

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE VILLAGES & CHURCHES: WEST BRIDGFORD AND ITS APPROACHES FROM NOTTINGHAM

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In a very old book, the remark may be observed, "That it is not good for man to be alone!" This has been many times shewn to be true: in these fast days, and in the scramble for existence and livelihood, in which too many find a "quietus" in the grave, we might also add "that it is not good for man to be always at work." The mind should have some quiescent moments, should be occasionally relieved. It is this opinion and these feelings together with a love for the picturesque, whether displayed in God's great works or man's puerile constructions, and perhaps a twang of antiquarian taste, that again starts us forth on another ramble.

It will be recollected by those who read our first essay that our footsteps wandered north from Nottingham. They shall, however, now take the opposite direction, and we would lead our readers with us, starting from the time-honoured church of S. Mary (to which we trust at some future occasion to draw attention.)

Standing, then, at the southern end of Stony-street, in our good old town, and turning our backs upon the fine "perpendicular" east window of St. Mary's church, we may, previous to commencing our march, take a glance before us. Hollow-stone, with its faded memories of the past, is our rite. It is now an exceedingly steep hill, and forms one of the southern entrances into the town; indeed, in ancient times, it must have been the principal one, though its form and gradients were not as we now see them. Previous to 1740, this hill was much contracted in width by the presence of a house belonging to the Duke of Kingston, and the hill was so steep as to be dangerous, but the Town Councilmen of that day, being desirous of increasing the width of the road and improving the gradients, cleared away the obstructive house, lowered the upper end of the hill near to S. Mary's church, raised the lower part near to the present White Lion Inn, and otherwise improved the entrance. In 1800, another improvement was made by increasing the width of the road opposite to the inn just mentioned, and by setting back the houses; the road also was still further raised, insomuch that the ground floors of the houses at this point were below the level of the road. No doubt, that in the days of chivalry, when fighting and war seemed more consonant with the feelings of the inhabitants than a steady adherence to business habits, the contracted size of this approach was considered convenient, as this side of the town could in that case be more easily defended: indeed, we find that it was so, as Deering makes mention of a "strong port cullice;" and not long ago plain marks were strongly visible cut in the rock, shewing its former position at the angle or elbow turning into the lower part of the hill leading to the London-road; and within this gate a large cavity was constructed to form a guard-house for the soldiers keeping the gate. This apartment is still to be seen, though occupied in the "general dealing," otherwise "rag and bone" trade. It formerly contained the chimney, fire-place, and benches, which had warmed and rested the defenders of the town. A staircase also led to the top, from which enemies approaching could be seen by the sentinels, but this, of course, would be long before the erection of the dwelling-houses which now intercept the view. The "port cullice" formed, as it were, a portion of the town wall or defence, which was first built in the year 910 by Edward the Elder, and which stretched away from this point, to the right along the back of Short-hill, and to the left towards Fisher-gate and Carter-gate. The irregularity of the hill and its adjacent houses and the upper terrace now called Short-bill, gives still a quaint

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picturesque look and an air of antiquity to this neighbourhood, but which must have been considerably enhanced by the wild, rugged appearance which the rocks and hills would exhibit previous to their being covered by buildings. But we must pass on without staying to mark the more modern erections, until we reach the Leen Bridge. It is probable that the first bridges that were erected in this neighbourhood were those over the Leen, which river had been diverted from its former course (where it fell into the Trent at Wilford) into this channel by William de Peverill. The original bridge had twenty arches, no doubt of a small span, and connected the town and Meadows. In 1724, this bridge was demolished and a new one of three arches was built. Pity it is that no antiquarian society existed at that date, as in that case some sketch might have been preserved, shewing the details of this bridge, as it would most likely have presented Norman, or early English, character.

If our readers had lived some centuries back, and had occasion to travel from this point to the Trent Bridge, they would have had need of “knickerbockers,” or of some equivalent protection to the lower extremities, as the road was, to some extent, to be described as a bog. Deering says:- “In 1641, the traveller found the Trent lanes very dirty, and, after he had passed the Leen Bridge, the very foot of the town, called the Bridge end, deep and miry.” A local board of health would also have been useful, for he further says:- “At his first entrance into the narrow passage which used to lead between two high precipices to the upper part of the town, he was from a little parcel of rock houses (if the wind was northerly) saluted with a volley of suffocating smoke caused by the burning of gorse and tanners’ knobs.” That, to some extent, it must have been a struggle to travel in that direction, may be seen from the descriptions that have been handed down to us: “Previous to the building of the Ten-Arch Bridge, the common road between the Leen and the Trent Bridges was round two pools, except in time of high water, when there was a road over them, on wooden bridges, which had been erected for that purpose. When the road round the pools was dry, chains were fastened across the bridges which went over them, and hence they were called Chainy Pools. The largest and deepest of these used to contain a good store of fish, but it is now intersected by the canal and is daily filling up.”

All these difficulties were, however, overcome by the erection of bridges over these pools in 1766. But time and increased traffic rendered better accommodation necessary, and in 1790 the ten-arch bridge was erected, but whether the floods were unexampled, or the engineering talent of that day was not sufficiently scientific, or equal to the task, we cannot say; but in 1795 the floods swept away great portions both of this ten-arch bridge and also of the Leen Bridge. Attempts to repair such a work as this would have been unavailing, and in the following year the present Flood-road was commenced, consisting of the Leen Bridge and the Seven Arches, and in 1809 considerable additions and improvements were made by the rebuilding of one of the pool bridges and also by the construction of culverts to carry away the floods.

The whole now forms a first-class road, and gives free passage upon it across the low-lying and swampy meadow land, and beneath it room for the free passing away of floods, however large. In more recent times, modern enterprise has rendered necessary another alteration to this road, namely, the construction of the bridge over the Lincoln branch of the Midland Railway.

Before proceeding further, we might pause to note the beauty of the prospect which may be observed from almost any point upon this road, for although the charms of the Trent and its banks have oft been sung by poets and lovers of nature, both local and otherwise, we cannot help recurring to the subject again: for -

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“We know thy meadows, Trent, are rich and green
Thy swelling slopes are gay with lawn and wood.”

Upon one side of our route, Colwick with its woods and trees -

“ Where shady groves a chequered scene display,
And part admit and part exclude the day;”

And the pleasant country towards the neighbourhood of the time-honoured seat of the Manvers’ family, Holme Pierrepont, to which may be applied the lines -

“ The stately homes of England!
How beautiful they stand
Amidst their tall ancestral trees,
O’er all the pleasant land.

The deer across their greensward bound,
Through shade and sunny gleam,
And the swan glides pass them with the sound
Of some rejoicing stream.”

Glancing, too, towards the other side of the scene may be observed the Meadows, which in summer form one of our most delightful walks, while even at other times the crocus, which in this ground grows indigenously, floods the whole with a purple hue. These latter pleasant resorts, however, are now being quietly but surely taken away from us, the greater portion of the Meadows being arranged for building purposes, which the increasing requirements of the town will quickly cover, with factories, workshops, and with abodes for the working classes. Thanks, however, to the wise precautions of Mr. Patchitt and the framers of the Inclosure Act, the inhabitants will still retain some portion for their especial delectation - in the green and grassy recreation walks, with their shady avenues of trees, which will soon spring into strength and beauty, and in the cricket ground which has been newly formed and turfed, and which is amply appreciated, if we may judge by the great number of the lovers of the fine old game who are nightly in the season to be seen renewing strength and muscle; though we, might here venture to remark that, while there is a chance and the land is free and untrammelled by bricks and mortar, this ground should be at least doubled in size, to provide for the increasing number of inhabitants, for generations yet unborn, and for the rising Parrs, Clarkes, and Dafts, who will hereafter have to sustain the cricket credit of the county, independently of which a small piece of ground should be always set apart for the matches which are occasionally played, and to serve also as an alternate portion of ground, which would be, as it were, at nurse or in course of preparation, and thus allow the turf to reform after a course of play upon it.

But, lest we be thought discursive, let us return to our subject. Proceeding, we note upon our right the Rye hills, a part of the Meadows, though we incline to the opinion that they are hardly to be dignified by the name of hills, being merely rising grounds; from them, looking back towards Nottingham, a very fine view of the town may be had. Some few years ago a lithograph was published, by the proprietor of the *Nottingham Journal*, giving an admirable idea of what the town was in 1741, taken from this point. It shows numerous fine trees in the Meadows; but we are sorry to have to record that the greater number of them have disappeared.

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A few minutes more on our journey, and we arrive at the Trent Bridge, in ancient times called by the following various names, Heithe-hithe Bridge, Heath-beth, Heathbethe-brigg, Heath-bet, and Hebeth. And now a thoughtful passenger may well stop. As he looks over the parapet of this time-worn and weather-beaten structure, and gazes upon the deep flood passing away with its silvery murmur, perchance his mind may look back, and he may think upon the names and memories of knights, prelates, lords, and even kings, who during the rolling on of centuries have passed over this bridge upon so many and such various errands; for, independently of its being the passage over the Trent to numerous towns of much note, in our historic annals, it was, from Nottingham, the grand route to London. The great antiquity of this bridge, it having been built in the time of the elder Edward, A.D. 919 to 924, would carry us back, in thought, to the time when the archives of our town record the visits of some of England's great ones. Time and space will permit us to notice but few of the names of those who must have honoured this bridge with their presence, commencing, say, from William de Peverill, the son of the Conqueror, down to our own beloved Queen, who passed this way, accompanied by her Consort, Prince Albert, on her Way from Chatsworth to Belvoir Castle in 1843. That it has been a place of many different exploits, diversions, and scenes, may be very easily gathered from the pages of history, as we find, in 1179, Henry II. kept Christmas in Nottingham, when, no doubt, he would frequently pass this way either for hunting, shooting, or other amusements. King John seems also to have been a frequent visitor. And what, too, must we say of the martial array of the Crusaders, numbers of whom, as our old churches can prove, came from this neighbourhood, congregating, there is little doubt, at Nottingham, previous to their final march? But -

“The sound of the clarion hath died on the blast,
The long sweep of trumpets and banners is past;
The hoof of the charger is restless no more.”

We must pass over the names of many others, until we reach the name of Mortimer, Earl of March, who resided at Nottingham with his paramour, and who likewise passed this way.

To the royal roll so may also add Kings Henry V. and VI., and in 1461, too, we find the Duke of York mentioned as a visitor.

To Richard III. sad thoughts may have occurred as he may have had some presentiment that he was soon to follow the many generations who had lingered near this stream, for it was from Nottingham, and over this bridge, that he rode to his death and grave.

The year 1487 records also some busy scenes, for Henry VII. held at Nottingham a council of war, immediately before the battle of Stoke; and James I. was here, too, upon six occasions. But all these famed personages, with their progresses and passages over this bridge, must sink into less note when we arrive at the time of the civil wars, when this bridge was the locality of many a fierce and bloody fight, when Nottingham took principally the parliamentary side, though there were also many adherents of the King (Charles I.) In the numerous disturbances which occurred at this period, the Trent Bridge figured frequently. It was defended by a fort, which, in 1645, was stormed by the Royalists, who took possession of it, and put 40 Roundheads to the sword. On the 5th May, the Leicester and Nottingham forces marched to dislodge the small band of Royalists on the bridge, who very judiciously took to flight, setting fire to what they were obliged to leave behind. This fort was taken and retaken according to the varying chances of war, and was bravely attacked, and as bravely defended, on several occasions, so much so, indeed, as to remind us of the lines which Macaulay sings, in his “Lays of Ancient Rome,” where he alludes to -

“The three who kept the bridge so well
In the brave days of old.”

Colonel Hutchinson esteemed this point a place of much importance, and he supported it in some measure by another fort, erected somewhere in the Meadows. In one of these skirmishes or attacks, the Royalists, having found it necessary to vacate the bridge, destroyed two of the arches to prevent the enemy following too closely.

It would appear, if we study history, that our forefathers, in almost every great undertaking, were not unmindful of the claims of religion. In this case we find mention of a chapel which stood upon the bridge, and was dedicated to S. Mary. It was built upon one of the arches at the north end of the bridge. Thoroton mentions this chapel, stating that he himself saw a piece of the ancient chapel arch, and in further proof we have it stated that - “The jury in the 30th year of Edward I. found it not to the King’s loss, if he granted license to John le Paumer, of Nottingham, and to Alice his wife (who was sister and heir of Hugh de Stapleford, son of Robert de Stapleford, of Nottingham) to give £6 13s. 5d. rent with the appurtenances in Nottingham, to a certain chaplain to celebrate divine offices for their souls, &c., in the chapel of S. Mary, on Hithe-bethe Brigg, where there is one arch yet known by the name of the Chapel Arch.” This chapel is now destroyed, and there seems to be not the slightest vestige of it: probably it may have been turned into the fort previously named, and in the civil wars destroyed.

The Trent bridge is still an interesting structure, and has a picturesqueness, about it which time alone can give. It consisted originally of piers only, with a superstructure of wood. This gave place, however, in time to one formed of a series of arches, and these have been subject to repair numberless times, often without the exhibition of much taste, the original pointed form having in some of the arches entirely disappeared. The dates of these repairs have been inscribed upon some of the key-stones. Thus, counting from the north end, the eighth arch has upon it “1776,” the eleventh “1852,” and the thirteenth “1860.” Perhaps the irregularity of the arches gives a more picturesque look to the bridge, for certainly it has a most irregular appearance.

The first five arches and the ninth from the north end are of what may be termed the revived classic date, and were built after the flood of 1683. The sixth, seventh, eighth, tenth, and eleventh, are samples of the style of the greater number of the arches, namely, the pointed, or mediæval; the twelfth is comparatively modern; the thirteenth has upon it “1860,” that being the date of a repair as previously mentioned; and the fourteenth and fifteenth are brick arches, devoid of much taste or style, and probably took the place of those destroyed by the Royalists, when retreating during the civil wars. Next comes a space without arches, which may have been made to serve as a kind of abutment to receive any thrust there may have been, and then, lastly, come the fifteenth and sixteenth arches, from which perhaps, more can be gathered, as to the form, date, and style of the first arched bridge constructed over this stream than from any other source. The pointed or mediæval arches are principally chamfered in two orders, though two of the arches are in three orders, these, in some instances, being replaced by brickwork facings of modern construction, done during the repairs previously named. The bridge originally varied in width from ten to thirteen feet, the latter being the width in the centre of the stream. Some of the arches still shew their original width, close examination proving that they have been widened by additional arches, added to each side, springing from the protecting parts or abutments of the bridge. Although these bridges have served their purpose for so many years, their construction would almost raise a smile upon the face of our modern engineers. The arches are formed of stone ribs, or groins, measuring about 12 inches on the soffitt, or underside, the intervening spaces being left open,

but the haunches and the spaces above the ribs were filled in with concrete and brick in a somewhat similar manner to those over the aisles at Southwell Minster the concrete forming in the latter case the floor of the triforium. This, however, in the case of the bridge, was found to be a weak form of construction as the many marks of failure, and the insertion of iron rods will prove; and, therefore, the spaces between the ribs have been filled up with brick-work in cement, occasionally bonded together by layers of Yorkshire stone. Many different statements have been made as to the date of the first arched bridge, some giving it quite a modern, while others ascribe it to a very early period. Deering states that, previous to 1683, this bridge was almost wholly composed of wood, the piers only being of stone, and that, after a heavy flood, at that date, the present bridge was constructed. But we beg humbly to differ from that worthy antiquary, and we give it as our carefully-considered opinion, that the only part built at this date was the first five and the ninth arches, which had necessarily to be reconstructed after the immense floods which had torn away several of the arches; and that, previous to this date, there was already an arched bridge, the greater portion of which is still to be seen in those arches which have not yet lost their quaint, pointed, mediæval taste. From certain details which are to be observed on very close examination, the date of this bridge may surely be placed as belonging to the close of the 13th or the commencement of the 14th century, and this would coincide with the date of the grant, or license, or the maintenance or support of the chaplain who was to celebrate divine worship in the chapel of St. Mary, previously alluded to; namely in the 30th year of Edward I., or 1302, as we deem it probable that the chapel was erected at the same time, or very soon after the construction of the pointed arched bridge. It is clear that Deering's opinion, that the bridge was partially built of wood previous to 1683, is erroneous, for it is a matter of history that, in 1645, the Royalists destroyed, in their retreat from Nottingham, two of the arches of the bridge, which latter term would not have been applied to the openings between the piers had they not been constructed of stone or brick arched in some form. We find, also, a memorandum, in a recent publication, that, in 1374 - "Bridgemasters were appointed (on Parliament being petitioned by the men of Nottingham, Derby and Lincoln) to purchase lands for the maintenance of the Hey-beth, or Trent Bridge."

At the present time the bridges are repaired at the expense of a fund, which is termed the Bridge Estate, and towards which many benefactions have been made both by individuals and by the crown. There has been some consultation about taking down this bridge and building one of iron in its place, or on a contiguous site, but as a lover of all old-world matters, and everything having an antiquarian feeling, we would still plead for the conservation of the old bridge, at any rate for some time, and, using one of Dr. Spencer T. Hall's quaint phrases, we would remind the destructives that there is about it "an air of old," which should not be destroyed without absolute necessity. A poetry of feeling should have some little allowance made to it, some little concession. That this is a time when it should still more particularly be dealt kindly with, is plain, if it is true that we are soon to lose the poet-loved old ferry boat at Wilford, with all its time-hallowed reminiscences of Henry Kirke White, and all our other local bards; for it must and will be, that Wilford and its neighbourhood will lose half their rural charms when connected with our manufacturing side of the Trent by the erection of the proposed Wilford bridge. But we are again discursive, and must leave the Trent, but, before doing so, we may add that it is recorded in Stow's chronicle that the river was dried up in 1110 for some two or three hours: and perhaps we ought to mention the bridge and small sheet of water over which we have to pass previous to crossing the Trent: Bridge. This water is termed the old Trent, but why so no tradition is handed down, and it would be absurd to suppose that this was ever the sole course of the Trent river; although, on close examination, we can trace its connection with it both above and below the bridges, though "time, that

great leveller," has nearly obliterated all traces of the ancient bed. Yet we followed what we considered to be the ancient course up to a spot where it ran out into the river, above the site of the present bathing places, but which maybe more accurately defined, by travellers passing that way, when they approach an old ash-tree, "late blasted by a storm." It may have been that this bed was used for carrying part of the river during the partial rebuilding of the bridge in 1683, the river being dammed up so as to divert its course, and this would partially account for the presence of so many portions of stonework, which are constantly being turned up near to this point, and which may have been used in the diverting of the stream. Or another and reasonable hypothesis would be that the river was here formerly divided into two streams, as it is in some other portions of its journey towards the Humber. Our readers will, however, think it quite time we passed on to our destination, namely, West Bridgeford, which certainly is a place of considerable antiquity, as we note that - "Edward Senior, between 919 and 924," according to Marianus Scotus, "did build a bridge over the Trent, *and on the other side a little town over against the old town of Nottingham, now called Bridgeford*," Thoroton, Deering, and some others enter into various arguments as to the probability of West Bridgeford having been a Roman station, and in Saxon times, we find, "the famous lady of Mercia" built a fortification here to suppress the violence of the Danes. We, however, will not enter the lists as to these probabilities, but merely mention that this village is mentioned by Stow, Camden, and the aforesaid Marianus Scotus.

The present aspect of the place is pleasant, the village consisting principally of cottages and neat farm houses. A new rectory house has also recently been built in good taste and style, while a fine old mansion, of the Georgian era, now occupied by Mr. Alderman Heymann, stands in a prominent position. According to our usual custom, however, we give our principal remarks to the church, which we can approach either from the main road or through the fields. As it appears that there has been a foot-path through the church-yard almost from time immemorial, and though we are sufficiently conservative to be desirous of preserving to future generations all ancient rights and old landmarks, still we are of opinion that, for the sake of the better preservation both of the church and its grounds, this footpath should be turned so as to lead through one of the fields instead of the church-yard, the clerk informing us that the sacred ground has often been a scene of unhallowed sports - stone-throwing and other amusements of the N.R., otherwise Nottingham Roughts. On the north side of the church-yard may also be seen the Flood Bank, cutting across the grounds, and partially dividing it, as it were, into two portions.

The church has, in some measure, owing to unstudied repairs and alterations, lost its picturesqueness, the more especially when we turn towards the chancel end, but shews, on closer examination, many portions worthy of interest. Its plan is, west tower, nave, south aisle, chancel, south porch, and vestry. The tower is of the usual three-storey class, the upper storey being the belfry, arranged for three bells. It appears to be, with the exception of the vestry, the most modern or recently-built part of the edifice, and would probably be erected circa 1600. It is surmounted with battlements and crocketed pinnacles, and is ornamented with moulded cornice. The roof, which is of stone, carried upon circular ribs or groins, throws off the water in the usual manner, through carved gargoyles. The windows to the belfry are very obtusely pointed, the arches, indeed, almost approaching to semi-circles. Several other openings of a small size, lighting the staircase, turret, and ringing chambers, appear on the different faces, but the general effect of the tower is plain, though the lower storey is a little relieved by the angular buttresses, and by a window on the west side, having an appearance of "perpendicular" date. There is no west door, but a modern debased one with a square head has been inserted on the south side, probably for the convenience of the bell-ringers. Two inscriptions, in Old English raised

characters, are carved on the south side, one about half-way up the tower, and the other under the south-eastern pinnacle. From the effect of weather, the old gray lichen, and the height of the inscriptions from the ground, we were unable to decipher them, but they would, in all probability, give the date of the reconstruction of the tower.

The south porch is probably of “early decorated” date, but it has been so much debased by repairs and alterations that it is difficult to arrive at any exactness about it. Its entrance is very plain, the jambs not even being chamfered, having no doubt been added during the last 200 years. This porch is of considerable depth, and contains stone seats or benches, and on both east and west sides there are narrow chinks or orifices, formerly open but now glazed. It has originally been lower, and perhaps thatched, but was re-roofed in the “perpendicular” period as the stone mould or eaves, cornice is similar to that on the clerestory of the church, and the upper courses seem of better masonry than the rubble work of the original part of the walls below.

The chancel is perhaps the most interesting part of the sacred edifice, and originally has been of very good character, but having been recently plastered and re-roofed in anything but an ecclesiastical style, it has lost at a first glance some part of its beauty. Nor has the addition of the vestry on the north side enhanced the beauty of the scene; indeed, the vestry might by many persons be easily mistaken for one of those useful and convenient little buildings generally seen at the extreme end of the gardens attached to the cottages of labouring men, so plain and bald is its form. The date of the chancel is “early decorated.” It has originally had upon it a steep roof, which is clearly proved on close observation, as the chancel arch now shews itself on the outside of the building above the present roof of the chancel. The priests’ or south doorway is pointed, single chamfered, and has a moulded label and impost; and this label has originally been connected with a string course running underneath the windows both on the south and east fronts. On the same side also is a window of three lights, of what we should term “late decorated” character. It has been restored, in the “plasterers’ “ style, in such a manner that it is difficult to see what the tracery has been. The window may be termed square-headed, though the centre rises slightly. It is very similar in form to one at Wymington, in Bedfordshire, which was constructed A D. 1380, though this at Bridgford must be of a later date, if we may judge by the deeply sunk and hollow moulded jambs, and by the curved mould of the mullions. At the east end of the south walk there is also a two light window of a similar character. At the east end of this chancel is rather an unusual arrangement, namely, two three-light windows. They are of “decorated” type, and have still some very fine tracery in them, though partially blocked and concealed to suit the low, flat ceiling of the interior. A hood mould runs round the heads of both these windows, and connects the whole, as it were, into one of six lights. These windows have good details, and are well worth the trouble of inspecting and sketching. The north side shows one lancet widow, and also a low side window of one light. The upper part of the latter has been cut away and made larger, debased, and filled in with lead lights of common character.

The south aisle is interesting on account of some of the windows, which are of good form and detail. It is of “decorated” date; the walls are of rubble masonry, except the upper part, which has, together with the parapet battlements, and cornice, been rebuilt at a later period, and with better worked stone, probably at the same time as the addition of the clerestory. The east end of this aisle has a rich “decorated” three-light window, of the same date as the two at the east end of the chancel. It contains some good tracery and the section of jambs and mullions corresponds to those alluded to. The hood mould is, however, of a richer section, and is finished by moulded terminations; a somewhat similar

window may be seen at S. Magdalen church, Oxford though the sections of the mullions differ. The south side of this aisle also shews two other windows of “decorated” date, each of three lights, square-headed, and containing tracery, excellent in its form. Though much dilapidated, the windows differ from each other in design, but are yet of corresponding character. One has a great affinity to a good example of 1320 “decorated” style at Over, in Cambridgeshire; and some very similar - indeed, so much so as to raise the idea that the design may have emanated from the brain of the same architect, may go seen at Ashby-Folville church, in Leicestershire, constructed A.D. 1350. The west end of this aisle has one window only, of a lancet form.

The nave next calls attention, and it may be here remarked that it is lit on the north side by two windows, one a four-light, and the other a three-light. Both are square-headed and have tracery in them of similar character to that previously described; the lights, generally speaking, are narrow, and the mullions small in appearance. The clerestory is lighted on both north and south sides by four windows, each of two rather wide lights, with flat arched tops, nearly square, and filled in with “late perpendicular” tracery. The roofs, both over the nave and south aisle, are partially concealed by battlemented parapets and the water is thrown off through gurgoyles. We regret also to add that, at the south-eastern angle of the nave, a vile-looking brick chimney-stack rears its head and destroys the harmony and ecclesiastical appearance of that part of the building.

Let as now, however, enter the interior of this time and prayer-hallowed building, first premising that the western doorway is of plain form, pointed, single chamfered and without shafts or caps, though a moulded impost and neckings relieve the appearance. It contains what we should surmise to be the original door, which is of oak and is hung with the ancient bands of stamped ironwork used in former days. The interior of the church produces a very agreeable effect upon the beholder, owing to the amount of early decorative art which still remains. The nave was most likely originally built in the “decorated” period, but subsequent alterations have been made to it at a later date. Thus, for instance, the arcade, or arches and piers between the nave and south aisle seem to have been rebuilt, or then added, as some of the mould and the carving of the respond at the east end of the arcade bespeak a later period, namely, the perpendicular. This arcade consists of four bays of arches, double sunk and chamfered, with octagonal shafts or piers, with moulded caps and bases; the arches at both ends are brought down on to corbels, that at the east end having rudely carved grotesque heads, enclosed amongst the foliage of the conventional form used in the “perpendicular” period. The roof has at some date been raised to form a clerestory, probably at the same period as the date of the arcade. No doubt the church would previously have had a steep roof, but it gave way to one of a much flatter pitch when the clerestory was formed. It is supported by moulded principal beams, strengthened by solid curved struts of rather a nice form, sloping down on to carved figures: these trusses, or struts, and this roof are alluded to in a recent publication, namely, Dobson’s “Art of Building,” in which also a wood-cut sketch of the roof may be seen. Upon turning round the angle of the tower we may see, near to the north-east angle, the original form of the ancient roof, part of the west, end of the old roof gable being still visible, together with one of the buttresses.

The “fittings,” as they are usually termed, may next be described, but will need little notice beyond that they are the usual “pens,” or “pews.” A pulpit, of post-Reformation date, occupies a site at the north-east angle of the nave. The tower arch (which is a fine one, with chamfered arris, the inner orders being carried upon splayed corbels of early date) is blocked up and nearly concealed by the usual ugly western gallery.

Turning our steps towards the chancel, we observe that the chancel arch is partially blocked up, and that the remains of a very handsome chancel screen still occupy the rest of the opening; it is likewise of "perpendicular" character, and is very much dilapidated. We had, also, nearly forgotten to notice the chancel arch, which is carried upon corbels of nice form, very richly cut into foliage and sculpture of grotesque forms. Upon looking eastward we are again struck by the peculiarity which the presence of the two three-light windows in the east end gives to the appearance of the chancel, though their beauty is much marred by the flat ceiling crossing the panes and shutting out the tracery. The north side of the chancel is occupied by the door into the vestry, and by a recess arched over and richly moulded, the front of which has also at some time been filled with tracery and cusplings. This has probably been the tomb of the founder of the church, which was most frequently placed in this position in ancient churches. In an adjoining field an old stone has been visible for many years called the "stone man." It is much dilapidated, and has been much ill-used, but it has been often surmised that it has originally been brought from this church, and it very probably may have been upon the tomb of the founder. On the south side there is a two-seated sedilia: the heads over the seats are arched in an ogre form, and the spandrels are filled in with rude carving, and a resemblance of tracery. There are also to be seen the usual "Piscina" and "Aumbry." The altar rail is of "post-Reformation" character, and is probably coeval with the pulpit. On the north side of the chancel we observe that part of the floor is formed of alabaster or gypsum. This would be the top of the founder's tomb, before alluded to, which has, with this exception, been destroyed, and on the south side another stone appears, which has originally been the altar stone, and would formerly have upon it five crosses, typical of the five wounds of Christ, namely, two in the hands, two in the feet, and one in the side. Upon the tomb top, at one corner, we observe some characters, which we presumed to be "*In Dei nomine. Amen.*" This was often a usual form for commencing inscriptions, and very frequently the last wills and testaments of persons leaving money or property to the church were commenced with the same words. In another part of the floor we observe also a recess, or incision, in one of the stones, which has formerly contained a brass, but this, no doubt, has long since been melted down by the marine store dealers. Contiguous to this is a cross body stone, with inscription running round it. The arms of the cross are terminated with the Fleur-de-lis, and at the lower extremity, in place of the usual steps, or "Calvary," as it is termed, is a moulded base, incised the same as the rest of the ornament.

Some very interesting portions of the original stained glass are still to be observed, principally of the "decorated" period. That at the east end of the south aisle we particularly noticed: it is contained in the three principal compartments of the traceried head of the window. In the central portion we see a figure, which is, no doubt, intended to be representative of Jesus, the Saviour. It is tolerably perfect, and has the hands raised in the attitude of benediction, the two forefingers of the right hand being open, or raised, and the others closed, this attitude being the usual form of benediction in the Latin Church. The glass in the other compartments of this window is nearly all destroyed; sufficient, however, remains to show that a figure has been portrayed in each, part of the drapery being still intact. It may be that these figures were S. Mary, the virgin, and St. John, the apostle; or perchance, in place of the latter, may have been a representation of the patron saint of the founder of the church, as the south end of this aisle may have been portioned off into a chapel. Stained glass is also visible in other of the windows, some of it being heraldic and figuring shields with arms displayed upon them belonging to the family of Lutterell. The most noteworthy of the specimens is, however, in the head of one of the windows on the north of the nave, where the figure of Christ is given, likewise in the attitude of benediction. This glass is very perfect and very valuable, and we would certainly suggest that those in

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charge of this edifice should protect by wire or usher means these scarce specimens of an art, some secrets of the manufacture of which have never been recovered. This figure, unlike the former we noticed, is seated, and upon a bench, the front of which is shown in decorated panneling; a “nimbus,” or glory, encircles the head, and the face is bearded; the back ground is filled with foliage decoration. Portions of this glass are of a splendid ruby far surpassing in depth of tone anything which we see in modern glass, and at the close of our visit a westering sun shed its glorious light through the windows of the church, giving quite a “Turneresque” feeling and haze throughout the nave.

The church is dedicated to St. Giles, and the benefice is a rectory and (according to a statement recently made in a directory) is valued in the King’s books at £16 14s. 2d. Now at £588. In concluding this article we cannot help but add that the church is most interesting, there being considerably more of the architecture usually termed “decorated” than is often to be met with in one village church; while, in the interior, a considerable amount; of carving and sculpture still remains, our notice being called especially to the corbels which carry the struts of the roofing, both in the nave and aisle. If we might venture a suggestion in this place, it would be that some of the soil surrounding the walls of the church should be lowered, which would render the interior of the building drier and more comfortable.

The length of this paper, however, reminds us that we must conclude, trusting, however, in some short time to recall attention to some of our antiquarian rambles so soon as time and opportunity, conjoined with health and fair weather, will permit.

Nottingham, October, 1863.

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