenly Jerusalem*; *Various Contemplations*; and flourished in 959."—*Stevens.*

was elected Bishop and Archbishop. As Odo had given up home to be a Christian, so, when about to be Archbishop he took up the strictest rule of religious life then known, viz: that of the Benedictines. To acquaint himself with which, he is said to have gone and stayed for a time at Fleury* in France, a notable Benedictine Monastery. In accordance with which Rule he trained his nephew Oswald, and sent him also to Fleury. The uncle and nephew became most staunch Benedictines, and did their utmost to get rid of the married clergy, to introduce celibacy, and Benedictine Monasteries. Our quaintest English Church Historian, Fuller, writes, "This Oswald was the man who procured by the King's authority the ejection of all the secular (or married) priests out of Worcester, and the placing of Monks (unmarried Clergy) in their room; which Act was called "Oswald's law," in that age. They might, if it pleased them, have styled it "Edgar's law," the legislative power being then more in the King than in the Bishop. This "Oswald's law" afterwards enlarged itself over all England, secular priests being thrown out, and Monks everywhere fixed in their rooms; till King Henry

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* FLEURY. "The old antiquarians of England, even Benedictines, prove, it was an old common custom, for Englishmen that affected Benedict's Order, to profess themselves monks in that Floriacen Monastery in France: and plainly call it, above all others, S. Benedict's Monastery; and give their reasons, because the beginning of that Order came first into England from that place. There Oswaldus, Archbishop of York (dying 27 of February, 992 thirty-two years after his consecration) became first a Monk, and was of that Monastery many years, as others also were."—*Richard Broughton's True Memorial, &c.*, 401.

"Fleury had gained a splendid reputation as the main seat and seminary of Benedictine discipline."—*Soame's Anglo-Saxon Church*, 169.

the Eighth's law ousted Oswald's law* and ejected those drones out of their habitations."

In whatever measure the Benedictines deserved Fuller's epithet "drones" so far had they departed from the founder's rule (see above p. 9.) Besides that "Rule" they had a "Time-table" of devotion, study, and work sufficient to occupy 16 out of 24 hours; and, "When they ride or travel afoot, they are not to spend their time in idle discourse, but either to sing Psalms, or to talk of necessary things in proper season." The "Rule" was not in fault, that was strict and clear enough; but, "in the time of their wealth" it was sadly neglected, as indeed the clearer and better rule of God too often is. (Stevens' Monasticon, vol. I. 163.)

Having introduced our principal personages, we now pass on to the commencement of the friendship between Duke Ailwyn and Archbishop Oswald and that to which it led, viz: *the Institution of Ramsey Abbey and the Building of the Abbey Church.* The Ramsey Chronicler shall tell the tale.

"King Edgar, at a solemn Easter Festival, invited to his court a great company of Nobles, Clerics and Laics, the Divine mysteries were celebrated with alacrity and rejoicing,

* OSWALD, surnamed ODONIUS, from his uncle ODO, Archbishop of Canterbury, first Canon of Winchester, then Dean, and afterwards disciple of *Abbo*, Abbat of *Floriac*, in France, and a Monk of ST. BENEDICT under him. Returning thence into his own country, he was first made BISHOP OF WORCESTER, and afterwards ARCHBISHOP OF YORK. A man of a sharp wit, a solid judgment discreet in counsel, and famous for piety and learning. He built a Monastery, in the Marshes of Ramsey, and was more addicted to an active than a contemplative life, yet writ a little, viz: *Several letters to his uncle Odo*; *One to Abbo*; *To the Saints, while he was at Floriac*; *Synodal Statutes*, &c. He died holily at WORCESTER, in 992."—*Stevens' Monasticon*, vol. I. 197.

after which refreshments were provided for them at the Palace. The festivities continued for some days, but were abruptly ended by the sudden death of a nobleman, whom many of the guests, Bishops, Counts and Barons followed to his burial at Glastonbury." There Ailwyn and Oswald became acquainted, and continued in close friendship for the remainder of their lives. After the funeral rites were ended, in a confidential conversation the Duke acknowledged the short-comings of his life to the Bishop, and Oswald urged him to make some compensation for his sins by giving lands on which to build a Monastery and for the sustenance of Monks.

The Bishop said "all these secular occupations in which you have been engaged are meritorious to you, if you have been just in everything, if you have shewn pity in judgment, if thine eye has been single, *i.e.*, if you have intended to do what is right. But because a good intention is liable to be overshadowed by a false appearance of what is right, you must remember that errors of this kind are to be atoned for by charitable gifts and by shewing pity to the poor. But, that you may have the incentive of plain example, consider that those, who have renounced the world, and have voluntarily embraced poverty for the sake of Christ, these only have true pardon and peace, and they alone are free from those cares of the world to which we are exposed. Sometimes by the good deeds of such men the anger of God and his judgments are averted, a healthy atmosphere is bestowed, crops are abundant, famine and pestilence flee away, the state prospers, prisons are opened, prisoners are freed, the distressed are relieved, the sick are healed,

the weak grow strong, and in short, the whole world, after fearlessly, nay madly, tempting the Divine patience, is saved by them from total destruction. If then, most beloved, you have in any part of your domain a place suitable for the professors of a monastic life, I would advise you to build there a Monastery to the honour of God, and that holy men should be gathered for Divine services, by whose prayers your defects may be filled up and your sins expiated. I, on my part, would give personal and monetary assistance."

To which the Duke answered, "I have venerable Father, an hereditary estate, its local name is Ramsey, surrounded by a marsh, well adapted in my opinion, for the abode of such men. It is remote from concourse of men and very retired. It is a place crowded with all sorts of trees; where it is cleared, the land is fruitful and well-adapted for the pasture of flocks. Formerly there was no house, and no building there, except sheds for my cattle, kept there on account of the excellent grass. But, a few years ago, when I was ill with fever, and I expected no other relief but death to put an end to my increasing weakness, I received a promise of restored health. This was conveyed to me in a vision of a person sent me by the blessed Benedict, the father of Monks, who ordered me, when my strength was restored, to build there immediately a Monastery to the honour of God, and in memory of that blessed father. As soon as my restored health had confirmed the truth of the vision—within a few days—I had a temporary cell built there of wood, until opportunity and wholly restored health should enable me to build a larger Monastery, with its necessary offices;

even now three men are there, living by themselves, having renounced all the sinful lusts of the flesh, earnestly desiring to learn the rule of Monastic Discipline; if they had anyone to teach them."

Then the illustrious Duke told the holy man all the particulars of the vision, as recorded in the charter of King Edgar (R.H. xix.) In answer Oswald proposed to bring 12 men from another Monastery (Westbury,) which he had founded, and offered to superintend them. The Duke accepted Oswald's offer, and they went together to Ramsey. On arriving there the Duke said:—"Behold, my Father, the place in which holy Benedict, by the faithful messenger, I mentioned above, ordered me to build a house to his honour. Enter the island, look at the place, undertake the direction of everything and execute it as quickly as possible, order whatever you please, and you will find me ready to comply without delay."

The Bishop seeing the locality entirely surrounded by marshes, and suitable in many respects, and cut off from the approach of men, spake these prescient words, "Here is a second Elysium, provided from eternity for those destined for the highest place in Paradise. In this place the mirror of thy devotion, O Friend, shall shine throughout successive generations: here shall be thy rest, here shall thy memory dwell, since thou hast chosen it. The anxious occasion of building this house shall be a league of perpetual friendship between us, by a temporal building we will prepare for ourselves an eternal one, if our piety fail not; as therefore, whilst the iron is hot the smith beats it to his will, so whilst this conceived

spark of devotion burns in us, let us hasten our proposed work, lest perchance delay intervening, some wile of the devil or growing sloth prevent the completion of our purpose. I also, if it pleases your Highness, will return home with haste, and send a certain trusty man, skilled in such work, under whose superintendence and advice shall in the meantime be prepared a small refectory with a dormitory for the coming brethren. We meeting again will take counsel as to the plan and dimensions of the Church to be built. In the meantime let it be your care and labour to collect all necessaries for the work, and to provide means for the expenses."

On his return to Worcester Oswald sent the venerable monk ÆDNOTH to Ramsey, who enlarged the Chapel* which he found there, and built the necessary offices, according to the manner and form before shown to him by the Bishop. When this was completed he sent a messenger to the venerable father; but he, it being autumn, delayed his coming until the harvest was gathered in; though in the meantime, he made the requisite preparations for his journey; and at length taking with him the Books and Ornaments suitable for Divine worship: and accompanied by the twelve brethren of Westbury, and the venerable Germanus (a monk from Fleury,) he proceeded to Ramsey, where he was met, according to appointment by the

* This was doubtless built of wood, as well as the cell. "Dr. Sayers supposes that the Churches of the Saxons were chiefly of wood till about the year 658, when the practice of building with stone was greatly promoted by the efforts of Wilfrid (Bishop of York) and Biscop Benedict (a noble Saxon)," and "that the *parochial* Churches, at least, were commonly constructed of wood, even to the time of the Conquest."—*Architectural Antiquities*, p. 122.

renowned Duke Ailwyn, on the day of the beheading of St. John, that exalted hero of the profession of hermits. Then introducing his infant flock into the folds newly erected, and the Divine mysteries being celebrated with a solemn gladness, the management of things within was committed to Germanus, of those without to Ædnoth; the charges of the maintenance of the brethren being allotted to be paid from the 'common purse' of both the Duke and the Bishop till they could be more conveniently provided for 'from the rents of their estates and possessions'. After this beginning it was arranged that, during the ensuing winter, 'the requisite iron and wooden materials, and all other necessary things', should be prepared for building the Church. So, A.D. 969, 'when the spring had reared its head, adorned with flowers, the gathered treasures were properly distributed, skilful workmen were hired, the plan of the building was staked out, and the deep foundations that were laid on account of the ooziness of the soil, were battered firm by the frequent strokes of the battering engine'.—"The work rose higher from day to day; two towers overtopped the very summit of the roof, the less of which was in front of the Church towards the west, and afforded a fair view from afar to those entering the isle; in the midst of the building, where it divided in four parts, was placed the larger tower, resting on four columns, connected by arches extending one to another, so that they might not give way. An edifice sufficiently presentible according to that style of building used in ancient time."

Bentham (History of Ely, p. 28) says, "From this passage one may easily collect, that the plan of this new

Church was a cross, with side-aisles, and was adorned with two towers, one in the west front and the other in the intersection of the cross; a mode of building, I apprehend, which had not then been long in use here in England."

This inference of Bentham is rejected by Dr. Milner, who thinks that cruciform Churches, with towers, were of an older date in this country. He refers to Eadmer's description of the Cathedral Church of Canterbury as it stood during the whole of the Saxon period; also, Mr. Lingard, says, "the Church of Ramsey was by no means the earliest of the cruciform shape; for the contrary appears from a Poem, written in England long before the tenth century." See *Architectural Antiquities*, vol. V. p. 126.—*Britton.*

Whilst the Church at Ramsey was being built the number of the Monks increased and ÆDNOTH *Senior* was made Prior of Ramsey. Oswald also sent to the Abbey of Fleury, where he himself had been educated, for the "most noted" man Abbo, who had "deeply imbibed a knowledge of the liberal arts," that he might preside over the Schools* at Ramsey, and "cherish the scions of the newly-made little garden with the dew of his doctrine." In this interval, it is also noted, Oswald was enthroned Archbishop of York, Dunstan favourably recommending him to King Edgar, the Clergy and People being

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* "The Monastery Schools were the centres of education in all parts of the country."—*Illustrations of English Religion*, H. Morley, p. 10.

"The teachers of religion were also the teachers of all other learning, and formed the main body of the educated class. To be of the people 'leod' was to be unlearned 'lewed'; the educated man was clerk."—See p. 28.

unanimous in this election.† At length the Church of Ramsey was finished, and ready for consecration by ALFNOTH, Bishop of the Diocese. "The people assembled; the floors were cleansed, the walls swept, all the furniture was carried out, all things were removed from the altar, and the whole Church was stripped of every ornament, like a young child about to be baptized. In 974, A.D., 6th Nov.,

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† Of the *Election of Bishops and Archbishops by the Clergy and People;* the King confirming their choice we have several instances in the R.H., to quote one, "Sanctus *Dunstanus* de Abbate *Glastoniæ Wygorniæ*, et *Londoniæ* Episcopus, Deo ordinante, et voto totius cleri et populi cum favore Regis consonante, Metropolitano *Cantuariensi* Archiprœsul subrogatur" (cap. xiii.) see also caps, viii, lxix, lxxv. "The Bishops, when chosen by the Clergy, always required the confirmation of the Prince, but, in most instances, they were nominated by him."—*Lappenburg* vol. I., p. 190.

A.D. 1044. "It is not very clear what the exact process of appointing a Bishop at this time was. It is clear that the royal will was the chief power in the appointment. It is clear that the official document which gave the Bishop-elect a claim to consecration was a royal writ, to which now, under the French influences of Eadward's court, a royal seal, in imitation of continental practice, was beginning to be attached. It is also clear that the appointment was made in full Witenagemot. This of course implies that the Witan had at least the right of saying Yea or Nay to the King's nomination. But we hear at the same time of capitular elections, which clearly were not a mere form, though it rested with the King to accept or reject the selected candidate. In ordinary speech the appointment is always said to rest with the King, who is constantly described as giving a Bishopric to such and such a man. The King too at this time exercised the right, which afterwards became the subject of so much controversy, of investing the Bishop-elect with the ring and staff. It is clear also, from the case of Stigand, just recorded, that the King and his Witan had full power of deposing a Bishop. On the other hand, doubtless owing to the number of foreign ecclesiastics now in the kingdom, references to the court of Rome become from this time far more frequent than before. For an Archbishop to go to Rome for his pallium was nothing new; but now we hear of Bishops going to Rome for consecration or confirmation, and of the Roman court claiming at least a veto on the nomination of the English King."—Norman Conquest, vol. II. 67, 68; in Appendix I. of same volume, "The appointment of Bishops and Abbots" is very fully treated; see also vol. I. 507.

The above witnesses seem to establish a clear independence of the English Church from the Pope of Rome, for the first 1000 years, as to the appointment of Bishops and Archbishops.

it was solemnly dedicated by the blessed Oswald to the guardianship of the Virgin of Virgins—to the name of holy Benedict—and to the memory of all Virgins—Christo annuente. Nor can it be doubted that the Divine favour was granted to those faithful ones, for most pleasant breezes accompanied their devotions, and the sun blessed their deeds by his bright shining."

During the building of the Church, the other works of the Abbey were going on. The brethren were increased in number, and pupils were taken into the Schools. There were many Benefactors and valuable Benefactions. These we will leave for the present and follow the history of the Church consecrated, as above, Nov. 6, 974. The material progress of the Religious Society at Ramsey Abbey was great. Yet there was a want. In those days a rage prevailed for Relics the utensils, or clothing, or bones, or bodies, of those who were accounted saints, were highly prized. No monastery liked to be without some such possessions, as they could be turned to profit. The community at Ramsey would have been behind similar Religious Bodies, if it had not desired and found Relics. Mosheim says, "To obtain a sufficiency of Relics for those in quest of them, the latest carcases of saints were first sought by the priests with prayer and fasting, and then forsooth, were found, God shewing the way, and pointing to the spot." We have no reason to think that the early monks of Ramsey so found their first Relics. But the founder of the Abbey, most liberal in Benefactions to it, provided also for it some Relics. Two Princes, Speed calls them "Kings" had been murdered, and buried

near a country house of Alderman Ailwyn, at a place named *Wacheringe*, in the Chronicle. First buried there, some unmistakeable signs having shewn them to have been exalted to the glory of Martyrs, the Alderman had the bodies disinterred, and re-buried at Ramsey; "adorning its Church, and crowning all his gifts, by the illumination of these two precious gems."—R.H. xxv.

William of Malmesbury tells us that the above two Princes, were cousins of Egbert, King of Kent, who reigned 664-673. Egbert feared that those young men might be troublesome rivals. He had some grounds for such fear. For their father Erminfrid, eldest son of King Eadbald, had been kept from the throne by Ercombert the father of Egbert. By Thurme—"whose name signifies thunder"—a minister of Egbert, the two Princes, Athelrid and Athelbrite, were slain and buried secretly. After a time their bodies were found and a small Church built over them, where they remained until the time of King Edgar. In the reign of this King, so says William of Malmesbury, their bodies were removed by the blessed Oswald, *Archbishop* (sic) of Worcester, and carried to Ramsey Monastery. 'From which time they manifested themselves by many miracles in answer to the prayers of suppliants'. It is said of the above Egbert, who, as a modern Eastern Prince, cut off his possible rivals, that he was "renowned for his encouragement of learning," and, "the ecclesiastical writers praise him for his bestowing on Dorneva—sister of the murdered Princes—some lands in the Isle of Thanet, where she founded a Monastery." (*Rerum Anglicarum Scriptores*, 87, 50, 1601; *and Stafford's, Hume's Hist. Eng.*, 10.)

Thus Ramsey Church became possessed of its first Relics. In after ages it obtained others, which together with the mode of their acquisition will be duly recorded. What claim those young men had to be saints the deponent does not tell us. But they had one strong recommendation, they were of noble blood. Fuller writes, "four parts of five (according to the heraldry of those who wrote the lives of the Saints) were of royal or noble extraction."

In a few years the success which had marked the founding and progress of Ramsey Abbey was somewhat checked, by an unlooked for casualty. Every precaution seemed to have been taken in the building of the Church, but the soil was oozy and treacherous. From this cause the casualty came. In the reign of Ethelred the Second, (979-1016) a crack opened in the central tower of the Church from the top to the bottom, so large as to threaten its destruction. The frightened brethren sent the Prior Germanus and brother Ædnoth "of tried prudence" to tell the tale of the sad disaster to Duke Ailwyn, living then very probably at Upwood. After some silence and with troubled countenance the brave soldier of Christ replied, "I was struck dumb at this news, my dearest children, and I am cast down that my work has to be done again. As the Lord pleased, so it has been done, blessed be the Name of the Lord. I am now weighed down with old age, and had desired to give my wearied limbs their well-earned rest: but these two events have come together to hinder me, viz: the destruction of my former labours, and the imposition of new ones. However, I have this consolation, that as yet, by the favour of God, I am strong in body and my

intellect is even stronger. Moreover losses of this kind would produce despair, if present misfortune did not keep good men in their pursuit of eternal riches; yea, the divine promise assures me of the certainty of attaining a heavenly reward, because however adverse circumstances may be there is certain compensation for crosses patiently endured."

The Duke hastened to the Island to see for himself, what needed to be done, and to encourage the brethren. The whole of them met him as he drew nigh, filling the air with sacred songs, driving out their tears of sorrow with hymns of joy. The venerable Duke entered the Church, accompanied by a procession of singers, and after prayers he inspected the tower threatened with a speedy downfall. He was struck with terror as he looked on the leaning building. He asked the opinion of the workmen. They all said that an insufficient foundation was the cause of the disaster, and that the whole building must be taken down. With the consent of all, the Duke sent to the holy father Oswald, at that time resting in his old age at York, to tell him what had happened and to ask his advice. The Archbishop filled with compassion for this so great affliction of his friends, but concealing his own grief, returned this answer: "As the fire proves the fuller's vessel, so tribulation tries good men; as the strength of the human mind is sometimes weakened by continued prosperity, so its endurance is confirmed by occasional adversity; that all faint-heartedness must be set aside, strength vigorously used, the shaken building must be taken down and in confidence of the merit which will follow, that a deeper foundation must be dug and the work solidified by frequent strokes of the

battering ram, and in short the whole building restored on a better foundation to the glory of God." On hearing which message the Alderman assembled the brethren and said, "Behold I am weakened by old age as you see, and my failing strength does not allow me to undertake such heavy labours as in my earlier days, and the uncertain die takes from me the hope of long-continued life, on you then in manhood's vigour and who have a keen sense of what is most needful—with you, I say, it rests to undertake the present task of assembling workmen, and, before approaching death cuts me off, now tottering with age, hasten by all means the work in hand. I indeed from money which I have saved will liberally furnish you with means to meet all charges." Then the brethren, having the permission, assembled workmen and took down the tower from the roof; and such was the perseverance of the workmen that soon one stone was not left upon another. They found the disaster was caused by "the ooziness of the soil." Then they filled the foundation with closely packed stones, rammed together, and over them poured cement, and, on this erecting their building, rejoiced in the progress of their work.

This work was done under the superintendence of a novice, called Ædnoth *junior* by all, to distinguish him

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Piles and Concrete for foundations were used in the Fens at a date even earlier than this. "In the early part of the eighth century the monastery of CROYLAND, in Lincolnshire, was erected. This is described by the historian, Ingulfus, to have been a stone building, succeeding the wooden oratory of St. Guthlac; and as the marshy soil on which it was situated made it necessary to form an artificial foundation, that was done by driving into the ground a vast number of large oaken and ashen piles, and bringing from a distance in boats, earth and sand to compose a solid surface."—*Architectural Antiquities*, p. 123.

from Ædnoth *senior*, under whom the former Church was built, and who was growing old. Ædnoth *junior* was noted for the nobility of his birth, the comeliness of his form, and the elegance of his manners, as well as for his knowledge of letters. When the Church was completed Duke Ailwyn ordered a wooden tablet to be set in front of the high altar, which he signally adorned to the glory of God, and of St. Benedict, and to the beautifying of the Church, with large and solid plates of silver, together with precious stones of various sorts and colours. He gave also thirty pounds for fabricating the copper pipes of the organ, which fitting their holes within its hollow in close order, upon one spindle, and being played upon on festival days with the strong breath of bellows, uttered a most sweet melody, with a far-resounding clangor."*

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* ORGANS. "Large organs are described and spoken of as donations to the Church in the beginning of the 8th century."—*Lappenberg's Eng. and Ang.-Sax. Kings*, p. 203.

The above description of an organ is not very intelligible. The account following of another ancient organ is equally singular. It was written by Wolstem, another early chronicler. "The monk wrote in rude Latin verse, and Mason, in his *Essay on Church Music* has given a translation:—

"Twelve pair of bellows, ranged in stately row,
Are joined above, and fourteen more below;
These the full force of seventy men require,
Who ceaseless toil, and plenteously perspire;
Each aiding each, till all the winds be prest,
In the close confines of the incumbent chest;
On which four hundred pipes, in order rise,
To bellow forth the blast that chest supplies."

"An instrument that required *seventy* stout bellows-blowers must have been of enormous size. It has been conjectured, and with apparent probability that these men did not continue to blow during the time of the performance, but laid in a stock of wind, which was gradually expended as the organist played."

An object of interest in Fécamp Abbey Church, where Herbert-de-Losinga (who will appear among the Abbots of Ramsey) was trained, was "a certain

At the approaching consecration of the re-built Church Oswald advised that all the Benefactors thereof and the principal notables, ecclesiastics and laics of the neighbourhood should be invited, in whose presence they should guarantee to keep the faith and peace of the Church and to give further security for the safety of its possessions. The Duke therefore, and all the rest, approving of Oswald's advice, messengers were sent out, and all came on the appointed day without any exception; to wit, the Nobles of East Anglia and Chiefs of Cambridgeshire, of Hertfordshire, of Bedfordshire, of Huntingdonshire, and of Northamptonshire; also the men of much sanctity and authority, Ælfwi Bishop of Dorchester, Brithnoth of Ely, Alfircus of St. Albans, Aldulph of Peterborough and Godeman of Thorney, Abbots, all came together with similar devotion.

These guests and witnesses being assembled, the Duke rising from their midst addressed them; "Thanks to you most holy and noble Fathers and my fellow Soldiers, that with one mind in the Lord ye have assembled to the encouragement of our work. You all know that the Archbishop Oswald and I have now built anew this house of God, and we are here to dedicate it again. At its first foundation many things were given to it by the most illustrious King Ædgar as by ourselves and many other

instrument of Music which, by means of large iron tubes, emitted all sorts of sounds, sometimes deep, sometimes shrill, and resembled a chorus in which children, young men, and old men should unite their voices. They call it an Organ," says Baudry, and play upon it on different occasions." He continues, "I know there are some priests who, having no organ in their Church, grievously censure the use of such music but they seem to have forgotten that it was by the melodies of his harp that David soothed and chased away Saul's access of madness, &c.. &c.—*Life and Letters of Herbert-de-Losinga*, vol. I. p. 68.

faithful ones, of whom some indeed still living are now present in our College, but others are asleep in the Lord; gifts were made in villages and cities, in meadow and field, in mills and fisheries, in Churches and the ornaments for Divine Service, which were almost all confirmed by the authentic Charter of the king himself, and by the terrible anathema of many and venerable persons were fortified for ages to come; that therefore you may hold to the same Church in your life by a strong compact of peace, that your posterity also through successive ages may seek no occasion of injuring it, it seems profitable and best for the memorable Charter of the aforesaid king to be read in our ears before the office of the dedication begins, also for the gifts made after his death to be likewise publicly recited before you. In order that if any of you, in reference to any of the things enumerated, shall think he has a claim, without strife, he having impartial hearers shall be able to make known his case before all, and you listening attentively and knowing the law, if you decide in his favour, we, by persuasion or sufficient price will endeavour to retain the disputed property, or neither of these prevailing, we will give it up without altercation or further litigation."

The Charter of Edgar, given below p. 44, was then distinctly and particularly read, and public notice made that if any one had claims against the Church of Ramsey, he should there state it. When all were silent the Duke moved with joy, said, "We call you all to witness before God and His Saints, that in public to-day we have offered a hearing, if any layman or ordained person, or any one of those, who in the vulgar tongue is called Twelfhende, or

Twihende,† wishes to make a claim against this Church. And since all were silent, it is committed to your judgment, O good and wise men to decide, whether after this silence of all present any claimant should hereafter be admitted." After a sufficient silence of all, the nobles and men of great authority decided against any future claimant. A similar notice was given by Abbots Brithnoth of Ely, Aldulf of Peterborough, and Godeman of Thorney in reference to the property of their Monasteries, also in reference to the Abbey of Croland, and the Monastery of Eynesbury, which is now called that of St. Neots—of which at that time Count Ailwyn was the Patron and Guardian—on no person appearing to make a claim, Ailwyn the soldier of Christ and the other nobles, by the advice of Saint Oswald and other venerable men there present, swore 'on their corporal* oath, that they would keep in faith and in deed, during their whole lives, what they had engaged by their words, and protect, as well the Church of Ramsey, as all the above-named Monasteries, with all their appurtenances.' 'The Gospels of the Holy Evangelists, whereon the oath had been taken, were then placed on the High Altar before God, in testimony of this remarkable oath; and the Abbots and Monks, in consideration of the liberality shewn to them, admitted the Duke and his companions into the common benefit and fraternity of their respective Churches.' (R.H. lvii.)

* "So called because the party who takes it was obliged to lay his hand upon the Bible."—*Bailey.*

† Twelfhende (Sax.) The highest rank of men in the Saxon Government, who were valued at 1200 shillings; and if an injury were done to such persons, satisfaction was to be made according to their worth.

Twihende were the lower men of Saxons, valued at 200 shillings, as to pecuniary mulcts inflicted for crime, &c.—*Jacobs' Law Dictionary.*

To turn from our narrative for a brief space, we learn, from the "Norman Conquest" that the fidelity of the above notable men to Monastic Institutions was put to a severe test. For, "The moment Eadgar was dead a reaction took place against the Monastic party (which had seated him on the throne, and which he had greatly favoured,) which was met by as powerful a movement on their behalf. Ælhere, the Ealdorman of the Mercians and a kinsman of Eadgar, headed the movement against the Monks and drove them out of several Churches into which Eadgar's favour had introduced them. But the Monks found powerful supporters in the Eastern part of the Kingdom, where their cause was strongly supported, it would seem even in arms by two remarkable men who then held the government of East Anglia and Essex. Æthelwine (*i.e.* Ailwyn,) one of the founders of Ramsey Abbey, is chiefly known for his bounty to Monastic foundations, to whose gratitude he doubtless owed his singular surname of the Friend of God. Alongside of him stood his maternal Uncle Brihtnoth, Ealdorman of the East Saxons, whose lavish gifts to Ely, Ramsey (R.H. lxxi,) and other monasteries, won him well nigh the reputation of a saint, and whom we shall soon find dying a hero's death, in the defence of his country against heathen invaders."—*Norman Conquest*, Vol. I. 263-4.

"Brihtnoth met them (the Danes) in battle at Maldon. The hero of the monks was also the hero of the soldiers, and the exploits and death of the valiant Ealdorman were sung in strains which rank among the noblest of Teutonic poetry."—*Id.* Vol. I. 271.

When all things for the peace and security of the Church were so accomplished by the skill of the illustrious Ailwyn, the Lord Oswald (so often spoken of,) who now growing old was assisted by Æswi the Bishop of the Diocese, solemnly consecrated* the Church, amidst the willing prayers of a large multitude, with the same title with which it had been before consecrated. The divine office being celebrated according to custom. After the service was ended, which had continued to a late hour of the day, all were at once assembled to refresh their bodies. How splendidly, how liberally, how bountifully, the venerable Duke provided them with many kinds of meats and of drinks, it is superfluous to tell, lest we seem to provoke the nausea of the temperate, or excite vainly the appetite of the gluttonous. (R.H. lviii.)

On the following morning the benediction of the holy Father Oswald having been asked and given, the guests returned with joy to their homes. The holy Archbishop remained holding familiar discourse with his dearest

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* *Consecration of Churches.* "The custom of solemnly setting apart from ordinary and secular use, whatever is appropriated to the service of Almighty God, has the highest possible sanction; for many are the instances recorded of it in holy Scripture. True it is, that there is no record of any such ceremonial having been used among Christians before the fourth century." Yet there are records of 'the offices connected with the consecration of Churches in primitive times. Bishops, from distant provinces, with a vast concourse of clergy and laity were present; appropriate sermon or sermons were preached; the Holy Eucharist was always administered, in the course of which prayers suitable to the occasion were offered. Of these prayers one is still preserved in the writings of St. Ambrose."

"There is a detailed account of the consecration of the Church of Ripon by Wilfred, Archbishop of York, A.D. 665, given in the life of that Prelate, written by Eddius and Fridegode."

Hook's Church Dict., Art, "Consecration."

children, whom having called before him, the blessed man addressed for the last time, the Alderman sitting by. The address is of the rise and prosperity of the Monastery, of the conduct of the brethren in temporal and spiritual matters, and has this direction as to the choice of his successor.* "After my death choose for your Abbot, that one of your fraternity whom a God-like and provident piety shall declare to be worthy, let all agree with uniform vote and consent, according to the tenor of the privilege, which at my petition the venerable John, Chief Priest of the Roman See, granted to this Church at my request." To what purpose Oswald sought this privilege from Pope John it is difficult to see since the Charter of Edgar had already permitted the Monks to choose their own Abbot, and to be responsible to none but the King. Edgar's Charter was confirmed in similar terms by those of subsequent Kings. After the address the Chronicler continues, "Then the holy father, blessing and kissing each, sad and weeping departed, the grieving flock following the retreating shepherd with tears to the doors of the Church, where he turned weeping greatly, and blessing them again, he is said to have spoken this last word to them, *Consociet nos Christus in Paradyso.*—H.R. lix.

The Charter of King Edgar, obtained by Duke Ailwyn and Archbishop Oswald for Ramsey Abbey, which was publicly read—as above p. 39,—before the consecration of the second Church is given by Dugdale in the Monasticon. It is interesting in its account of the circumstances, which

* Oswald seems to have held the position of Abbot, though probably never collated thereto, as Ailwyn did that of Patron and Guardian.

it relates as, leading to the foundation of the Abbey, and for its ample privileges. Its chief parts we will now add :—

"I, Edgar, through the great mercy of God Himself, exalted to be King of all England, to all future Kings after me, Archbishops, Bishops, Abbots, Counts, Sheriffs, Captains, and all the sons of holy Church, greeting, since a certain man beloved by me, and also a near relation, by name Ailwyn, Alderman, moved by divine clemency, with my good will and permission, hath built in the Island, called Ramsey, a Monastery to the honour of the blessed mother of God and perpetual Virgin Mary, and of Saint Benedict, and of all holy Virgins, foreseeing the uncertain condition of all future times, I have desired all my posterity in the future to know, how by the grace of the Almighty, a miracle shewed itself; as by the sure relation of some of my bishops, yea even from Ailwyn himself I have learned." Then follows this narrative of the miracle, which has been alluded to :—"The forenamed illustrious man Ailwyn, suffering frequently and severely with the gout in his feet, had at length a promise of health, by a certain fisherman of his, named Wlfget, who, with his small boat and fishing tackle, went on Ramsey Mere to catch fish for his beforementioned Lord. Wlfget fishing here and there, but by the predestination of God labouring in vain, and at length wearied, slept in his boat, to whom in a dream Saint Benedict appeared thus speaking, "When the morning dawns, throwing your nets, you will take a multitude of fish, offering the largest of the captured fish, which you call Haked, from me to your Lord Ailwyn say to him, that, taking my gift kindly, he shall build

without delay to the pious Mother of mercy, to me, and to all holy virgins a monastery in this island, fitted with necessary offices; that I urge you to make known all these things, repeating word for word, wherefore let him carefully notice in the forementioned place, how the wearied cattle lie down at night, and where he shall see a bull, rising, strike the earth with his right foot, there he may know he is to build an altar with a house for guests. And that his mind may be clearer and his faith firmer as to these commands being from me; I bend for thee thy outer finger, which he himself, loosened from the bond of gout and strengthened by a certain sign, shall straighten for thee."

"Therefore the forementioned fisherman waking as he heard these things, and seeing the day dawning, as had been told him, began to throw his nets, and as the holy father had said, he inclosed a multitude of fishes, of which choosing the largest as bidden by Saint Benedict he carried it to his master, and told him the things which had been revealed in his dream; and asked him to straighten his finger bent by the Saint, all which things Ailwyn taking in with quick intelligence, he straightened the man's finger, and taking the fish, he gave numberless thanks to the mother of the Lord Jesus Christ, and to Saint Benedict for his blessed word, and the illustrious man rising commanded a horse to be saddled quickly, and going to the island itself, observed how the animals lay, as he was commanded. Wonderful thing, and wonderful to be related! When the Duke entered the island, immediately, by the nod of God, he was entirely freed from his stubborn and double disease, he saw his animals lying in the form of a cross, a

bull in their midst; and, as formerly to Saint Clement a lamb with his right foot shewed the place of a fountain, so to this man a bull by striking the earth with his foot shewed by Divine permission the place for the position of the future monastery. Then the aforesaid man praising God, immediately, trees being cut, began to build a chapel there with beautiful work, as he had been commanded, and from a chosen plan he built a convent for the future congregation of Monks. Five years having passed, and eighteen days, I, yielded to the prayers of my venerable friends Dunstan of Canterbury and Oswald of York, Archbishops, and on the 6th of November, in the year of the Incarnation of our Lord, 974, the same Church was dedicated in honour of the blessed Virgin Mary and of the aforesaid Saints.

In the same year, when on Christmas-day the nobles of all my kingdom, Clerics and Laics, had assembled at my court to keep the festival: I being asked by my friends the Archbishops, to confirm by this Charter of my kingly authority, before my whole court, all the gifts and possessions, as well of the said Ailwyn, as of other persons, which they have bestowed for the support of the said Church and maintenance of the family of monks there under the yoke of Christ, as well as record the names of the donors, these I have decided to inscribe by my letters for the information of posterity; that is, firstly the gifts of the Alderman himself, to wit, the island, in which is built the aforesaid Monastery, with all the adjoining meadows, pastures, plains, marshes, and thickets of woods." Then others are enumerated as Upwood, Raveley, Hemingford, Sawtry, Stukeley, Brington, Weston, Hebrigch, Walsoken;

in Upwell also twenty fishermen, paying sixty thousand eels a year for the use of the aforementioned brethren; Brancaster, Warboys, Kingston that is Wistow, with Raveley, and Biri berewicis; Slepe, and Chatteris, and the eastern part of Elsworth; Wythesaton and Ysham; Houton, Witton, Ripton, Clinton and Withersam; Hinith vidua, Graveley, Belington, Stockton, and Gillinger, to each and all of which is added "*cum omnibus sibi pertinentibus.*"

These were granted and confirmed, "*tam bene, et tam plene, sicut ea sub mei juris dominio, suffragatore Deo,*" as fully and as freely as if the aforenamed nobility possessed them, by the favour and consent of my first and chiefest, for perpetual possessions to the aforesaid Church.

Nor was this all, the granted estates were freed from taxes or taxed labour, from all secular services and works, "so that no king, or bishop, or prince, procurator, or tax-gatherer, should exact from them pasture, or labour, or tribute; but all should be altogether free, and private, which are noted above. Besides, on the counsel and advice of my friends Dunstan and Oswald, Archbishops of Canterbury and York, I have decreed, that whosoever shall flee to this place for high treason, or other offence, shall escape punishment of estate, members and life; and always it shall be a habitation of monks, and according to the rule of the blessed Benedict, after the death of the Abbot, another worthy one shall be chosen from the same congregation; but if no one there be worthy, they may elect from another known monastery one eminent for wisdom and piety; but no laic or cleric may presume to usurp the headship of that house. Moreover the property

given it, neither Abbot, nor any other person may have power to sell, or give away, but that house holds them always by protection of the Kings; the Abbot, himself serving God alone as King, shall diligently feed the flock committed to him with spiritual and temporal food: it is permitted to that Society always to possess these rights, and it is enjoined on them to pray unitedly for me, and the stability of my kingdom. Also after the gift of this my privilege, all the bishops, abbots and presbyters, who in great numbers were present that day, have excommunicated as much as in them lies, those, who shall break this constitution, or permit it to be broken. And that this authority may be perpetually lasting and inviolate in my time and that of future Kings after me, and that it may be better and more certainly acknowledged by all my nobles, and judges both private and public, I have strengthened this Charter on the fifth of January by my own subscription and confirmed it by the impression of my seal.

— Seal of Edgar, most serene Emperor of the Angles.
— Seal of Edward, son of the King.
— Seal of Ethelred, his brother.
— I, Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury, confirmavi.
— I, Oswald, Archbishop of York, corroboravi.
— I, Alfstan, Bishop of London, consolodavi.
— I, Æthelwold, Bishop of Winchester, commodum duxi.
— I, Ælfnothus, Bishop of Dorchester, conclusi.
— I, Ælfstan, Bishop of Rochester, consigillavi.
— I, Ælgar, Bishop of Winchester, amen dixi.
— I, Æscwius, Osgar, Ælfric, Æthelgar, Ælfeah, Flodbyrht, Germanus, Abbots.

— I, Ailwyn, Alderman, have accomplished this my desire, God being my helper.
— I, Ælfwold, Æthelstan, Brihtnoth, Æthelweard, Dukes.
— I, Wulstem, Leoffa, Thured, Sideman, Wulfhere, Presbyters.
— I, Æthelsi, Presbyter, with the above and many other Presbyters have excommunicated all transgressors of this agreement.

Similar privileges, liberties and immunities were conferred and confirmed by several subsequent Kings. In a Charter of Henry I. we find, "Et omnia sua sint libera ab omni regia consuetudine et ab omni collectione census quæ geld, vel scoth, vel danegeld Anglicè nominatur. Præteria levgata terræ suæ circa Abbatiam suam ita sit quieta et libera ab omni episcopali et seculari potestate sicut unquam quietior fuit aliquo tempore prædecessorum meorum regum Angliæ, quæ leugata extendit se usque ad monticulum desuper Wistowe, et vadit per mediam villam de Wistowe accingens Rauel. Usque in mariscum T. H. Archiepiscopo Rotom, &c.

The great privileges granted in the above Charter were not peculiar to the Abbey of Ramsey, though it was of the earliest to possess them. The following is a copy of the privileges belonging to the Abbey of Benedictines at Westminster:—"That the Abbot and Convent should be free from all secular service, and have the power of electing a new Abbot, on the decease or surrender of the former. That no layman or clergyman should claim any jurisdiction over them, but that they be under the immediate protection of the King, and free from military service, and they, and

all belonging to them, be exempt from all taxes, customs, suits, or services whatever, whether ecclesiastical or temporal."—*Stevens' Monasticon*, vol. I. p. 279: *cf.* also *Blunt's History of Reformation*, p. 32.

Further, the free election of their own Abbot and immunity from external authority were, if not a rule of the Order, a privilege sought for in Monasteries of earlier date than that of Ramsey. For St. Aldhelm, Bishop, who presided over the Monasteries of Malmesbury, Frome and Bradamford, in A.D. 705, complied with this request of the brethren, "We humbly and unanimously intreat you, that you confirm it under the sacred testimony of writing, and the plain consent of favourable men, that no person after your death do claim dominion over us, without our voluntary assent, either by regal presumption, or pontifical authority, or any secular, or ecclesiastical authority. To this reasonable petition of my monks, especial servants of God, I most willingly consented, &c., &c., &c."—*Stevens' Monasticon*, vol. I. 181.

One more Charter by Edward the Confessor will be given hereafter, written in Anglo-Saxon. Professor J. J. Blunt says, of the exemption from Episcopal visitation, conferred by these Charters, "This privilege of the Monasteries proved their poison." *History of Reformation*, p. 62. And Burnett, "The Abbeys, being exempt from all jurisdiction, both civil and spiritual, and from all impositions, and having generally the privilege of sanctuary for all that fled to them, were at ease and accountable to none; so they might do what they pleased." *History of Reformation*, vol. I., 302.

We must now look on the last hours of the venerable Founders of Ramsey Abbey, the builders and re-builders of its Church, and its most liberal Benefactors, *viz.*:— Oswald and Ailwyn. The Ramsey Chronicle gives us some account of their closing days. According to the Chronicler dreams and portents preceded their deaths. For instance, a brother in his sleep saw both towers of the Church fall, one after the other, with a great crash. Next, two Monks sleeping at a distance from the Monastery, heard a great sound, as if the Church had fallen by a stroke of lightning. Excited by fear they thought the whole College of the brethren was involved in the ruin, but returning in haste they found all safe and praising God. Also, when the brethren were walking in the garden, they thought a great crash was made as by strokes of battering-rams, and crushing of stones within the Church, and that part of the wall was ruined; but entering in they found all things sound to their great joy. By these portents the brethren were made anxious, and looked for the coming of some great event, and after a few days a messenger came from Worcester with the lamentable intelligence of the death of the Holy Archbishop, and most beloved of God Oswald, on that Lord's-day of Lent, on which is sung *oculi mei semper ad Dominum*, which in that year was on the second of March. It will be seen above, note p. 23, that a later writer (Richard Broughton) places Oswald's death on 27th February, 992.

As he had promised, when he left after the consecration of the Church, Duke Ailwyn returned in Lent, to the Abbey, (this was about the time of Oswald's death) with his two

sons Ædwyn and Æthelward, and he addressed the monks assembled before him. The Duke spoke of their loss in the death of Oswald, of himself as the other turret about to fall, according to the forementioned dream, and then continued, 'old age* diminishing the strength of a feeble and crooked body, wholly takes away my wish of remaining longer here. The gracefulness of my once comely form is destroyed by wrinkles; the testy cough, by its frequent stinging, tires my breast; my complexion is pale and bloodless, my scent is less acute than formerly; what I taste relishes less; scarcely can I support my tottering steps with a staff; hardly will my trembling hands hold anything fast, they being worn out with sickness and length of days; and the stolen succession of passing years has deprived me of all my strength; what confidence then can be placed in the perishable state of the human condition. It is pleasant to die when life is found to be so irksome." Then he confessed his sins in their presence, besought their prayers for the pardon thereof, and requested them to bury him in that place. Whilst acknowledging the sins and wrongs of his life the Duke prostrated himself on the floor of the Church. Amidst their own tears and

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* *cf.*, The following from "First Metre of Bœthins":—

"For hasting age, unlooked for, comes with ills,
And grief has claimed her turn of rule within;
Gray hairs, too soon, are scattered on my head,
On the spent frame quivers the wrinkled skin."

"The Consolation of Philosophy," by Bœthins, (A.D. 370-424,) "the last of the old Latin Philosophers," was translated into First-English, by Alfred the Great; and some of the same writer's, "Small pieces of Latin versification—'Metra'," were also translated into First-English, the one from which the above four lines are taken is given in, "Illustrations of English Religion," by Henry Morley, p. 20.

sighs the attendant brethren sang over him the seven penitential psalms. After which the Prior Germanus said over him the accustomed prayer of absolution, the others answering, Amen. The soldier of the Lord, lifted up by his sons, left the place where he had lain, wet with tears. Again he addressed the monks, and then said to his two sons, 'you, the successors of my race, my bone and my flesh, you, I say I ask, I exhort, I advise that with fraternal affection you love this place, with those dwelling here, always in all necessity you are to protect these men, to the utmost of your power. Moreover, under a threat of your father's malediction, I forbid you taking ought from the benefactions, which you know full well, I have conferred on them; but let it delight them to see always in you the kindliness and good will, which I have manifested towards them.' The sons, in the presence of their father, having bound themselves to fidelity to the Church, the soldier of Christ kissing all and receiving the benediction of each, was carried in a boat to his *home*, which was situated on the margin of the lake, not far from the island. There the Duke spent his few remaining days in watchings, prayers, and alms-givings. Alphege, Bishop of Winchester, being near at hand, was sent for. Before him and the Elders from Ramsey the Duke made a public confession of his Christian faith, received Extreme Unction, and died happily on the 9th of May. The Duke was buried at Ramsey, as he had desired to be, a great multitude from the neighbourhood assembling at his funeral. The rich mourned, that they had lost their adviser in difficulties, and the poor their friend in the time of need. So, in the

house, which he had founded with consummate wisdom, the venerated remains of the prudent architect were reverently placed (the aforesaid Bishop Alphege being the minister) to be taken again at the last day.

The *home* referred to above was probably at Upwood; for, from a paragraph in which are enumerated the gifts of Duke Ailwyn to Ramsey Abbey, see the Monasticon, Numb. vii. p. 557, we learn that he gave, first, "the island where he built the monastery, with its adjacent marshes and pools, then the estate at Upwood, which had come to him as a gift* of royal munificence from King Edgar, with the fisheries of the neighbouring streams pertaining to it. For there he had his house in his life and a court befitting the nobility of so great a man. Because the place was both filled with woods, and near to the streams of the marshes, he frequently lived there spending his time in hunting and fowling, or hawking, &c., &c."

* The gift of Upwood was made to Alfwen, the mother of Duke Ailwyn, to whose care Edgar in his childhood had been confided. See p. 18 & 19.

II. BENEFACTORS AND BENEFACTIONS.

We learn from the Charter of Edgar, above given, that Duke Ailwyn bestowed on *his* Monastery—as we may call it—the whole of the Isle of Ramsey, and that he and others had by that time conferred on it many estates and valuable gifts. Such benefactions were too often the fruit of the wrong superstitious feeling, expressed in the frequently recurring words "pro animarum suarum salute." Still they shew a readier willingness to make sacrifices than is often seen in the holders of a purer faith. Yet superstition ought not to be stronger in self-sacrifice than the right Christian faith, which worketh by love to God and man. We should rather let our truer knowledge and faith imitate their self-sacrifice than be content to be harsh judges of the motives of those, who were less carefully instructed than ourselves. They obeyed the teaching of their day, let us see to it that we obey, that which we hold to be, the purer teaching of our own. This should be even more fruitful in good works.

It needs not that we give a detailed account of every Benefactor and Benefaction to Ramsey Abbey, sufficient shall be told here to shew how generous were the givers and how great the gifts.

First among the Benefactors were the family and friends of Alderman Ailwyn. The following list of them is taken from the Monasticon :—

A.D. 969—St. Oswald and Duke Ailwyn built Ramsey Abbey.

A.D. 977—Countess Ethelfleda first wife of Ailwyn died, who gave us Saltreia=Sawtrey.

981—Count Ethelwold* died, the brother of Ailwyn, and is buried at Ramsey.

983—Alfwen mother of Count Ailwyn died, who gave us Weston, and is buried at Chateriz.

985—Ethelgiva died, the second wife of Count Ailwyn, who gave us Stowe and Brune. Indeed Count Ailwyn had three wives, first Ethelfleda, second Ethelgiva, third Wlfgiva.

986—Ethelstan Manesune died, who gave Chateriz and Clopham, Gravele, Weresle, Ellesworth, and is buried at Ramsey. And in the following year Ethelsin brother of Ailwyn died, and is buried at Ramsey.

988—St. Dunstan died, who gave us Warboys, and in the next year died Alfelinus, who gave land at Eccleye and Potton, and is buried at Ramsey.

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* Roger de Hoveden in his "Annals" seems to make this Ethelwold, or Athelwold the doer of that scurvy trick to King Edgar, which is commonly told in Histories of England. To wit, King Edgar having heard of the beauty and wealth of Elfrida, daughter and heiress of Ordgar, Duke of Devonshire, sent his friend Athelwold with proposals of marriage. Athelwold gave an ill report of the famed beauty of the heiress, but said her fortune would be a boon to a poor Earl, though not of much profit to a King. Edgar on this gave permission for Athelwold to marry Elfrida. But the truth reached the King, and Edgar went to see for himself. He killed Athelwold for his treachery, then married the widow, in 964. This date and that of Roger de Hoveden do not tally with R.H. This marriage, begun with the sword, was followed by the sword, for the said Elfrida hired an assassin to kill Edward—son of Edgar by a former wife—and thus opened the way to the throne for her own son Ethelred, surnamed the Unready.

A.D. 990—Count Alfwold, the brother of Alfwin, who gave to Ramsey Hotton and Witton, Rippon cum Wenington, Bithern cum Elinton, and is buried at Ramsey.

993—St. Oswald died and in the same year Count Ailwyn.

994—Countess Wlgiva died, third wife of Ailwyn, who gave Brancaster to clothe the monks, and is buried at Ramsey.

997—Countess Ethelfleda died, the wife of Ethelwold, the brother of Ailwyn, who conferred many benefits on Ramsey and is buried there in a small Chapel.

998—Black Ailwyn died, who gave Clopham, Gerdington, Kembeston et Cranfeld, and is buried at Ramsey.

1007—Alfwara died, who gave Haliwell and the Church of Ellesworth, of which she was Patroness, and land of Burleya, and many ornaments; and is buried at Ramsey.

1013—Godricus died, who was brother of Ædnoth first Abbot of Ramsey, who gave land at Eyrnington.

1019—Arnketel died and Wlfron his wife, who gave land at Hikkeling and at Kuldoton, and are buried at Ramsey. Of this father and mother was born Ethelstan, the fourth Abbot of Ramsey.

A.D. 1022—Alfwin the son of Bricuis died, who placed his scalp or caul, and hair, at Ramsey. He gave Lanshut and Halstede.

1029—Count Brithnoth died, who gave to Ramsey Wichington and Doddington for perpetual alms.

1051—Jol. died, who gave Querington, Sleford, and Cranewell.

1054—Wak. our brother died, who gave Withlismara.

1056—Leofwina died, who gave Stotton, Dillington, Gravele, and Gillinge, and one best cross, and is buried at Ramsey.

Other notable Benefactors were the Kings Edgar, Edward the Martyr and Ethelrid his brother—both sons of Edgar, Cnut, Hardecnut, Henry I, Stephen, Henry II, Richard I, and John. Of eminent clerics were Dunstan and Oswald already mentioned, and others who will be found in the list of the Abbots. Their gifts were ornaments for Churches and priests, Churches and Estates, fisheries, tolls of markets and fairs, and even wreckages on the sea coast of Norfolk, (see below,) in Edward Confessor's Charter) bordering on property there belonging to the Abbey. But that the extent of the Abbatial property may be known we add the list, from Dugdale, of the Churches and Estates owned by the Abbey at the suppression of the Monasteries.

These are the Churches belonging at the time of the suppression to the House of Ramsey, in the Diocese of Lincoln. Huntingdonshire was then in the Diocese of Lincoln:—

Slepe (*i.e.* St. Ives,) All Saints; Shyllington, All Saints; Barton, St. Nicolas; Cranfield, St. Peter's; Elyington, All Saints; Ripton Abbots, St. Andrew; Houghton, St. Mary; Wardebois, St. Mary; Broughton, All Saints; Walton, St. Andrew; Stivecle, St. Martin; Huntingdon, St. Andrew; Hemingford, St. Martin; Haliwell, St. John Baptist; Allington, All Saints; Brington, All Saints; Torfield, St. Mary; Bernewell, St. Andrew; Giddynge, St. Andrew.

The Churches in the Bishopric of Ely:—

Quere, St. Mary; Gritton, St. Andrew; Knapwell, All Saints; Ellisworth, Holy Trinity; Gravele, St. Botolph.

The Churches in the Bishopric of Norwich:—

Bonwell, St. Mary; Lansill, All Saints; Wells, St. Peter; Walsoken, All Saints; Helyngege, All Saints; Dunham, St. Edward; Ryngsted, St. Peter; Brancestre, St. Mary; Depedale, St. Mary; Brunham, St. Albert.

Besides which the Abbey had the Patronage of the Churches of Wistowe, Stivecle, Giddynge Abbots, Cherfield, in the Diocese of Lincoln; and of Downham, Upwell, and Walsoken in the Diocese of Norwich.

The extent of the Abbey Estate is given below in Hidages or Hides. Many are the answers to the question, "What is a Hide?" The answers shew it to have been a variable quantity. "Some think it was as much as could be tilled with one plough. But this must have been variable according to the nature of the land. Others as much as would be sufficient for the support of one family." "Thirty acres to the Hide seems the most reasonable calculation."—*(Fenland, Past and Present,* p. 63-64.*)* "Hide was the

name of the more ancient and Saxon measure of land in this Kingdom, and answered to about 120 acres, but varied considerably in different Counties, being less in some and more in others."—(Rev. G. Johnston's translation of Domesday Book for Huntingdonshire, p. 27.) We can find no more definite explanation of Hide.

Hidages belonging to the Abbey of Ramsey, in the County of Huntingdon :—

Ayllyngton, 10½ hides; Weston, 10; Bryngton, 4; Britherne, 4; Giddynge, 7; in the other Giddynge, 1; Saltreye, 7½ hides and half a rod; Ludyington, 2½; Elyngton, 9; Dilyngton, 6; Stivecle, 7; Ripton with Wenyington, 10; Upwode, 10 with Ravele; Wistowe, 9 with Ravele; Broughton, 9; The Soc of Slepe, 20; Houghton, 14; Wardebois, 10; Haliwell, 9; Offord, 4; in the two Heminyffs, 25; Gillynge, 5; Walton, 5.

In the County of Northampton :—

Wichertown, 5 hides; Dodyington, 1; Isham, 1½; Bernewell, 6; Hemyngton, 3; Hale, 3 rods.

In the County of Lincoln :—

Querendown, 5 hides with Cranewell; Erckyngham 3 hides Maringes.

In the County of Bedford :—

Crannfeld, 10 hides; Barton, 10½; Pekesden, 10; Shitlington 10 hides with 5 rods in Mepershall; Gravenhirst, 1 hide; Holwell, 3½; Clifton, 1; Bereford, 1.

In the County of Hertford :—

Cherfield, 10 hides.

In Suffolk:—

Lansil, 10 hides.

In Norfolk:—

Branncestre, 10 hides; Brunham, 2 with Depedale; Ryngstede 7 with Holm; Wynbodesham; Downham with the Soc, 4; Helyngege with Snore, 6; Walsoken, 6; Well.

In the County of Cambridge:—

Cnapwell, 5 hides; Gravele, 5; Ellisworth, 9 hides, 1 rod and 5 acres; Stowe Wye, 3 hides; the other Stowe, 2½; Brune, 1; Drayton, ½ an hide; Quere, 9; Gritton, 8½ hides and ½ a rod; Borewell, 10½; Chatriz, 3.

Only by such detail, given as briefly as possible, can we estimate the extensive properties and extended influence of the Abbey of Ramsey. Most of these properties were gifts, but several were purchased from accumulated riches. That we may not be tedious, we will give from Speed's *Theatre of the Empire of Great Britain*, Bk. I. c. 29. §7—a summary of the wealth and position of the Abbey—"This monastery (the shrine of two Martyred Kings, Ethelbright and Ethelred, see above p. 33, and of S. Ivo, the Persian Bishop) by humble piety at first and pious charity, arrived at such a pitch of worldy fortune, that it transformed their founder (religious poverty) into their ruin, the attribute of Ramsey the Rich;* for having made themselves Lords of 387 Hides of land (whereof 200 in Hunts., so much as at an easie and under rent was at the Suppression valued at £1983, 15*s.* 3*d.*, but by account of this time, *i.e.* 1600 A.D.,

* "The Church grew luxurious under patronage. It is true of communities as of individuals; the bitter tonic of persecution is preferable to the luscious draughts of prosperity."—*Orthodox London*, 120-121.

annually amounts to £7000,) they then began to affect popular command, and first enclosing that large circuit of land and water (for in it lieth the mile square meer of Ramsey) as a peculiar Seignory to them, called the Banleuc or Bandy (bounded as the Shire from Ely and from Norman Cross with the Hundred Meer) by Sovereign grant they enjoyed regal liberty,* and then aspiring a step further (to place in Parliament) made Broughton the head of their Barony, annexing to it in this shire four Knights' fees. Thus in great glory it stood above 400 years, until Henry VIII, (amongst many other once bright lamps of Learning and Religion in this State, though then obscured with those blemishes to wealth and ease concomitant) dissolved the House."

In the foregoing we have seen somewhat of the BENEFACTORS and BENEFACTIONS, which raised the Abbey of Ramsey to its greatness. But the concluding words from Speed, describing such Institutions as, "once bright lamps of Learning and Religion," may remind us of great and lasting BENEFITS conferred by them on their own and succeeding times. In the Monasteries were the bookworms, the architects, the artizans, the advanced farmers, the doctors, the schoolmasters, and even the relieving officers of those days. Of the Benedictines it has been written, "The Majesty in the divine offices was so great and solemn as was not found in any other Order, which therefore stirred up very extraordinary devotion in the people. Their hospitality and alms were profuse and wonderful towards

* See Edgar's Charter, p. 41; Edward the Confessor's and Henry the First's, hereafter.

all that wanted, and especially towards the learned, and private indigent persons—who could not beg, towards relieving whose wants this Order had in a manner a public stock; wherefore it is no wonder that the people doted on them, seeing that those who were in want, were so bountifully supplied by them." Another writer, who tried honestly to weigh the good and evil of Monasteries, tells us, that in them were many "humble and righteous servants of God," and reminds us, "these it would be ungenerous to confound with the swarm of lazy, sensual, unlettered drones among whom it was their unhappy lot to live, and whom the shock of the Reformation dispersed."—*Blunt's Reformation*, p. 62.

We will give here, some evidence of the right Ramsey had to be classed as one of the "bright lamps of learning and religion." In this respect being in its turn a BENEFACTOR.

Mr. E. W. Brayley, in his "description of the County of Huntingdon," translates much of the Ramsey Chronicle, and closes his notice of the Abbots with the following paragraph. He gives good authority for his statement.

Many of the Abbots and Monks of Ramsey were men of considerable talents and learning, to which, doubtless, the *School* established within the walls of the Abbey, and almost coeval with its foundation greatly contributed. Here was also a famous *Library*, concerning which the following particulars have been collected by Whitaker, from Leland. "The Library of RAMSEY was celebrated for, what we are amazed to hear of either there or then, to wit, *Hebrew Books*. The Jews being

for the first time permitted to pass over from Normandy into England by the Conqueror, spread in a short time over the Kingdom, and had a synagogue in almost every great town; but in the reign of Edward the First, all their property was tyrannically confiscated, and they themselves were barbarously banished.* Then the Synagogues at Huntingdon and Stamford being profaned, all their furniture came under the hammer for sale, together with their *treasures of books:* but when Gregory Huntingdon, a Monk of Ramsey, who had been studying the Hebrew Language for some time before, and had been checked in his studies by the want of Hebrew Books, understood of this auction, he hastily repaired to it from his adjoining monastry, with a good sum of money, and readily at the fixed price purchased their gold for his brass, and returned home in high spirits. What did he do then? Night and day he turned over his Hebrew volumes, till he had drawn from the fountain head a more intimate knowledge of the language. He left also to his colleagues many excellent annotations from his own pen, which a learned posterity might read with pleasure. The *Catalogue of Ramsey Library* makes a specific and honourable mention of the Hebrew Books most diligently collected by him. He thus began that collection which afterwards received considerable additions from Robert Dodford, another monk of the Abbey, and

* "When the Jews, being convicted of many heinous crimes were by degrees expell'd *England*, more particularly for having crucify'd children in several places and times in contempt of Christ and Christianity." (Stevens.) This was one of the barbarous, and probably wholly false rumours of those times to rouse hatred and oppression against the outcast Race.

had even a *Hebrew Lexicon* compiled from both by a third, *viz.*: Laurence Holbeach, in the reign of Henry the Fourth, who 'lighting upon the Hebrew volumes which had been rescued from destruction by Gregory, and which exhibited all the glorious majesty of the ancient Synagogue,' resolved that, 'what Gregory had happily begun, he would more happily complete': and therefore 'he formed, in an elegant manner, a Hebrew Dictionary,' a work at once refined and learned; which was carried away many years ago, by the wicked industry of a purloiner, Robert Wachefeld."

From Woods' Athenæ Oxoniensis we learn "R. Wachefeld al Wakefield, a Northern man born, and the greatest linguist of his time, was as he saith, 'Ex fidelibus natus fidelis, ex Christianis Christianus,' and afterwards being fitted for the University, he was sent to Cambridge, where he took one or more degrees in Arts. But his desires being solely bent to improve his natural genie in the tongues, he went to travel, and in short time attained to a very considerable knowledge in the Greek, Hebrew, Chaldaic, and Syriac tongues . . . . . in 1519, I find him to be Hebrew professor at Louvain, in Brabant, in the place of one Matthew Adrian. But continuing there only four months, he returned into England . . . . . where he was made one of Henry the Eighth's Chaplains, was beloved of many and patronized by Thos. Bulleyn, Earl of Wilts. . . . Afterwards, upon intreaty of the University of Oxon. made to the King, Wakefield was sent thither in 1530, and read publicly the Hebrew Lecture there at Ch. Ch. In 1536, when he saw the King begin to make havock of

religious houses, he carefully preserved divers books of Greek and Hebrew, especially those in the Library of Ramsey Abbey, which were partly composed by Laurence Holbeach, a monk of that place, in the reign of Henry iv, among which was his *Hebrew Dictionary*. He died at London in 1537. Jo Leland in one of his books gives him the name of POLYPUS, noting thereby by way of contumely, that he was a crafty man for craftily conveying away the Hebrew Dictionary before mentioned."

From a note in Bliss' edition of Woods', &c., is the following, which, if true, makes R. Wakefield to have been a person of easy principles and of abounding vanity, an early Vicar of Bray. "In Phillip's *Life of Cardinal Pole*, p. 38, is this, 'The earliest document which remains of these proceedings (those connected with the divorce of Catharine of Arragon) is a letter of Secretary Pace, to the King, in which he informs him, that he had treated with Dr. Wakefield of the divorce, and that the Dr. was ready to resolve the question either in the negative or affirmative, just as the King thought proper, and in such a manner as all the divines in England should not be able to make any reply.' This letter is dated 1526, and to Wakefield's eternal infamy is still extant."

JOHN CHILD,* when the Abbey and its noble *Library* were sinking into one common ruin, preserved the Hebrew Books from destruction. Such an illustrious Society of Hebrew Scholars was this sequestered Abbey of Ramsey;

* The care here attributed to JOHN CHILD is said by Stevens to have been taken by JOHN YOUNG, see below.

and such a Christian Zion was raised among the Eastern Lakes of our Island; till the Reformation swept away this Zion, and made that study of the Hebrew, which seems to have begun with the beginnings of the Saxon Church, which was now culminating rapidly to its zenith, to set in the ocean for a century-and-a-half afterwards." Further Dugdale tells us, "Among the ancient Rolls belonging to the Cottonian Collection, there is one marked II. 16 on five skins, containing an extensive catalogue of the (Ramsey) Library, with the names of the different persons by whom the respective manuscripts were given or bequeathed. It is imperfect; but furnishes a substantial proof of the great encouragement which literature received within the walls of the monastery. It was probably one of the largest Abbatial Libraries then existing. The Catalogue seems to have been made about the time of Richard II. Among the works enumerated are:—

"Hystorum Normanorum et Anglorum—Liber Naturarum Aristotelis in uno volumine—Casus decretalium—Compotus et Algorismus—Metaphisica et Liber Ethicorum—Priscianus constructus—Anselmi Opera—Seneca—Augustinus de Spiritu et Anima—Marcianus—Duo Donati—Boecius de Consolatione—Oviduis Magnus—Oracius—Lucanus—Grecismus Thomæ de Warewyk—Prudencius—Terentius—Plato—Macrobius—Remigius super Therencium, et Salustius, in uno volumine—Virgilius—Itinerarium Clementis—Stephanas Cantuariensis super xii prophetas—Sententiæ Petri Lumbardi—Gesta Britonum—De Ortu Pilati—Pœtrus Blesensis—Vita Sancti Georgii—Prosæ

magistri Henrici Versificatoris—Bibliotheca Hebraica—Martialis—Josephus—Soluius—Orosins—Liber Organicus fratris Willielmi de Chilteham."

The following Monks, "learned men of the English Benedictines," were of those, whose industry and talents conferred honour on the Abbey of Ramsey.

BRITHFERTH, a Monk of Ramsey, knowing in the *Aristotelian* Philosophy, and skilled in Mathematics as appears by his learned works. He writ excellent commentaries on several works of *Bede*, the titles whereof are lost. What I find of his are as follows :—*Exposition on Venerable* BEDE of the *Times* ; on BEDE *of the Nature of Things* ; on BEDE'S *Book of talking by the Fingers ;* on his *Book* DE RATIONE UNCIARUM ; likewise of *Mathematical Principles;* of the *Institution of Monks,* &c., and lived in 980.

WILLIAM OF PETERBOROUGH, Monk of *Ramsey,* a man of great wit, much reading, and one of the prime Divines of his time, as Leland observes. He was resorted to from all parts, not only on account of his learning and eloquence, but also for advice in difficult affairs. *Boston* of *Bury* gives us these *titles* of his *writings, Commentary on the Canticles ; Exposition of Words in Holy Writ ; Distinctions in Divinity ; Notable Homilies ; Euphrastick Expositions ;* the *Work of Parts ;* he flourished in 1188.

JOHN WELLIS, Monk of *Ramsey,* Doctor of Divinity at *Oxford,* a great enemy to *Wiclif,* and one of the first twelve who condemn'd his (supposed) errors. His writings were *of the Eucharist ; of the Prerogative of the Clergy ; of Private*

Religion; Against Nicholas Horford; *of his Companion's Ingratitude; Epistles;* and much more, mostly against Heresies and Hereticks. He flourished in 1382.

To the three following, as successful students of Hebrew, reference has already been made (p. 64,) *viz*: to (1) GREGORY of Huntingdon, (2) ROBERT DODFORD, and (3) LAURENCE HOLBECK or HOLBEACH. Of (1) STEVENS enables us to add, "he gained a thorough knowledge of the *Hebrew* tongue, and expounded several difficult places in Scripture. Most of the writings of his we have left concern *Greek* Literature, of which sort he left to posterity, *The Art of understanding* GREEK; *Exposition of* GREEK *Names; The sum of Grammar; Rudiments of Grammar; Attentarium; The Image of the World; Exposition of* DONATUS; *Notes on* PRISCIAN; *Court Epistles; Rules of Versifying*; *Sentences by Verses.* He flourished in 1255. (2) Of DODFORD, "he made no stop in his progress in learning; but being past other studies, he entirely devoted himself to the Meditation of the Word of God. For the more perfect understanding whereof he learnt the *Hebrew Tongue.* He is said to have writ much, but little of it is come down to us. The only titles we have of his Works, are *Short Notes on the Parables,* and *Sermons.* He is thought to have lived about 1270. (3) Of LAURENCE HOLBEACH, he "ennobled the meanness of his birth with virtue and learning. Delighting much in the *Hebrew* Language, he spent several years in the study of it, and at length arriv'd to the perfect knowledge of that Holy Tongue. The Hebrew Dictionary which Gregory had begun, Laurence took in hand, brought the same to perfection, and published it, under the title of *An Hebrew Dictionary,* which is all I

find of his writing; and this was taken out of the Monastery, in the reign of King Henry VIII, by Robert Wakefield. (see p. 65-66.) Holbeach flourished in the year 1410.

John Young, Monk of *Ramsey*, religious, learned, and very skilful in the *Hebrew Tongue*, he, when his Monastery, together with the Library was destroyed by King Henry VIII, privately conveyed away some *Hebrew* Books (Note on p. 66) of great value, and preserved them from the flames, as the greatest Treasures. What he writ is not come to my knowledge; but he flourished in the year, 1530.

Another notable of the Town, though not of the Monastery, of Ramsey, yet perhaps in youth one of its scholars, may fitly find a place here, *viz*:—

William Ramsey, born in the Town of that Name, first Monk, and afterwards Abbot of *Croyland*, became famous for piety, wisdom, and learning, and of singular dexterity in the management of affairs; on which accounts, he was much esteemed by great men, and particularly by King Henry II. Nor had he only the art of acquiring favour but knew well how to take advantage of it; for in the space of 18 months that he was Abbot, through the King's Bounty, he paid off 14,000 Marks that the Monastery then owed. Leland says, he was excellently versed in all polite literature, and employed himself in reading, writing, and imitating the lives of Saints, as appears by his works. The titles whereof here follow:—*The Life of St. Guthlac*, in *Heroic Verse*; *The Life of St. Neot*, in verse, *the same in Prose; Of his Translation; The Life of* Earl Waldelph; *His Passion; His Miracles; The Acts of his Predecessors; Of the* Countess Judith; *The Life* of St. Edmund, *King; The Life*

of St. Berinus, *Bishop; On* Bede *of the Times; On* Isidore *of Computation; Of the Acts of his own Monastery; Of the Lives of the Philosophers; Of reading the Writings of Heathen.* At length after a good life, he made an happy end in 1180."—*Stevens' Monasticon.*

The monks and men of Ramsey seem to have pursued other studies than classical and theological ones, if we may credit allusions in certain MSS. in the Ashmolean Catalogue. They engaged in the 'science' of earlier times, *viz:* in the search after the 'Philosopher's Stone,' and in the mysteries of 'Alchymy.' In the Ashmolean Catalogue MSS. 1415-7, we find the heading "Translation of a book of the transmutation of metals in the time of Edward the Third, by Cremor, Abbot of Westminster." Ashmole observes "Dr. Dee conceiveth this was written by the Prior of Ramsey."

In other MSS. on kindred subjects "Master Rauf of the town of Ramsey is referred to as an authority." Whether he was the aforesaid Prior or not we cannot say.

In a valuable Book recently published, "Fenland Past and Present," another very precious Benefit, is said to be inherited from the Monks of the Fens. The Editors undertake—we think successfully—"to shew that the Fenland was the cradle of modern Classic English; that here was the fusion of those elements of speech into a dialect, which was to grow into a model language, the vehicle of thought for a great nation—a language more widely used at the present day than any other on the globe." p. 116.

We shall not enter into this important and interesting question, but, with the quotation following, refer the

reader to "Fenland, &c.," and to "The Sources of Standard English." By T. L. Kingston Oliphant.

"It may seem strange that England's now standard speech should have sprung up, not in Edward the First's Court, but in cloisters on the Nene and Welland. In no part of England, perhaps, was there such a cluster of monastic institutions, within the same limits, as in the Fens (there were four Mitred Abbots)—none that could enjoy such seclusion. Here men had the leisure and opportunity to think and write. The Saxon monasteries, too, were the chief, or, perhaps, the only schools for education, and they very early obtained certain privileges on that very account."

The Abbot of Ramsey was one of the four mitred Abbots of this neighbourhood, and he of Peterborough another. Ramsey Abbey was richer than that of Peterborough, but the latter, possibly from its less isolated position, became the more famous and was converted into a Bishopric. "Mr. Oliphant tells us that, 'of all cities, none has better earned the homage of the English patriot, the English scholar, and the English Architect, than Peterborough. Without the Peterborough Chronicle we should be groping in the dark for many years, striving to understand the history of our tongue." *Fenland Past and Present*, chap, iv.*

The Editors of '*Fenland Past and Present*,' having given us free permission to avail ourselves of their labours, we add the following specimen of poetry, from the earliest

* "The English tongue has made some advances since the eleventh century; but they are small compared with the advances which it had made between the fifth and the eleventh."
Freeman's *Norman Conquest*, vol. I., p. 8.

Poet of the Fens, Robert Manning, or Robert of Brunne—a Gilbertine Monk of the monastery of Bourn, Lincolnshire, circa 1300, or a little earlier, "who gave the English language its present shape." "Manning tells the tale of two good women who never had a word with their husbands for 20 years. (They were *Fenland* women, no doubt, and we hope there are many such now-a-days.) He comments thus:—

A godë womman ys mannys blys,
*Þere here love ryȝt and stedfast ys;
Þere ys no solas vnder heuene
Of allë þat a man may neuene,
Þat shulde a man so mochë glew,
As a gode womman þat louеþ trew,
No derer ys none yn Goddys hurde,
Þan a chaste womman wyþ louely word.

Perhaps the reader would like this bit of *The Handlyng Syrme* (the name of the Poem) in modern dress: here it is—

"A good woman is man's bliss,
Where her love right and steadfast is,
There is no solace under heaven,
Of all that a man may neven, (*know*)
That shall a man so much glew, (*please*)
As a good woman that loveth true,
No dearer is none in God's herd,
Than a chaste woman with lovely word."

* This Þ is intended to represent the 'First English' Th or Wh.

ADDENDA TO PART II.

The following are copies of Charters of Henry I, conveying the fair of St. Ives, or the tolls thereof to the Abbots of Ramsey :—

Carta Henrici I. *Regis de Feria Sancti Yvonis.*

H. Rex Angliæ, &c. Sciatis me concessisse sancto Benedicto de Rames. et Abbati et monachis et sancto Yvoni unam feriam apud sanctam Yvonem de Slepe quæ incipiat die Lunæ in ebdomade Paschæ et duret usque in diem Lunæ sequentem et toto die illo. Et habeat feria illa socham suam, et sacham, et tol et theam, et infongenethef, et omnes libertates et consuetudines suas sicut aliquis feria melius habeat in tota Anglia. Et volo et præcipio quod omnes undecunque ad eam venientes et in ea existentes et inde revertentes hanc meam firmam pacem dando Abbati suas rectas consuetudines ne super hoc ab aliquo alicubi injuste disturbentur super x. lib. forisfacturæ. Teste Johanne Episcopo. &c.

Carta ejusdem Regis de Feria Sancti Yvonis, die Mercur.

H. Rex Angliæ, &c. Sciatis me concessisse sancto Benedicto de Rams. et sancto Yvoni de Slepe feriam die Mercur. in Pasch. usque ad octavum diem, ita bene et honorifice cum socha et sacha, et tol et theam, et infongeneth, et cum omnibus consuetudinibus sicut aliqua feria melius habet in tota Anglia, et volo et præcipio ut omnes ad eam venientes et in ea existentes et inde redeuntes, firmam pacem nostram habeant. T. Roberto Episcopo Linc, &c.

The following is the Charter of King John respecting the Market at Ramsey:—

J. Dei gratia, &c. Sciatis me concessisse et hac carta nostra confirmasse abbati et monachis de Rames. unum mercatum habend. apud villam suam de Rames. singulis ebdomadis per unum diem; scilicet qualibet die Mercur. Ita tamen quod non sit ad nocumentum vicinorum mercatorum vel vicinarum feriarum. Quare volumus et firmiter præcipimus quod prædicti abbas et monachi habeant et teneant prædictum mercatum bene et in pace, libere et quiete, integre, plenarie, et honorifice, cum omnibus libertatibus et liberis consuetudinibus ad hujus mercata pertinentibus sicut prædictum est. T. Galfr. fil. Petri com. Essex, &c. Monasticon, 564.

On a Map, date about 1750, by "Eman. Bowen," dedicated to Robert Montague—Duke of Manchester—is this note respecting our Market: "Ramsey Market is now reckoned one of the best in England for cattle and water-fowl on account of plenty and cheapness." The water-fowl have disappeared from our well-drained fens, and St. Ives has drained our market of cattle. Only a few pigs are now its staple.

"The following is curious—"Ex Libello Donationum Ramesiensis Monasterii,"—*viz.*:

"Custodia ferarum in Huntinduneshire data monasterio de Ramesey a Joanne rege." Monasticon, 565.

ROYAL CHARTERS.

There are still in the possession of E. Fellowes, Esq., several Charters and other deeds granted to the Abbey in days gone by.

The Royal Charters number 14, and are as follows:—

I. Of Henry I, certainly as early as A.D. 1113 to Abbot Aldwin, being a confirmation of Charters granted by the King's Ancestors.

This Charter is very much mutilated.

II. Charter of same King and probably of same date, to Roger of Huntingdon, in Abbot Aldwin's favour.

III. Charter of same King, between A.D. 1102 and 1107, to R. Bishop of Lincoln, Simon ——, and Roger, Sheriff of Huntingdon, in Abbot Bernard's favour.

IV. Charter of same King, between A.D. 1114 and 1133, to Abbot Reginald, about all the privileges of Ramsey Abbey.

V. Charter of same King, between A.D. 1133 and 1135, to the Bishop of Lincoln, and all the Barons of Huntingdonshire, in favour of Walter, Abbot.

VI. Charter of Henry II, probably about A.D. 1154, to all Sheriffs in whose shires the Abbot of Ramsey holds lands.

VII. Charter of Henry II, between A.D. 1154 and 1189, securing privileges as formerly held.

VIII. Charter of Richard I, in which he calls himself Count of Cornwall, and instead of the seal affixed having on the reverse the ordinary stamp of the King on his throne, it bears a lion rampart.

IX. Charter of Richard I, probably A.D. 1189, granting to the monks and all the men of S. Benedict of Ramsey exemption from tolls and dues all over England.

X. Charter of Richard I, A.D. 1199, being a repetition of his early Charter of privileges, and a rectification of any abuses which may have crept in "while he was a prisoner in Germany," (dum capti essemus in Alemanniâ.)

XI. This seems to be a Charter of Edward II, or Edward III, but much of the writing is obliterated, it grants exemptions from certain services.

XII. Charter of Edward III, A.D. 1353, being letters patent confirming an agreement, between the Abbot and Monks of Ramsey on the one hand and John and Alice King on the other, concerning certain lands and rents in "Lanshull."

XIII. Charter of Edward III, A.D. 1369, about Justices who are within the "Banleuc" or Liberty of Ramsey.

XIV. From this Charter of which only part remains, it would appear the Abbot and Monks of Ramsey presented to the King a petition for a renewal or confirmation of the privileges granted to them in the time of king Edgar, which was granted.

The king is named Henry, but there is nothing to show the date of the issue or which King of that name is the issuer.

Numbers IV, V, VIII, IX, X, XII, and XIII have the seals originally attached to them still affixed, though considerably mutilated.

OTHER GRANTS AND DEEDS.

XV. Theobald who was Archbishop of Canterbury from as early as A.D. 1143 to 1161 grants this confirmation, to the Abbot and Monks of Ramsey, of Ripton which Stephen the King granted, this charter is at variance with Dugdale, who says that Ripton was given to Ramsey Abbey by Henry II.

Theobald anathematizes all who shall in any way alter, or try to alter, the gift of the King.

XVI. This is a confirmation of the right of Ramsey Abbey to demand 3 marks annually from the 'poor' church of Burwell, and one mark annually from the church of Depedale. The confirmation is granted by John, successor to Herbert de Losinga, who was the first Bishop of Norwich.

The seal on this Charter is in a very good state of preservation, having on one side the figure of the Bishop, with his pastoral staff; and the inscription 'Johannes dei gratia, Norwicencis Episcopus,' John, by the grace of God, Bishop of Norwich; and on the other a lamb with this inscription, 'Angellus dei qui tollis peccata mundi,' a perversion of the text—'The Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world.'

XVII. Explains itself, a translation of it is given in full. To all who look at the present letter, Thomas by divine permission, Bishop of Lincoln, greeting—

Be it known to you all, that, the holy* men, the Abbot and Monks of the monastery of Ramsey, in our diocese, on a day and at a place assigned by us for them, have produced and shewn before us visiting our diocese with our authority as ordinary, the privileges, by right of which, as they said, supported, they hold the parish churches of S. Ives, with its chapels, rights and all its appurtenances, of Ramsey, with its rights and all its appurtenances; and Bury with its chapels and all its appurtenances, in our said diocese for their use for ever; and claim and say that they have a right to claim annual payments, viz: 5 marks from the church of Aylington, 4 marks from the church of Therefeld, 20 shillings from the church of Cranfield, 1 mark from the church of Broughton, one parcel of land from the church of S. Andrew, of Huntingdon, 20 shillings from the church of Houghton, 20 shillings from the church of Barton, 40 shillings from the church of Hemingford, 40 shillings from the church of Warboys, 10 marks from the church of Schittelyngdon, 2 shillings from the church of Ripton, and half a mark from the chapel of Wistow; moreover portions of the tithes of their demesne lands of Higney, Upwood, Wistow, Abbot's Ripton, Warboys, Broughton, Houghton, S. Ives, Holywell, Hemingford, Aylington, Weston, Brington,

* 'Religiosi viri.' Men who have devoted their lives to the service of God.

Bythorn, Gidding, Ellington, Therefeld, Schittelyngdon, Barton, Cranfield; and two parts of the tithes of sheaves of the demesne lands formerly belonging to Berengarius le Moyne in Barnwell. We have seen examined, and carefully weighed these (privileges, &c.) produced and shewn; and because we have found that the said Abbot and Monks have canonically possessed the churches enumerated with their chapels, and all their appurtenances, and have claimed the payments and portions previously mentioned; and that they have canonically held these churches with their chapels, and all their appurtenances for their use for ever, and do hold them, that they have possessed and do possess them, and that they have claimed, and have a right to claim, the said payments and portions, moreover that the same religious men have been protected by sufficient titles, in addition to service and prescription, we acquit the same religious men from our suit instituted against them on this question, and we hold them acquitted. In testimony of which, our seal is affixed to these presents given at Danentre,* 5th kal. March, in the year of our Lord, 1343, and the second of our consecration.

XVIII. This deed contains the terms of an agreement between the Abbot and Monastery of Ramsey on the

* DANENTRE. This is probably identical with the modern Daintree, the name of a farm in the Parish of Ramsey; and it is worthy of remark that in excavating for the foundation of the present farm-house there, the head of a figure was found, carved in stone, very much resembling that of the Scandinavian idol in Cassell's History of England.—Vol. I. p. 445.

If this head is of Scandinavian workmanship, it would seem to argue an early settlement on this spot. The head may still be seen above the front door of the house.

one hand, and S. incumbent of Ailington; the terms agreed upon are as follows:—the said S. shall pay to the Abbot and Monastery 5 marks per annum, and 2 marks in addition; and the said S. shall have the tithes of Barnwell. The arbiters or judges in this case were S. Abbot, of Wells, W. Subdeacon, of Lincoln, and Master R. of Derby, acting under the authority of the Pope. 'summi pontificis.'

XIX. Is a deed bequeathing 5s. per annum to Abbot Ranulph and the Monastery of Ramsey, the testator is Gilbert de Stanton.

XX. Is a bequest of land from Robert de Graveley, to Hugh Abbot, and the Monastery of Ramsey.

XXI. Ralph Marshall, of Cranfield, gives to the Abbot and Monks of Ramsey a rent charge of eighteenpence a year, in exchange for one mark and one robe, in hand. Date between 1267 and 1286.

XXII. In exchange for 15 marks of silver, Johanna, widow of William le Waleis, gives to the Abbot and Monastery of Ramsey 6 acres of land, in Gravenhurst. The deed mentions that the money was advanced to meet her pressing necessities. Date between 1267 and 1286.

XXIII. Walter de la Sale gives 2 ridges of land in exchange for 8 quarters of corn. Date between 1267 and 1286.

XXIV. This deed is an agreement by which Berengarius le Moyne makes over the manor of Chatteris to William of Godmanchester, Abbot of Ramsey, in exchange for 400 marks sterling. Date about 1267.

XXV. By this deed Nicholas Fareman makes over a field called Gocelinescroft, and other lands, to the Abbot and Monks of Ramsey. Date between 1267 and 1286.

XXVI. Galfrid de Suthorpe and his wife Roys for the health of their souls, and of the souls of their ancestors and descendants grant an estate in S. Ives to the Abbot and Monks of Ramsey, receiving only 10 marks in exchange. Date between 1267 and 1286.

XXVII. Emma, widow of Berengarius le Moyne, grants to the Abbot and Monastery of Ramsey, all the estates and rights she possessed in Holywell, Crawethorpe, Needingworth, Barnwell, S. Ives, Ramsey, Hurst, and the advowson of the church of S. Andrew, of Barnwell, reserving only till her death, lands and tenements in Hemingford, which the Abbot had granted as her dowry; this deed is evidently later than XXIV, but previous to 1286.

XXVIII. By this deed William of Corton and Robert of Peterborough grant to Abbot Simon and the Monastery of Ramsey, 8 acres and 1 rod of land, and 4d. rent with appurtenances. To this deed of gift Edward III gave his consent, on May 7th, 1329; he being, at the time, at Northampton.

XXIX. Robert of Peterborough grants to Abbot Simon and the Monastery of Ramsey, 145 acres of land, and thirteen shillings and four-pence annual rent, with appurtenance in Broughton, Wood Weston, and

Ramsey, and in addition, 4 dwelling-houses. This deed was executed on Sunday, on the feast of the 'Nativity of Mary,' 1337.

XXX. John de Houghton gives a deed entitling the Abbot of Ramsey to two-pence, under the name of Henschire, and eight shillings as keeper of S. Ivo's shrine in Ramsey. This is apparently a written confirmation of a custom which had existed for some time. The date is probably 1344.

XXXI. By this deed John Litlyngton makes over a house which previously belonged to Robert Lavender, to the Abbot and Monastery of Ramsey. The house was situated in Bridge Street, Ramsey. Date 1390.

XXXII. Is a lease of a house in the 'Michylewyght' belonging to James Fisher for three years to the Abbot and Monastery; the annual rent consisted of two red roses, one to be paid at the festival of the Nativity of S. John the Baptist, and the other at the festival of the translation of S. Thomas the Martyr. Date, 1422.

XXXIII. Is a deed of gift handing over the above house entirely to the Abbot and Monastery of Ramsey, and their successors. Date, 1423. The Abbot at this time was John Tychmarsh.

XXXIV. This, the latest of the deeds, was not issued till after the dissolution, and gives authority to Gulfrid Trygarn to settle certain disputes, within the peculiar jurisdiction of the late Abbey. It is signed by Sir

Richard Cromwell, into whose hands the Abbey property, in the County, had passed four years previously, by purchase. It is dated 1544.

Translation of "Permission" for the Election of an Abbot, from an original, in possession of E. Fellowes, Esq.:—

HENRY, by the grace of God, King of England and France, and Lord of Ireland, to our beloved in Christ the Prior and Convent of our Monastery of Ramsey, greeting. On your part you have humbly prayed us, that since the aforesaid Monastery has been deprived of happiness by the death of Lord Henry Stukely, the last Abbot, Pastor there, to grant you leave to choose another worthy man as Abbot and Pastor of that place. We on our part being favourably disposed, have thought it right that the aforesaid leave be granted you, by the tenor of these presents. Enjoining that you choose, as Abbot and Pastor, one who is devoted to God, suitable to your Church, and good and true to us and our kingdom. In testimony of which, I have caused these letters patent to be issued. Witness, myself, at Croydon, on the fourth day of March, in the twenty.second year of our reign. Cavnbrig?

By the writ of our private seal, and of the aforesaid given authority of parliament.—*cf*, p. 47.

III. THE ABBOTS OF RAMSEY.

EDNOTH Junior, * *First Abbot,* 993—1008.

We pass on from the lay-benefactors, and those not members of the Religious Society at Ramsey, to the list of ABBOTS, several of whom were from their private resources great Benefactors, others by careful management largely increased the property of the Abbey. To make our story more complete, we shall give as full a list of the Abbots as we can from the Monasticon of Dugdale and Stevens, and weave in with the history of the Abbots such parts of the Ramsey History as treats of each.

After the funeral of AILWYN, Archbishop ALPHEGE called together the mourning brethren, and bidding them be comforted, urged them to choose one from their own College to be their head. They, the grace of the Holy Spirit being asked, with one consent chose EDNOTH Junior, a man eminently skilled in the rule of Oswald. See above, p. 23.

ALPHEGE presented the one chosen to King ETHELRED, and he approving, Ednoth was consecrated, instituted and ordained, the first (elected) Abbot of the church of Ramsey. "Salva Matricis Doncastriensis Ecclesiæ obedientia." (R. H. lxiv.)

In the latter part of EDNOTH's 9th year as Abbot, another much prized Relic was obtained for the Abbey Church

* Ednoth Junior was President, indeed Prior in the life-time of Count Ailwyn, who himself was in the place of Abbot, nor was any one else Abbot whilst he lived.

Dugdale's Monasticon. Note on p. 547. *cf* also p. 36 above.

even the body of St. Ivo, a Persian Archbishop of much sanctity, who is reported to have travelled through England, about the year 600, preaching the Gospel with unremitting diligence, (*Brayley*, 479.) The Saint's body was found at Slepe, (now St. Ives from the above St. Ivo,) which had been given to Ramsey Monastery, in the reign of King EDGAR, by Ethelstan Manvesune, a noble Saxon; and the gift witnessed by AILWYN, Edric, Lefic, &c. (R.H. xxix, xlv.)

The finding of the reputed remains of St. Ivo is thus related. (R.H. cap. lxviii.) "The blessed relics of that holy Archbishop, which venerable antiquity of many ages had entombed in the land of the estate of *Slepe*, near the channel of the river Ouse, were found, whilst the ploughman turned up the bowels of the earth deeper with the plough, drawn by oxen, compelled by the will of God. Cleaving fast to the possession of so great a treasure, which, while all were ignorant whose remains they were, the Saint, appearing by night to a certain honest man of the ville, affirmed to be his own; and directed the discovery to be made known at Ramsey, where three of his companions were also to be found. The Lord Abbot Ednoth, convinced of the truth of this vision by supernatural testimony, sent for his Associate in good works, the Abbot (of Selsey, R.H. lxv) Germanus, and these two, having the precious relics of exalted piety placed upon their shoulders, conveyed them, attended by a great multitude of people, to the Church of Ramsey, where, at this day, they shine with renowned miracles. In the tenth year then after the death of our patron Earl Ailwyn, and on the same day on

which he had been entombed, viz. 8th kal. of May, the earth, through the divine bounty, gave us a new advocate, not in anywise to be afterwards snatched from us by destiny, who, from the place of his repose, unceasingly intercedes before God for the same, nay, even for all his worshippers." The reality of the discovery of the Saint's remains, was, however, not wholly regarded as satisfactory in those credulous days, for the Monkish Historian affirms that "Ednoth, who is by most conjectured to have been once Bailiff of Slepe, for deriding the truth of the vision, and calling the saint himself, Saint Cobbler, was, in vengeance of his persevering rashness, plagued with boots to the end of his life; in order that through the destruction of the flesh, his spirit might deserve to be saved in the day of the Lord." (R.H. cap. xxxii, and *Brayley*, 479, 480).

After he had been Abbot 16 years, Ednoth was *elected* (see p. 31,) by the common voice of Clergy and people, to be Bishop of Dorchester. This see, its seat at Dorchester in Oxfordshire, which was once included in the Diocese of Lincoln, (*Stevens' Monasticon*, Vol. II, p 95), extended over Huntingdonshire and Cambridgeshire; and so Ramsey and Ely were in its jurisdiction.

This Ednoth whose whole life seems to have been so retired—after being a Monk at Westbury, twenty-two years Prior of Ramsey, sixteen Abbot, and eight Bishop—perished on a field of battle. In the reign of Edmund Ironside (1016—1017), many battles were fought by the English under his command, against the invading Danes under CANUTE. As was then the custom, some English Clergy accompanied the General and his army, not to bear

arms, but to assist with their prayers. Bishop Ednoth, Wlfsius—his successor in the Abbacy of Ramsey—and other ecclesiastics were present with Edmund Ironside at a battle near Essenden (Assington or Ashdown, in Essex), and were slain there.* At the same time was killed Aylward, a son of the above-mentioned Duke Ailwyn. The bodies of Aylward and Wlfsius were removed from the battle-field and buried at Ramsey. (R.H. lxxii.)

The body of Bishop Ednoth was also removed, that it might be buried at Ramsey, where he had spent so many years of his life. His remains were indeed being carried thither, the bearers, conveying the body in a boat, approached Ely as night closed in and stayed there. They were hospitably entertained by the Monks. But bodies of saints and relics were precious in those days, moreover, Ely was then in the Diocese of Dorchester, so the hospitable Monks had some plea for the treachery which followed. During the night the body of Bishop Ednoth was removed to a secret place, and in the morning the men from Ramsey could not find their treasure. There seems to have been no attempt to say the body had removed itself, but the Monks of Ely claimed a right in their Bishop, and having possession of his body, they determined to keep it. According to the Chronicler those from Ramsey being the weaker party, made a virtue of necessity, and

* In 1020, Cnut "engaged in a remarkable solemnity on the spot which had witnessed his last battle, his only distinct victory, in his great struggle with the English Edmund. On the hill of Assandun, Cnut, in partnership with Thurkill, at once as Earl of the district and as his chief comrade in the battle, had reared a Church, which was consecrated, in the presence of the King and the Earl. by Wulfstan, Archbishop of York, and several other Bishops."
Freeman's Norman Conquest, Vol. I, 426.

with a soft answer ended the strife. It was rumoured by those of Ely that a heavenly light shone that night over the bier of the departed Bishop, and so signalled Ely as his burial place, but the Chronicler thought the rumour needed confirmation. (R.H. xxiii.)*

Wlfsius, *second* Abbot, killed as above related at Essenden, was elected in 1008. This Abbot, either fearing an Earl Brithnoth, (see above, p. 41,) who was passing Ramsey to fight with the Danes, or being of a stingy disposition, excused himself and the Abbey from receiving as guests the warrior and his soldiers, on the plea that they had not food for such a multitude, but expressed a willingness to entertain the Earl and six or eight others. Brithnoth would not feast whilst his soldiers fasted, so, in anger, he went on with his hungry men. They were all well provided for by the Monks of Ely; and in gratitude the Earl gave to them estates, which he had before set aside for the Abbey of Ramsey. R.H. lxxi.† This Abbot believed not in a

* "In the reign of Edgar, a shameful description of robbery had obtained among ecclesiastical bodies—the stealing of relics upon a pretended revelation. In those days, it was no uncommon practice for powerful abbeys to despoil the weakerMonasteries, or to rob defenceless villages of their sainted remains, in order to increase the celebrity of their own foundations."—Gorham's *Hist. and Antiq. of Eynesbury and St. Neots, I*, 48. See above, p. 32.

The Monks of Ely seem to have been rather notorious for the unscrupulous manner in which they "snatched" the bodies of saints. Stevens in his addition to the Monasticon says—Abbot Brithnoth, of Ely, translated the body of St. Withburga from Dereham. Tradition says, the Monks of Ely visited the Monks at Dereham, made the latter drunk; whilst these slept those decamped with the remains of the holy woman.

† The Cotton Chartulary, of older date, says—"Iste apud Ely interfectus fuit a Danis in tempore Cnutonis."—*Dugdale.*

This is hardly history; we see too clearly the stories of Gideon and the Elders of Succoth, and of David and Abiathar the Priest. It is also hard to see how a march to Maldon from any part of Brithnoth's Government could

scattering, which yet increaseth. He bestowed many Manors on the Church of Ramsey, and lies buried there by the corner of the high altar. He ruled for 8 years.

WITHMAN * became *third* Abbot in 1016, and in his time the crown was transferred from the English to the Danes, viz: from ETHELRED, after his death, to CNUT, chosen by the English. WITHMAN was Abbot 3 years, in the fourth year he undertook a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and returning the next year, found Ethelstan President. ETHELSTAN would have resigned to him, but he would not allow it, choosing rather a solitary life at Northeye, where he lived 26 years. In his time ST. EDWARD, King and confessor, son to King Ethelred by

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lead him by either Ramsey or Ely. The Ely History escapes this difficulty by making him Earl of the Northumbrians instead of the East Saxons, and by making two battles of Maldon. Brithnoth, victorious in the former, returns to Northumberland: the Danes land again; Brithnoth comes from Northumberland, taking the two Abbeys on his march; he then fights the second battle, in which, after fourteen days of combat, he is killed. Norman Conquest, vol. I, 636-7.

* MR. FREEMAN refers to *Withman's* appointment, as if made by the King irrespective of the right of *election* by the Monks, which at that early period was, in all probability, fully and freely exercised, the King confirming the choice of the Brethren. Mr. F. remarks, "The promotion of Germans in England was not wholly new. It had begun under Cnut, in whose time the Saxon Duduc had obtained the Bishopric of Somerset, and another German, Wythman by name, had held the great Abbey of Ramsey." Again, "We now find the first instances of the appointment of foreign prelates in England. Cnut, who placed so many Englishmen in the newly founded churches of Denmark, bestowed, at least, two great English preferments on Germans. Early in his reign, we find the Abbey of Ramsey held by a certain Wythman, of whom the local historian (c 75 Gale, p. 264) gives the following account:— Quum esset bonæ vitæ et prudentiæ laudabilis, genuina tum animi feritate, *utpote Teutonicus natione*, damnum aliquid suæ attulit laudi. The precedent however was not a very lucky one, as Wythman (whose story in the Ramsey History is well worth reading) got into all kinds of troubles with his Monks, and at last, after a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, died a solitary." *Norman Conquest*, Vol. I, pp. 81, and 599.

Emma, through the instigation of him, WITHMAN, gave Ringstede (in Norfolk) to the church of Ramsey, with all appurtenances and wrecks, and at the request of OSWALD, a monk living with him, and nephew to St. Oswald, he gave Windebodesham (Wimbotsham) with an hundred and an half, and 60 socmen, and the market of Soham, with all its liberties. This donation was made in the year 1047.

The above is from Stevens' Monasticon. The *Ramsey History* helps us to the probable reason which induced WITHMAN to hasten on that pilgrimage to Jerusalem. But let the History first introduce us to a noted member of the community at *Ramsey Abbey*. One ETHERICUS had been trained in its schools whilst a boy, and loved well the place of his education. But even in the schools of Monks, boys were boys, and sometimes got into mischief. This did ETHERICUS and three of his companions, all of them afterwards notable men, they broke one of the "larger bells * which hung from the beams of the western tower," and being leniently dealt with, vowed to repay the damage a hundredfold (R.H. lxviii.) This ETHERIC remained at Ramsey, and became a Monk of the Abbey; after the death of EDNOTH, as above related, he was chosen to be Bishop of Dorchester, the King approving the unani-

* "BELLS appear to have been known in Italy at a very early period. Small bells (tintinnabula) are said, by Pliny, to have been suspended by chains in a monumental edifice, erected by Porsenna, King of Etruria, five centuries before the Christian Era. When bells were first used in religious edifices, among Christians, is not, perhaps, to be ascertained. Paulinus Bishop of Nola, in Campania, at the beginning of the fifth century, is commonly, represented as the inventor of bells of that kind, which were used in churches. Some, however, suppose they were introduced before the time of Paulinus."

Britton's "Architectural Remains." Vol. V, p 127, note.

mous choice of the clergy and people; and as Bishop of Dorchester, he seems to have been visitor of his former school and Abbey at Ramsey.

Now to return to Abbot WITHMAN, it is told us, that he was imbued with such innate fierceness of mind, that it diminished somewhat from his commendation, he accused his innocent flock of contumacy, and neglect of regular discipline, to the Diocesan Bishop ETHERIC. The latter knew well his former companions, and thinking it unlikely that they should have so degenerated, he determined to see for himself in a private visit to the Abbey. Coming therefore, at the dawn of day-light, as a traveller, he entered the Monastery as if to beg, and began diligently to scrutinize everything. Some of the Monks he found devoutly celebrating masses at private altars, some praying round the high altar to the memory of saints, others sitting closely together between the pillars of the cloister,* and giving their attention to reading in deep silence, to avoid idleness. Discovering thus the falsehood of the accusation, the Bishop rebuked the Abbot sharply. WITHMAN soon after went on his pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and on his return resigned, as above, and betook himself to Northeye. This was a secret place, about a stone's throw from the Church of Ramsey, in the midst of alder, looking on the damp marshes, very straightened in length and width, inaccessible without a boat, sufficiently convenient and acceptable to those despising a secular life. There WYTHMAN with one brother as a companion and two servants, his food daily brought him from Ramsey,

* Cloisters were used as School-rooms and Studies.

passed his life in virtuous exercise until the reign of EDWARD, atoning for his former sins and at his own expense increasing the possessions of the Church of Ramsey. (R.H. lxxix.)

This Withman is, we presume, "ANDREW LEUCANDER (in Stevens' Monasticon, p. 197) alias WHITEMAN, Abbot of Ramsey, who having laboured day and night for some years at his studies, and profited accordingly, took a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, and returning home, writ his *Own travels; The Life, Acts and Translation of St. John*, Bishop of the Persians; and dy'd in 1020."

Also OSWALD, a Monk of Worcester, who lived with Withman, see above, p. 92, we learn from Stevens, p. 197, "gave tokens of a sharp wit from his youth, and was always aspiring to literature, and curious to pry into abstruse matters. Not satisfied with the learning he found at home, he went into the *Belgic part of France*, where he visited many Monasteries to improve himself, being all the while maintained by the bounty of *Oswald*, Bishop of Worcester. Having gathered all he could, he composed several works, and among them, *A book of Holy Prayers; One about Writing of Letters; Another about makying Verses*, &c., and lived in 1010."

ETHELSTAN, the *fourth* Abbot, who was President during WITHMAN's absence, was made Abbot in 1020. He was Abbot 23 years, that is till 1043, when he was slain by an Irish servant, whom he had rescued from beggary, and fed during several years with food from his own table, but, having for some reason ordered him to receive his allotted food without, the ungrateful wretch drove a deadly weapon

through ETHELSTAN's bowels, on the day of St. Michael, as the brethren were celebrating evening service, and, according to the custom derived from antiquity, were proceeding to the station before the cross in the nave of the Church. The Abbot lingered until the next day, when, in peace with all, giving his blessing to all, praying for the pardon of his murderer and his release, he died. Other notable things during ETHELSTAN's Abbacy shall now be noticed.

For instance, after the election of ETHELSTAN as Abbot we have a chapter in praise of King Cnut, (R.H. lxxx); by whom Bishop ETHERIC was greatly noticed. Indeed the Chronicler applies to their intercourse the words used by St. Mark (vi. 20,) in reference to Herod and the Baptist, "audito eo multa faciebat, et libenter eum audiebat."—(*Vulgate.*) To what extent in other respects, the King listened to the Bishop, we do not know, but by the latter's advice Cnut built 'another Church in honour of the Holy Trinity,' at Ramsey, near the former one, on the same plan, but a little differing in size, (the money being supplied from the Royal Treasury,) in which might be assembled a company of females* for carrying on the continued worship

* "The Annals of Roger de Hoveden" state "In the year 967, Edgar the Peaceful, King of the English, placed nuns in the Monastery of Ramsey, which his grandfather, King Edward the elder had built, and appointed St. Merwinna Abbess over them." If this were at Ramsey, Hunts., it seems strange that the Ramsey History should make no mention thereof. This it does not, but commencing from 969—the year of Ailwin's first Chapel—it treats the place as ground previously unoccupied by religious or other inhabitants. (See above, p. 26)

There was a Nunnery at Rumesey, *i.e.* Romsey, "Christina facta est monialis apud Rumesey."—*Leland* Vol. I. p. 416.

Cnut was held in no less honor at Ramsey than at Ely, the resting place of Ethelweard, a son of Ailwin, (above, p. 88.) "There he built a second Church, and designed the foundation of a Society of Nuns, which he did not bring to perfection."—*Norman Conquest*, Vol. I. p. 441.

of God, as the college of men in the other Monastery did. But by the providence of God the latter proposition was not carried out, it being prudently considered, that disadvantages might arise from the vicinity of the two sexes. "The crypt, however, which was built under the greater altar of that Church, remains uninjured in our Cemetery to this day, a witness and memorial of the building." (R.H. lxxxi.)

In Magna Britannia, Vol. II. 1054, we have the following reference to Canute's connection with Ramsey :—

"King Canute's children and servants passing this Lake (*i.e.* Whittlesey Mere) from Peterborough to Ramsey, and sporting themselves with singing and jollity in their voyage, were surprised with a tempestuous storm and turbulent winds, so that they utterly despaired of life and succour, but through God's mercy some escaped, tho' many perished. When the King heard of it, he was put into a dreadful fright; but recovering himself, took counsel of his Nobility and Friends, how to prevent the like mischances in future, and thereupon ordered his soldiers to cut a ditch with their swords and skeins,* and day labourers to scour and cleanse it; from whence it was called Swordes-delf, and Knouts-delf.† It parts this County from Cambridgeshire."

Camden is probably the authority for the above. The story is told in his Britannia. This story remains in local tradition much in the same form, the memory of it doubtless kept up by its being given in the History of Huntingdonshire. But the local tradition adds, Cnut had

* Skain or Skein, "an *Irish* short sword."—*Bailey*.

† "King's-delf, a causeway between Peterborough, Whittlesey and Ramsey, is attributed to Cnut."—*Fenland, &c*,

a fishing-box at Bodsey, that his children went from there to school at Peterborough, and that two of his children are buried at Bodsey.

But though King CNUT did not finish his intended edifice he permitted Bishop ETHERIC to add another relic to the existing Church. This was the body, or supposed remains, of ST. FELIX, the first Bishop of East Anglia. He was a Monk of Burgundy and had been brought over to England by Sigebert, (A.D. 630) King of East Anglia. "FELIX, *i.e. happy*, was his name," Fuller says, "and *happiness* was with him." Dunwich in Suffolk was the seat of his Bishopric, "which he held for 17 years, and has left not only his name—but the example of a zeal and piety, which merit the reverence and imitation of all his successors."—(Inett.) The remains of this worthy had been duly buried in his Cathedral city, but for some cause were taken to Soham in Cambridgeshire, and from thence removed to Ramsey. This removal excited the envy of the monks of Ely, 'who went on board their boats with a strong force to intercept the brethren of Ramsey' and to deprive them of their treasure. But this time the elements helped the weaker party, "on a sudden a thick cloud arose to the hindrance of the many and the safety of the few," and the "adversaries wandering from their course, the attendant water restored us safe to the bosom of our domestic home." This "Miracle" is also admitted to be of "doubtful credit," and the reader is not required to believe it, provided that "he feels it to be certain that *every part* of the relics of ST. FELIX were translated to the Church of

Ramsey, and honourably deposited there; where even to this day the holy man confers many favours upon his worshippers." (R.H. lxxxii.)

We will now narrate in brief the circumstances of two gifts of land made by Bishop ETHERIC to the Abbey of Ramsey. (1) The western part of the Manor of Ellesworth. This was given by a Dane, named THURKILL, under the following circumstances. The Chronicler notes that the successful Danish Kings had conferred on their followers many fair estates of the conquered English nobles. This may have made the Bishop think it quite lawful to despoil the spoiler of some of his prey. THURKILL's first wife died leaving one son. After a time the widowed Dane took a second wife, who became jealous of the love of her husband for his motherless boy. She called in the services of a witch to draw away the love of the father from his son. The evil arts of the woman had the desired effect, so much so that the father drove from him the child seeking his accustomed caresses. But this did not satisfy the jealous wife, who desired that there should be no heir besides her own children, and yielding to her bad feelings she killed the boy in the absence of THURKILL, and with the help of the witch buried him in a meadow of Lollesworth. THURKILL's wife told her husband on his return that the lad had disappeared and could no where be found. THURKILL under the influence of a violent love for his wife soon became consoled for his loss, and she hoped all was hidden. But the witch becoming very poor, looked to THURKILL's wife for sustenance, and persisted in her request so often and so importunately that she was at

length driven from the door, and forbidden to come there again. Then the illused woman went and confessed the murder and burial to ETHERIC. The Bishop summoned the Dane and his wife to his Synod that he might confer with him on the subject. THURKILL refused to appear. But ultimately he was commanded to do so by the King, to whom the matter had been communicated, and to take with him XI witnesses, and for his wife as many of her sex, that their innocence or guilt might be publicly established. The Bishop fixed the place of meeting at the field in Lollesworth, and thither he summoned ETHELSTAN, Abbot of Ramsey, and certain of the brethren, who were to carry with them some relics of saints. Before a great assembly of Laics and Clerics the Bishop bade the Abbot and brethren of Ramsey place on the grave the things which they had brought. Then, in presence of all, THURKILL declared his own innocence of the murder of his son and his ignorance of the means by which he had died. Further, wishing his wife to be spared the ordeal of swearing, and believing her to be innocent, he, winding his hand in his beautiful beard, said, "O Bishop, just as God permits me to glory in this beard, so my wife is clear and innocent of the crime imputed to her." After saying which, he drew back his hand, and with it came off the whole of his beard drawn out by the roots from his face. At this miracle the people shouted, and God was praised in His works by the Monks and Clergy, the friends of the Dane were amazed, and THURKILL himself dumb-founded. This sign seemed clearly to point out the guilt of the wife, who still denied the crime. Then the Bishop commanded

the grave to be opened and the bones of the little boy were shewn to all. On which the woman confessed her guilt and the man his perjury. They received the punishment of a yearly penance, and THURKILL, making satisfaction to the Bishop, whom he had so obstinately withstood, and feeling very grateful, gave him before all, the western part of Ellesworth—free from all future claim of himself or his heirs—to be bestowed by the Bishop on some religious place. ETHERIC thankfully accepted the gift and bestowed it at once on the Abbot and brethren of Ramsey, then present. Thus ETHERIC, heavenly virtue prevailing in him, no unworthy scholar of the Church of Ramsey, obtained for his mother the remainder of the above mentioned Manor, of which previously she possessed only a part.

(2) The means, by which ETHERIC obtained Athelinton and added it to the Abbacy of Ramsey, given in the History (lxxxv) is translated fully by Brayley (p. 519.) The tale shall be briefly told. ETHERIC, travelling with King CNUT, stayed at the house of a Dane, with which and the adjoining estate the Bishop was well pleased. After dinner when wine had been drunk freely, ETHERIC said he should like to buy such a property. The Dane replied, "if you will bring me to-morrow, at dawn of day, fifty marks of gold, without deduction, all my effects being removed, I will make over the Ville to you." The Bishop had the agreement signed and sealed and obtained the money by the time appointed. The wine was then out and the Dane would fain have repudiated the bargain. But

on the matter being referred to the King,* he, seeing the duly executed documents, gave judgment in favour of the Bishop, and the Dane and his wife with their flocks and moveables departed to buy another home with the gold they had received. The Bishop rewarded four barons, who had assisted him, each with two marks of gold, and then betook himself to Ramsey, where he assigned to the Abbot and brethren, the "before mentioned Ville for the perpetual supply of their table."

Before we part from Bishop ETHERIC, let us remember that his desire to enrich Ramsey was stimulated by his love of the place where he had been educated as a boy and lived as a Monk, and by his vow referred to above, p. 91. He died in the year 1034, and was buried at Ramsey, having bequeathed to the Church other estates than those above

* Mr. Freeman (*Norm. Conq.* Vol I. cap. vi.) praises King Cnut very much for his not favouring Danes, at the expense of the English, when he was fully settled on the throne. In the above case he seems to have been somewhat unfair to the Dane. Mr. F. writes, "No doubt Cnut had largely rewarded his followers with grants of land, and we can well believe that some of these new Danish thegns often behaved with great insolence to their English neighbours (he here refers to Thurkill of the above story, R.H. cap. lxxxiv). Cnut, from the beginning, admitted Englishmen to high office. . . . . He gradually changes into a Prince, English in all but actual birth."

"England had more than led captive her conqueror; she had changed him into her King and Father."

Cnut seems to have been so closely connected with Ramsey, that local readers may desire to know somewhat more of him than as a Danish Conqueror of England, and as a favourer of Monks. Mr. Freeman tells us of Cnut's laws. "First above all things are men one God ever to love and worship, and one Christendom with one mind to hold, and Cnut King to love with right truthfulness." This is very much like the apostolic, "Fear God and honour the King." Another law of Cnut is, "The observance of the Lord's-day is also strongly insisted on; on that day there is to be no marketing, no hunting; even the holding of folkmotes is forbidden, except in cases of absolute necessity." Here again is a Christian rule, enjoined in superstitious days (as we think them,) preached now, but the practice of keeping holy the Lord's-day is very sadly deteriorating.

mentioned, (R.H. lxxxvi-xc) and 'many books and Episcopal ornaments,' (R.H. xcii.) and so, the Chronicler says, 'he made sufficient compensation for the broken Bell.' (R.H. xc.)

ALFWIN, *fifth* Abbot, took upon him the Abbacy in 1043—was Abbot 36 years—and in his time William Bastard, (*i.e.* the Conqueror,) came into England, *viz*: in the year 1067, and the same year died Aielward, the Golden Bishop. (*Stevens.*)

This ALFWIN is said to have been the Bailiff, or Reeve, and (in the Ramsey History) to have governed firmly and actively for 38 years, (R.H. ciii) and not 36, as above. In his time ALFWARD—formerly a Monk of Ramsey, then Abbot of Evesham and Bishop of London,* holding the two offices at the same time,† (R.H. xciii)—becoming a leper, resigned his dignities, and would have retired to Evesham, but the brethren would not receive him, so he turned to Ramsey—the home of his early life. The Monks of this latter place welcomed him with great ceremony, for "amongst other precious gifts, he brought not only the *Cheek bone* of ST. EGWIN, but even the *Cowl* of the Holy Martyr ST. ALPHEGE: which, the Martyr being stricken through it, had imbibed the bright stains of his sacred blood;—and these it shews even to this day, both to be beholden with our eyes and touched with our lips." R.H. civ.

During the Abbacy of ALFWIN, died EDNOTH, the Bishop of Dorchester, who had succeeded ETHERIC. This EDNOTH

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* *cf*, "Norman Conquest" Vol. I. 510, Note 3; "Ælfweard received the Bishopric of London from Cnut, who is called his kinsman, about 1035," and Vol. II. 70.

† Pluralities were not unfrequent then. The great Dunstan was a Pluralist.—*Inett* 320; R.H. 392-3. For other instances of "Pluralities and Simony" see "Norman Conquest," Vol. I. 505-527.

had been educated at Ramsey, and was one of the four boys who broke a bell. He gave farms at Over, Berton, and Cnapwell, and was buried at Ramsey. (R.H. cv.)

Also whilst ALFWIN was Abbot, EDWARD the Confessor—instigated by the learned Oswald, (another of the boys who broke a bell,) nephew to Archbishop Oswald, and Withman the Hermit—granted considerable estates, and extraordinary privileges to the Abbey, and confirmed them by different charters, (R.H. cvi-cxi.) He also became a party to an agreement between the Abbot of Ramsey and the Abbot of Burgh (Peterborough,) in regard to an exchange of lands; to the bounds and limits of KING'S-DELF; and to a right granted to the brethren of Ramsey to dig stone, both 'squared and broken' at Barnack;* for the latter liberty they were to give the Monks of Peterborough yearly 'four thousand eels in Lent.' (R.H. cxii.)

One of the charters referred to above, (p. 50,) is by Dugdale given in Anglo-Saxon.† The following is a copy:

"EADWARD cyng gret Stigand ercebiscop, & Aegelin aer biscop, & Gyrth eorl, & Toli scirreve, & ealle his theines

* *Barnack Stone.* "A list of the edifices in the Fenland in which Barnack Rag was used would include nearly every Church over three hundred years old, but I may especially mention the Cathedrals of Peterborough, Ely, and Lincoln; the Abbeys of Ramsey, Thorney, and Crowland; and the five Churches of Wisbech, Moulton, Holbech, Spalding, and Boston."—*Fenland, &c.*, p. 80.

The quarry is now exhausted.

† According to modern opinions instead of "*in Anglo-Saxon,*" it should be "IN OLD-ENGLISH."

"When I wish pointedly to distinguish the men, the language, or the institutions of the time before 1066 from those of any time after 1066, I speak distinctively of "Old-English," as our kinsmen speak of "Alt-Dutch."—Norman Conquest, Vol. I. 548.

H. Morley uses the words, "First-English" in describing the writings of Cædmon and other early authors.

inne Northfolce & inne Suffolce, & ealle his othre witen ofer eall Aenglande hadede & leawede freondlice, & ic cyde eow thaet ic habbe ge geofen Criste & sancte Marie & sancte Benedicte & Aelfwine abbod into Rameseye, saca & socna, tol & team, & infangentheof, fihtwite & ferdwite, forestall & hamsocne, grithbryce, & scipbryce, & tha sae upwarp on eallen thingen aet Bramcaestre, & aet Ringstyde, swa wel & swa freolice swa ic hit me seolf betst habbe bith a saern ne ahwaer in Engelande, & ealle tha gerihte tha ic me seolf waer ahte. And ic wylle thaet seo socne with innen Bicchamdic ligce into Ramesege to sancte Benedihte on eallen thingen, swa full and swa forth swa ic heo meseolf ahte; & ealle tha gerihte tha aeni kinge maei ahen, & ealle tha men tha beon mot wurthi, ferth wurthi, & faldwurthi, in thaet other halfe hundred swa hyilcman swa tha men ahe sancte Marie & sanctus Benedictus & se abbod & tha gebrothra into Ramesege habben tha socne on eallen thingen ofer heom, & that market aet Dunham bi waetere & bi lande, mid in lade & mid ut lade, & mid eallen than gerihte the thaerto hered, swa wel & swa fredlice, swa ic hit me betst ahte: & ic nelle ge thafien thæt ani man this gelyclige mid aenige thinge. And in aelcer scire thaer sanctus Benedictus haf der land inne, his soca & his socne, tol & team, & infangentheof with inne burhe & with uten, & on aelce styde, be lande & be strande, be wude & be felde, swa hy ylc man swa tha ahe sanctus Benedittus habbe his freodom on eallen thingen swa wel & swa freolice, swa ic hit me seolf betst ahe ahwaer in Engelande, & ealle tha gyltes tha be limped to mine kinehalme, inne Jol, & inne tha hali wuca, &

gangdagas,* on eallen thingen, al swa ic heo me seolf ahe, & tolfres ofer ealle Engleland, with inne burhe & with utan, aet garescepinge, & on aefrice styde, be waetere & be lande. And ic for beode, Godes forbode & min, that nan man this geofe nelytlige ne awende. And gif aeni man hit awansi mid aefraenige thinge of than the ic habbe her geunnen on theosen gewrite, si he ge syndred fram Criste & fram eallen his halgan. Amen. This writ waes gemaced aet Windlesoren on feorthe Easterdaes on lagide, ge witnysse waere Cwene & Godrines eorles, & Haroldes eorles."

It may make the above charter more interesting to most readers to have it in more literal English :—

Edward the King greets Stigand Archbishop, and Aegelin Bishop, and Gyrth Earl, and Toli Sheriff, and all his Nobles in Norfolk and Suffolk, and all his other faithful Councillors over all England, Clerics and Laics, and I notify that I have also given to Christ and Saint Mary and holy Benedict and Alfwin Abbot of Ramsey, sac† and soc, tol and team, infangentheof, fihtwite and ferdwite, forestall and hamsocne, grithbryce and scipbryce, and the sea upwarp in all things at Brancaster and at Ringstead so well and so freely as I myself have both along the shore anywhere in England, and all the rights that I myself would have. And I will that the sea soc within Bicchamdic belong to Ramsey to Saint Benedict in all things, so fully and so wholly as if I myself had it; and all the rights that

* "In England, Ascension Week was, from an early date called *Gang-wœcas* or Procession week; and the Rogation Days were similarly called *Gang-dægas* (*i.e.* Procession Days)"—Evan Daniels, The Prayer Book, &c., p. 160.

† *Sac and Soc*, &c. A glossary of these terms is given below.

any King may have, and all the men that are motwurthi, ferthwurthi, and faldwurthi, in that other half-hundred so this man so those men the holy Mary and blessed Benedict and the Abbot and brethren of Ramsey may have the socne on all things over them, and the market at Dunham by water and by land with inlet and with outlet, and with all the rights that thereto belong, so well and so freely as if I myself were to have them, and I am unwilling to know that any man should lessen this in anything. And in every shire where blessed Benedict has land I grant to them his sac and his soc, tol and team, and infangentheof within City and without, and on every side, by land and by strand, by wood and by field, as this man so that he, Saint Benedict,* have his freedom on all things as well and as freely as I myself would have it anywhere in England, and all the dues which belong to my crown, on Christmas day and in the holy week and Rogation days, on all things, all as I myself have, and toll free† over all England, within city and without, at markets, and on every side, by water and by land. And I forbid by God's forbidding and mine, that no man this gift neither lessen nor change. And if any man change or injure things of that which I have given on these writings, let him be sundered from Christ, and from all his holy heaven. Amen. This writ was made at Windsor, on fourth day of Easter. The witnesses were Cwen and Godrines Eorles, and Haroldes Eorles.

In the year 1059, ALFWIN attended at the great Council held at Rheims, by Pope, Leo IX, from whom he obtained

* or his representative, the Abbot of Ramsey.

† From this Charter has come a tradition that the people of Ramsey, not the Abbots only, had free toll over all England.

a protecting privilege* for the rights and possessions, which the Abbey then had or should have in future by just acquisition, against all interference of the envious. (R.H.cxv.) He afterwards obtained from Pope Alexander II, a privilege for the perpetual protection of his Church from the knavery of posterity (R.H. cxviii.) When ALFWIN obtained this privilege he seems to have gone to Rome, sent thither by King Edward. From the fatigues of his Roman journey he contracted an illness, which deprived him of the use of almost all his limbs; and then he retired from the Abbacy.

AILSIUS, or EGELSIN, succeeded as *sixth* Abbot, in 1080, and held the office for 8 years. At the time of his appointment to Ramsey he was Abbot of St. Augustine's.† AILSIUS is reported to have been a man of prudence and industry. With all watchfulness and anxiety he studied the welfare of his community, and to guard them from injury, he obtained a Charter of perpetual protection from King Edward. This AILSIUS, when Earl Tosti and Harold Halfagen—King of Norway—invaded England after Edward's death, "was warned by St. Edward, in a vision," to encourage King Harold (Edward's successor,) against his invading enemies, promising to him a certain victory. (R.H. cxx.) This, history says, Harold obtained. AILSIUS

* What was the advantage of this privilege we do not understand, seeing the great privileges conferred by Royal Charters. It may have been asked to compliment the Pope, as if he had some power in England; or the Abbot may have been moved by some Official to make the request, and as a *semblance* of papal power it was granted. The Popes were possibly as early as this attempting to encroach on the kingly power and seized any occasion to put forward their encroachments. About fifteen years after, papal claims were more strongly asserted, a synod then held at Rome forbad "Ecclesiastics to receive investiture from Laymen." See Life and Letters of Herbert-de-Losinga, Vol. I. 94.

† We presume St. Augustine's, Canterbury.

was obliged afterwards to seek refuge on the Continent, through his having assisted Archbishop Stigand, in his opposition to William the Conqueror.

Fuller has remarked, "The Monks that wrote this King Edward's Life had too heavy a hand in over-spicing it with miracles." A little of this is seen in the above recorded vision. But there is evidently a want of accuracy as to dates on the part of the Ramsey Chronicler in putting the retirement of ALFWIN and the succession of AILSIUS in the time of Edward,—(R.H. cxix.) for ordinary History gives 1066 as the year of that King's death, and the Monasticon gives 1080 as the date of AILSIUS' succession. The latter is probably correct. It is difficult to reconcile the two, but possibly he was in exile before he was Abbot. The Chronicler wrote from memory or from undated MSS., and as EDWARD was a favourer of Monks, they liked to say all possible and even apocryphal good things of him, to whom they gave the title of Saint and Confessor.*

* CONFESSOR. "Posterity conceived so great an opinion of King Edward's piety, that his clothes were deposited among the Regalia, and solemnly worn by our English Kings on their coronation; never counting themselves so fine, as when invested in his Robes; the sanctity of Edward the first wearer excusing, yea, adorning, the modern antiqueness of his apparel. Amongst these is the rod or sceptre, with a dove on the top thereof, the emblem of peace, because in his reign England enjoyed halcyon days, free from Danish invasions; as also his crown, chain, staff, tunic, close pall, Tuisni hosen, sandals, spurs, gloves, &c. Expect not from me a comment on these several clothes, or reasons for wearing them. In general, it was to mind our Kings, when habited with his clothes, to be clothed with the habit of his virtuous endowments; as, when putting on the gloves of this Confessor, their hands ought to be like his, in moderate taking of taxes from their subjects." He released the grievous burden of Dane-gelt.

"And yet all things being cast up, I confess I understand not how the name *Confessor* is proper to King Edward, in the strict acceptance thereof. For a *Confessor* is one actually persecuted for the testimony of the truth, and prepared to lose his life for the same. He is a martyr in bullion, wanting only

The printed part of the Ramsey History has but one chapter more, a very short one respecting the gift by Countess WLFGIVA—third wife of Duke Ailwyn—of Brancastre, her Charter of which is given in full, R.H. xxvii. Why reference is again made to the gift is not clear. The fourth part of the History has never been published in full, but is in MSS. in the Bodleian, Oxford, Rawl. B, 333, and Jesus Coll. Ox., 77. It repeats much of the preceding parts, and contains several charters, &c. given in the Monasticon. It has also a Register of Rents. At the end of the third part is added, probably not by the writer of the Chronicle:—

"*Inscriptio* Sepulchralis Ailwini, *prout in alio libro* Ramesiensi *legit* Lelandus et Cambdenus.

HIC REQUIESCIT AILWINUS INCLYTI REGIS EADGARI COGNATUS: TOTIUS ANGLIÆ ALDERMANNUS, ET HUJUS SACRI CŒNOBII, MIRACULOSUS FUNDATOR.

The notices, which follow, of the Abbots are taken from *Dugdale's* and *Stevens' Monasticon* with some few additions.

Respecting AILSIUS Abbot, we read in the Monasticon, "to him it was revealed at sea, that the Feast of the

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the stamp of violent death to be impressed upon him. Now a great part of Edward's life was led by him in peace and plenty; nothing bounding his abundance but his own moderation, and, for twenty years together, having no visible foe to offend him. And although in his youth he lived in Normandy, in a middle condition, betwixt an exile and a traveller, flying thither for fear of the Danes; yet such his sufferings were of civil concernment, not directly relating to conscience, though at distance reducible thereunto. But seeing, in the titles of great persons, it is better to give too much than too little; a Confessor we found him, and a Confessor we leave him." (*Fuller's Church History*, Vol. I, p 222,223).

Conception of the Blessed Mary should be celebrated, and it was by him first invented."—*(Stevens*, 405.*)* The honour here claimed for AILSIUS has not been remembered by Church Historians. This Festival, still marked in our Calendar, on December 8th as "Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary," yet not tabled with those to be observed, is of doubtful origin; it is said to have been of early date in the Eastern Church, and its introduction into England to have been "instituted by Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury, upon occasion of William the Conqueror's fleet being in a storm, and afterwards coming safe to shore." So far, "*Mant's Notes on Book of Common Prayer*." The Bishop gives no reference to his authority. But the story is probably apocryphal, for Anselm was not Archbishop until the reign of William Rufus. *Evan Daniel* gives the Feast as established in 1140. But, whenever instituted, its observation became not general in the west till the fifteenth century, so *J. H. Blunt*. The last writer adds, the observance of the Festival was optional long after the time of St. Anselm. It was made optional by the 'Council of Oxford A.D. 1222.' The word "Immaculate" was added to "Conception" at probably a very late date. "Monçon, a Dominican D.D. at Paris, published a thesis in 1387, ... maintaining that the Blessed Virgin was conceived in original sin, and that it was an error in point of faith, to assert the contrary: this opinion was plainly condemned by the University of Paris, and afterwards by the Pope; but it is almost needless to add that Monçon was in this matter right, and that none but our Blessed Saviour Himself was ever conceived and born in a sinless state."—*Hook's Ch. Dic. Art*; Conception

(*Immaculate.*) But whatever uncertainty prevailed about the doctrine in the past, by a decree of the late Pope Pius IX. (in 1854) the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception has been made an additional article of Faith to Romanists. The setting forth the doctrine of the "Immaculate Conception" as an article of faith met with great opposition even in the Church of Rome. From the 12th century this novelty had been discussed, or even earlier, if Abbot Ailsius *invented the Festival*, but the acceptance of it was left an open question, or varied with the opinion of the reigning Pope. Perhaps in nothing has the Papacy shewn its fallibility more than in reference to the so-called "Immaculate Conception." Pope has contradicted Pope, again and again. The following illustration must suffice, Pope Innocent V, says "Si ita foret, a peccato originali fuisset immunis . . . . . quod dici non potest;" Pope Pius IX, says—"A peccato originali immunis est;" can contradiction go farther?

Why I left the Church of Rome, pp. 115-122.

HERBERT DE LOSINGA, *seventh* Abbot, was chosen in 1087; four years afterwards he was made Bishop of Thetford. He translated his Episcopal See from Elmham to Norwich in 1095. (*The Monasticon*, pp. 548, 560.) This HERBERT de Losinga is now made known to the world, his "Life, Letters, and Sermons" having been published by Dr. Goulburn, the Dean of Norwich. The following notice of ABBOT HERBERT is from the "Church Quarterly Review," April, 1879. The notice will explain how HERBERT was Bishop of Thetford or Elmham and Norwich. The parent

See, from which these Dioceses emanated, was at Dunwich* in Suffolk at one time the second City in the Kingdom; and the See of Dunwich comprised probably within its limits the whole kingdom of East Anglia. Bisious, the fourth Dunwich Bishop, unable probably from age to work so large a diocese, divided it, retaining Dunwich for Suffolk, † and choosing North Elmham for the northern county, which village was tolerably central. Wilbrid, the eleventh Dunwich Bishop, re-united the See, but fixed it at North Elmham, and not at Dunwich, which was becoming more and more invaded by

* "It was natural that Dunwich should have been first selected to give name to the See, itself a Roman Post and Military Station, a Royal Saxon residence and Seat of Government, and the capital of East Anglia;—Dunwich of which the traveller now sees nothing except the ruins of its Franciscan Convent [and two Churches and Maison Dieu];—Dunwich, which the wild waves of that angry coast have long asserted their supremacy over, and engulphed, but which in 1173 was still a strong fortress, could help Edward I with eleven ships of war, and promise sixteen to Edward III to take Calais with—Dunwich with its fourteen Churches, its Hospitals, Almshouses, and Convents, was clearly fitted to be the metropolis of a Christian Bishopric, as it already was the second city in the kingdom." *Church Quarterly, April*, 1879, *pp.* 129. 130.

Dunwich was visited by De Foe, who wrote of it, ... "this town seems to be in danger of being swallowed up; for Fame reports that once they had Fifty Churches in the Town. I saw but one left, and that not half full of people." "This town is a testimony of the decay of public things, things of the most durable nature; and as the old poet expresses it,

"'By numerous examples we may see,
That Towns and Cities die as well as we.'"

Tour of Great Britain.

De Foe describes the neighbouring Church of Southwold as capable of holding five or six thousand (if we remember rightly) and that only 27 were present at a service to which he went. It is a grand Church, yet not roomy enough for so many worshippers, and is now in beautiful order, and well attended. An example of improvement in Church matters.

† . . . . . "dioceses, even in this day, would be found, we suspect on a careful examination, to have a more than imaginary reference in their dimensions to the limits of the several Saxon Kingdoms into which the island was divided, as parishes certainly have a reference to the estates of individuals."—*Blunt's Reformation, p.* 38.

the sea (we read of its being swallowed up *temp., Edw. Conf.*), and Suffolk henceforth never regained her ecclesiastical supremacy. Nor did Elmham long enjoy it. The See was afterwards transferred to Thetford (where at one time were 30 Churches); and from thence to Norwich by HERBERT de Losinga.

HERBERT was born of a good county family in Suffolk about A.D. 1050, and taking his name of LOSINGA, in all probability, from the part of the county where his father had property, he received his early education at Fe'camp, of which he became a professed Monk, and subsequently Prior. Preferred by William Rufus to the Abbacy of the mitred Benedictine Abbey of Ramsey, he seems in A.D. 1091 to have procured for himself the See of Thetford, and for his father the Abbacy of Hyde Abbey, in Winchester, but not without the payment* down to the Crown of the good round sum of £1900. His conscience smiting him for this kind of Simony, he contrives to reach Rome without the King's leave, with a view to resign his episcopal insignia at the feet of the Pope, who, however, insisted on returning them to him—"Quod Romani Sanctius et ordinatius censeant, ut ecclesiarum omnium sumptus suis potius serviant marsupiis, quam quorumlibet regum usibus militent." (*Malmesb. de Gestis Pontif*, lib. iii, edit. 1596, fol. 136)—and at the same time allowed him to change

* We have seen before (p. 101 note) that *Pluralities* were a fashion of Early English and Monkish times, so here we find *Simony* in the modern sense of the word, as implying the purchase of Ecclesiastical positions; and with monastic and other religious societies began the unjust and injurious system of *impropriations* (See J. J. Blunt's History of the Reformation, cap. iv). Clerics having started the allowableness of *impropriations*, in after time found the laics too apt and ready scholars.

the See to Norwich, which accordingly he did, 1094,—"Anno D. 1095, et rege Gul: Rufi 8, translata est sedes episcopalis a Theotford ad Norwich per Herebertum de Losinga qui ex Abbate Ramesiensi dato pretio Gul: regi episcopatum adeptus est." (*Leland's Collectanea*, Vol. I, pt. 2, 416,)—and two years after laid the first stone of his Cathedral there.

In 1104, he instituted Cluniac Monks at Thetford. In 1106 he built the Benedictine Monastery at Norwich on the south and sunny side of his church, and attended at Ely the grand ceremonial of the second translation of the body of S. Etheldreda. In 1107, he was chosen ambassador to Rome with two others, in order to come to some understanding with the Pontiff on lay investitures (a previous mission of Bishop Warelwash, of Exeter, for that purpose having failed), and to gain an acknowledgment of his own Episcopal rights over S. Edmund's Bury Abbey. But both objects failed, and brought no honour on his negociations. In 1116, he was singled out as one of the most eminent Prelates of the day, with Hugh, Abbot of Cherbury, to attend the Primate, Archbishop Ralph, to Rome, to set at rest for ever the question of the independence of the English Church; but the journey was an ill-starred one. Herbert was detained by illness at Placentia, and his colleagues failed in their object, obtaining only the evasive answer, that all the privileges of the Church of Canterbury should be retained; which meant nothing, for it did not state what they were. This was the last act of his official life. His last recorded appearance in public was his following Queen Matilda to

her grave. On July 22nd, 1119, he himself expired, and was laid before the high altar of his cathedral in a sarcophagus, which was probably removed by the Puritans; but Dean Prideaux in 1651, raised a lasting epitaph to his memory. A question has been raised whether he was ever Lord Chancellor; and after balancing the evidence, Dr. Goulborn inclines to the affirmative ..... His literary remains were fourteen sermons, a treatise on the length of the ages, and the end of the world; a book on monastic constitutions; letters; and an address to Anselm. He left behind him, besides his own, five Churches—two in Norwich, one at North Elmham, one at Lynn, and one at Yarmouth—of which the last two still remain to attest the magnificence of his architectural designs.

Several extracts are given, in the Review above-named, of Abbot and Bishop HERBERT'S sermons. We will give one specimen of his bold out-speaking to (probably) the lawless nobles of his day; it is from an Easter Sermon, which thus abruptly and effectively begins:—

"Think you of your fathers, grandfathers, great-grandfathers, and ancestors. They have passed away, never again to return to this present life. Seeing ye are about to follow the dead, why deal ye so much with the things of this life? Death knocks at the door of your castles,* and

* There is a quotation in the said Review from the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, which shews the utter lawlessness of the Nobles in those times, and makes the Bishop's plain speaking the more admirable:—

"They had done homage (to Stephen) and sworn oaths, but they no faith kept; all became forsworn and broke their allegiance; for every rich man built his castles, and defended them against him, and they filled the land with strife. They greatly oppressed the wretched people by making them work

do ye fill them with riches? whence the Lord saith most fitly to a certain rich and covetous man, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be taken away from thee, and whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?" A stern rebuke! would God that it might pierce your heart of hearts! surely the world would then begin to be held cheap by you, and ye would condemn your sins, and ceasing from the oppression of the innocent, ye would shew the bowels of Christian compassion to the poor. Know ye, brethren, that the Church's poor are themselves among the saints whose festival ye are to-day celebrating. Make them your friends, as the Lord saith, that when ye shall "fail, they may receive you into everlasting dwellings." The holy poor are lean with hunger, and shiver with cold, but hereafter in heaven they shall be kings, and in the presence of God shall sit in judgment upon your crimes, and those of all the wicked. Such words appear to you unreasonable, but the truth of the Gospel abideth in all its purity."

It may not be out of place, or without profit, to refer the reader to a similar comment on the above text, *S. Luke*, xvi, 9, in the 3rd part of the "Homily on the Fear of Death," by one of the Reformers, some think possibly by Ridley. "Riches He called *wicked*, because the world abuseth them unto all wickedness; which are otherwise the good gift of God, and the instruments whereby God's servants do truly serve Him in using of the same. He

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at those castles, and when the castles were finished, they filled them with devils and evil men." They robbed those men and even women, not able to defend themselves, who were suspected to have any riches. They spared neither Church, nor Churchyard, but robbed and burnt the former. Nor did they respect the property and homes of the Clergy, Bishops, or Priests.

commanded them not to make them rich friends, to get high dignities and worldly promotions, to give great gifts to rich men that have no need thereof; but to make them friends of poor and miserable men, unto whom whatsoever they give, Christ taketh it as given to Himself. And to these friends Christ in the Gospel giveth so great honour and pre-eminence, that He saith *they shall receive* them that do good unto them *into everlasting homes*. Not that men shall be our rewarders for well-doing, but that Christ will reward us, and take it to be done unto Himself, whatsoever is done unto such friends. Thus making poor wretches our friends we make our Saviour Christ our friend, whose members they are."

ALDWIN, *eighth* Abbot, was promoted in 1091, he made the Assize at Ramsey, held the Abbacy for eleven years, and was then deposed (Malmesbury says for Simony) in a council by St. Anselm, (Malmesbury and Cotton MSS. say by Lanfranc,) Archbishop of Canterbury, with Richard Abbot of Ely, and Godrick of Peterborough, and remained deposed for five years. Bernard a Monk of St. Albans was made Abbot by the King. But after five years Aldwin recovered the Abbacy and held it four years, and died, and the Abbey was vacant for more than a year; in his time after taking the Abbey again, to wit, in 1199, Henry, King of England, changed the Abbacy of Ely into an Episcopal seat, and preferred Hervey le Breton, Bishop of Bangor to be first Bishop.

To this Abbot's time the following refers, which is taken from *Magna Britannia*, Vol. II, p. 1062:

"In the year 1100, several of the Barons of the kingdom raised a war against Henry I, who forced them to fly into Normandy, where Guiscard de Limosin, Lord Molins, appeared in the King's behalf, and prosecuted the war against them. For this service he was so highly favoured of the King, that he brought him with him into England, and gave him divers Castles, Lands and Honours. *This Norman Lord built the part of Ramsey Monastery, which was called Norman's Isle*; and from him descended the Lord Molins. Roger, a younger son of this family, was Castellan of Nottingham, and called himself Roger de Lemeusin, *i.e.* in English, Waterhouse."

See also (*Dugdale's Monasticon*, p 564, n 22, m xix.)

BERNARD, *ninth* Abbot, a Monk of St. Albans, held the chair during the five years that ALDWIN was deposed, and then died. Upon his death ALDWIN was restored, as above stated.

REGINALD, *tenth* Abbot, succeeded in 1114, and after two years he began to build a new Church, into which the convent went after seven years, *i.e.* in 1123. He was Abbot sixteen years, and died. He is said to have been "a clever but intemperate man."

WALTER, *eleventh* Abbot, was made so in 1133. He was Abbot twenty-seven years, and after ten years of his Abbacy the Monks of Ramsey were expelled by Geoffrey de Mandeville, Earl of Essex. A Cottonian MS. says WALTER sustained much oppression in the time of William de Lay and Geoffrey de Mandeville.

This Geoffrey de Mandeville,* one of the most lawless of the lawless nobles of his time, headed a rebellion against King Stephen. He desolated the town of Cambridge, forcibly entered and robbed its Churches. Then with his ruthless band he devastated the whole neighbourhood, breaking into all the Churches, laying waste the lands of the Monks, and carrying off their property. The Abbey of St. Benedict at Ramsey, he not only spoiled of the Monks' property, and stripped the altars and the sacred relics, but, mercilessly expelling the Monks from the Abbey, he placed soldiers in it and made it a garrison. Whilst the Abbey was so garrisoned, 'blood,' it is said, 'exuded from the walls of the Church and the cloisters adjoining, witnessing,' says Henry of Huntingdon, 'to the divine indignation, and prognosticating the destruction of the impious.' This destruction overtook him, he being slain at length by the King's troops, "and as while he lived he had disturbed the Church and troubled the land, so the whole English Church was a party to his punishment; for, having been excommunicated, he died unabsolved, and the sacrilegious man was deprived of Christian burial." (*History of County of Huntingdon*, p. 364, &c.)

WILLIAM,† *twelfth* Abbot, succeeded in 1161. Fitzstephen informs us he was made Abbot of Ramsey by the interest

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* Leland has of a Count Galfrid or Gaufrid . . . . . "Hic totus in rabiem versus, invectus Ramesiam, nobile monaster: invadens, fugata monach: caterva, custodiam posuit." "Similiter apud Benewik in ipso transitu aquarum." *Collectanea*, Vol. I, pt. ii, 600.

† The *Cottonian MSS.* Vesp. A. xviii, names DANIEL as the immediate successor of WALTER. "Daniel abbas. Iste supplantavit ipsum Waltererm de abbatia sua, et confusus recessit a curia Romana." The Exchequer Register names WILLIAM as the successor of WALTER.

of Thomas à Becket. "Willielmus monachus S. Martini de campis qui in Gallia studuerat opera Thomæ Becket cancellarii regis fit abbas Ramesiæ." In his time, *i.e.* in 1162, St. Thomas was made Archbishop of Canterbury, and in the year following WALTER, Prior of Ramsey, was made Abbot of Thorney. This Abbot WILLIAM ruled the Abbey of Ramsey 16 years, and then was chosen Abbot of Cluny. The following year he left Ramsey, lived two years, and the Ramsey Abbacy was vacant those two years.

ROBERT TRIONELL, *thirteenth* Abbot, was chosen in 1180. He was Prior of St. Andrew's, at Northampton. In his time, to wit, in 1186, RALPH, Prior of Ramsey, was made Abbot of St. Benedict of Holme. Also in his time, *i.e.* in 1192, the bones of the Saints Felix, Ethelred, and Ethelbright were placed in shrines at Ramsey. This ROBERT was Abbot about 20 years.

EUDO, *fourteenth* Abbot, Prior of Peterborough, succeeded as Abbot of Ramsey in 1200. He lived one year, and the same year ACARIUS, Prior of St. Albans, was made Abbot of Peterborough. Also in that year ST. HUGH, Bishop of Lincoln, died.

ROBERT DE REDINGES, *fifteenth* Abbot, or ROBERT, Abbot of Reading, as he is called in the Cottonian MSS., was elected to the chair at Ramsey in 1202, by the procurement of John de Grey, Chancellor of England, afterwards Bishop of Norwich. This ROBERT was Abbot for five years, and then resigned his Pastoral Staff into the hands of WILLIAM of Lincoln, and had for his maintenance the

Manor of Cranfield. In his time, the Archbishop of Canterbury appointed three Monks to be receivers of all the revenues of the Monastery; and from this year the Monastery continued for seven years without an Abbot; and in the next year after his abdication the Priory Church of St. Ives was burnt with all its offices, to wit, A.D. 1207. Robert died at Reading, and King John held the Abbacy in his own hands for seven years, because the Monks of Ramsey would not choose the Prior of Fronton as their Abbot.

Richard, Abbot of Selby, *sixteenth* Abbot of Ramsey, was elected to the latter in 1214, by the procurement of Nicholas Bishop of Frascati or Tusculum, Cardinal and Legate, in the same year that the same Legate took off the interdict in England. An interdict is an ecclesiastical censure by which the Pope of Rome forbids the administration of the Sacraments, and the celebration of any religious services or offices in a Kingdom, Province, Town, &c. It is a wholesale *major excommunication*. For the *greater curse* in detail, see *Fox' Acts, &c.*, p. 947; or *Wordsworth's Eccl. Biography*, Vol. I, p. 58.

In the same year the said Legate deposed the Abbots of Westminster, Evesham, and Bardeney, "et substituti sunt per eundem prior Fronton apud Westm., Prior Wigarn. apud Evesham, Prior de Lenton apud Bardeney." In the following year the Church of Ramsey was robbed of much wealth. Richard lived two years.

Hugh Foliot, *seventeenth* Abbot, Prior of Ramsey, was made Abbot in 1216, and lived 14 years. He received his benediction from the Bishop of Bath. The royal assent

was given to his election on June 14th. In his time, A.D. 1218, Silvester, formerly a Monk, afterwards Bishop of Worcester, died at Ramsey, whose bowels are buried before the high altar of the blessed Virgin, but his body was carried to Worcester.

RALPH, *eighteenth* Abbot, Prior of this Monastery, was chosen its Abbot in 1231. The royal assent was given to his election July 22nd. Three years after, King HENRY III visited Ramsey, the first King of England that was ever there. He arrived on the feast of St. Matthias, and remained four days. In his sixth year was dedicated the Church of St. Ives, and in the eighth year this Abbot was made a Justice of Norwich. He was Abbot 22 years.

A statement of the revenues arising from the lands of the Monastery during his time is given in Cottonian MS., Galba E. x. fol. 10 p.

The details are concluded with this—"Summa quater centum et xiij libr. absque feria S. Yvouis, et absque auxiliis."

According to Matthew Paris in this Abbot's time, the Church received a new dedication, A.D. 1238. "Circa idem tempus, dedicatæ sunt nobiles ecclesiæ conventuales, in diocesi Lincolniensi, in Marisco; videlicet Rameseie, Burg (Peterborough), et Sautereje (Sawtry); a venerabili episcopo Lincolniensi Roberto. Ecclesia Rameseje, decimo calend. Octobris; die scilicet sancti Mauricii sociorumque ejus."—(edit. 1684, p. 407).

WILLIAM ACOLT, *nineteenth* Abbot, was elected in 1253, he received the royal assent October 10th, 1253, and was

blessed by the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury. He lived as Abbot but one year. It was in the time of this Abbot that a dispute began with the King respecting the Fair of St. Ives. The free possession of the Fair, according to the Charters of the Monastery, was not recovered for near six years. The controversy is told by Matthew Paris, (edit. 1684, p. 769, &c.).

Upon the death of WILLIAM ACOLT which happened 16th November, 1254, the custody of the Abbey seems to have been committed to the Abbot of Pershore and Henry de Malo Lacu.

HUGH DE SULGRAVE or SOLEGRAVE, *twentieth* Abbot, was elected, according to the Exchequer Register in 1254; the royal assent was given to his election January 1st. The next year Master William of Kilkenny, the King's Chancellor, was elected Bishop of Ely, who, having obtained the episcopal dignity, very much oppressed the Church of Ramsey; but being sent by the King into Spain he died there. The same year the Pope granted King HENRY a tenth from all the Clergy, and the Monasteries of England were, unknown to themselves, obliged to this payment, in the court of Rome by the Bishop of Hereford;* Ramsey was fined 624 marks. In the fourth year of this Abbot, William Brito, the King's Justice, by the King's Writ, made a Goal-delivery of Ramsey at Winebodesham,

* "About three years after (1229) the Pope demanded and obtained the tenth of all ecclesiastical revenues, which he levied in a very oppressive manner; requiring payments before the Clergy had drawn their rents or tithes, and sending about usurers, who advanced them the money at exorbitant interest." So *Stafford's History of England*, p. 165. This evidently refers to the same transaction as the R.H., but the dates differ by about 25 years.

(Wimbotsham) in the hundred of Clacclose, of many robbers taken within and without the Abbot's Liberty. This Abbot HUGH began the Refectory, and made St. Ivo's Shrine, and a Silver-gilt Table for the High Altar, and purchased Gravenhurst, and assigned a pittance for the suppers of the Convent, and acquired many other lands and tenements and buildings. He ruled his Church for thirteen years and a half and died.

This Abbot HUGH and the Bishop of Ely had several disputes about the boundaries of their Fen-land, which were not settled till about 1256, *i.e.* 40th of HENRY III. The settlement, Matthew Paris tells us was accompanied by the following tragical incident:—

"In the year 1256 (40, H. III), WILLIAM Bishop of Ely, and HUGH Abbot of Ramsey, came to an agreement, upon a controversy betwixt them, touching the bounds of their Fens; whereof in these times a wonder happened; for whereas, as antiently, time out of mind, they were neither accessible for man or beast, affording only deep mud, with sedge and reeds; and possessed by birds, (yea, much more by devils, as appeareth in the life of St. Guthlac,* who, finding it a place of horror and great

* St. Guthlac was the founder of Croyland or Crowland Abbey. His biographer gives a sad account of Crowland and the Fens. "Crowland in respect to its desolateness was known to very few, by reason that apparitions of devils were so frequently seen there. Not long after St. Guthlac being awake in the night time, betwixt his hours of prayer, of a sudden he discovered all his cell to be full of black troops of unclean spirits, which crept in under the door, as also at chinks and holes, and coming in both out of the sky and from the earth, filling the air, as it were, with dark clouds. In their looks they were cruel, and of form terrible; having great heads, ill-favoured beards, rough ears, wrinkled foreheads, fierce eyes, teeth like horses, swollen ankles, preposterous feet, and hoarse cries; who, with such mighty shricks were

solitude began to inhabit there) is now changed into delightful meadows, and arable ground; and what therefore doth not produce hay and corn, doth abundantly bring forth sedge, turf, and other fuel, very useful to the borderers; which occasioned much dispute and contention betwixt them that were the most antient inhabitants in those parts, nay quarrels and fighting, touching the bounds of such fruitful lands. For so it happened, that, on the feast day of St. Peter ad Vincula, two of the Canons of the Priory of the Holy Trinity in London, disputing thereof, grew to such high words, as contracted an implacable hatred betwixt them; so that, studying a revenge, the one took an opportunity to murder the other."—(*History of Imbanking and Draining*, p. 358). What interest these worthies had in the Fens the *Chronicler* does not say.

WILLIAM DE GURMECESTRE, *twenty-first* Abbot was chosen, and confirmed by the Legate Ottoborms, in the year 1257. He purchased of Berengarius le Moyne, the Manors of Bernewell, Hemington, Conthorpe, and Littlethorpe, with the advowson of the Church of St. Andrew, at Bernewell, Anno. 1276.

The good deeds of this Abbot are chronicled at considerable length in a Cottonian MS., Vesp. A. xviii, fol. 94*p*. This is given by Dugdale, Numb. xxxix, in which are enumerated other purchases and acquisitions than those

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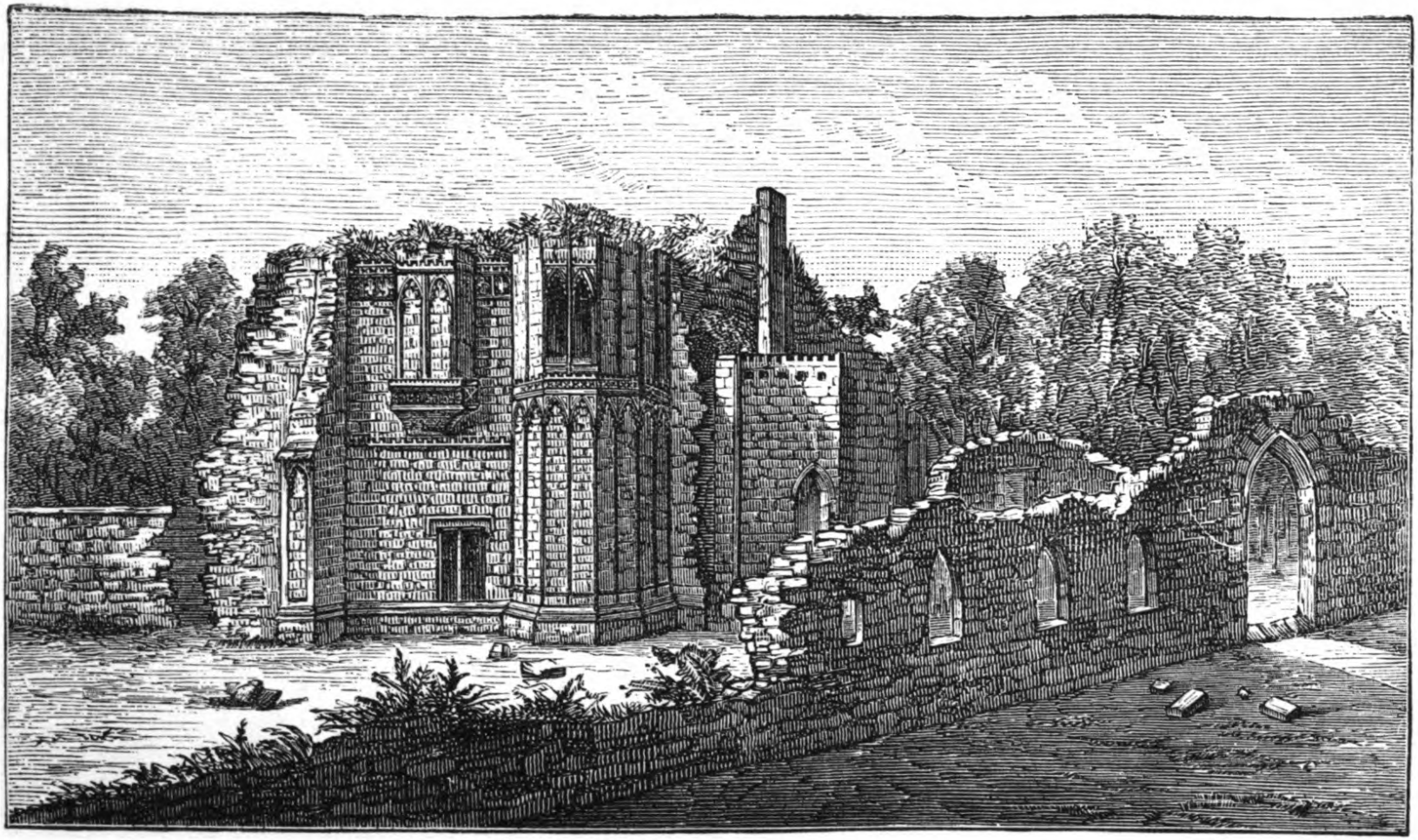
heard to roar. And by and by rushing into the house, first bound the holy man, then drew him out of his cell and cast him over head and ears into the dirty fen; and, having so done, carried him through the most rough and troublesome parts thereof, drawing him among brambles and briers for the tearing of his limbs." See above ps. 10, 17.



The North-West View of Ramsey Abbey.

From an Old Plate, dated 1730.

above made by WILLIAM DE GOMECESTRE. "The whole of which land, before spoken of, with all pertaining thereto, by the consent of his convent, he assigned for our alms at Ramsey, to feed and clothe twelve paupers for ever, and for the maintenance of one priest, continually celebrating for his soul and for the souls of all the fathers and mothers of all the Monks of Ramsey."

In 1276 the Convent first used the new Refectory. WILLIAM made besides, in the year following, for the Monastery a costly Conduit, and a new Cistern in the court—a noble reservoir for the water. He built also a new Abbot's Hall, and placed a gate in the west side of the court. He made an image for the tomb of COUNT AILWYN, founder of Ramsey Abbey, of the clearest brass, subtle in workmanship, very costly and splendid in guilding."

WILLIAM was Abbot eighteen years, and the nineteenth was struck with a palsy, for which reason he resigned his pastoral staff, and voluntarily quitted his office; after which he lived a year and two months and then died.

From the Cottonian MSS., Galba E. x, Dugdale quotes a list of about ninety officers and servants of the Abbey in the time of WILLIAM DE GURMECESTRE; fifteen paupers were also on the list of retainers. The wages of the officers and servants were paid partly in money, partly in bread or flour, and partly by allotments of land. Of the money payments some were made directly by the Abbot, or from funds under his control, and others by the Cellarer. Bundles of such accounts are still in possession of the present owner of the Abbey. The list of officers and

servants includes a Chaplain,* porters, stewards and bailiffs, gatekeepers, attendants in the Church and in the Infirmary, washerwomen of the Church and Abbey, cooks for the Monks and Abbots' Hall, keeper of the Cellar, woodmen, herdsmen, millers, brewers, fishermen, carpenters, masons, tailors, gardeners, ploughmen, &c, as if all its necessities were provided for by the institution.

The *twenty-second* Abbot, JOHN DE SAUTRE, took upon him the Abbacy in 1285; and, according to the Exchequer Register, paid, as a fine for the custody of his house during the vacancy, 2000 marks. King EDWARD II had by extortion of him, the one half of all the revenues of the Abbey according to the valuation. In his time, to wit in 1309, Isabella de Valois, Queen of England, and daughter of the King of France, stayed eighteen days at Ramsey Abbey, to the great expense of the Abbot. "The King (EDWARD III), accompanied by his mother (Isabella), his brother, and his two sisters, had already set out for the North when he issued this proclamation:—'All the forces of his kingdom should meet him at Newcastle-on-Tyne, to commence his wars with Scotland'; it was dated from Ramsey, a village ten miles from Huntingdon." *Longman's Life and Times of Edward III*, Vol. I, p. 10.

The above took place in 1327, but the R.H. gives 1309 as the date of Isabella's eighteen days stay at Ramsey. She may have made two visits.

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* This possibly the Chaplain of the Parish Church whose payment is referred to in many schedules of accounts, which are still in Ramsey Abbey. In the MSS. referred to above we have "*Capellanus* ipse commedet in aula; et mercedem accipiet de sacrista." In schedules of payments in the Abbey are such entries, as, 'In stipend. Capellani parochialis cum vestura sua VI Lib.'

Abbot JOHN underwent many afflictions and burdens,* but acquired lands and tenements, out of which he assigned Ten Pounds to the Convent for hose and shoes. He lived thirty years, and was blind six before his death, but did not resign.

The *twenty-third* Abbot, SIMON DE EYA or EYE, Professor of the Canon Law, received the royal assent to his election on December 19th, 1316. He received the Bishop of Lincoln's confirmation on the 10th of January following. He purchased land for the Monastery in Hauker, or Howker, and contributed to the new work of the Church, which he is said to have begun ("who new-built the eastern part of the Church," so Brayley, p. 524), and acquired much more in his time. He governed the Abbey 26 years and then died, and was buried in the new building on the left side of the high altar.

The *twenty-fourth* Abbot, ROBERT DE NASSINGTON, was elected, and to him the temporalities of the Monastery were restored January 22nd, 1342. He did many wonderful things in his life; he was Abbot six years and a half, and died in 1349, in the time of a Plague, and was buried in the new building on the right side of the altar.

The *twenty-fifth* Abbot, RICHARD DE SHENYNGDON, or SHENYNGTON, to whom the temporalities were restored August 21st, 1349, in the time of a Plague, is stated

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* 1294, Johannes de Sautre abbas Ramesey, Reginaldus de Castre prior, Michael de Gravenhyrst supprior, &c., majoris excommunicationis sententia innodati. Literæ archiep, dom. regi ad captionem, Reg. Winchelsea Cant. *MS. Cole*, Vol. xxvii.

to have been burthened with his predecessor's debts to the amount of 2500 marks, beside the ordinary charges at the time of his creation. He was elected on the day after the feast of St. Mary Magdalen, and blessed on St. Bartholomew's Day, 1349. His death was announced to the King (RICHARD II), November 11th, 1379.

The *twenty-sixth* Abbot, EDMUND DE ELYNGTON, received the royal assent to his election on the 28th November, 1379, of this Abbot we have but few particulars. He died September 18th, 1396.

The *twenty-seventh* Abbot, THOMAS BUTTURWYK, was the next Abbot. According to the Exchequer Register, he began his Abbacy in 1400, but the entry on the Patent Rolls states the temporalities of the Monastery to have been restored to him November 2nd, 1396. His confirmation is also noticed in the Registers of that diocese, as having been given on the eve of St. Simon and St. Jude. He died in the beginning of his 24th year, about the feast of All Saints. There seems to be some doubt as to the date of his death, we have given it as in the 24th year of his rule; but the next Abbot is said to have been elected in 1419.

The *twenty-eighth* Abbot, JOHN TYCHMERCH, elected in the month of October to the Abbacy, was confirmed as Abbot on the 8th November, 1419. He died on the vigil of the Assumption, 1434. "He was a noble father, who repaired that which was decayed, and erected new buildings."

The *twenty-ninth* Abbot, JOHN CROYLAND, or CROWLAND, was elected Abbot August 27th, 1434. He received the Bishop of Lincoln's confirmation October 3rd following; after which he lived but a year and a half, and died on the 13th of April, 1436.

The *thirtieth* Abbot, JOHN STOWE, was elected 4th of April, 1436, at whose cost by his industry, a license was obtained from King EDWARD the Fourth, for the purchase of the Manor of Le Moyne, with its appurtenance in Raveley and Sautre. Having governed the Monastery 32 years, being disabled by age and weakness, he resigned his pastoral staff. He lived three years after, when he died, and was buried before the altar of St. John Baptist, on the north side of the Church.

The names of the Abbots following are taken from Mr. Willis (*Hist. Mit. Abb.* p. 156) where note, that he makes this JOHN STOWE the 31st Abbot, which is occasioned by his reckoning ALDWIN twice, upon his having been once deposed, and again restored, whereas he is here mentioned but once.—Stevens.

The *thirty-first* Abbot, WILLIAM WITLESEY, or WHYTLESEY, then recently made Abbot, professed obedience October 19th, 1468. He was succeeded by,

The *thirty-second* Abbot, JOHN WARDEBOYS, in the year 1472.

The *thirty-third* Abbot, JOHN HUNTINGDON, was elected 1488, the temporalities of the Monastery were restored to him July 26th.

The *thirty-fourth* Abbot HENRY STEWEKLY, had the temporalities restored April 16th, 1506. He governed but a short time.

The *thirty-fifth* and last Abbot, JOHN DE WARDEBOYS, *alias* Lawrence, received the temporalities 1507 or 1508. Wood, informs us, that in 1519, he, being then Abbot of Ramsey, supplicated at Oxford for the degree of B.D., which is all I find of him, except continuing Abbot till the Dissolution, Anno 1539. He was very forward in procuring not only his own Abbey to be surrendered to the King's use, but influencing others to submit, for which wicked service he obtained a large pension of £266 13s. 6d. per annum, which I find vacated by his death before the year 1554.

The retiring allowances of the above John Lawrence are set forth in "a Book of Pensions in the Augmentation Office."

ADDENDA TO PART III.

The following are interesting papers connected with Ramsey Abbey.

The one marked A, is a summons, issued by Edward the First to the Abbot,* "requiring him to furnish his quota for war against the Welsh, according to the Tenure of his lands." The paper B, is an "acknowledgment of Edward the Third, for plate borrowed of the Church, to be pawned to supply the King with money for his wars in France." (*Brayley*, 528). C, shews how great

* Probably William de Gurmecestre, or Godmanchester, as "Edward started on this expedition directly after Easter, 1277."

were the claims and powers of the Lord Abbots within their demesne, and these they held up to the time of the Dissolution.

A, B, C, are all taken from Stevens' additional Volumes to Dugdale's Monasticon.

A.

De summonitione Abbatum contra Wallenses, Rex dilecto sibi in Christo abbati de Rames. salutem.

Quia Lewelinus filius Griffini, princeps Walliæ, et complices sui, rebelles nostri, terras nostras, et fidelium nostrorum in partibus Marchiæ invaserunt, et de die in diem invadunt, et homicidia et alia dampna enormia ibidem perpetrarunt, et idem Lewelinus nobis, prout deberet, obedire contempsit, et contempnit, in nostri præjudicium et contemptum, et vestri ac aliorum fidelium nostrorum grave dampnum, et exhæredationem manifestam, per quod jam exercitum nostrum summoneri fecimus, quod sit apud Wigorniam in octabis sancti Johannis Baptistæ proximo futuris, ad rebellionem dicti Lewelini, et fautorum reprimendam.

Vobis mandamus quod dictis die et loco, habeatis servitium vestrum, nobis debitum, paratum, ad proficiscendum exinde nobiscum, in expeditionem nostram, contra prædictum, Lewelinum, et complices suos rebelles nostros.

Et ita vos habeatis in hac parte, ut per vestrum et aliorum fidelium nostrorum, quos propter hoc summoneri fecimus, auxilium, dictorum rebellium nostrorum versutia adeo potenter reprimatur, quod nobis et vobis cedere valeat ad honorem.

Teste rege apud Windes. xii die Decembris. The same command to other Abbots.

B.

An acknowledgment of King EDWARD 3rd, for plate borrowed of this Church to be pawned, to supply him in his wars in France.

De mutuo de Abbate de Ramesey, pro Passagio Regis Edwardi tertii, A.D. 1338.

Rex omnibus ad quos, &c. salutem. Sciatis nos recepisse de dilecto nobis in Christo abbate de Rameseye, per manus dilecti clerici nostri Roberti de Wodehouse archidiaconi Richemundiæ, thesaurarii, et camerariorum nostrorum, ex causa mutui, pro passagio nostro versus partes transmarinas, per præfatum abbatem facti, unum calicem aureum, cum diversis petrariis in fundo, cum patena, ponderis novem marcarum et quinque solidorum, et pretii sexaginta et octo librarum et quindecim solidorum; unum ciphum argenteum deauratum, veterem et debilem, cum pede et cooperculo, cum diversis scuchonibus et aymellis, infra et extra, ponderis quadraginta et octo solidorum, et pretii quadraginta et octo solidorum; unum ciphum argenteum, cum pede, deauratum infra et extra, cum diversis scuchonibus et petrariis, sine cooperculo, ponderis triginta et duorum solidorum et duorum denariorum, et pretii triginta et duorum solidorum et duorum denariorum; unum ciphum argenteum deauratum infra et ingravatum, sine pede et cooperculo, ponderis viginti et septem solidorum, et pretii viginti et septem solidorum; et unam capam chori, broudatam de auro et serico, de diversis ymagin-

ibus, pretii quadraginta marcarum. Quos quidem calicem, patenam, ciphos, cooperculum, et capam eidem abbati restituere, vel sibi centum et decem et septem libras et decem solidos pro calice et patena prædictis et quinquaginta et duas libras, et sex denarios pro dictis ciphis, cooperculo et capa (si iidem calix, patena, cooperculum, et capa sibi non restituantur) solvere promittimus bona fide.

In cujus, &c. Teste rege apud villam de Sancto Edmundo quarto die Junii.

Per ipsum Regem et Literas ipsorum Thesaurarii et Camerarii.

C.

"The Abbot of Ramsey claims the privilege of running his greyhounds in his own Lands, *viz.*, in the Manor of *Gritton*, within the Warren of our Lord the King, belonging to the castle of *Cambridge*. The which Abbot came and shewed his charter, by which it is granted to him that he have free Warren in all his Lands belonging to the Hundred of *Hyrstington*, and in his other Land, and Wood, and Plain; and it was certify'd that he always hitherto used the same undisturb'd. Therefore he is acquitted.

The *Abbot of Ramsey* claims these under-written *Liberties* in his Bailywick, or Liberty of *Ramsey*, viz., the Return of the King's Writs, as well the original Writs, as the Writs called *Pone*. And in the Circuits of the Justices in the County of *Huntingdon*, he claims to have the very original Writs. He claims also to have his own proper Justices

who shall plead these Writs, and other pleas of the aforesaid Liberty, at a certain place *Smythescroft*. He also claims to have all the Amerciaments of whatsoever Tenants of the aforesaid Liberty. He also claims to have his own Coroners in the aforesaid Liberty, and the Chattels of Felons and Fugitives, Weyf, Infangentheof, Gallows, Tumberell, Pillory, and those things which belong to the View of *Frank-Pledge*; with Judicials, Free Chace, Free Warren, Shipbrech. And that he and all the Tenants of his Fee, within his Liberty, be exempted from all suits of Counties, Shires, and Hundreds, and Aids of Sheriffs, Murder, and Theft. He claims to have Treasurers found and Causes. He claims to have hearing of Causes, with (in ?) the Liberty of the Hundred of *Hyrstington*, and the pleas which belong to the Hundred. And he pays to our Lord the King for the said Hundred £8. And View of *Frank-Pledge* within the said Hundred of all the Tenants of his Fee, *viz.*, in *Wardeboys* with *Caldecote*, *Wistowe*, *Little Ravele*, *Ripton Abbots* with *Wenyngton*, *Houghton* with *Wyton*, *Little Stivecle*, *Broughton*, the town of *St. Ives* with *Wodehurst*, *Woldhurst*, *Nidingworth* with *Haliwell*, Gallows at *Hirstington*, and at the Town of *St. Ives*, which serve all the Hundred; Infangenetheff, and the Chattels of Felons and Fugitives, of all the Tenants of his Fee, within the aforesaid Hundred, and the Amerciament of the same and Weyf likewise. He claims without the aforesaid Hundred in his Manor of *Hemingford*, *Elyington*, with its Members, viz., *Bryngton*, and *Bytherne*, *Wyllyngton*, *Giddyng Abbots*, View of *Frank-Pledge*, and such things as belong to View; Infangenetheff,

Chattels of Felons and Fugitives, Amerciament of his Tenants, Weyf, and Gallows at *Wistowe*, *Aillyngton*, *Hemingford* and *Elyngton*.

The manner how the relief of the free Tenants of the Lord Abbot of Ramsey is to be paid and exacted with Knight's Fees, and how whole Fees are made up of certain Hides, Hides of certain Rods, and the Rod of certain *Acres*, viz., that four Hides make an whole Fee; four Rods an Hide, 8 *Acres* make a Rod, that is, in some places more, in some less.

An whole fee pays to the Relief C shillings, one Hide, which is the fourth part of a Knight's Fee, xxv^{s}.

One Rod, which is the fourth part of an Hide, vi^{s}, iiid. *Stevens' Monasticon*, p. 4067.

The "Relief of the Tenants" above spoken of was probably from military service, which seems to have been exacted for all lands of the Abbey, outside the "Liberty of Ramsey." This latter was probably altogether free, according to the Charters of Edgar and Edward the Confessor.

Stevens gives also this translation of Dugdale (p. 575), "The Liberty of Ramsey begins at *Homberdale*, and runs on to the little Hill of *Wistowe* through the midst of the Town touching *Raveleye*, so far as *Cnettis rode*, and to a certain Wooden Cross under *le Barwe*, between the Wood of Walton and the Marsh, and enters into the Marsh in the same *place*; and goes on through the midst of *Hokeslode*, touching upon *Buckmere* and *Ubmere*, so far as *Wrongebetle*, through the midst of it, and so to *Soldremere* touching

upon *Ashebech*, and so across the Marsh as far as *Hertynges*; and then as far as *Aldrestub*, and then as far as *Pollyngoscote*, through Pakkelode, and so to *Wethis* and *Wayfen* by *Weremere*, the whole length of the bank of Weresmere as far as *Luthmere*, athwart *Weremere*, and so to *Hethwere*, and so far as to *Coldemowehath*, and so to Colpetslade, which was down as far as *Homberdale*."

Glossary *to words in Edward's Charter on* p. 102.

"*Sac* (*Sacc* O.E.) was a right to jurisdiction granted by the crown, for holding pleas, trying causes and offences, levying fines and forfeiture, and doing other acts contingent to a Court Leet." *Notes on Domesday Book of Hunts.*, p. 25.

"*Sac* in the Saxon tongue properly signifies as much as (*causa* with the Latines) *sake*, whence we in English still retain the expression *for whose sake, &c.*, that is *for whose cause*." *Cowel's Law Dictionary.*

"*Soc* was the territory or limits over which this jurisdiction extended. It often included several parishes, which were then together called the *Soke*; the *Sac* or privilege of holding pleas extending throughout the whole." *Notes*, &c. as above.

Socna (Socna, Sax or O.E.) was "a privilege or Liberty or Franchise." *Bayley.*

Socmen were "Tenants who tilled the inland or peculiar Demesne of their Lord; but after the Conquest those, who held by no servile Tenure but paid their rent as a *Soke* or Sign of Freedom, were so called." *Bayley.*

Tol alias Tholl, Tolnetum alias Theolonium, "hath in our common Law two significations; *first*, it is used for a Liberty to buy and sell within the precincts of a Manor; *secondly*, for a tribute or Custom paid for passage, &c.—*Brach.*, lib. 2, ca. 24, num. 3, interprets it to be a Liberty as well to take as to be free from toll, for they who are enfeoffed with toll are custom free, saith Skene, &c. &c."

Team and Theame, or Tem and Theme (from the Saxon T'yman, *i.e.*, propagare to Téem or bring forth) signifies a Royalty granted by the King's Charter to the Lord of a Manor for the restraining and judging of Bondmen and Villains with their children, goods, and chattels in his court.

"Infangentheof, Hinfangthefe or Infangethefe is compounded of three Saxon words,—the prep. *in*, *fang* or *fong* to take or catch, and *thefe* a robber—It signifies a privilege or liberty granted unto Lords of certain Manors to judge any thief taken within their Fee."

Fihtwite, fighwite, fithwite, a fine, 120*s.* some say, imposed for fighting or breaking the peace.

Ferdwite, a fine imposed on Military Tenants for not appearing in Arms.

Forestall, an intercepting on the highway (*a*) to buy or bargain for cattle or corn as it is coming to market to be sold, (*b*) to assault a passenger thereon. The latter is probably the sense of the word in Edward's Charter.

Hamsocne, (1) "Our ancient records express *Burglary* under this word; (2) in Scotch law, the crime of violently assaulting a man in his own house."

GRITHBRYCE, a breach of the peace.

SCIPBRYCE, wreckage.

SAE UPWARP, cargo, &c. from wrecks.

Mot-wurthi, Ferth-wurthi, Faldwurthi were military men, or men worthy to take arms, or mustered or enrolled to appear upon any occasional expedition.

"HUNDRED a century, because it consists of 10 Tithings, and each Tithing of Ten Households." *Bayley*.

"The division of England into HUNDREDS is of Saxon origin. They were originally regulated by the free population, as is evident from the great number of HUNDREDS in the counties first peopled by the Saxons." *The History of Huntingdon*, Note on p. 19.

Part IV.—The Dissolution.

The Ramsey Chronicle was finished at p. 130; and we have taken from Dugdale's Monasticon and Stephens' "Additions" all that seemed likely to interest the general reader; and now we are near to the fall of Ramsey Abbey.

Royal Charters had declared its independence from control; wealth had been poured into its treasury; and its Lord Abbots ranked with the great ones of the earth. But Kings infringed the charters, and coveted the revenues, and nobles were envious of the Abbots. As seen above, William Rufus appointed Herbert de Losinga as Abbot, for a sum of money. The next Abbot was deposed for Simony. Robert of Reading and his successor were appointed by the influence of great men. Then, in the times of several Abbots, "the temporalities were restored." On what grounds, or for whose benefit they had been suspended, does not appear. These were however the beginning of sorrows for Ramsey Abbey, and examples probably, of what was taking place in other Monasteries. They were precedents, strengthened by the growing internal corruptions of those institutions, for the severe measures of Henry VIII and his covetous and envious courtiers. But, on the tale of the Dissolution of the Monasteries, we shall enter no further than to add the subjoined letters respecting Ramsey, from the Monasticon.

Letter of Thomas Bedyll, one of K. Henry the Eighth's Commissioners, to . . . . . respecting the Monks of Ramsey.

[Ex autogr. MS. Cotton. Cleop. E. iv. fol. 203.]

Please it you to vnderstand that in the reding of the muniments and chartors of the house of Ramesey, I found a chartor of King Edgar, writen in a very antiq Romane hand, hard to be red at the first sight, and light inowghe after that a man found out vj. or vij. words and after compar letter to letter. I am suer ye wold delight to see the same for the straingnes and antiquite thereof. In the ende thereof is subscribed this. "Signum Ædgari incliti et serenissimi Anglorum Imperatoris ✠." Whereby it may be wel noted that affor the Conquest the said king wrate himself to be emporour of England. Item it is to be noted of the subscription of the said charter that in England wer vj. duks at that tyme, for they subscribe this—"Ego Alfwold dux. Ego Athelstan dux. Ego Alfre dux. Ego Oslac dux. Ego Brithmoth dux. Ego Ethelweard dux." And that tyme the king had to sonnys, Edward and Ætheldred wiche he subscribed not as du . . but under this maner: "Signum Ædwardi ejusdem regis filij," and Signum Æthelredi fratris ejus."

I have seen also there a chartor of King Edward writen affor the Conquest, whiche begynneth this "In onomate summi Kyrion," and soon after the same he writeth this, "Ego Ædwardus totius Albionis Dei moderante[a] gubernatione [b]archiepiscopis, episcopis, abbatibus, centenariis, cunctisque sanctæ fidel . . ecclesiæ, clericis et laicis, insuper et omnibus post me futuris regibus salutem,

perpetuamque pacis felicitatem :" whereby ye may note that King Edward nameth himself . . . . . of al Albion, and not by the name of England. Also in the said charter it is writen this: "In primis ecclesiarum[c] beatæ Dei genitricis (quæ Ramesea nuncupatur) ita liberam et quietam ab omni exactione episcopali quam a sæculari esse volo, ut neque nos neque successores nostri neque quilibet episcopus, neque quicunque de ordinaria potestate in ipsam sanctam basilicam vel in manentes in ipsa, vel in homines qui cum suis terris, vel quibuslibet substantiis, ad ipsam tradere vel devovere se voluerint, nisi per voluntatem abbatis et suorum omnium monachorum ullam unquam habeant potestatem." Of this may be noted that if King Edward by his kyngly power could exempt this monasterie of Ramsey from all bishops powers, the kings grace may aswell all other abbeyes or asmay as he wol from the bisshops powers. And to this chartor subscribed iiij. dukes, Leouricus, Haroldus, Leofwynus, and Eadwynus. Ferther in the said charter when I overloked it agayne I noted the words folowing. "Ipse abbas soli regi serviens atque ei soli os ad os respondens commissum sibi gregem spirituali et tempor. pastu habundantius[d] foveat, soli regi et nulli alii subjectus." For which goodness of kings to this house above all other (in my opinion) they be moost bounden to owe their love, feith, and obedience to the king's grace above other religious houses, whiche be not so exempted only to the king immediatly. And asfar as I can yet perceyve thabbat and his brethern here be aswel contented to and under al the bisshop of Rome his vsvrped juris-

diction and to accepted the kings grace for the supreme hed of the churche of England as any men man be. And thabbat causid to be shewed affor my commyng hither his charter of King Ædgar in the parisshe churche in the pulpit to the multitude of the parisshe, wher'by was declared that the kings grace is emporour of this his realme as King Edgar was. Whiche was a tokyn of a good mynd. What I shal ferther do or fynd here or in other places worthy writinge I w . . . . ascerten you from tyme to tyme, to whom I hertly commend me to be had in your remembraunce in this my long absence. From the abbey of Ramsey the xiijth. day of Januarie.

By yo^{r}. owne

THOMAS BEDYLL.

Second Letter of Thomas Bedyll, to . . . . . concerning the Monks of Ramsey.

[Ibid. fol. 204.]

In my moost hertie wise I commende me to you: doing you to vnderstand that I am now at Ramesey, wher in myne opinion the abbat and convent be as true and as feythful obedienciaries to the kings grace as any religious folks in this realme, and live as vprightly as any other after the best sort of lyving that hath been emong religious folks this many yers; that is to sey mor gyven to ceremonies than is necessary. I pray God I may fynd other houses in no worse condicion, and than I wolbe right glad that I tok this jorney. Yo^{r}. cosyn M^{r}. Richard was

a moderamine *in orig.* b *sc.* basileus. c ecclesiæ. d abundanter.

her on Thursday by whom I sent letters vnto you whiche I think ye have not yet rescyved. Muche of the mater of my letters concerneth a charter of King Edgar whiche I found in this house writen in a very antique Romane hand; whereof the subscription is this "Signum Ædgari illustris Anglorum imperatoris." And it is subscribed by vj. duks whiche wer in Edgar's tyme. The said Edgar exempteth the abbat and his convent and al his men from the power of al bissops, and maketh thaim immediately subject to himself. And albeit they were this exempted, the bisshop of Rome had never to do with thaim. Ther may be good nots gathered out sum of as I have writen mor playne in my said lettres deliured to Mr. Richard.

Here in this monastry of Ramsey be two brethern whiche have gyven thes billys enclosed unto me very affectuosly desiryng to have liberte to go from thair cloyster by the kings grace auctorite, or els to have licence to reparr to my lord of Cauntrebury to sue thair capacites. I have steyed thaim as well as I can with suche counsels and exhortations as I could gyve thaim, but, I fer, if the can have no liberte graunted thaim they wol take it of thair owne auctorite. I beseche you to write a word or two how I shal vse meself towards thaim and al other whiche wol make like suyt, in no smal number as I think: whereof svm occasion hath growen by that that Doctor Lee now at Christmas gave liberte to half the house of Sawtre to depart (as I am informed) whiche Sautre is within v. myles of Ramsey. The religious men thinketh that I have like auctorite

as Doctor Lee: and that moveth thaim to make this suyt. Nevertheles I wol no thing do therein, or presume suche hyghe maters without your advise and counsel: beseching you to write your mynd [in] this behalf, and in suche other things whiche ye wold me to do in this jorney. If it pleased you to grant me a commission to visit the religious houses vnvisitted in Lyncoln dioc. whiche shal be nyghe my jorney, it shuld be muche to my commodite. From Ramsey the xv. day of January.

By your owne

THOMAS BEDYLL.

Richard Cromwell to Thomas Cromwell his Uncle; reports his going to Cambridge, Ely, and Ramsey.

[Ibid. fol. 204b.]

I haue me most humbly commendyd vnto yo^{r}. lordshipp I rode one Sondaye to Cambrige to my bedd, and the next mornyng was upe betymes, supposyng to have found at Elye M^{r}. Pollard and M^{r}. Williams, but they were departyd bifore my commyng: and so beyng at dynner at Somersham with the busshop of Elye I overtoke them: at which tyme I openyd your pleasure unto them in every thyng. Yo^{r}. lordshipp I thynke shall shortely apperseyve the pryor of Elye to be of a forwarde sorte, by evydent tokens, as at our commyng home shalbe at large relatyde unto youe. At the makyng hereof we hadd done nothyng at Ramseye savyng that ouer nyght I commenyd with the abbot, whome I found conformable to every thyng as shalbe

at this tyme put in vse, accordyng as yor. lordshipps will is. Assone as we have done at Ramsey, we go to Peterborough: and frome thense to my house, and so home. The which I trust shalbe at the farthest one this daye come sevyn days. Thus the blessyd Thrynyte preserve your lordshipps helth. From Ramseye on Tewysday in the mornyng beyng the xvth. of Octobre.

Yo^{r}. lordshipps most bounden
nephewe

RICH. CRUMWELL.

Ramsey, in the Countye of Huntyngdon.

[From a Book of Pensions in the Augmentation Office.]

Herafter ensuyth the names of the late abbott and monks there, wyth theyr pencons assignyd by the kyngs comyssyons to be payd vnto theym yerly duryng theyr lyves, at ij. termes of the yere; that ys to saye, at the feasts of th'Anuncyacon of o^{r}. Lady and seynt Michell th'arcangell, by evyn porcons. The fyrst payment therof to begyn at the feast of th'Anuncyacon of o^{r}. Lady next ensuyng the date herof. Whiche late monastery was surrendred to the kyngs use the xxijth. day of November in the xxxjth. yere of the raygne of o^{r}. soueygne lorde kyng Henry the viijth.

JOHN LAWRENCE late abbott there, over and besyds the howse of Bodsey with thapp^{r}tennes, and one hundred loode woode to be taken yerly out of the woods of Bottnall Ruckyse Grove and Warbys

Woode by equal porcons yerly duryng his lyffe, and allso one marke of swans wyth the profytts therof, and one boote gate callyd the Subcellerers Bote Gate, w^{t}. the hylke and ptenncs belongyng to the same, duryng his seyd lyffe . . . cclxvj^{li}. xiij^{s}. iiij^{d}.

John Dryver at Ramesey late pryo^{r} there . xx^{li}.

John Pakye at Ryngsted . . . . . viij^{li}.

Robert Huchyn late po^{r} of Seynt Ives, over and besyds the chappell and chamber stondyng upon the brygge at Seynt Ives, duryng his lyffe . . . xij^{li}.

John Avyson at Downhm late subcellerer viij^{li}.

John Nyccols an old man . . . . . viij^{li}.

Lawrence Bardney beyng aged . . . viij^{li}.

Wyllm Silke at Sawtrey . . . . . vij^{li}.

Wyllm Rogers at Halywell . . . . . viij^{li}.

Wyllm Alwyn late chunter . . . . ix^{li}.

Stephyn Bawdwyn at Bannett . . . . vij^{li}.

Thomas Baker high cellerer . . . . . x^{li}.

Wyllm Cooke at Bardwell late sexten . vij^{li}.

Thomas Powle at Brayntre . . . . . vj^{li}.

John Pakye late treasaurer . . . . . vj^{li}. xiij^{s}. iiij^{d}.

John Hodyngsells at Lylford bachelar of lawe. . . . . ix^{li}.

John Ffaunt bacheler of dyvyte . . . x^{li}.

John Pawmer at Halywell subpryo^{r} . . vj^{li}. xiij^{s}. iiij^{d}.

Thomas Andrewe beyng a syckly pson . vij^{li}. vj^{s}. viij^{d}.

Wyllm at Swasey . . . . . v^{li}. vj^{s}. viij^{d}.

JOHN BRYGGEMAN at Burwell leyng sycke of the pawsey	vj^{li}.
ROBERT HARRYS at Standground . .	v^{li}. vj^{s}. viij^{d}.
RICHARD HAWLYNG scoler	vj^{li}. xiij^{s}. iiij^{d}.
HUGH PHELYPE	vj^{li}.
WYLLM IRLOND at Grytby student . . .	vj^{li}. xiij^{s}. iiij^{d}.
THOMS FFYLD at Hemyngford	v^{li}.
JOHN PYCARD	v^{li}.
JOHN SMYTH at Tysenshe	v^{li}.
JOHN WHYTWELL at Vyllyngborough .	v^{li}. vj^{s}. viij^{d}.
GEORGE MARSHALL at London	v^{li}.
Sm	cccc^{xx}iiij v^{li}. xiij^{s}. iiij^{d}.

RYCHARD RYCHE.

PHYLYP PARRYS.

JO. TREGONWELL.

JO. HUGHES.

Part V.—After the Dissolution.

After the Dissolution of the Monasteries, 'the site with several manors of the rich abbey of Ramsey, all in the same county, was granted to Sir Richard Williams *alias* Cromwell, A.D. 1540, in consideration of his good service and payment of £4663 4s. 2d. by the tenure, and rent in capite by the tenth part of a Knight's fee paying £29 16s.'

The annual income at this time was, according to Speed, £1987 15s. 3d., which proves that the services of Sir Richard were of value; he had been employed in suppressing a rebellion fomented by the Roman Catholic Clergy, and, as he wrote despatches to the Earl of Essex, it is probable that he held a high command in the army. The father of this Sir Richard was one Morgan Williams, who was descended directly from the Lords of Powis, and held in Wales an estate worth £200 or £300 per annum. He was brought into notice by Thomas Cromwell, Earl of Essex, (the favourite of Henry VIII.) whose sister he married, and so his son was put into a fair way of preferment. Subsequently to his life as a soldier, he was appointed one of the visitors of the Monasteries just prior to their dissolution.

Sir Richard Williams changed his name to Cromwell as a compliment to his uncle the Earl of Essex, Sir Thomas Cromwell.

The way in which he obtained the honour of Knighthood is given at length in *Stow's Chronicle*. But for our purpose it may be enough to say that he was very successful in a tournament at Westminster in May 1509 or thereabouts; so pleased was Henry VIII. with his courage and skill that he gave him a diamond ring, taking it from his own finger, and saying "formerly thou wast my Dick, but hereafter thou shalt be my diamond." He then ordered him to bear such a one in the jamb of the demi-lion in his crest, which the elder branch of the family did from that time.

In 1541 he was appointed High Sheriff of the counties of Huntingdon and Cambridge. He received in this year grants of the Monastery of S. Mary's in the town of Huntingdon and S. Neots, whose yearly values were £232 7s. 0d. and £256 1s. 3d.

He was made one of the gentlemen of the Privy Chamber in 1543, and on a war breaking out with France in this year, he was sent thither as General of the Infantry. This expedition was commanded by picked men, 'all right hardie and valient Knights, Esquires and Gentlemen.'

In 1544 he was made Constable of Berkeley Castle. He married in 1518, Frances, daughter of Sir T. Murfyn, Sheriff of the city of London, and a native of Cambridgeshire. Only one of his children is specially mentioned as such, Henry, his son and heir; another of his sons was probably member of parliament for Bodmin, and others were in distinguished positions, but it is with Sir Henry we are principally concerned. He was Knighted by Queen Elizabeth in 1563, and entertained her at Hinching-

brook on her return from visiting Cambridge University. He was a member of the House of Commons in 1563, and was four times Sheriff of the counties of Hunts. and Cambs. during Elizabeth's reign; he was called the "Golden Knight" from his liberality. Report says that whenever he came from Hinchingbrook to Ramsey, he threw considerable sums of money to the poor townsmen.

Sir Henry was buried in all Saints' Church, Huntingdon, in 1603, and he is mentioned as a worthy gentleman, both in county and country, and universally esteemed. He had married Joan, daughter of Sir Ralph Warren, who was Lord Mayor of London in 1536 and 1543; by her he had eleven children. Sir Oliver, his eldest son and heir; Robert, the father of the Protector Oliver; Henry, to whom he gave the Manor of Upwood, in consideration of certain payments; Richard, who was member for Huntingdon and subsequently for Lostwithiel, is supposed to have died a bachelor; Sir Philip of whom mention will be made in speaking of the 'Biggin'; Ralph died a child. The daughters were *Joan*, *Elizabeth*, *Frances*, *Mary*, and *Dorothy*. Sir Oliver was born A.D. 1562, and knighted by Queen Elizabeth in the 40th year of her reign. He was Sheriff for Hunts. and Cambs. He entertained two if not three English Monarchs, Elizabeth, James I. several times, and probably Charles I. He received James I. for the first time, when he was on his way to London from Edinburgh, and so royally did he entertain him that the King exclaimed 'Morry mon, thou hast treated me better than any one since I left Edinbro'.'

James made him, with 59 others, Knight of the Bath ; he was a conspicuous member of the House of Commons from 1604 to 1610, from 1614 to 1623 and in 1624; he was also in parliament in the first year of Charles I., 1625. He was a zealous royalist, supporting Charles to the last, raising troops at his own expense for the royal cause, and insisting on his sons serving in the royal army. His nephew, afterwards the Protector Oliver, visited him (probably) at Hinchingbrook, and though he was very respectful took away all his plate for the public service, and left him disarmed.

After this he went to Ramsey to live, and here his dutiful nephew paid him another visit. The demand of the nephew for a sum of money was not complied with, though it was accompanied by a threat to burn down the town in case of refusal. The answer was that it was impossible, as Sir Oliver could not raise the sum, but he would meet his nephew ; they met on the High Bridge, Oliver the younger, being accompanied by a body of cavalry ; the composition agreed to was that Sir Oliver should give to the cause of the parliament 40 saddle horses and £1000.

In spite of this, Sir Oliver remained a royalist, and his estates were sequestered, but saved through the interposition of his nephew.

So proud and resolute was he that the colours which he and his sons had captured from the parliament forces, continued displayed in Ramsey Church during the whole of the great rebellion, which ended in 1649, and were certainly there as late as 1687.

He died much involved, partly no doubt on account of the support he gave the royal cause, which cost him vast sums of money. His death took place in 1655, in the 93rd year of his age, and he was buried at night in Ramsey Church. The family vault of the Cromwells is said to have been just at the entrance of the chancel.

His first wife was Elizabeth, daughter of Sir H. Bromley, Lord Chancellor of England, upon whom he settled Ramsey, Warboys, Hinchingbrook, Higney, Broughton, and Little Raveley; she died in 1601. In July, 1601, Sir Oliver married Ann, widow of Seignior Horatio Palavicini, and on her he settled the Manors of Ramsey, Heigmongrove,* Bury, Upwood, and Wistow except the Rectories in each of them, and the parishes called the old and new parishes, and the lands lying in those parishes, viz:—Ramsey, and the chase and ground called Mychwood. This lady died at Hinchingbrook House, and was buried at Huntingdon, 1626; by her Sir Oliver had no children†, but by lady Elizabeth several.

1 HENRY, his eldest son and heir, of whom more below.

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* Monasticon, 550 note.—"Hechmundegrave and all the island of Ramsey is assigned to the cellar, and to the refectory, and to the kitchen, and to the mill, and to the brewery, and to the infirmary, for the purchase of glasses in the refectory, and napkins, and other utensils. Likewise also in the kitchen for dishes, and jars, and drinking vessels and all other utensils; likewise in the cellar, and in the mill, and in the brewery, and in the infirmary, and in the other offices of the Monks. But the cultivated lands of Hechmundegrave, and of the whole island of Ramsey are assigned for the keeping of the fowls and farm stock belonging to the Monks."

† One authority says he had, and gives their names as Oliver, Giles, Anna, and Mary. For further information respecting this family see ADDENDA.

2 THOMAS.

3 JOHN, born 1589; in 1621 he was a captain in the 1st regiment of foot, sent by James I to recover the Palatinate, after that he was Colonel of an English regiment in the service of the United States of Holland. He heard Oliver, afterwards Lord Protector, say that he considered the King, who was then a prisoner, 'the most injured prince in the world,' and concluded from that, that he would not sanction Charles's execution. He was sent over by the Prince of Wales and Prince of Orange to try to obtain a pardon for Charles, he brought with him to England letters credential from the States, and letters with the King's and Prince of Wales's signet, offering Oliver his own terms if he would prevent the execution of Charles. He pleaded with his cousin that the horrid crime contemplated would, if carried out, leave an indelible stain on the nation; and added that of all men living he thought he would never have had any hand in it, who in his hearing had protested so much to the King. Oliver replied, that it was not his doing but the army's, and that he had prayed and fasted for the King, but no return that way was yet made to him. Colonel Cromwell then hastily shut the door, and Oliver thought he was going to be assassinated, but Colonel Cromwell simply drew out his papers and told him that he might, if he choose, make himself and relations and family happy and honourable, or he might so disgrace them that they would have to change their name back again from Cromwell to Williams. The Colonel then retired, promising to sit up for an answer; at one o'clock

in the morning it came, 'the council of officers have been seeking God, as he had also done, and it was resolved by them all that the King must die.' With this answer he returned to Holland.

Sir Oliver's fourth son, WILLIAM, was a Captain in the army in 1627, for he and John his brother, are both mentioned as such in the will of Henry Cromwell, of Upwood; he was a royalist, and carried on a correspondence with Lord Craven, an exile for his loyalty. A letter from William was intercepted, but Oliver pardoned him. He was afterwards employed on a secret expedition to Denmark by Oliver, which was very near being fatal to him; he was wrecked on the coast of Norway, broke his arm in endeavouring to leap into a boat, and bruised his head so much that he had a dangerous illness; he lost all his clothes and money, and was afraid to disclose his real name, but finally he made his way to Copenhagen, and by help of the parliament Ambassador there was supplied with everything necessary, even a servant in place of the one drowned in the wreck.

He engaged in a plot to assassinate the Protector. He died of the plague at Ramsey at Nine o'clock in the morning of February 22nd, 1655, and was buried at Nine at night of the same day, in Ramsey Church. He caught the infection by wearing a coat, the cloth of which had come from London, and some 186 people died of the same disease thus introduced into the town, among them the tailor who made the coat, and all his family.

Sir Oliver's fifth son was named OLIVER, he was a

student at the University of Padua in 1618, where his coat of arms is painted, and where he probably died.

His sixth son was EDWARD, who is supposed to have been a barrister.

Sir Oliver had five daughters—

1 ELIZABETH.

2 CATHERINE, who married Sir Richard Ingoldsby.

3 JANE.

4 JOAN.

5 HANNA, who married John Baldwin, gentleman. Their wedding is entered in the Ramsey register.

We now return to HENRY, Sir Oliver's eldest son and heir, who was born in 1586. He was an active royalist; the letter signed by Prince Rupert—now in the possession of E. Fellowes, Esq.,—is addressed to him, and is as follows:—

Sr.

You are immediately after sight hereof to march with your whole Regiment of Horse to my Lord Hopton wheresoever, from whom you shall receive further orders. And hereof you may not faile as you will answer it.

RUPERT.

Oxford, this 13th day of December, 1643.

For Colonell Cromwell or the chief Officer of his Regiment att Hinton or elsewhere.

He also commanded the royalists, according to one account, at the battle of Winceby, 1643; the royalists were defeated after half-an-hour's fighting.

In Sir John Marsham's Docquet-book, now in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford, we find the docquet of a commission for Henry Cromwell.

"Cromwell Esqre., 500 horse: A commission for Henry Cromwell, Esqr., High Sheriffe of y^e^ County of Huntingdon, to raise and entertayne a regiment of five hundred horse and horsemen volunteers, to be employed in his Majesties service." On the same day the same gentleman was authorized to raise 1500 infantry, volunteers, as the subjoined copy of the docquet shews. "Cromwell 1500 foote: a like commission for the said Henry Cromwell to raise and entertayne fifteen hundred foote volunteers to be imployed in his Majesties service."

Henry Cromwell was thrice married, first to Baptina Palavicini, who died 1618, and was buried in S. John's Church, Huntingdon; secondly to Mary or Lucy Dyer, who died 1629, and was buried at Ramsey; thirdly to Elizabeth Ferrars. She was the widow of a gentleman who was knighted, and was descended from the family of that name, seated at Tamworth castle; her maiden name was Lucy. She died in 1658, and was buried at the foot of the cross in Ramsey church-yard. The issue of the first marriage was one daughter, who died an infant; of the second—

1 JAMES, born 1620, died young.

2 ANNA, baptized at Upwood, 1621.

3*CARINA, Baptized at Ramsey, 1622.

4*PEMBROKE, baptized at Ramsey, 1623, died 1639.

5 HENRY, *surviving son and heir.*

6 ELIZABETH, baptized at Ramsey 1626.

7 MARY, baptized at Ramsey, 1627, died an infant.

8*MARY, baptized at Ramsey, 1628.

HENRY, mentioned above as *surviving son and heir* of his father HENRY, was the last of the eldest branch of the CROMWELL family, and he changed his name to WILLIAMS; he was baptized at Ramsey in 1625. We find this mention of him in Thurloe's State Papers, 1656—7.

"Hary Cromwell rising in the house next after major-generall Butler had spoke, who was a little too hot, I thinke, tooke the major-generalle to task; and after he had spoken to answer him, began to argue their case. Amongst others had this argument, that hee observed many gentlemen, and hee that spoke last, did say and think it just, that because some of the cavaliers had done amisse, therefore all should be punished. By the same argument (says honest Hary) because some of the major-generalls have done amisse, which I offer to prove, therefore all of them deserve to be punished. Kelsey thereupon calls to the orders of the house, and desires the persons that had done amisse should be named. Up starts Hary, and begs the house to give him leave to name them, and offered to prove unwarrantable actions done by them; but this fire was put out by the grave water carriers.

After this Hary Cromwell is threatened by the major-generall's party, that his highness would and did take it

* These are entered in the register as children of Henry Cromwell, Junr., Esqre., but good authorities make no distinction between H. Cromwell and H. Cromwell, Junr. There is also an entry in 1627 of the burial of Elizabeth Cromwell, a child, who can not have been the daughter of Sir Oliver's son Henry, for she survived her father and brother.

ill. Hary goes last night to his highness, and stands to what he had sayd manfully and wisely; and to make it appeare he spake not without booke, had his black booke and papers ready to make good what hee said. His highness answered him in rallary, and tooke a rich scarlet cloake from his backe and gloves from his hands, and gave them to Hary, who strutted with his new cloake and gloves in the house this day, to the great satisfaction and delight of some, and trouble of others."

This act of Henry Cromwell's showed a brave spirit; we must remember that he was at the time a young man, 31 years of age, that the parliament was almost entirely composed of men bitterly hostile to the royal family, for whom his father and his uncles had only a few years before been in arms, and it required no ordinary amount of courage thus to represent right against might.

He was so highly in favour with Charles II, that when that monarch instituted the Order of Knight of the Royal Oak, in allusion to his hiding in an oak tree after the battle of Worcester, he was one of those named for the honor; none were to be admitted but those who had eminently distinguished themselves by their loyalty. This Order of Knighthood was soon abolished, as it was thought likely to keep alive animosities, and so the intended Knight retained his name of plain Henry Williams.

He died very suddenly at Huntingdon. A dispute had arisen as to whether he or the Earl of Manchester had the greatest interest in the county of Huntingdon,

and this was to be tested at a general election, in which Cromwell supported one candidate, and the Earl of Manchester another. At the close of the poll the Earl's candidate was found to have been elected, and Cromwell was so affected that he fell from his chair and soon expired; this happened in 1673. He was buried at Ramsey.

Thus died the last male representative of the eldest branch of the Cromwell family. He was married to Hanna Cromwell, of Upwood, a relative; they had no children, and Ramsey Abbey with its estates, devolved on Henry's two sisters; Carina, who married William Hetley, Esq., of Broughton, and Elizabeth, who married Henry English, Esq., a Norfolk gentleman.

Henry's widow, Mrs. Hanna Cromwell or Williams, had only a life interest in the Abbey property, and she lived, on her income thence derived, in a house near the town, 'which with a large piece of land was reserved to her; the latter still retains the name of Dame Williams' Close.'

She was a very decided royalist, and also an authoress, publishing poetry and a book of prayers; some of her writings still exist. She died in 1688.

Carina Hetley and Elizabeth English disposed of the remains of the Abbey property to Col. Titus; it had been reduced by frequent sales effected to meet the liabilities of its owners, to such an extent that at this time it was worth only £2000 per annum. Bury and Wistow having been sold by Henry Cromwell, and other estates by his ancestors.

The purchaser, Col. Titus, who obtained the property in about 1674, was rendered memorable by his being supposed to have written the pamphlet "Killing no Murder," the dedication of which he addressed to Oliver Cromwell the Protector, styling him the tyrant of England.

"He was the buffoon of Charles II's court, by which he prevailed more than others with the greatest wisdom. Lord Clarendon's banishment was owing to his foolling; he was a leading member for the bill to exclude James duke of York, afterwards King James II; he said, in the House of Commons, that expedients to secure the protestant religion, when such a person was suffered to mount the throne, were as strange as if there was a lion in the lobby, and they should vote that they would rather secure themselves by letting him in and chaining him than by keeping him out."

Col. Titus adhered to the royal cause throughout, but was very much respected by Cromwell and others; his address was such that he several times obtained access to Charles I. during his imprisonment, and conveyed valuable information to and from the King.

After a time suspicion began to be aroused, and Cromwell heard that meetings were frequently held in a tavern in London, which meetings were only attended by royalists, and had for their object the restoration of the King, or the crowning of King Charles II. While one of these meetings was being held, a company of parliamentary soldiers halted before the house, and an officer came upstairs, and into the room where the meeting

was being held, his head completely covered by his cloak; he called out, "If Col. Titus and Firebrace (another well known royalist) are here, let them escape for their lives;" they took advantage of this friendly warning and escaped by the back of the house while the officer went back to his men, so that when he returned to the room with his company they were not to be found. After the restoration every effort was made to discover who this friend in disguise was, but without effect.

Col. Titus represented the Borough and County of Huntingdon in several parliaments, residing at Ramsey in the summer, and at Bushy Park in the winter. His free and cheerful humour made him very popular.

He left Ramsey to his three daughters, or to his wife and two daughters; the survivor, Catherine left the Manor of Ramsey with an estate of about £2000 per annum to two of her servants, a man and woman; she died in 1732, and in 1736 or 1737 Smith, the man servant, sold it to Coulson Fellowes, Esq. It is now in the possession of Edward Fellowes, Esq., the great grandson of the above.

Of the ancient building but little remains, and indeed the Abbey seems to have been almost demolished. A manuscript description now in the British Museum, which seems to refer to the refectory, says—

"It was a * * * * * plane of three squares above, (*i.e.* three times as long as wide) 24 yards by 8. The walls have been raised a little, a building added in the north side towards the west, and a tower on the same

side towards the east, and stairs and bow window to south."

Mutilated stone work still shows the dimensions of the refectory, and much of the carving is still to be seen; this is beneath the dining room and drawing room, and is now used for a house-keeper's room, &c., being divided by several partitions into a number of smaller rooms. There is to be seen also at the west end of the corridor the carved stone which seems to have formed the top of Duke Ailwin's tomb.*

Besides this relic of the Abbey there is a small piece of old wall in that one separating the churchyard from Mr. Fellowes' property, and part of the old gateway spoken of as a prison; it was, in all probability, a porter's lodge, with the dungeon under ground. In the west wall facing the road may still be seen part of one of the iron spikes to which rings were attached for the purpose of securing prisoners who might be disposed to escape; such irons in a much more perfect state are still to be seen in Battle Abbey, Sussex, and doubtless at other places.

The best portions of this beautiful specimen are a staircase turret, a small oval, and some buttresses, very elaborate in their details. The walls are 3½ feet in thickness.

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* An engraving of Ailwin's monument will be found in Stukeley's "Itinerarium Curiosum," vol. vii. There is also a drawing of it with a pen in one of Cole's MSS., now in the British Museum, vol. v., fol. 101, where the figure is said to have been of grey marble. Monasticon, 546.

Cole thinks the monument is something in character and workmanship like one he saw in a Church in Paris, erected to the memory of Clovis, King of the Franks, who died in 511. Cole says, "he is habited in much the same manner as Clovis, and his left hand holding the string which fastens the cloak or robes on his shoulders." Cole MSS., vol. xxxiv, p. 164.

INCLYTUS AILWINUS TOTIUS ANGLIÆ ALDERMANUS
FUNDATOR ABBATIÆ DE RAMSEY, (IN LAPIDE. 1719)

W. Stukeley delin. & *Amiciſsimo S Gale Ar: D.D.* E. Kirkall. ſculp

The Church.

"Not far from the Abbey is the Parish Church, which is in length 120 feet, and in breadth 64. It consists of a body and chancel of equal height, which are tiled, and two side Isles which are leaded; at the West end is a tower, about 64 feet high, built about the year 1672 by the inhabitants, with the Abbey stone; before which time the steeple was a low wooden building, in it then hung four bells, which upon erecting the stone tower, were with additional metal cast into five. There are no monuments or arms. I have been so particular in describing the Parish Church because divers persons conceive it to have been the Abbey Church*; but in this they are very much mistaken, the Abbey Church having been considerably larger and more magnificent."

Stevens' (Monasticon vol. I, p. 406) gives the above on the authority of Mr. Willis, Hist. Mit. Abb., p. 1521.

The following description of the Church, dated June 7th, 1744, is taken from Cole's Manuscript in the British Museum.

"The Parish Church here is a good handsome building, consisting of a square tower and five bells, and a clock in it at the West end; a Nave which is very long and Chancel as short, which last is roofed with stone, and both tiled, two side Isles leaded, and South porch tiled. It is

* 'As often as he (Cromwell Earl of Essex) sent out any to suppresse any monasterie, hee used most commonly to send them with this charge, that they should throwe downe those houses even to the foundation.' *Wordsworth's Eccles. Bio.*

a curacy in ye gift of Mrs. Titus, and formerly belonged to ye Abbey, which stood very near it on South side. It is dedicated to S. Mary and S. Benedict. The altar is railed, on three steps and wainscoted all round; in ye middle light are two small and neat crucifixes in painted glass. Over ye said light hangs an Achievement with " Col. Titus' arms, &c. in it.

"On a small square stone on ye North near ye pillar of ye North Isle (for ye chancel comes lower than ye stone roof, and is divided on each side from ye upper ends of ye Isles and from ye Nave by a screen of wood) is this inscription :—

'Here lyeth the body of Eliz. wife of Peter Cowling, minister of this parish, who departed this life Feb. 29, 1737, aged 33 years.'

John Hall erected this stone; which John Hall ye clark, made an apology to me for ye impropriety of erecting a stone which was to be laid on ye ground, and laid ye fault on ye stone cutter The Nave as I said before is separated from ye Chancel by a Screen, which comes further into ye body or Nave or Middle Isle of ye Church than ye stone roof of ye Chancel, against which is fixed ye royal arms; 10 Command^{s}. on one side of y^{m} and on ye other a frame wth this wrote on it. The beautifying of this Church was ye gift of ye Honorable John Driden, Esq., Henry Smith, Henry Johns, Church-wardens, 1706.

In ye second North window of ye Nave is a coat of arms, seemingly modern, viz :—

* * * * * * * * * * 2 Hinds passt A. Tho' I wont be positive as to ye animals, for it is pretty high and not very clear. In ye same window at bottom 'Orate p aia me gri Rectoris,' which Rev. D. W. Sweeting fills up, Orate pro anima Magistri Rectoris. Under this window on a black marble slab, removed out of ye churchyard, as ye clark informed me, near where ye cross at ye East end of ye churchyard stands, is part of an inscription to be seen, with a large cross in it, partly covered by pews and broken, which is as follows: *Hic infra jacet Elizabetha Filia Edmundi Lucy militis et Uxor Johannis Ferrers militis—quæ vitam æternam expectans animam suam—1st Sept. 1658, ætatis suæ 70.

In luce tua videbimus lucem.

If you go out of ye North Isle into ye Chapel, at ye end of it lies a fine cross florz on an old stone by ye screen, which separates them. In ye East window of this Chapel is ye remainder of a beautiful crucifixion. Just before the Pulpit, which stands agst ye 3rd pillar of ye Nave, lies a small free stone in ye middle Isle, with this inscription:—

'In memory of William Searle, Minister of this Parish, who departed this life May ye 29, 1733, aged 64 years.'

John Hall, clark, deposited this stone.

The Font stands agst ye North-east pillar, of which there are six on each side. On a small free stone abt ye middle of ye South Isle is this inscription :—

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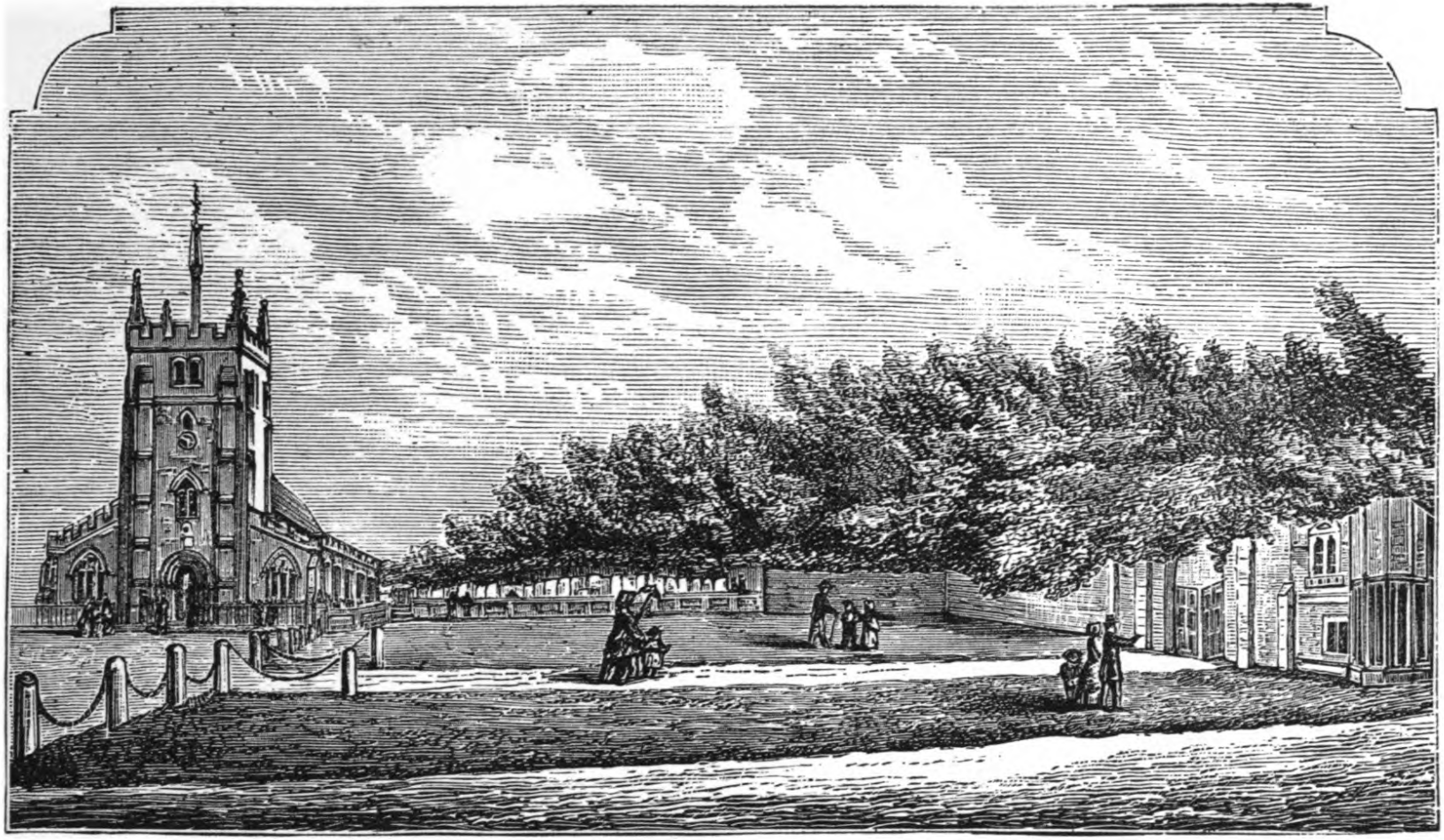
* This lady was the third wife of Henry Cromwell, the son of Sir Oliver, to whom she was married May 4th, 1642. See above p. 156.

'In memory of William Crane, Gent., who departed this life December 15th, 1724, aged 32 years.' This person, as ye clark informed me, was an attorney. There are no more monuments of any kind in ye Church, except ye cover of an old tomb which was removed out of ye Abbey Church at ye Dissolution, and now stands upright in a sort of vestry, at ye bottom of ye North Isle. This is a very great curiosity, and was the reason I gave myself the trouble to transcribe ye aforesaid epitaphs. It is a very old and curious image of grey marble, holding two keys and a ragged staff in his right hand, being I suppose ye ensigns of his post under King Edgar, with his left hand taking hold of a sort of collar which is fastened to his robes, which descend behind him. He has an odd kind of cap, not much unlike ye corno of ye Duke of Venice, and an eagle under his left foot; and under a gothic canopy with small figures at top."

The statue mentioned is the one preserved in the Abbey, (see p. 162) and above the head of the Duke are to be seen four angels bearing the soul of Ailwyn. Cole does not seem to have known that this is supposed to be the top of the tomb of Duke Ailwyn.

From the above accounts we see that Willis and Cole's opinion is that the present church is not the Abbey Church, but the old Parish Church. The Vicar of the parish of Ramsey is mentioned as early as the reign of Edward III., in 1362, and a house for him to live in is mentioned at that date, so that he certainly did not live in the Monastery as the rest of the Monks did; and it seems scarcely probable that the Church in which he officiated was the same one



Ramsey Church and Abbey Gate.

as that in which the Abbey inhabitants worshipped; on this question opinions are at variance. One of the deeds now in the possession of Edward Fellowes, Esq., mentions Ramsey Parish Church, and, as the date of the deed is certainly in pre-Reformation times, there evidently was a Parish Church then, whether the one now standing is the same or not.

From the account given by Cole, we see that the present Church differs considerably at the present date from its description in 1744. In his day there was a porch at the South door in the nave; this has been removed. The chapel at the end of the North aisle has been taken down, as a corresponding one at the end of the South aisle had been, and the stone mentioned as being in the North-east chapel is now in the floor at the East end of the North aisle. The screen has disappeared, having been taken down in 1844; the monuments of which he speaks, with the single exception mentioned, have disappeared from the Church; the pulpit stands nearly at the East end of the North side of the middle aisle, and the old stained glass in the windows is entirely gone, and replaced by other designs in most cases.

The Church consists of chancel, nave with aisles and clerestory, one North and two South doors, West tower, with principal doorway and entrance in it.

The chancel is very short in proportion to the rest of the building and to its own width, being 22 feet long by 20 wide; it has a groined roof with plain intersecting semicircular ribs, spanning from corner to corner diagonally.

Both chancel and nave are transition Norman work,

about the twelfth century, and though the style of the work in the chancel gives it the appearance of being somewhat older than the rest of the Church, it is probable that the chancel, the pillars and arches of the nave were all built at the same time. The chancel floor is considerably above the floor of the nave, being raised by two separate sets of steps, containing four in each set. The nave is of seven bays, the arches being all alike, but the capitals are alternately round and sectangular; each pair of pillars has similar ornaments, but no two are exactly alike. The arches are pointed without mouldings. Part of an eighth bay is concealed under the tower, so that the Church must have been longer than it is at present.

The West door-way is of the same date. The clerestory with seven windows on each side is of later date, as are also the aisles. The windows of the aisles are all alike except four on the North-west. These four windows are all exactly like drawings of the windows made by Cole in 1744, and are probably the same ones as far as the stone work is concerned.

At the East end of the chancel are three round-headed lancets, above them is a pointed fish-shaped window of the style termed vesica piscis; from the outside another window-frame, walled up, may be seen above all the others, it is round-headed like the three lower windows.

Externally the roofs of nave and chancel are of the same height.

The design of the stained glass with which the vesica piscis is filled is "The Ascension." The window imme-

diately below contains the "Taking down from the Cross," with the monograms I.H.S. and A.Ω.; in each of the others are two of the Evangelists.

In the chancel is a double piscina, there are also three sedilia plain.

The screen mentioned by Cole, extended across the nave and aisles at the first pillar from the chancel arch, and two smaller screens extended East and West from the chancel to the first pillar on each side.

The stained window at the East end of the North aisle has in it the text "For the Kingdom of God is not in word but in power," that in the corresponding position in the South aisle contains the text "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift." In the windows facing North and South nearest to the East end of the North and South aisles are the texts "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men," and "The gift of God is eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord."

The nave is in length 93 feet, and in breadth 40 feet; the seats are low, and all of the same kind, with poppy-head finials. The Church was restored by E. Fellowes, Esq., as stated on a tablet in the South aisle, in 1844.

The lectern* is of oak, with rotating desk, supported by four buttresses of open tracery; each buttress is surmounted by a figure of one of the Evangelists. Two old books

* This lectern is noticed and illustrated in *Parker's Glossary of Ch. Archi.*, but without the four Evangelists, which have been restored on the shafts of the basement.

are on it, the paraphrase of Erasmus and Comber on the Book of Common Prayer; to the latter of which the chain by which it was attached to the lectern or to the large Bible on the other side is still affixed. The date of the lectern is about A.D. 1450.

The font is hexagonal, of blue marble, only lately scraped and restored to its proper use; it having been found buried below the floor of the aisle at the time the Church was restored; each angle is supported by a circular shaft, with a larger one in the centre.

In the belfry are six bells beside the sanctus bell, the inscriptions are as follows:—

1. 1810.
2.3. R. Taylor, St. Neots, Founder, 1810.
4. R. Taylor, Founder, 1810.
5. Thomas Pooley & Henry Parker, Churchwardens,— 1810.
6. Thomas Pooley & Henry Parker, Churchwardens, R. Taylor, Founder, 1810.

On a beam in the belfry is the following inscription:—

1672 Nevill Jones E. / Thomas Wallis } Churchwardens.

The 'E' is probably a contraction of the Latin word *et*, meaning *and*.

The lintel of the door by which the belfry is entered is made of a portion of a coped coffin lid, which has once covered the resting place of an Abbot or Prior; another is in the wall at the South-west corner of the Church, and another now covers the grave of Mr. G. Jones, at the

East end of the Church, and still another of more elaborate workmanship has been carried to Broughton.

The monuments in the chancel are to the memory of W. H. Fellowes, Esq., who departed this life Aug. 23rd, 1837, having represented the County in Parliament during 34 years; and a second to Emma Fellowes, relict of the above, who died in 1862. In the North aisle are two monuments, one to Carina Day, daughter of the late Peter Descou, who died in 1867, and left £12 annually to the twelve women in the neighbouring Alms-houses; another to James Smith, Esq., Surgeon, who died in 1848; other tomb stones are to be seen in the flooring of this aisle.

At the East end of the churchyard still stands the shaft of an ancient cross, but whether this was a preaching cross or a market cross, or both, is uncertain.

Near this cross was some years ago a tomb of brickwork, with black marble top, with this inscription:—"Here lyes y^{e} body of Lucy Carr, y^{e} only daughter of S^{r}. Edward Carr, Kn^{t}. and Barronett of Sleyford in Lincolne Sheire, Deçeased Oct^{o}. 18th, in y^{e} yeare of our Lord 1683, aged 66. Shee dyed without issue, beeing y^{e} wife of Henry English, Esquire."

The above inscription is from a copy now in the possession of Edward Fellowes, Esq., taken from the original.

The slab bearing the word "Resurgam," mentioned afterwards as the monument to Rev. John Robins, a former Vicar, is also claimed as marking the resting place of three other Vicars buried near it.

Until 1876 the Incumbent of the parish retained the

position of his predecessors in Monkish times, as Chaplain or Curate of the Parish, for which he (until 1840), received the modest stipend of "forty pounds per annum in money besides some small perquisites arising out of y^{e} sd parish. Memorand: y^{e} sd sum of 40$\mathfrak{lb}$ to be pd at 4 equal payments viz: 10 per quarter yearly and every year." The present Patron, with the aid of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, has increased the endowment to £350, and has provided a Vicarage. The Incumbent is now Vicar, the Patron having given up the donative* character of the cure.

That there was a Vicar of Ramsey before the Reformation the following charter shews:

[35 Ed. iii., Col. Rol. Pat.]

Certain Lands settled on the Vicar of Ramsey.

19. "We grant permission &c. that Thomas de Strickland be allowed to feed his flocks in Hellington levenes (?) and Hackethorpe, on the common of Westmere, containing 300 acres of land, and that Andrew Mauncer—parson of the Church of Little Oklee—be allowed to give and assign a messuage with its appurtenances in Ramsey, to be had and held by the Vicar and his successors in the Vicarage of the Church of Ramsey for his dwelling place and that of the Vicars his successors, again this permission is confirmed for ever: and further we grant and give a licence for ourselves &c. to the same Andrew, that he may bestow

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* DONATIVE. "A Donative is a Benefice given to a Clerk, by the Patron, without presentation to the Bishop, or Institution, or Induction by his Order." *Bayley.*

Until 1875 the Patrons of Ramsey claimed the right for the Parish Church of freedom from "Visitation" by Bishop or Archdeacon. See above p. 47—50.

and assign seven acres of land with the appurtenances in the said village of Ramsey to the aforesaid Thomas, Vicar, to have and to hold for himself and his successors the Vicars of the said Church, that they may keep a certain lamp burning every day before the high altar in the chancel of the said Church of Ramsey whilst the parochial mass is celebrated for ever. And to the said Vicar, that he be permitted to accept and to hold the said messuage and land with the appurtenances from the aforesaid Andrew for the aforesaid purposes, for himself and his said successors for ever as is aforesaid."

We do not know where *Oklee*, above named, was; but in another charter the Monks of Ramsey give permission to the Monks of St. Ives to cut underwood in *Oklee* wood, "inter le Haceheweye et le Wykene."

Old Registers and Records.

The Registers of the Church contain several entries of interest. The date of the earliest is 1559, even this one is in a good state of preservation with the exception of a few leaves which have suffered from wear. Here and there we find mention of money left for specific purposes, and people are mentioned as engaged in trades no longer pursued here, *e.g.* Glover, Fisherman, Soapmaker, Felmonger, Weaver, Tanner, Fuller, &c. We also find that a Newsman and a Psalmodist were inhabitants of the town.

We will first note these entries which refer to the Cromwell family.

"1606.—Ales Cromwell was buried ye 25th of Feb."

"1607.—Henry Cromwell, son of Sr. Philippe Cromwell, Knight, was baptized the fifth day of Februaary."

"1608.—Philippus Cromwell, filius Philippi Cromwell, militis natus erat Decembris 25 et baptizatus erat Januarii 7th.

"1609.—Thomas Cromwell, son of Sr. Philip Cromwell, Knight, was baptyzed the fourth of January."

"1610.—Anne Cromwell, the daughter of Sir Philip, Knight, was baptized ye 15th of Mch."

"1612.—Oliver Cromwell, son of Sir Philip Cromwell, was baptyzed Maye ye 21st."

"1613.—Robert Cromwell, ye fyfte sonne of Sir Philip Cromwell, was bapt. the 29th of June."

"1614.—Elizabetha Cromwell, filia Philippi Cromwell, militis bapt. erat Decembris 21st."

"1615.—Mary Cromwell, daughter of Sir Phillip Cromwell, Knight, bapt. January ye 18th."

"1617.—Marye, the wyf of Sr. Phelip Cromwell, Knyght, was buryed the third day of November."

"1622.—Carina, the daughter of Henry Cromwell, Junr., Esq., was baptized the fifte of September."

"1623.—Pembroke Cromwell, son of Henry Cromwell, Junr., Esquire, borne the 20th of November, and baptized the third day of December."

"1625.—Henry, the son of Henry Cromwell, Esquire, bapt. the 22nd of June."

"1626.—Elizabeth, the daughter of Henry Cromwell, Esquire, bapt. the 6th of Sept."

"1627.—John Baldwine, gent., and Hannah Cromwell, daught. of Sr. Oliver Cromwell, Knight of the Bathe, were married the 11th of Sept."

"1627.—Mary the daughter of Henry Cromwell, Esqre., was baptized the 12th of Sept."

"1627.—Elizabeth Cromwell, a child, buried the 11th of Novemr."

"1628.—Marye, y^{e} daughtr of Henry Cromwell, Esquire, Jun., baptized the 25th of September."

"1629.—Mrs. Marye Cromwell was buried the 12th of January."

"1629.—Sr. Phelip Cromwell, Knight, bur. the 28th of January."

"1639.—Pembroke Cromwell, buried August 23rd.

"1639.—The lady Ann Car, wife of Henry Cromwell, Esq., was bury'd Jan. 12th."

"1642.—Henry Cromwell, Esquire and the Ladye Elizabeth Feres, were maryed the fourthe day of May."

"1642.—Phelip Cromwell, gent., buried the 12th of Maye."

"1655.—Oliver Cromwell, Knight of y^{e} Bath, being aged about 93 years, was buried the same night (Aug. 28th)."

"1657.—Henry Cromwell, Esqre., died y^{e} 18th day of Septebr., and was interred in y^{e} chancell of Ramseye, y^{e} nyneteenth day of September."

"1658.—The Lady Ferrers was buried Septemb. 2, at (see p. 171) the foot of the crosse, in the churchyard."

"1662.—Richard Williams, buried Jan. 3."

"1665.—Col. William Cromwell, Gentleman, y^e^ younger son of Sr. O. C., departed this life Feb. 23rd, 9 in the morning, and was buried Feb. 24, 9 of clock at night."

"1673.—Henry Williams, Esqr., departed this life at Huntingdon, Aug. 3, and was buried the 6th day of Aug. at Ramsey."

"1687.—Mrs. Ann Williams, bur. Jan. 10th."

We give some extracts which mention the devising of certain estates or property to special purposes, and some of a different kind.

"M^d^ that there were noe marriage recorded in the old Register for all this yeare 1590."

"The christionings for this yeare are rent out of the Olde Book."

"1591.—Anne Thorowgood, daughter of Andrew Thorowgood, a mayde of thage of xxi yeares, was buried the xxviiith daye of Maye, 1591, who gave to y^e^ poor people Ramsey x^s^. a year for ever."

"William Simcock was buryed the first of July, 1591, who gave viii^s^. a year to y^e^ pore for ever."

"1600.—Willm Myles, yeoman, was buryed the xth of Maye, 1600, whoe a little before his death did sell and surrender upp one close commonly called Swases, lyinge on the west syde of (Clappcote?) lane, unto the use and behoof of John Lavender, of Warboys, and to his heres for the summe of

ffourtie pounds of lawfull Englyshe money, to be payed by the said John Lavender into the hands of Walter Creede, Gent., Robert Margitts, and William Maney, to these uses followinge, *vizt* :—That Judith, the wyfe to the said Willm Myles, should have all the commodotie and profitt wh. the said Walter Creede, Robert Margitts, and William Maney should rayse of the said fourtie pounds duringe her naturall lyfe. And after the death of the said Judith, all the commodotie and profitt cominge and arysinge of the same xl^{li} to be bestowed uppon the poor people of Ramsey (wher the said Willm Myles dyed), yearely for ever, at the discreacon of the said Walter Creed, Robert Margitts and Willm Maney, or their assignes for ever."

"Deo gratia solique gloria."

"1600.—Oct. 28th—The same daye were buryed Ffayth Beridge and Prudence Marshall, beinge twoe poore fatherlesse children. And having sore heads, were dressed by Joan Bowncer, widdow, with Ratt's bayne and freshe grease, and dyed both within iii houres after; which medicine is ever hereafter to be shunned, for Ffayth and Prudence were thereby spoyled. Miserere mei O Deus."

"Jessey Adisor and Hugh Hunt did enter as churchwardens at Mich., 1600, and contynued that office untill a fourtnight after Easter, 1602.

At this tyme it is appoynted that the churchwardens shall always be chosen, and no more at Mich. as they now want."

"1602.—Robt. Margitt, yeoman ffarmer of Biggin, was buried the xxviith of December, 1602."

"1603.—John Cowper, a sheapheard at Biggin, was buryed the vith of Aprill, 1603, who gave xx^{s}. to the poore, and xv^{s}. uppon a dynner for the rest of his friends."

"Willm Goobye, another servant at Biggin, was buryed the fourth of April, 1603, who gave also x^{s}. to the poor of Ramsey."

"Willm Cervington, Esquire, was buryed the xxviiiith daye of Maye, 1603, who gave x^{s}. to the poor, and x^{s}. to y^{e} church."

"1604.—William Goslin, a poore laborer, was drowned in Ugmear as he came out of y^{e} Turfe ffen with his boote loded with turves in an extreame great wind, and was buried y^{e} iii of October."

"1607.—Robte. Trice, of Godmanchester and Elizabeth Margets of Biggyn, were maried y^{e} xvith of Aprill.

"1608.—Wyllyam Love, a very old poore man who lived uppon y^{e} almes of y^{e} towne, bur. xxviith of November."

"1612.—Willm Feareflaxe, of Mch. (March), who was drowned in Ramsmear, his boate laden wth wheate, was buried in Ramseye the third of August."

"1615.—Richard Hill, soapmaker, y^{e} xith of Maie (buried). Walter Sampson, *alias* Creed, steward to Sr. Oliver Cromwell, Knight, died at Hinchingbrook y^{e} xxiiird of November, and was buried in y^{e} p(ar)

ishe church of All Saints', in Huntingdon, ye xxiiiith of November."

"1617.—John Basse, sonne of Wyllyam Basse, glover, was baptized the 8 of June."

"1618.—"Wylliam, the sonne of William Phelips, fisherman, was bapt. the xxixth of November,"

"1619.—Henry, the son of John Marret, weaver, was bapt. xixth of September."

"1620.—Ales, the daught. of Edward Clarson, turner, bapt. the same day (xxxth April)."

"Thomas, the son of Thomas Smythe, felmonger, bapt. the xxviii of Maye."

"Elizabeth, the daught. of Thomas Storer, collarmaker, bapt. the xvi of Julye."

"Anne, the daught. of Thomas Key, fuller, bapt. the same day (Oct. xxii)."

"1621.—John, the son of Richard Harness, leppmaker, was baptized the iii of June."

"Ane, the daught. of John Poker, cowper, bapt. the xxth of January."

"1622.—James, the son of Edward Ponsonbee, tanner, bapt. ye 9th of June."

"1623.—William, the son of William Walters, ropemaker, bapt. the xxvii August."

"Mathew Boothe, John Warwick, Thomas Lambert, William Garner, and Margret Smythe were buryed the xxxth of August, who were all five in a boat together, and by mishapp were

drowned in the streame called Roman stream, being in the p(ar)ishe of Ramsey."

"1626.—Oreginall, the son of Edmund Whelwryt, shoomaker, bapt. iiiith Ffebruary."

"Anna Margaets, a child about the age of seaven yeares was drowned in ye mote nere bigin howse, the xxth of July and buryed the xxith of the same month."

"Thomas Leader who was drowned by going one the yce upon Ramsemere, and buried the 26 of Jan."

"1632.—John Harvye, Simon Sothell, Mathew Whewell, and Jaret Hues, who were drowned in Ramsemere as they went homward fro Ramsey market, were buried the 17th of Maye."

636.—William Rawson, servingman, was buried the 30th August. Who was burned the day before in a great soar fyer, wherein ther were xv commoning tenements burned in the littell wyte besydes other that were in p(ar)t burned."

The last year in which an entry is made in the old book is 1642, and the signature of John Robins is placed (see p. 171) at the foot, so that he was probably vicar in that year.

We find this entry in a later register:—

"1660—The year of his Majesty K. Charles II, his happy restauration and return after his long exile, wch was 29th of May. Vivat."

JOHN ROBINS.

On a small leaf at the beginning of the new book we find:—

"Bee it remembered that John Adamson of Ramsey, Clerke, being elected to bee Parish Registrer for the Parish of Ramsey aforesaid by the inhabitants there was upon the ffifteenth day of December, 1653, aproved of and sworne to execute the said Office by mee Robert Bernard, Sr. * * * at Law, one of the Justices of the Peace for the County of Huntingdon.

ROB. BERNARD."

The first entry in this book is dated 1653, leaving a gap of 11 years between the two books. The first entries are evidently made by Adamson; then, in 1657 we find this entry.:—

"Thomas Huxley, Clerk, began to Register anno. dom. 1657, October y^{e} eleventh."

Thomas Huxley was possibly appointed by the parliament to the displacement of Adamson as Registrar and John Robins as Incumbent.

The above named John Robins (p. 180) was a prebendary of Lincoln, and the black marble slab on which is the word "Resurgam," in the wall just outside the chancel door, is said to be his monument, (as mentioned on p. 171).

We make further extracts from the registers:—

"1654.—Thomas Clifton, labourer (being digging of sand, was by y^{e} fall of earth yt gave way suddenly slaine), and was buried Nov. 16."

"Thomas Symth, labourer, digging sand at y^{e}

same time had his thigh mortifyd, his body broken, and was buried November 18th."

"1654—Richard being aged, according to Compt. 110 (upwards), was buryd Decemb. 27th.

"1660.—Burialls, Aº. Dm. 1660, et Regis Caroli 2di—Reg. 12, et in Angliam reditus sui auspicatissimi, et mensis Maii Die 29.

Sequentes per me Johannes Robins, prest.—

WILL HENDRY, } Churchwardens."
JAMES SHARPE, }

At the beginning of the entries of the Marriages we find :—

"Aº. Dm. 1660, et Carili 2di Regis nostri 12º; jam feliciter restituti. Maii 29. 1660.

J. ROBINS, Presbyter.

John Robins was apparently deposed in 1642 or 1657, and thus expresses his gratitude for the restoration in 1660, which doubtless affected himself as well as the king.

"1661.—Michael, the sonne of Luke Sherman, being detained from babtisme till ye age of 9 or 10 years,* did then receive that holy sacrament, Jan 6."

"1664.—George Blench, by the overthrow of a cart, perished and was buried 25 of September."

"A morte subitanea Libera nos Domine."

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* From these observations we judge it must have been very unusual so to postpone Baptism.

"1666.—Ramsey visited with ye plague this year. Elizabeth, the wife of Thomas Middleton, was buried July 16, in her own yard."

"1667.—Thomas Wisditch, a mason, falling on high from an house, Sep. 17, died that night, and was buried Sep. 19."

"1668.—Robert, ye sonne of Edward Hendry, was privately baptized by a Romish Priest, Aug. 13.

"1669.—William, the sonne of William Hunns, a child (being killed by a horse running away with his rider), was buried Ap. 16."

Then occurs the following prayer:—

"O, gracious God, when thou makest inquisition for blood, lay not (we beseech Thee) the guilt of this innocent blood to ye charge of any of the people in this parish, nor let it ever be required of us, or of our posterity; but be mercifull unto Thy people whom Thou has redeemed and be not angry with us for ever, but pardon us all for Thy mercies sake; through ye merit of Thy sonne or Lord Jesus Xt. Amen."

"1669.—John, the sonne of Reuben Poulter, hurt by a fall from an horse, died July 14, and buried July 15."

"1671.—William Lea, of Benwick, going from this market in the night, and falling out of his boat was drowned Oct. 11, and was buried Octob. 12."

"1673.—Peter, ye son of Peter behague; Jane, the wife of John Arx; and Sarah, the wife of Richard

Bradford, drowned in Ramsey-mare, Apr. 9, were found Apr. 10, and were buried April 11. 2 more were drowned at y^e^ same time one of y^m^ found, and was carried to be buried at Peterburgh, y^e^ other not yet found. Ap. 10."

"Ann, y^e^ wife of Walter Sprung, drowned w^th^ y^e^ forementioned, found Ap. 21, buried Apr. 22."

At the beginning of the next Register-book we find the following entries :—

"Belonging to the Parish Church of Ramsey in y^e^ County of Huntingdon one large Bible one large Common Prayer Book for y^e^ Minister and one for the Cleark 2 surplices one hood two silver chalices and covers one green cloth fringed for y^e^ Communion Table and 2 pewter flaggons 2 pewter basins beside the plate and cushion and pulpit cloth set down under y^e^ other side y^e^ gift of Robt. Pigott Esq. and John Titmuss; one bell-mettle kettle 2 bells one clock lether bucketts ladder 2 fire engines and 3 fire hooks one book of Homilies one Cumber upon y^e^ Liturgy and an old Paraphrase of Erasmus and in y^e^ vestry 2 chests one y^e^ minister and churchwardens y^e^ other for y^e^ trustees of some lands in y^e^ fenns all yearly to be delivered by y^e^ old ch. wardens to the new ones at y^e^ entring into y office.

This entred here by y^e^ Parish consent and order at a Publick Vestry in which there is one long table and 2 long formes."

"RAMSEY,
"May 27th, 1731."

"Memorand.

"On the 21st day of May, 1731, a sudden and terrible fire began about 2 of ye clock in ye afternoon, in ye house of Wm. Pain, of Ramsey aforesd, Taylor, by ye carelessness and neglect of 2 of ye daughters of ye sd Wm. Pain, wch in ye space of 5 or 6 hours burnt down and wholly consumed above Four-score Houses, besides Granaries full of Wheat, Malt and Oats; Barnes, Stables, and Outhouses, Household Goods, Beds, Bedding, Brass, Pewter, and all manner of Wearing Apparel, &c., to ye utter ruin of an innumerable number of poor miserable people.

Note, not one house standing in ye high street from ye school house to ye high bridge on ye North side of ye sd street, nor from Richard Badson's house, on the South side, to ye Widw. Priests at the George, except a part of John Beard's house and Samuel Philups', and wch were very much shattered; all ye West side of ye gt. White, from ye turning of ye corner in ye high street down to an house of Mr. Overall's, wch, tho' not consumed, was in part pulled down.

God be praised! no one person burnt, killed, hurt or bruised."

"For, behold, ye Lord will come wth fire and wth his chariots like a whirlwind to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire."—Js. 66 15.

"Lord have mercy upon us."

"Wm. Hume, Curate de Ramsey, July 22, 1686."

"*Gifts to ye Church of Ramsey.*"

"One large silver flaggon ye gift of Robt Piggot Esq one velvit cushion and velvit cushion cloth laced wth gold lace and a glory wth I.H.S. in ye middle of it ye gift of Robt Piggot Esq Member of Parliament for ye County of Huntingdon. One large silver cup and cover for ye use of ye communicants at ye Blessed Sacrament ye gift of Mr. John Tidmarsh a native of this Parish of Ramsey but now this the 20th of May 1731 Inhabitant of ye City of London or Westminster."

"1718.—Edmund, Lord Bishop of Lincoln, confirmed in this Church about 130 of Ramsey; and of Berry, Warboys, Little Ravely, Walton, Upwood cum Ravely, and Wistow about 250; in all about 380."

"*Four Commemoration Services.*"	*Benefactors.*
"St. Andrew."	"Geo. Woodham."*
"St. Thomas."	"Tho. Thirkill."
"St. John's Xtmas."	"Ch. Denson."
"Epiphany Janry."	" Creed."

We make extracts from the Register itself.

"Note, that ye last Parchment Register being full of Names &c (Mr. Robins then Curate being sick) the Names aforesaid were written in loose Papers and as many as I could find after his Decease were inserted in in ys Register and yt delivered into ye Court Registry, transcribed by Edmond Gibbs. Successor prox."

* Buried Nov. 30th, 1659.

"Note y^{t} y^{e} Register of the Marriages was losst (among many other loose Papers) in Mr. Robins his sickness, &c."

"1675.—Y^{e} mother of Francis Chadbourn's wife bur. Feb. 11th."

"1681.—John Harrison, a town charge, buried Aprill 16th."

"1682.—Robert Lambert (Oyle-miller), buried March 12."

"1685.—John Faulkner, pipemaker, buried Jan. 15th."

"1686.—About this time Mr. Edmond Gibbs resigned y^{e} Curacy of Ramsey, Mr. William Hume being appointed to succeed him."

"1687.—"About this time Mr. Richard Askew, upon Mr. William Hume's his resignation was appointed and licensed Curate of Ramsey."

"1702.—Rowland Robertson, killed by a waggon, bur. July y^{e} 29."

"1706.—Buried, Henry Evans (nulli pietate secundus)."

"1711.—Bur., John Pepardii, psalmodist."

"1718.—Bur., Simeon Johnson, cloggmaker."

"1719.—Bur., Abraham Fenton, newsman."

"1721.—Bur., William Lambert, oatmeal man."

"1724.—Thomas Story, carpenter, killed in a clay pitt by a fall of y^{e} earth upon him, y^{e} 10 of Sbr., at 9 in y^{e} morn., but lived till y^{e} 13, and was buried y^{e} 15 of September. When at y^{e} same time and y^{e} same falling of earth one Robt. Offly, carpenter, servt. to Jacob Berry, was killed outright, and found dead

under y^e^ ruins, and was buried at Wistow in y^e^ County of Huntingdon; his father and mother living y^r^."

"1729.—Ann, a stranger's child, bur. Sep. xxvi."

"1735.—Mary, wife of Richd. Neal, drowned going in a small boat f^m^ Ramsey Market; Barnaby Brity, who was w^th^ her w^n^ y^e^ boat sank, narrowly escaping. Feb. 20."

"1735·—Jno. Pyott,) y^e^ Dissenting Teacher, March 24th."
*Now Quiet.)

"1749.—Aug. 17th, Bur., Wm. Lines, a stranger, suffocated in a dry ditch."

At the end of the entries for 1782 appears the following:—

"*Particulars of the Communion Plate belonging to the Parish of Ramsey.*"

"One old silver Cup and Cover, the Cover marked 'Ramsaye.'"

"One larger silver Cup and Cover, marked on the Cup 'The gift of Elizabeth Margetts,' the Cover plain."

"Another silver Cup and Cover (larger), Marked on the Cup with a glory, and 'Donum Joannis Tidmarsh,' 'in usum perpetuum ecclesiæ Parochialis de Ramsey in Com. Huntingdon.' The same inscription on the Cover."

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* These words have been inserted by a different hand.

"One large silver Flagon engraved with a coat of arms, and underneath—

"Ex Dono Robti Pigott armigeri,
Hæredis et Virtutis et Census
Johannis Dryden armigeri ecclesiæ
et Parochiæ de Ramsey in Agro Hunt,
Benefactoris Munificentissimi.
Anno Dom.,
1713.
HENRY HAMPSHIRE,
Churchwarden."

Besides the above, a Plate and Flagon are mentioned as being given by Mrs. Emma Fellowes in 1813; and this is a correct list of the Communion Plate at the present time.

There are several records of "Beating the Boundaries" of the Parish entered in the Register. We give the one for 1794.

"Be it remembered that on the Thirtieth Day of October, A.D. One Thousand Seven Hundred and Ninety four, We, the Minister, Churchwardens and Inhabitants of this Parish of Ramsey, in the County of Huntingdon, whose names are hereunto subscribed, did make the procession and perambulate part of the Bounds of the said Parish adjoining to Bury, Wistow and Warboys, in the County of Huntingdon and the Parish of Doddington and Hamlet of Benwick, in the Isle of Ely and County of Cambridge.

First, we assembled together on the High Bridge and proceeded down the George Inn Yard and made a X on

the Mantle Tree of a tenement belonging to John Beard; and from thence on the West side of Northy Brook to Northy Plash; and from thence along the Drove to the South side of the Division Drain which parts Ramsey from Bury, to that part of the Drove opposite the corner of the late Batson's Bury Fenn Lott, where we made a X and chanted the first verse of the Hundredth Psalm; then cross'd the said Drain into a piece of land of Wm. Fellowes, Esq., called Cow Close, and proceeded close to the North side the said Drain till we came to the North end of the Drain which parts Bury fenn and Wistow fenn, where we made a X in Pool's Close and chanted part of the Hundredth Psalm; from thence across Ash Drain on the North side the Division Dyke which parts Wistow fenn and Ramsey fenn, along the lands of Barnabas Brighty and late ——Cole, Esq., till we came to Puddock Drove, where we made a X in the middle of the said Drove and chanted the first verse of the Second Psalm; and from thence along the said Drove till we came to the Farm of formerly Sir Thomas Mills and George Foyle, Esq., late Fleming, Esq., and now of John Fryer, called Pulver fenn, and across the said Farm to a certain place or stone called S^{t}. Bennet's Cross, where we chanted part of the Hundredth Psalm; and from thence to the house of the said John Fryer, taking in part of the said house by going over the chimney, and through a new Barn back to Puddock Drove, again taking in fifty acres of the said Farm, here we made a X in Puddock Drove at the East end of the Division Dyke which parts the lands of Wm. Fellowes, Esq., called Dawson's Farm, and lands of

Francis Ibberson, in the Hamlet of Benwick and Parish of Doddington aforesaid, and along the South side of the said Division Dyke till we came to the Forty-feet River or Vermuyden's Drain, and proceeded across the said River to the Water Engine, standing upon a piece of ground belonging to Wm. Fellowes, Esq., called Betty's Nose, and a Farm of the said Francis Ibberson, and made a X on the North-west side of the said Engine, close to the Water-way, and proceeded across the Farm of the said Francis Ibberson till we came to the end of the Drove near the place where Benwick Turf fenn gate formerly stood, thereby taking in sixty-three acres of the Farm of the said Francis Ibberson, where we made a X, chanted part of the Hundredth Psalm, and finished this day's procession and perambulation.

HENRY MAWDESLEY, Minister.

THOMAS RIDLINGTON,
WILLIAM HARD, } Churchwardens.

SAMUEL JENKINS.
BARNABAS BRIGHTY.
ABRM. STAFFURTH.
JAMES BALDWIN.
THOS. BELSHAW.
J. TESON.
RICHD. ABLITT.

JOSEPH FULLILOVE.
CHARLES MONTAGUE RIDLINGTON.
HENRY IBBERSON.
WILLIAM BROWN.
JOHN SERJEANT.

JOHN HALES.
JAMES HALES.
JOHN GREENWOOD.
JOHN DOCKERILL, JUNR.
JOHN FITZJOHN.
WM. TUCK.
THOMAS HARD.
GEORGE WILKINSON.
EDWD. BANES.
JNO. BEDFORD.
WILLM. THROSSELL.
THOMAS ROSE.
JOHN LEACH, JUNR.
ROBERT SMITH.
JAMES DARLOW.
ROBERT BEARD.
HENRY BROWN.
BENJ. PRIOR.
BENJ. PRIOR, JUNR.
ROBERT THOMPSON, JUNR.
WM. CAMPION.
JOHN HICKS.
GEORGE BELSHAW.
MATTW. ROBERTS."

In addition to the above account, we have accounts of perambulations in 1783, and in 1823; appended to the latter of which we find the signatures :—

"HENRY PARKER, } Churchwardens.
JOHN SOUTHAM, }

THOS. BEARD.
RICHARD KILBY.
JAMES JONES.
WILLIAM MALPRESS.
ISAAC PALMER.
WILLIAM CAMPION.
His
JOSEPH X TEASON."
mark.

EVAN DANIEL speaks thus with reference to "beating the bounds."

"The custom of perambulating parishes, or 'beating the bounds,' as it is popularly called, is all that survives of

the old processions that were observed on Rogation Days. There is however a Homily in three parts 'for the days of Rogation Week,' and there is an 'exhortation to be spoken in such Parishes where they use their Perambulations in Rogation Week, for the oversight of the bounds and limits of their town.' A special Collect, Epistle, and Gospel were proposed in 1661, and again in 1689, but not adopted. The Collect framed in 1689 will show the leading idea of the proposed service; 'Almighty God, who hast blessed the earth that it should be fruitful, and bring forth everything that is necessary for the life of man, and hast commanded us to work with quietness and eat our own bread; bless us in all our labours, and grant us such seasonable weather that we may gather in the fruits of the earth and ever rejoice in Thy goodness, to the praise of Thy holy name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen." "*Prayer Book. Its History, &c.*" p. 243.

We are indebted to Rev. W. D. Sweeting's excellent work for the following with reference to the fire of 1721, part is quoted by him from Steele's Collection in the Bodleian Library.

"This poor town was greatly impoverish'd before by the contrary element, their crops of corn, and the cattle having been destroyed by the overflowing of their low lands, which have lain under water for three years; so that they are now in general a very miserable people, and will be more so as the winter comes on.

"Immediately after this sad fire, Nicholas Bonfoy, Esq., sent the poor sufferers 20 guineas; Will. Marshall, Esq.,

the same sum; Rob. Pigott, Esq., £50; the town of Godmanchester, £27; the town of Huntingdon, besides great quantities of provisions, £30; the town of Whittlesea, £70; the town of Chatteris, £23; the town of Wistow, besides provisions, £19. Sir Will. Lemon hath also given them leave to dig what sand they have occasion for in his Lordship of Warboyce, towards rebuilding their several habitations."

"N.B. The Population of the Parish of Ramsey taken in March, 1801, by the Overseers of the Poor, Mr. Throssell and Mr. Serjeant, were Males 974, Females 920, total 1894 souls."

The next two extracts are also from Rev. W. D. Sweeting's book on "*The Parish Churches in and around Peterborough.*"

The Record Office furnishes the following two notices of the ornaments of this Church, which were sold under dates 1548 and 1552.

"Ramseye. Solde by Thomas Ainsworth and John Writte, churchwardens, there wth the assent of the poshn^{rs} on coverlett for vij^{sl} on old paynted clothe for iiij^{sl} . . . . . } xj^{sl}.

All w^{ch} money they wth other declare upon there othes was bestowed mountyng of scriptures about the churche there" . . . . . } xj^{sl}.

1552.

"In pnies . . . . Sillv^{r} double gillt w . . .

Itm iij bells . . . . d on sanctus bell and vi.

Itm on sute of whitte silke, a cope, a vetm^{t}, ij . . . stoles.

Itm on blew vestm^{t} of vellvett wth albe and . . . ij copes of w . . . .

Itm on redd vetm^{t} wth floures of golde; . . . . silke wth albes . . . .

Itm on vestm^{t} of grene tiffence wth albe and . . . . phanell; on redd vetm^{t} of satten a bridges wth albe amesse stole and phanell.

Itm ij olde russet coopes: a vestmt r . . . . silke wth albe and amesse: on vestm^{t} of blew satten a br . . . es wth albe."

"Itm x towells; on vaile: and a p clothe; iij pyllowes of silke; on of vellvett:

Itm ij canapies for the pyx these of silke . . . . ther of clothe; another of lynnen clothe wth iiij . . . . bedes: another of sattan bridges.

Itm ij crosse clothes on of blew silke on allow silke; ij latten basyns; iiij candellstickes of latten:

Itm iiij allter clothes of lynnen, and —— wrought wth redde silke at the endes; iiij —— resses wth cases:

Itm a streamer of yeallowe silke; . . . . thes to hang before the alter, on of green and whitte, on of whitte and redde on other green and blewe; on p. . . of copp and gilt: a littell pease of sillv^{r} to putt in the pyx.

Itm a paier of shettes; a paire of organes; xj sleaved surplesses: vi rachettes:

Itm on handebell: and ij sacring bells:

We the said Commissioners according to the king's mat[ies] instructions annexed to the commission have assigned and appointed for the Divin service in this Church of Ramsey on challice waieng xxv oz., iij surplesses, and iij allter clothes for the table of communion."

In the Churchwardens' and Overseers' Accounts for the year 1682—3 are the following entries:—

"To Goode Skiner for four children. .		5	2
Allso one that was too Little		2	2
ffor Beare bread and Grave for burying of a child from Mary Skiner . .	0 0	0 1	0 6
for ye bell going about	0 0	0 0	0 2
for those that Laid out thornton's boy .	0 0	0 0	0 6
for berring, in beare 9d. bread 3d. candle 1d. tobacco 1d.	0 0	0 1	0 2
To those that carried him to church beare 8d. thred 6d.	0 0	0 1	0 2
To those that sat by at Good hardis Child Day	0 0	0 1	0 0
ffor sending the bell about y[e] towne for the townsmen to meet to mak Book	0 0	0 0	0 2
Paid to ould frior for scouring y[e] Dike before the Dore	0 0	0 0	0 6

for Berring the stranger	0 0	0 1	0 0
Given to John Mast for haveing Rob. Sharpe's prentice back to Whittlesey	0 0	0 0	0 6
ffor sending the bell about the towne for the Towns men to meet . . .	0 0	0 0	0 2

John Driden, a relative of the poet Dryden, and also of the Robt. Pigott mentioned as giving a flagon to the Church, bequeathed some of his property to Ramsey for charitable purposes. His will is dated Jan. 2, 1707; he gave £100 to be laid out for charitable purposes in the town, as the Justices of the Peace of the County of Huntingdon and the most substantial inhabitants of Ramsey thought best. 10½ acres of land were purchased with these, the profits to be paid to a school mistress, who should teach certain children to read, knit, or spin.

This School is now in a building in Church-green, better known to inhabitants of Ramsey as the Infant School.

* 1555. R. Pickard left 4d. to the high altar at Ramsey.

1556. R. Nelson, says—

"I bequeathe my sowle to almyghtye God in trynytye, and my bodye to be beryed in the paryshe Churche of Ramsey, and I geve to the reparation of the sayd Churche vj^{s} viij^{d}. And to the poor people of Ramsey at the day of my buryall xl^{sl} and xx^{sl} at chrystmas next, to be distributed

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* Also from Rev. W. D. Sweeting's book.

by the dyscretion of my executors and sup(er)visors. Also I wyll that my mortuarye be pd accordinge to the lawes of this realm, in consideration of my tythes and offerings negligently pd or forgotten."

John Thresser, says—

"My bodye to be buried in the Church yerde of Ramsey. Moreovr I wyll, and ordeyne Mr. Stockwth, and Sir* Roberte Wynde, curate, my executors, whom I wyll shall sell the Residue of my goods unbequeathed to pay my debts, and to see my bodye honestly brought to the erthe; and wt the residue to discharge my funeralle, and do other works of mrcye as they shall devyse best for my sowle, and all chrysten sowles."

The names of the Incumbents of Ramsey since the Dissolution are—

before 1555,	Robt. Wynde.
—97,	Will. Mott.
—99,	Robt. Ennyle.
1600,	Henry Sampson.
—10—12,	Geo. Stuke.
—13—15,	Henry Sampson.
—16—17,	Geo. Stuke.

How these two latter thus alternated we can offer no explanation. Their names are thus found in the Registers at the close of the respective years.

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* Corresponding to the present use of Rev.

1617, William Harvey.
—31, no "Minister's" name to the Registers.
—32, Mr. (sic) John Pindar.
—33, Will. Baker.

The Registers of 1640 have at the end of the year, "William Baker, Minister," possibly by a copyist; to entries of 1641 no name is attached; at the end of 1642 "John Robins"* is signed, apparently in his own hand writing.

1673, John Robins signed the Registers to June 18 of this year; (see Notes on p. 182).
Edmond Gibbs then succeeds.
—86, William Hume, (see this date, p. 187).
—87, Richard Askew.
1701, William Searle.*
—33, Peter Cowling.
—37, John Peverel.

The Registers are lost between 1737 and 1754, but in 1754 Thos. Whiston signs them.

This gentleman was the son of a Rev. Daniel Whiston, who, "for conscience sake, was fifty-two years Curate" of the Parish of Somersham, so his monument records.

Thomas Whiston died at the age of 80, in May 1795, and was buried at Somersham; on his monument are the words—

"My God, my Father, and my Friend
Do not forsake me in the end."

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* Buried at Ramsey.

A brother of Daniel and uncle of Thomas was the Rev. Wm. Whiston, a celebrated Mathematician, some time Fellow of Clare Coll., Cambridge. He, having adopted Arian opinions, was expelled the University in 1710. "He was prosecuted as a heretic, though the proceedings were ultimately terminated by an act of grace in 1714. Being refused admission to the Sacrament at his parish Church, he opened his own house for public worship, using a liturgy of his own composition; and towards the close of his life he became a Baptist." He translated "*The Works of Josephus.*"

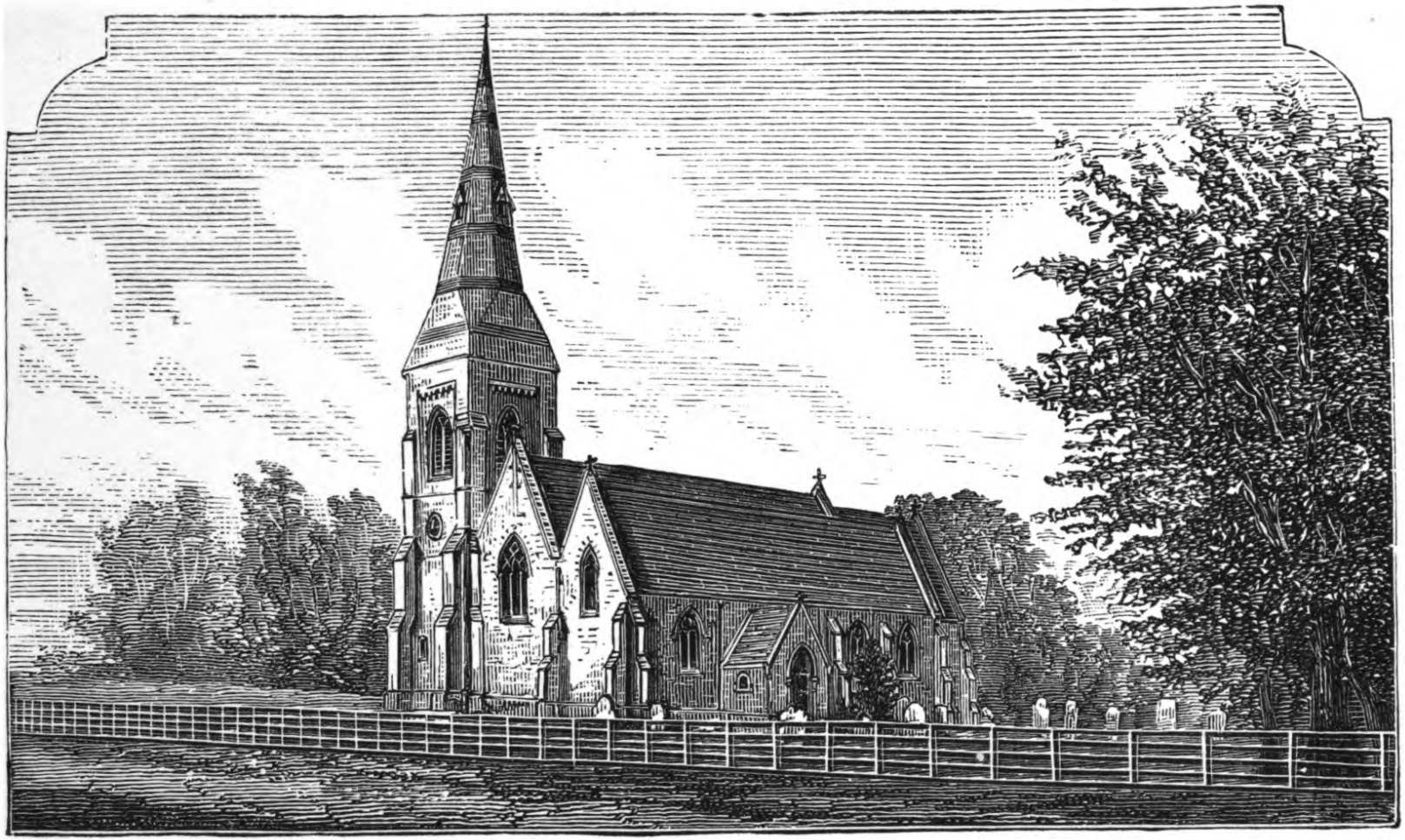
1787, Sam[l]. Cooper.
—88, Henry Mawdesley, A.M.*
1840, Edward Forbes, A.B.†
—47, Charles Hippuff Bingham, A.M.*
—75, John Wise, A.M.

St. Mary's Church.

Since the drainage of its meres the population of Ramsey has largely outgrown the ministrations of one Church and one Clergyman; but the efforts of those interested in the Church and the christian welfare of the people have been stirred here, as throughout the length and breadth of the

* Buried at Ramsey.

† Afterwards Chaplain of the English Church, Rue d' Aguesseau, Paris, now D.D. and Rector of St. Olave's, Old Jewry, London.



St. Mary's Church, Ramsey.

land. In 1858 a district was formed of about 7000 acres from this large parish, and the beautiful Church of St. Mary's was built, and endowed with £150 yearly by Mrs. Emma Fellowes, to which the Ecclesiastical Commissioners have added £50 per annum. The present Patron built the Vicarage, School-house and School-room. In this district there is a population of more than 1200.

The following excellent description of St. Mary's Church is taken from Sweeting's "*Parish Churches, &c.,*" pp. 182—3.

"The Church consists of chancel with N. vestry, nave with aisles and S. porch, tower and spire W. of the N. aisle. The main entrance is from under the tower, which forms a sort of N. porch. The Vestry also has a door. It is built in the decorated style. The nave is of five bays, one on the N. side being taken up by the tower, and having no arch to the nave. A somewhat ungainly buttress, supporting the tower, stands where the last pier should be. All the piers are octagonal. The aisle windows are all of two lights, trefoiled, with geometrical tracery in the head. Above the vestry roof, which is at right angles to the chancel roof, is a small triangular window to the N. aisle. The E. window is a handsome one of three lights. The other chancel windows are more enriched than those in the aisles. All the chancel windows have stained glass. A single lancet on the N. is a memorial, 1862, and has a wise virgin with burning lamp. One of two lights opposite, also a memorial, 1863, has the Sower, and the Good Shepherd. A third has Christ receiving children, and raising Jairus' daughter. The E. window has some very good glass. The chief

subjects are the Resurrection, Crucifixion, and Ascension. Below the central scene is a smaller one of the anointing our Saviour's head. This window is to the memory of the foundress. There is an inscription beneath to this effect ; and this appropriate text is added : 'This also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.' At the E. end of the S. aisle is another memorial window to this lady, bearing this inscription :—

✠ IN GRATEFUL MEMORY OF EMMA FELLOWES WHO FOUNDED THIS CHURCH TO THE GLORY OF GOD A : D : 1859 ✠ FROM THE INHABITANTS OF THE DISTRICT AND OTHERS INTERESTED IN HER PIOUS WORK ✠

The scenes in this window have relation to the subject of the memorial : both are from the temple at Jerusalem : one representing its building, the other its dedication. The roof is plain, but has a good effect. All the wall-pieces are supported on stone corbels, well carved. They have heads, male and female alternately. The corbels to the aisle roofs have ornaments. The chancel arch is deeply moulded. The hoodmould ends in carved heads. The arch is supported on large corbels, representing angels playing musical instruments, their wings extending backwards and embracing the wall. There is one step to the chancel, two more to the sanctuary. Except two Glastonbury chairs the chancel is without seats. The colouring at the E. end is well arranged. Besides the commandments, &c., there is much pattern work in colours, and some texts. The vestry is divided from the chancel by a screen. The seats throughout are of stained

St. Thomas' Church (Ponds Bridge), Ramsey.

deal, low and open. At the W. of the nave is an octagonal font. The panels are carved alternately with foliage and scenes. These latter are the Nativity, Baptism, Crucifixion, and Ascension."

Incumbents—

William Collins, Ox., M.A., 1859—68.
John Wise, Camb., M.A., 1868—1875.
William Harpur, instituted 1875.

St. Thomas' Church.

In 1866 another district, from the parishes of Ramsey, Whittlesea, Farcet and Stanground, was formed. The Church was built by subscriptions. The Parsonage and Schools were erected chiefly by E. Fellowes, Esq., the largest contributor to the building of the Church, and to its endowment, which is about £165 per annum.

Richard Devereux Jones, Dublin, M.A., the first and present Incumbent, was instituted in 1867.

The Church of St. Thomas consists of a nave with apsidal chancel, small double roofed transept on S.E., principal door on N.W. side, and bell turret on a buttress at N.W. corner.

The nave is lofty with well pitched roof covered with slates. In the interior the main timbers of the roof are exposed and are very ornamental.

One part of the transept is seated for the school children, and the other is screened off as a vestry.

In the chancel are a piscina and sedilia, and four stained windows by Wailes of Newcastle. The East window represents our Saviour giving the Benediction, with angels censing. In the others are the four Evangelists.

The seats in the nave are open, free, and unappropriated.

The font is octagonal, upon pillars of alabaster and is richly carved.

There is a School-room Chapel at the Forty-foot Bridge Hamlet, erected by E. Fellowes, Esq., M.P., and a Mission Room at Lode's End. The Church Services throughout the parish of Ramsey now are as follows:—in the Parish Church, three on the Lord's Day and Daily Evening Prayer; two a week at Forty-foot, and one fortnightly at a cottage in the Hollow; at St. Mary's Church, two on the Lord's Day, one on Thursday Evening; at St. Thomas', two on the Lord's Day; one in the Mission House, and Daily Prayers during the week. For such increased opportunities and means of grace, the feeling of us all should be, "We praise Thee, O God."

Bodsey House.

The name Bodsey seems to be derived from the two words 'abodes' and 'eye,' *i.e.* the island with houses on it; we find it in the forms Botsey and Bodesheye. Tradition says that Bodsey House was a hunting box of King Canute, which seems not impossible, as that King certainly did visit Ramsey, but we have no further evidence than tradition. The same authority tells us that two of

Canute's sons, who were drowned in crossing Whittlesey Mere, are buried there, and that their tomb stone still exists in the South-east corner of the room now used as the dining room. At the East end of the same room was a circular opening of unknown depth, which is supposed by some to have been merely an opening for shooting rubbish, by others to have been the entrance to cellars, which are supposed to exist under the building; others again think it was the entrance to a subterranean passage leading to the Abbey. The aperture has been closed and a cupboard formed over it.

The building was at one time a hermitage, as the following translation of a deed respecting it, still preserved in the British Museum, will show.

"To all the faithful in Christ to whom the present writing shall come Theobald de Leke greeting in the Lord:—

Be it known to your society that I have ratified the asked-for release and quit-claim which my father Henry by his own legal power made a gift of, to the Church of S. Benedict at Ramsey, and to the Abbot and Monks serving God there, the Hermitage of Bodesheye with all its appurtenances, as well in fisheries as in other rights also; and that I myself in my own person, and having touched the holy gospels have for myself and all my heirs and successors 'made over' the said Hermitage of Bodesheye and given a quit-claim thereof for ever as the very right and property of the said Church of Ramseye and for this my grant and quit-claim the aforesaid Abbot and Convent have given me 30 marks

of silver and one horse and have remitted to me and my heirs for ever the action which they had against me for claiming the patronage of the great tithes of Gillinge (*i.e.* Yelling), out of which the said Abbot and Monks have been accustomed to take for their sacrist 10*s*. yearly, at two terms, *viz:* at the Feast of S. Michael 5*s*. and at Easter 5*s*., which 10*s*. I and my heirs will pay for ever to the Church of Ramsey, and if by chance my step-mother Katerina shall claim her dower out of the aforesaid Hermitage, against the aforesaid Abbot and Convent of Ramsey, I Theobald and my heirs will upon their aforesaid petition free the Church of Ramsey and preserve it indemnified.

I Theobald have sworn that on reasonable summons of the said Abbot and Convent of Ramsey I will appear in the court of our Lord the King at Westminster before the Justices of the Bench.

In testimony of which thing I have granted to the said Abbot and Convent of Ramsey these my letters patent ratified with my seal in proof of my aforesaid release and quit-claim and furnishing assurance of every kind which has been in the same promised regarding them."

There is no date given to the above deed, but it is interesting as showing that there was property even on the island which did not belong to the Monastery until transferred to it by special grant, or which had been alienated. Bodsey House stands at one end of the King's Delph which ran from there to Peterboro' but it is now partly filled up.

The Biggin House.

Sir Philip Cromwell, a brother of Sir Oliver, resided here. He received his education at S. John's College, Oxford, taking his B A. degree in 1599; "the seat where he resided was a handsome pile, moated round, and not many years since taken down." The above was published in 1787; and in a note the writer says, "The door of the Manor House at Ramsey was brought from Biggin House, which was taken down upwards of 30 years ago; upon it are the initials H. C."

From this it is certain that the Biggin House was demolished as early as 1757.

The door, of beautiful black oak referred to, is the door of the cellar of the Abbey, and still bears the letters H. C., the initials of the last of the Cromwells who inhabited Biggin Grange.

Sir Philip received the honor of Knighthood at Whitehall, in 1604, at the hands of King James I. His first introduction to the King seems to have been at Hinchingbrook, when his brother, Sir Oliver, entertained that monarch on his way from Edinboro' to London.

He married Mary, a daughter of Sir H. Townshend, Knight, Chief Justice of Chester; by her he had issue ten children, six sons and four daughters.

1.—Henry, who was admitted a customary tenant of the lands in Ramsey, at a special court held on October 10th, 1630; but his rights as such he surrendered to his

brother Thomas, October 16th, 1634. It has been supposed that he was a Clergyman and Rector of Wistow, but their is no direct evidence of this.

2.—Philip, who was a Major in Ingoldsby's regiment of foot, in the Parliament Army, and was dangerously wounded at the storming of Bristol, September 11th, 1645, "fighting valiantly," he soon after died of the wounds then received.

3.—Thomas, who became his father's heir, as his elder brothers died childless. He was in the service of King Charles I, in 1630, when he was 21 years of age, for he signed his name after Lord Valentia to the condemnation of Lord Montmorris, at Dublin Castle, in December of that year.

At the time of his admission as customary tenant to the lands previously held by his brother his residence was in London.

After the breaking out of the civil war he continued in King Charles' army, in spite of his elder brother serving in the Parliament forces; for a time he was a Major in a cavalry regiment, and afterwards Colonel.

This Thomas had three children—Thomas, Barbara, and Henry; the last mentioned of whom succeeded to the copyhold premises at Ramsey, and is probably the one whose initials are found on the old door, above mentioned, in the Abbey. He was born in 1659, and was living in 1711, but the time of his death is uncertain.

4.—The other sons of Sir Philip were Oliver, who was possibly a member of the Long Parliament; he was

certainly a Major in the Parliament Army in 1648. He went into Ireland under his cousin Oliver, afterwards Lord Protector, and died there in 1649.

5.—Robert, who was executed in London for poisoning his master, an Attorney.

6.—Richard, who survived the restoration, resided at Denton, under the name of Richard Williams, and dying, was buried at Ramsey 1662.

Sir Philip's daughters were Joan, who was buried at Alconbury, January 19th, 1606; Ann, baptized March 15th, 1611; Elizabeth, who married a Dr. Paget; and Mary, who was born in 1616, and died 1630.

The above is the substance of the account given in "*Noble's Memoirs of the Cromwells*," and their residence, the Biggin, is scarcely mentioned anywhere else; it was granted to Sir Richard Cromwell at the Dissolution as a messuage or farm house, and we find it occasionally mentioned in the Parish Registers as the residence of the Margetts family, *e.g.* in 1602, one "Rob. Margetts of Biggin was buried."

Worlick House.

On a very old map of Huntingdonshire we find a drawing of this house, the drawings are not very accurate being small; but the house as represented has two towers, one at each end, as though it had been a fortification, which, from its position commanding an extensive view, is

very probable. There are still to be seen some eleven fish ponds, several of which are almost dry, the others still contain water, though there are now no fish in them; it has been elsewhere mentioned that the Monks of Ramsey supplied the Monks of Ely with 4000 eels every Lent, and these were probably the ponds in which the eels were kept; carp pools, in which fish were probably kept for the use of the Monks of Ramsey, still exist at Boose (*Boats'*) hill.

The grounds near Worlick are mentioned on some old maps as Col. Cromwell's park, hence we are led to infer that one of the Cromwells resided there.

In the year 1721 a large number of Roman Coins was found at Ramsey, these were supposed to have been buried by the Monks on some inroad of the Danes; many other coins have also been picked up, some bearing the stamp of the Nuremburg Mint, and the name or initials of Egidius Kravwinckel, these may have been brought over by the men employed in draining the fens, or by Protestant refugees.

In digging on the Mere Farm a battle axe of bronze and other relics of antiquity have been found.

A tradition exists that a cart load of cannon balls was found in a field between Bury and Ramsey, but no one seems to know what has become of them.

Many of the houses in the town bear early dates, the oldest with date, is in a yard opposite to the old Work-house, and bears on the chimney the date "1655"; and on a stone built into the house in which Miss Bodger now lives is an inscription, only partly legible.—

"Aug. 13, 1658."

"for ½ doz. of beer: I . . . . . came here."

This stone was in the wall of the old house, and was placed in its present position when the present residence was built on the old foundation.

On the top of the Anchor Inn are the figures of a Bull and a Ram fighting; an old tradition says, that the island received its name from the fact that in such a combat on the island the Ram was victorious.

The Old High Bridge, of which there seems to be no drawing, is described by an old inhabitant as having one high pointed arch; it spanned the river in the line of the High Street.

We find no satisfactory derivation of the word Whyte, but from the fact of one street being called the Great Whyte, and another the Little Whyte,* and that under each of the streets was formerly the bed of a stream, larger and smaller, the word must have some connection with *water*; it has been suggested that the name Whyte is given to

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* In some of the Parish Registers it is spelt "Wite."

houses which face the water; and again the word may be connected with *withe*, and so Great Whyte and Little Whyte would mean the Larger Willow-bed, and the Smaller Willow-bed.

The work of covering the stream, down the middle of the Great Whyte, and building a tunnel of three spans for the water was commenced in 1852, and finished in 1854. What was formerly an open stream is now covered, and affords an unusually wide street; the Little Whyte had been previously improved in a similar manner.

In the year 1873 some Stone Coffins were discovered in the Abbey grounds; the following account is from the Peterboro' Advertizer :—

"The men employed in widening the carriage drive to the Abbey discovered last week, about twenty inches below the surface, four stone coffins, three of which were deposited side by side, and the other a few yards off. The coffins vary in size and length, and would seem to have been 'made to order,' each coffin being occupied by a skeleton (all, more or less, in a good state of preservation), and adapted to the size and cranial proportions of its occupant, there being a circular cavity in each of the stone receptacles for the reception of the hinder part of the skull. One of the coffins measured 6 feet 6 inches in length in the inside, and enclosed the colossal remains of a person of that height, showing that there were something like 'giants in those days.'

Another of the coffins measured 5 feet 6 inches, and contained the skeleton of a person whose craniological

conformation would scarcely, in the opinion of the phrenologist, denote the quondam possession of a brain of much intellectual power. There are no dates to assist us in arriving at any satisfactory conclusion as to the time when the interments took place. Whether, as it is supposed, that the part of the grounds in which they are found is the site of an ancient burial-ground connected with the Abbey; or that the church-yard formerly included this space is not easy to determine. It would seem that one or more stone coffins similar in every respect have been, within the memory of some of the oldest inhabitants, taken out of the walls of the Abbey while carrying out certain alterations; and it may be the coffins to which we have referred were discovered at a very much earlier period, and removed out of the way by re-interment in the spot in which they are now found. This hypothesis would, perhaps, explain the fact of their being found so near the surface, and of the whole of the coffins being destitute of lids, the thorough decay of the bodies rendering the coverings unnecessary."

"Since forwarding the paragraph last week another stone coffin, making the fifth, has been discovered in a line with the other four. This one is about 18 inches wide at the head, and contains two entire skeletons (in a good state of preservation), lying side by side, and two other skulls placed at the foot of the coffin. There are no cavities in this one for the reception of the heads, and the two occupants of the coffin were buried with their faces downwards. This circumstance, and the fact of two other skulls being found in the same coffin, strongly support the

opinion that the spot where they are now found is not the original place of their sepulture; but where they have been re-interred, as we ventured to suggest last week, (centuries probably) subsequently. The coffins have not been disturbed, but remain where they were found, and are now covered up."

Previous to the year 1672 no half-pennies or farthings were issued by the English Royal Mint, and to supply the want of small change tradesmen used tokens bearing their own initials and some device, which could be passed from hand to hand.

The following list of such tokens, issued by Ramsey tradesmen, has been furnished to us by the kindness of H. S. Gill, Esq., of Tiverton.

Ramsey 17th Century Tokens.

		(In the field).
1.—O.	IOHN. BECKE. OF. RAMSEY	The Grocer's arms.
R.	GROCER. HIS. HALF. PENY	B. I. M.
2.—O.	MILES. BERIFFE ...	The Haberdashers' arms.
R.	IN. RAMSEY. 1666 ...	M.B.
3.—O.	THE GEORGE ...	W. S. F.
R.	IN. RAMSEY ...	The George and Dragon.
4.—O.	IOHN. FRENCH. OF. 1669	The Dragon's arms.
R.	RAMSEY. AND. CHATTERIS	His Half penny.
5.—O.	IAMES. JARMAN ...	An arrow between I . I
R.	OF. RAMSEY. 1669 ...	His halfe peny.

6.—O. IAMES. IAR.MAN	...	An arrow head.
R. IN. RAMSEY. 1663	...	I . I
7.—O. IAMES. SHARPE	...	The Grocers' arms.
R. OF. RAMSEY	...	I. S.
8.—O. WILLIAM. SHARPE	...	S. W. F.
R. IN. RAMSEY. 1666	...	His half peny.
9.—O. IOHN. WILLIAMS. 1668	...	A plough.
R. OF. St. IVES. AND. RAMSEY		His half peny. 2 pipes crossed.

Nos. 2, 3, 6, 7, passed as farthings, the other five as half-pennies.

Addenda to Part V. See p. 152.

(Note on p. 152).

Whatever doubt there may have been as to Sir Oliver having a son Giles is set at rest by the document, of which a copy is given below, the original of which is in the possession of Edward Fellowes, Esq.

The notary has copied the Will of Giles Cromwell adding some remarks of his own.

The identity of this Giles is proved by his mentioning his brothers William and John, and his sisters Anna and Mary.

One authority says nothing is known of Mary Cromwell, we find from this document that she was married to Mr. Edward Rolte, and that she was dead in March 1633, when this Will was made, having left 4 children.

Giles himself was one of the gentlemen in waiting to His Majesty the King of Bohemia.

"In the name of God Amen. Upon this present seventh day of the month of March in the year of the same our Lord one thousand six hundred and thirtie three. I Giles Cromwel setting before mine eyes and taking into consideration the uncertaintie of mans life the many alterations we are subject unto and that there is nothing more certaine than temporall death, yet nothing more uncertaine than the hour thereof, have out of mine own free will and absolute power not persuaded or misled thereunto in any manner by any thought good in time to dispose of the present goods which Almightie God hath lent unto mee in this world, and therfore have declared and ordained and by these presents doe declare and ordaine this for my last will in manner as here followeth. And first I Commend my soul as it shall depart out of my bodie into the mercifull hands of Almightie God mine onely maker, redeemer and Savior, and my bodie decently to be buried in the earth, there as in a bed-chamber to waite for ye blessed resurrection at the last day. After that I have revoked and frustrated and I doe revoke and frustrate by these presents all other wills codicills or other deeds, wh. before this time I have made and ordained in England or elsewhere, not willing that the same after my death shall come into any respect or consideration, but disposing now anew I have bequeathed given and ordained and I do bequeath give and ordaine by these presents unto my sister Mrs. Anna Cromwell wife unto Mr. John Baldwine, and the foure children

of my sister Mrs. Mary Cromwell of blessed memorie late wife unto Mr. Edward Rolte that after my decease each for halfe the children representing the place of yr mother in absolute possession all the goods which are come unto mee either by testament or otherwise left unto mee by the death and gift of mine uncle Sr. Cornelius Hooftman Knight of blessed memorie, and by my cosen Mr. Gerrard van Randerode otherwise Vandersta, Lord of Sevender of blessed memorie consisting in woods and lands part in Brabant, part in Zeland, as likewise in readie monies, rights and debts, none of these excepted together with all that will come to my portion or share out of ye right I have of the goods not yet distributed of mine uncle or cosen of Nispen of blessed memorie, and out of a suite of lawe against the Commissioners of Gelderland with the arrearages standing upon ye same. Provided by these presents that if it shall happen the foresaid my sister Mrs. Anna Cromwell to depart this life without leaving behind her lawful heires, all the goods which she shall inherit by vertue of this testamt shall againe come unto my cosen and Godsonne Mr. Giles Rolte, whome I ordaine and appoint thereunto (in case it shall so fall out). Also it is my will that if it happen all the foure children of my foresaid sister Mrs. Mary Cromwell of blessed memorie to depart this life without lawfull descent or issue, that then all the goods which they shall have inherited from mee shall come unto my aforesaid sister Mrs. Anna Cromwell or to her children yet in the mean time they shall have power to sell all the goods, rights, debts, to alienate and turne them into

monies, but that which shall come from them they shall be bound to lay the same upon purchase in England. Item I have bequeathed and ordained and I do bequeath and ordaine by these presents first unto y^e^ children of my brother Palavicino the summe of one thousand carolus gulders at fortie half stivers the gulder Flamish monie. Item unto my brother M^r^. William Cromwel the summe of five thousand carolus gulders which if he shall depart this life without children shall come unto my brother M^r^. John Cromwel—to William Crouch and Edmond Pue my servants to each g. Item unto Peter Fanius secretarie of Browershaven for some consideration me thereunto moving the summe of three hundred carolus gulders. Item to y^e^ poore of the place where I was borne an hundred gulders. Item to y^e^ Ladies of hono^r^ unto her Ma^tie^ of Bohemia and to his Ma^ties^ Gentlemen my fellowes in all amongst them eight hundred gulders. Item to my Cosen van Sevender an hundred gulders. And last to my Cosen Margareta Van Vosbergen an hundred gulders. And unto all my other goods which I shall leave behind mee wheresoever they now be, or shall be found to be, (all and every the foresaid legacies being paid and fully satisfied) I have appointed and named mine onely and universall heir, and doe so appoint and name by these presents mine aforesaid brother M^r^. John Cromwell, all others exempted. The which my brother I desire that presently after my decease shall enter into possession of all my goods, and shall pay all and every that I here above ordained, and that of the remainder of my goods (as before I have said) he

shall have full and absolute possession in such manner as that he may alienate and sell y^{e} same as his own goods without the gainsaying of any man. Provided always that if my said brother shall happen to die without lawful issue that then all and whatsoever he hath inherited from mee, and whatsoever monies shall have risen from the goods which he may have sold (under which are likewise included the five thousand gulders which by the decease of my brother M^{r}. William Cromwell without children he may have inherited) shall come unto his wife (if he shall leave any behind him) during her life and if she shall depart this life, or if he shall leave no widow behind him, it is my will and ordinance that all the said goods shall come unto my brother M^{r}. William Cromwell, and after his decease to his children and the children of my sister M^{rs}. Anna and Mary Cromwell every one a third part. All that is abovesaid declare I for my last will and testament wh. I desire after my decease without lawfull issue (and not otherwise) to be taken and held for such, and that out of the power therof as a testm^{t}, codicill, or any other manner of giving as my last stands by lawe. And to this end I renounce all priviledges, customes and other benefites and waies of right which may any way hinder this my will, and especially herewith the customes of England and Brabant so farre as they may prejudice the same. Also I desire not that any man (whosoever he be) shall therby in any manner of way help himself. And that this my will may with better power be observed I have ordained and authorized and by these presents

do ordaine and authorize my aforesaid brother M$_r$. John Cromwel and Peter Fanius secretary of Browershaven Executors of this my testm^t, with condition that if it shall happen any of my friends and heirs shall doe or attempt anything against this my will in any manner of way directly or indirectly, that then they shall forfaite all and whatsoever they shall or should have inherited by vertue herof, the which shall come unto y^e rest that shall be obedient herunto. All this done in S Gruvenhaghe the day month and year above written."

'And underneath stood written this following'—

"And I have caused this my present testament to be written, y^e same have read myself, and with mature deliberation and good understanding understood, and sealed with mine usual seale" 'and was subscribed' "Giles Cromwell," 'which said instrument was bound in a sheet of paper on the outside wherof stood written as followeth'—

"Upon this present seventh day of the month of March in the yeare of our Lord one thousand six hundred and three thirtie appeared before me Andrew Palmari publique Notarie residing here in S Gavenhaghe and the witnesses here underwritten, the well descended gentleman M^r. Giles Cromwell to me the said Notarie well knowne, and declared that in this present paper sealed with the seale of me y^e Notarins, the which he said was by him subscribed, written contained and enclosed his testam^t and last will, the which he willed and desired should be held authenticall and followed either in the forme of

a testamt codicill or last will, notwithstanding that all solemnities in the lawe required were not therein observed, willing that the same should after his decease without any solemnities of lawe be opened and punctually observed. All this done in S Gravenhaghe aforesaid in the presence of Henry Janss of Berkelo servant and messenger to ye Generaltie, and Vincent Heurickss glasier required witnesses hereunto, and was subscribed Giles Cromwel, Henrick Janss van Barkelo, Vincent Henrickss van (L?)anwicke. Which I testify A: Palmari publique Notarie there."

'Stood underwritten more as followeth.'

"Upon the 22th of May 1634 after the buriall of ye well borne gentleman Mr. Giles Cromwell of blessed memorie this testament being shut and sealed opened and read in the presence of ye well borne gentlemen Mr. Alexander le Zoete Lord of Villers the next friend of blovd unto ye deceased here in ye land, together with ye Honourable Colonell Herbert Knight, Sr. Jacob Asteley Knight lieutenant Colonel, Mr. Henry Cromwell and Peter Fanius, who all have subscribed" 'and was unwritten'*—"Ar. Zoete de Villers, He Herbert, Jacob Asteley, Henry Cromwell, P. Fanius," 'and were signed with five seales in red harde wax.'

Compared with the principall testamt written in a sheet of paper having upon ye head ye little seale of eight stivers, together with ye act of sealing and ye opening, both placed in the back side of the aforesaid testamt,

* A clerical error for *underwritten.*

being respectively dated underwritten and sealed as abovewritten, and is found to agree therewith, this 11th day of August 1634 within Utrech by mee (C?)erdaegn Noty

1654.

Judging from the following, Lady Carr (see above p. 175) seems to have been somewhat self-indulgent in the matter of Tobacco, to be made probably into Snuff.

"*Tobacco to my Lady Carr.*"

		£	s	d
"May 1624	tobacco sent my Lady Carr 1b5, 4oz at 9s ye pounde	2	7	3
"July, 1624	more tobacco 4lb at 8s	1	16	0(sic)
"Sep 30 1624	more tobacco to my lady Carr 5lb at 8s .	2	0	0

	£	s	d
tobacco	6	3	3

"De 1624.	tobacco 4lb at 9s	1	16	0
	more tobacco 2lb at 11s	1	2	0

	£	s	d
tobacco	9	1	3

	£	s	d
owing to mr Cokayne for tobacco ye 1st of January 1624 (sic)	9	0	0

The rest of the account is torn and unintelligible.

The following are extracts from the Abbey accounts, enumerating the offerings made at the different Altars in Ramsey Abbey Church and possibly in the neighbouring dependent? Churches, apparently in one year shortly before the dissolution; as also part of a bill showing the wages* of a master mechanic and his workman.

From the High Altar.	xxxviii^{s}.	i^{d}.
Also at the High Altar and at the foot of the Cross while the Indulgence† lasted	xxxi^{s}.	
and	iii^{s}.	iiii^{d}.
And from the foot of the Cross . . .	viii^{s}.	ix^{d}.
From the altar of S. Peter		
From the altar of the Holy Cross . .	xxi^{s}.	ii^{d}.
And from the Church of Saint Thomas the Martyr with the altars of S. ——— and S. Anne . . .	iiii$_{£}$.	i^{s}. x^{d}.
From the altar of S. Michael . . .	vii^{s}.	

* By comparing several different accounts we find that a Mechanic usually earned 3*d.* and his helper 1½*d.* a day.

† INDULGENCES. "Their (Roman Catholics) statement, as they usually put it, is that an Indulgence is simply a remission of those temporal punishments which remain due for those sins for which pardon has already been obtained through penance and confession. Now this was partly true once . . . . . But the modern Indulgence has little or nothing to do with *man's* ecclesiastical censures and penalties here on earth, and all citation of ancient usage in respect of such things is beside the question. It is now almost entirely concerned with God's chastisement of sin in the intermediate state of souls between death and the Last Judgment." (*Plain Reasons against joining the Church of Rome*, by R. F. LITTLEDALE, L.L.D., D.C.L.).

et 'capellis'	xv^{s}. iiii^{d}.
And from the image of S. John . . .	iiii^{s}. vi^{d}.
For vii velvet cloths left to the High Altar, sold according to the agreement between John Fflecton and (Cerington ?)	xxx^{s}. viii^{d}.
Also for x woollen cloths sold according to agreement	xxxvi^{s}. viii^{d}.
Also for three books given by Master Gulfrid of Ramsey, sold . . .	xlvi^{s}. viii^{d}.

To John May for mending the spouting upon the Church and over the windows, for iiij days	viii^{d}.
To Henry Knyght painter for painting v days	xv^{d}.
And to Mathew Thompson with his servant for work on the roof above the hall of the said tenement for ij days	ix^{d}.

The "Miscellanies" on pp. 210—11 are treated very briefly, from the fact that we have such little certain information about them. We should gladly have added a picture of the High Bridge, but we can find no drawing

of it; yet it ought to have been sketched before it was taken down, for on it the Protector interviewed his Royalist uncle and extorted from him "40 saddle horses and £1000," for the use of the Parliament. The Bridge is said to have had a seat on either side, and there no doubt gossips did congregate. On the Sunday green-grocery was sold upon it. This practice seems to have been given up under the pressure of Vicar Mawdesley.

The weekly Market of Ramsey is held on the Wednesday. It is small and very different from the one described above (p. 75). Pigs, and these few in number, are the chief commodities.

Ramsey has not the advantage of being on a main line of railroad, and has but few adjacent villages. The market or town will probably not improve much until it is more conveniently connected with such towns as St. Ives and Cambridge; or until some new industry, other than agriculture, finds here a habitation for itself.

Some other papers of the Cromwells and odd accounts might have been added, but we were obliged to consider the cost of printing. The item of cost enters into the size of books, as it meets us at most other turns.

We note for the information of any resident, who may pick up a copy of this book fifty years hence, that the "*Golden Plain of England*" (see p. 8) has for the last few years been but as a *copper* one; for this hitherto rich soil has failed to give its increase, or the crops have been spoilt by ungenial weather. Still we hope for better times, and that reclaimed lands and good farming will again pay.

It doubtless will be so, if, as a nation, whilst we plough and sow, we believe in our fathers' God—remember that He holds the sun and rain in the hollow of His hand—and ask Him to give the increase. We may all be thankful that "Rogation Days" (see pp. 104 and 192) are again being observed, and that "Harvest Thanksgivings" are very general. In such observances we obey an apostolic instruction, "In everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God" (PHILS. iv, 6.) Such reflections seem not out of place at the close of the history of a Parish where many spent their lives in the study of sacred literature (p. 69), and in continual prayer and devotion, their adversaries testifying to their uprightness (see p. 142).

THE END.

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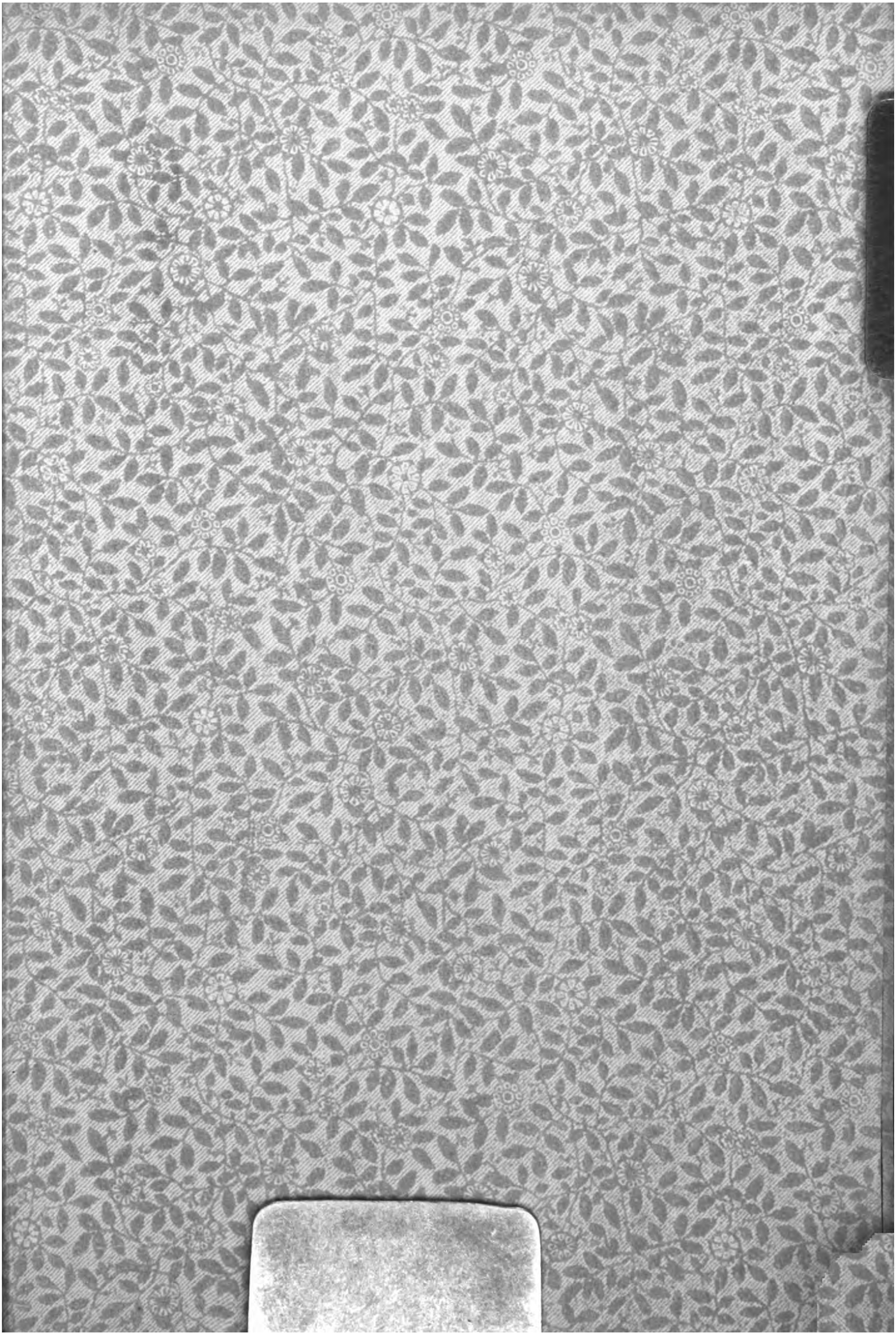
N.B.—"R.H." is frequently used for "RAMSEY HISTORY."

EDIS & COOPER, PRINTERS, HUNTINGDON.

CORRECTIONS.

Page	v.	line	8,	read	"Britannicæ" for "Brittanicæ."
—	vii.	—	4,	—	"have" for "has."
—	21	—	3,	—	"anima" for "amina."
—	38	—	1,	—	"To" for "At."
—	65	—	12,	—	"Wood's" for "Woods'."
—	66	—	10,	—	ditto for ditto.
—	67	—	23,	—	"Ovidius" for "Oviduis."
—	68	—	2,	—	"Orosius" for "Orosins."
—	130	—	12,	—	"4d." for "6d."
—	153	—	26,	—	"chose" for "choose."
—	168	—	9,	—	"rectangular" for "sectangular."

In some places marks of quotations have inadvertently been omitted or misplaced.

Our Note on page 43 seems at variance with that from Dugdale on 85, but it is difficult to decide which of the two, Ailwyn or Oswald, was Chief in the affairs of the Monastery.