

Darke.

The Two Langleys.

BEING

THE SUBSTANCE OF A PAPER UPON THE
TWO VILLAGES OF

ABBOT'S LANGLEY & KING'S LANGLEY, HERTS,

READ AT A MEETING OF THE

St. Albans

ARCHITECTURAL AND ARCHEOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

BY

RICHARD GEE, M.A.,

Member of the Society.

"We grew together,
"Like to a double cherry."—*Shakspeare*.

PRICE ONE SHILLING.

W. LANGLEY, HIGH STREET, ST. ALBANS.

SOLD AT THE

SCHOOL HOUSE, ABBOT'S LANGLEY.

PRINTED BY S. ODELL, PRINCES STREET, CAVENDISH SQUARE.

THE TWO LANGLEYS.

BEING

THE SUBSTANCE OF A PAPER UPON THE
TWO VILLAGES OF

ABBOT'S LANGLEY AND KING'S LANGLEY,

H. H. Lamb
HERTS,
Home Park House
READ AT A MEETING OF THE

Saint Albans Architectural and Archaeological Society.

BY

RICHARD GEE, M. A.,

Member of the Society.

~~~~~  
"We grew together,  
"Like to a double cherry."—*Shakspeare*.  
~~~~~

PRICE ONE SHILLING.

W. LANGLEY, HIGH STREET, SAINT ALBANS.

SOLD AT THE
SCHOOL HOUSE, ABBOT'S LANGLEY.

—
M. DCCC. LIII.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY S. ODELL, 13, PRINCES STREET CAVERDISH SQUARE.

THE WRITER is anxious to anticipate the very obvious criticism, that the information contained in the following pages is too minute to interest a stranger, and yet not full enough to satisfy a resident. The reader should bear in mind, that the paper was prepared for a Local Society, which might be supposed to have a general knowledge of the district, and a neighbourly interest in the subject. No claim is set up for originality of matter, but all the authorities cited have been carefully consulted, and the old chronicles have been industriously examined.

It seems due to the Architectural Society of St. Alban's (at whose expense this publication is undertaken) to state, that their committee is not responsible for the selection of the plates, nor for any expression or opinion advanced in the paper. The members are only answerable for having requested the Writer to prepare an account of the villages in which he was known to be peculiarly interested.

EXPLANATION OF THE PLATES.

All the Lithographs, with one exception, are from Etchings by Mrs. RICHARD GER, and in some instances Original Sketches have been taken.

PLATE I.

- 1.—Sketch of the Norman Arches in Abbot's Langley Church; as seen above the Pews, from the Langley-House Seats.
- 2.—The Font in Abbot's Langley Church. Advantage has been taken of the Engraving in Van Voorst's Book of Fonts.
- 3.—Head of Nicholas Breakspeare; from a Print published in 1799. This has been compared with the Portraits in Ciacconi's and Duchêsne's Works. But in almost all Portraits of the Pontiff the likeness is destroyed by the overhanging Mitre. The face too is seldom beardless.

PLATE II.

- 1.—The Funeral of Richard II.; from the Splendid MS. Copy of Froissart in the British Museum, once the property of P. de Comines. The Engraving of this print in Knight's Shakspeare has been followed so far as to complete the Car, &c.
- 2.—Edmund of Langley; copied from Knight's Shakspeare: not without communication with the Publisher.
- 3.—Edmund of Langley's Tomb—an original Sketch.

PLATE III.

- 1 (a).—The "Falcon and Fetterlock"—Edmund of Langley's device, see note at page 13.
(b).—The Arms of Edmund and of his first Wife Isabel of Castile, from the central Compartment in the Tomb at King's Langley. There is no trace remaining on the Shield of any Heraldic difference for the fifth Son.
(c).—The White Rose of York; originated by Edmund; but shown here, "En Soleil," as emblazoned after the battle of Mortimer's Cross.
- 2.—The old Palace at King's Langley as now remaining; from an old print, published by the Antiquarian Society, 1819.
- 3.—Money token issued 1668 by a publican at King's Langley, from Impressions lent by J. Evans, Esq.

THE TWO LANGLEYS.

THE reader will scarcely find elsewhere a very full account of the two villages in which it is here sought to interest him. The two Langleys will, perhaps, be most easily recognised if described as being situated on the line of the London and North Western Railway, at the distance of about twenty-one miles from London. At the third mile, on that line, beyond the first class Station of Watford, the traveller by railroad comes to a small stopping place, called the "Langley Station." On his left hand, supposing him to be seated with his face towards Birmingham, he may see a little village clustered prettily on some rising ground. He might not notice it particularly, for he would not think that there was any historical interest attaching to the hill which rises behind the village, and which is crowned by some clumps of only moderately sized trees. On his right hand there is no village at all to be seen. The traveller's attention, however, might be drawn for a moment to the buildings close to the line, on the right hand side, lately raised by the booksellers for their Provident Members, when aged. The village on the left, in sight, is King's Langley; and on the top of the hill, on the right, but too far removed from the line to be seen, lies Abbot's Langley. Any one who might inquire into the circumstances of the two villages, would find some traces yet remaining of the difference of their fortunes indicated by their names. They are in different divisions of the county, in different hundreds, in different sessional districts, in different unions, and, until lately, in different dioceses. *Abbot's* Langley has always retained some connexion with the abbatial town of St. Alban's. It is in the liberty of St. Alban's, and, with St. Alban's, was in the diocese of London, until recent arrangements caused the whole county of Herts to be included in the diocese of Rochester. *King's* Langley, on the contrary, never, until lately, had any political or ecclesiastical connexion with St. Alban's. It always formed a portion of the county at large; and it was, for hundreds of years, in that huge diocese of Lincoln, which once reached from the Humber to the Thames. We can, perhaps, suppose a visitor of antiquarian tastes to be led on, when informed of these circumstances, to make some inquiries as to the historical events

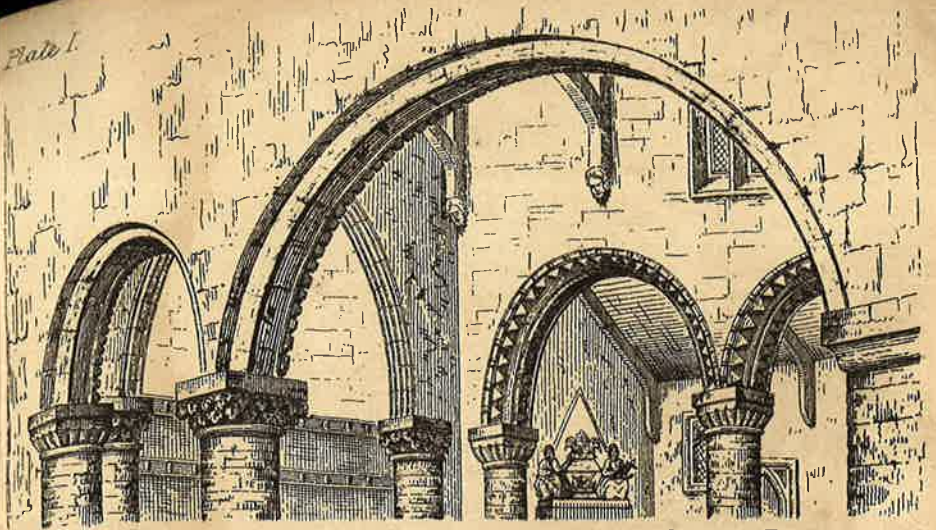
which may have happened in places to which Kings and Abbots lent their titles. As an archæologist, he would be mindful that he lived in an "old country," and would remember how many traditions and histories yet linger about our quiet villages. Such an inquirer may find some interest in these pages. They are written by one who, while taking the oversight of the flock of Christ in the parish of Abbot's Langley, has often had occasion to acknowledge with gratitude that "the lines have fallen unto him in pleasant places." The present peacefulness of these hills and fields has led the writer, while walking over the sloping uplands, to contrast their existing state with their past experiences. He has taken an interest in gathering up any vestiges of historical events which may yet be found. These he now seeks to lay before any reader who may sympathize with his tastes. If to some he may appear to have employed his pen and time on matters which hardly entered into his responsibilities, a kindly judgment will still believe that these secularities have formed only a passing relaxation from graver employments. At least one Episcopal authority might be cited, recommending every Clergyman to glean such historical morsels as may be scattered about his parish, and to store them up, if only for the use of those whose labours would be greatly lightened by a supply of such material.

So much has been said about the railroad, that perhaps the Langley Station might be used as the starting point in our proposed description of the villages. A walk may be imagined to the more interesting spots, and on the way such information may be imparted as will, at least, put the visitor in possession of the little local knowledge which is peculiar to the residents.

Imagine yourself, then, O reader! to have been led by business or pleasure to the "Two Langleys." You have come by the railroad; you have safely "got out" at the station; you have been met by the writer, as your guide, and you are now walking with me direct to King's Langley. You are not straitened for time, nor are you overpowered with business. You have leisure and inclination to notice all that is around you; and to listen to any account of the neighborhood which would guide you as to what is most worthy of your observation.

I begin with inquiring whether you have formed any general idea of the features or bearings of the landscape? Did you notice that soon after your train emerged from the Watford tunnel the line lay in a trough or valley? At a greater or less distance the ground rose on each side, and, if you have ever travelled far down this line, you may recollect for how long a space it continues so to do. This fact, when observed, will help you to acknowledge the fitting derivation of the name "*Langley*." It is the Long Lea, or Long Meadow. It is the name given to these villages in Domesday Book, where it is spelt Langelai. The Meadow was formerly shared between the King of England and the Abbot of St. Alban's. The King had, on his side, his Royal Palace and Home Park; and the Abbot, on the opposite hill, had his cell and country lodging. Each, probably, held his





Norman Arches in Abbot's Langley Church, - as seen above the Pews.

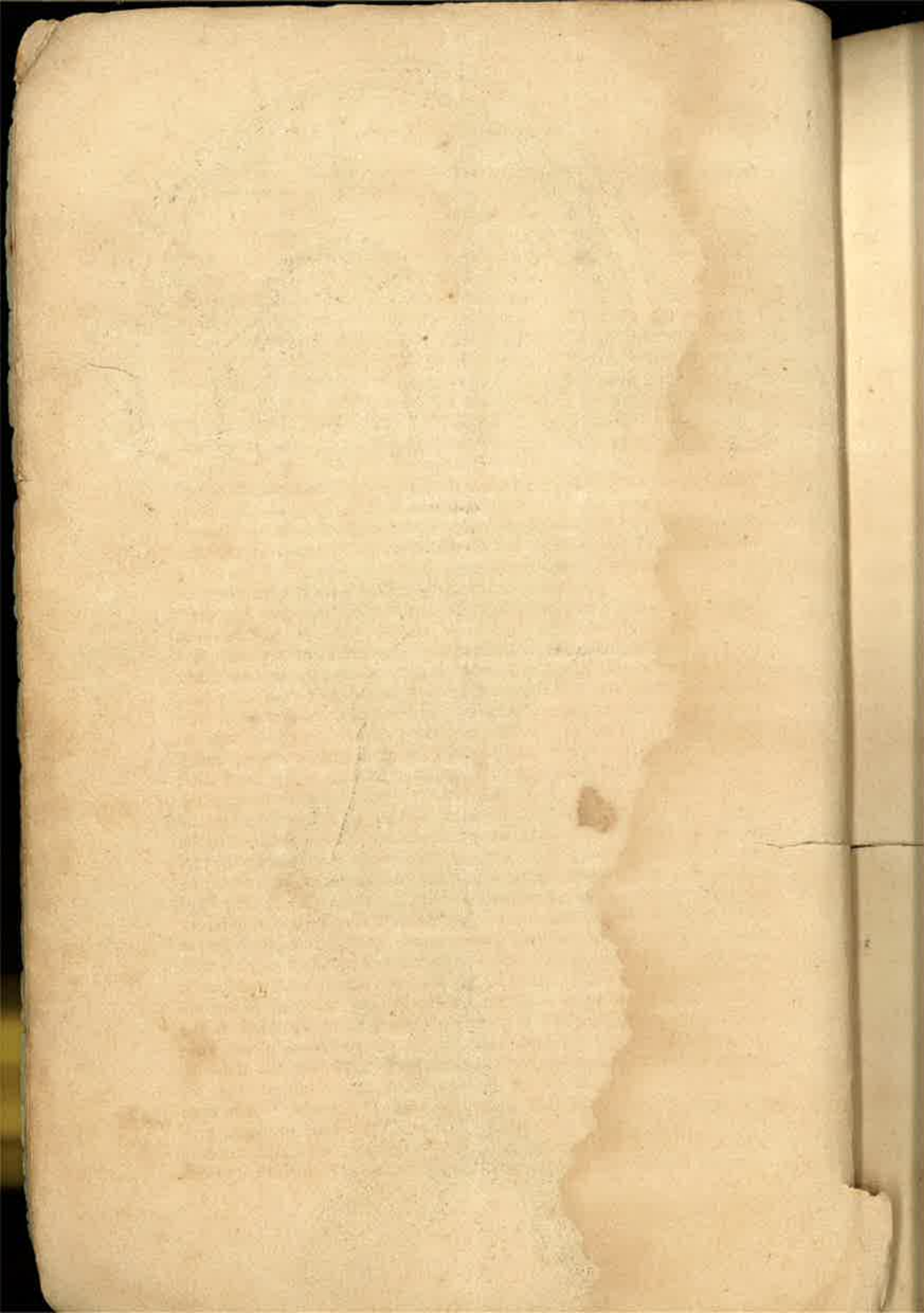


The Font

in Abbot's Langley Church,
A.D. 1400.



Nicholas Breakspear, born at Bedmont, Adrian IV. 1154



possession almost as private property. There is an "Alias" belonging to Abbot's Langley,* which is exactly justified by the facts. In old documents, it is called Lees Langley, or *the Meadow Langley*; perhaps because the meadow ground between the two ridges is in this parish rather than in King's Langley. The river Gade, now deepened to serve the purposes of the Grand Junction Canal, runs through the meadow, and any one who has seen the valley on a day when the waters of the mill are not wanted, can bear full witness to the meadowy, or even marshy, nature of the ground. Langley is not the only instance of a well-fitting Saxon name in this neighborhood. As you were drawing near to Langley, you passed Watford, or Water-Ford. There, rather than at Langley, was the place which grew into a town, because, in those days, when bridges were not, the water was fordable just where the railroad crosses the high road to London. A little further, you will come to Hemel Hemstead, or the Happy Homestead. Happy and smiling it must have looked before its noble Norman Church was shut out by its market-house. How must all ecclesiologists lament that the rare opportunity of opening a view of the church has been lately lost by the townspeople, and that their new town-hall is built on the old and objectionable site!

From Hemel Hemstead you proceed across a moor which, perhaps, had a very obvious reason for its name of Box Moor, and you come to Berkhamstead, or the Homestead-on-the-Hill, and further than that pretty town I have no right to stray in the present paper. You see now at King's Langley enough of this valley to enter into the force of the contrast which I would here suggest between its present and its former state. Who would have ever thought that the *Long Meadow* would become the *Steam Meadow*? What Abbot or Plantagenet King would have dreamed, that, not only would one of our principal manufactures be carried on here, with all the appliances of large capital and scientific skill; but, that, the valley would become the main artery in the circulation of the kingdom; that, where once the body of a king was brought to King's Langley in a simple springless one-horse car:† now the plebeian traveller rushes past the village at a speed which would have seemed miraculous. So it is; for in the hollow just described lies a portion of the main trunk line, of which the Welsh, Lancashire and Midland Railways are members or branches. Cattle and cotton goods, iron and woollen, are all hurried to Town along this valley.

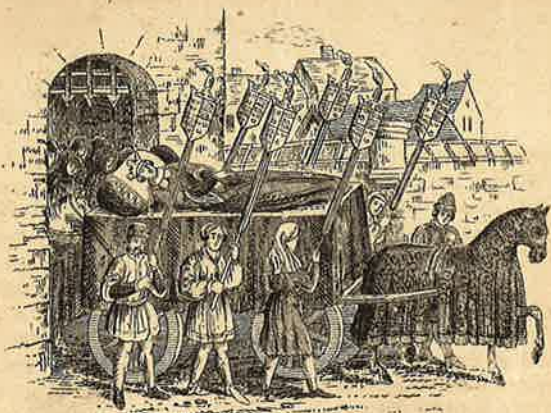
We are now drawing near to King's Langley, and it is quite time to state the little I know as to its earlier history. I cannot speak as to its Saxon experiences: nor, to go farther back still, can I say much of its Roman inhabitants. It is certain, however, that the Langleys were too near to the Roman Municipium of Verolamium not

* King's Langley has also an old Alias, viz. Chiltern Langley.

† *Vide* Print 1 in Plate II., where the funeral car of Richard is represented as drawn by one horse. In the last chapter of Lord Berner's *Froissart* I read that there were four horses attached to the vehicle.

to recommend themselves to the masters of the country. Close to the station, in the field on the right as you turn down to Home Park Mill, the remains of a Roman villa have been discovered. The walls were constructed of flint, and the floors paved with the ordinary red tesserae. A coin of Hadrian's was found on the spot. In Domesday Book, King's Langley is called "Lord Morton's land." It seems to have been a grant to him as to a Norman follower of the Conqueror. It must be obvious, however, that "Morton" is a Saxon, rather than a Norman name. In the Conqueror's survey, it is recorded that there is there one Norman proprietor, with four villains, or farmers, and with five bordars, or cottagers.* The wood is reckoned equal to the grazing of two hundred and forty hogs. The Mortons lost it for rebellion in the reign of Edward I. The Crown held it from that time among its other territorial possessions: yet it was not until the reign of Henry III. that a royal palace was erected there. Then, about the same year, one Roger Helle, an English baron, or baron's son, founded a priory for Black, *i. e.* Dominican, or preaching, Friars close to the palace. Edward I. (it is said) by letters patent, dated from King's Langley in 1274, and from Westminster in 1280, gave to the Friars the house belonging to the Parish Church (*i. e.* the Rectory House) and some land. He gave also the manor and the close; and the "vesture"—(*query*, the "lop and top"?)—of Chipperfield wood for fuel. I should, however, in candour, mention that Clutterbuck, in his County History, disputes much of this. He states that this account confuses *our* Langley with another in Norfolk. He produces a warrant of Edward the Second's, dated from York, and authorising the foundation at King's Langley. I have, however, ventured to think that Chauncy, Weever, Salmon, who likewise appeal to the Pell Rolls, are entitled to credibility. They warrant the earlier date I have first given, and I would advise my reader to rest satisfied with this, for it is not until the reign of Edward III. that the historical interest of King's Langley becomes peculiar. In the fifteenth year of Edward the Third's reign, *A. D.* 1344, Edmund, his fifth son, was born at the Palace on the Hill. Michael de Montmore, the Abbot of St. Alban's, was sent for to christen the royal child, in the Priory Church. Newcome (at p. 241 of the quarto edition) records the circumstances. He also says that this prelate was chosen for his peculiar sanctity. The sponsors were the great Earl John de Warenne and Richard de Arundel. Philippa, the queen, went over to St. Alban's Abbey to be "churched;" and her churching offering was a cloth of gold. I have much to say of this Edmund of Langley, who was decidedly *the* historical character of the neighborhood. I will reserve the account, however, until our return from the hill, as I wish to complete the sketch of the various events which have happened at the palace. Richard II. and his queen, Anne of Bohemia, and four bishops, as many earls, fifteen ladies and

* Bordar, or in Mediæval Latin, Bordarius, is given in Bailey's Dictionary as from the Saxon word, Bord, a cottage.

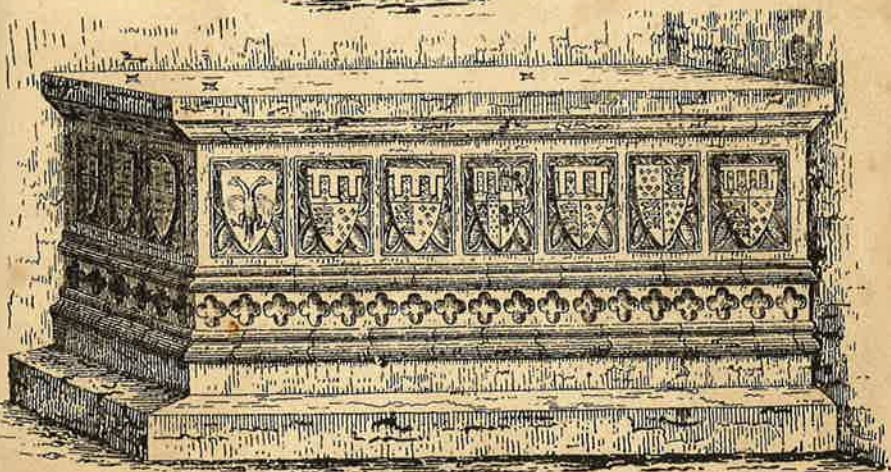


Funeral of Richard II.

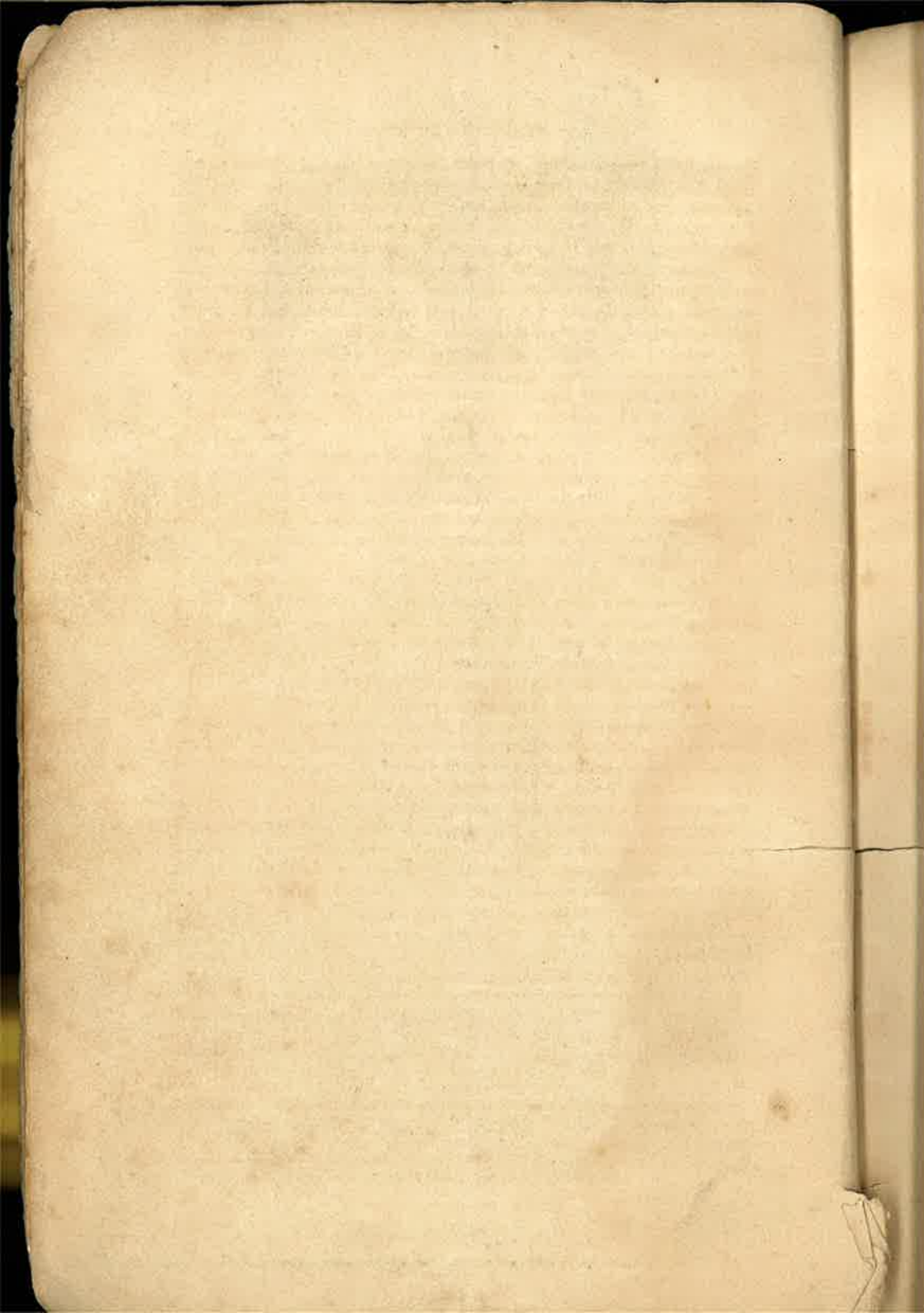


Edmund

of Langley



Edmund of Langley's Tomb.



others, spent the Christmas of 1392 "right royally" with Edmund, the King's uncle; now nearly fifty years old, and known as the Duke of York. Seven years after this, in the year 1399, Richard not living nor reigning, but deposed and dead, was brought once more to the palace to lay his bones among us. I adopt Holinshed's account that Richard was murdered in that year, in Pontefract Castle, in Yorkshire. Thence, says that chronicler, his body was brought to London. It was embalmed, and cased, and wrapped in lead, all except the face, which was left exposed in order that his features might be recognised. A dirge in the evening and a requiem in the morning were performed at every town on the road, and the body after each service was shown to all who cared to see. From the Tower, to which it was first taken, it was conveyed to St. Paul's Cathedral, where a solemn service was performed.* Thence it was taken to Westminster Abbey, where the service was repeated, the King and the Court being present. After all this, it was brought unattended by any of the nobility to the Church of the Friary at King's Langley, and here the Bishop of Chester and the Abbots of St. Alban's† and of Waltham buried him. No one of importance attended, nor, says Holinshed, was there anyone at King's Langley to entertain at dinner those who did attend the funeral. Still you must not imagine that this was the last funeral of the much-travelled corpse. On the accession of Henry V., (fourteen years after this interment), the first act of grace on the part of the new King was to have the body exhumed, and deposited in Westminster Abbey by the side of Richard's dearly beloved queen. Dr. Tyler, in his life of Henry V., not only mentions this more honorable reinterment; but gives as its cause, the attachment which there was on the part of Henry to his hapless cousin, to whom he owed his knighthood and much kindness. Dr. T. appeals to the great expense to which Henry V. went for the funeral, (the charges of which are recorded in the Pell Rolls,) as a proof of the King's kindness and generosity.

I pass on from the time of Richard to that of the Reformation; shortly before which, Henry VII. had granted the palace to his daughter-in-law, Katharine of Aragon. Henry VIII. afterwards bestowed it on Anne Boleyn, and in 1538 the Priory was surrendered to the Royal Commissioners, and valued by them at £127; or, as Speed says, £150; being the greatest amount set down to any house of the order. Queen Mary, on her accession, as might be expected, reinstated the Monks.‡ Queen Elizabeth, I need hardly say, again

* Froissart, in his last chapter, mentions but one service, which took place in Cheapside, as the body was being taken from the Tower to Langley.

† This Abbot must have been John Moote. Newcome, in his History of St. Alban's, is strangely silent on the subject. He gives a full account of this same John Moote's difficulty to reconcile his respect for John of Gaunt's remains, and his jealousy of his would-be diocesan, Cardinal Beaufort, the Duke's son, then Bishop of Lincoln.

‡ Tanner, in his *Notit. Monast.* says that Queen Mary made over the building to *Nuns*. He gives the Act; 3 P. & M.

ejected the monastics. By her gift of the Rectory to the Bishop of Ely, she put the ecclesiastical property into the hands of the present owners. Of the building, or site, I can only mention that it seems to have been separated from the domain. It (with seven acres) was granted (18th of Elizabeth) to Edward Grimston, and has passed through several hands until it has come into the possession of a private individual who is not resident at King's Langley. The domain continued to be royal property until the time of Charles I. when it was, by him, assigned to the Morison family, who preceded the Earls of Essex at Cassiobury. In the assignment, the deer and deer park are specially noticed.

Space will not allow any further indulgence on a theme which might be greatly extended. So I will suppose a visitor having passed through the village, or street, of King's Langley, without stopping to examine the present Church, to be with me now at the remains, or ruins of the Old Palace. He sees a venerable, but not extensive nor stately portion of the building. It is roofed in, covered with ivy, and formed into cottage dwellings for the labourers on the adjoining farm. This relic goes by the name of "King John's Bakehouse." It probably *was* the bakery; as there is the mouth of a large oven still visible near the old fire-place. The doors and windows were cotemporary with its royal uses, and it certainly was a portion of the offices of the palace. Although a great quantity of flints have lately been removed, still there are sufficient indications to be seen in the division walls of the adjoining fields that old building materials are to be obtained on the spot. Encaustic tiles seem to have abounded peculiarly. A considerable number are to be seen at the house of Mr. Betts, the tenant, under the Earl of Essex, of the ground. At his dwelling may also be seen some good basement mouldings, and a leaden coffin carefully modelled to the figure of its former occupant. The great want for an antiquarian's enjoyment of the scene, is a good plan, which might distinguish the conventual from the royal residence, and mark the site of the Priory Church; of the garden and the Hall of State.* I have carefully, but vainly, searched the County Histories, and the Catalogues of the British Museum. All now is indistinguishable, and Mr. Knight, who, in his excellent edition of Shakspeare, engraves from Froissart, the funeral and the figure of Edmund; is obliged to content himself with an ideal elevation of the palace. The entire quadrangles once covered, it is said, three acres of ground. Now all is swept away. You cannot even fancy that many a garden flower grows wild; yet the Shaksperian interest lies principally in the garden. The King's Langley scene [Richard II. Act III. s. 4] is a garden scene;† and it is there that the Gardener descants so wisely on the evils of over luxuriant apriocks. It might seem, in fancy, as if the curse of

* Mr. Gilbert Scott (the eminent architect, who was present when this paper was read) stated, that he had seen the foundations exposed, and had traced the outlines of the building. Mr. S. added, that the church was cruciform.

† I do not think that the subsequent scene "in the Duke of York's house" can be asserted to be at King's Langley.

Richard's queen on the garden had come true; for in return of the ill news of Richard's deposition, she passionately exclaims—

“Gardener, for telling me this news of woe,
“I would the plants thou graft'st might never grow.”

Beans and vetches possessed the spot when I was last there. It should be stated in justice to the ploughmen on the farm, that they take some interest in matters of antiquity. One of them produced to me, from his museum in the stable, an encaustic tile, or (as he was pleased to call it) “a flowered brick.” It represented a *fleur de lis*, beautifully emblazoned. His companion condescendingly remarked, that they were “gen'ous folk, those old people.” But the heavy heel of the husbandman treads recklessly in those courts. And, where no ruder sound once was heard than the requiem at the tombs of Royal Edmund and deposed Richard; there the pigs now grunt noisily as they go about their own ignoble pursuits. The only token of local recollection apparent at the spot, is the sign of the “Palace,” which a few years ago was taken for a beer-house close by. One is tempted to repine at such downfall. The words of the poet come to one's lips:—

“Out upon Time! It will leave no more
“Of the things to come, than the things before.
“Out upon Time! who for ever will leave
“But enough of the past for the future to grieve
“O'er that which hath been, and o'er that which must be:
“What we have seen, our sons shall see;
“Remnants of things that have pass'd away,
“Fragments of stone, rear'd by creatures of clay!”

But the Minister of Abbot's Langley must remind himself and his reader, that “the fashion of this world,” well and fitly, “passeth away.” A good subject of Queen Victoria's would make a foolish exchange to give up the uneventful peace and quiet of the present reign for all the pageants which ever poured forth from the Plantagenet's gates. A sound and grateful Protestant would little desire to see the Friars on that hill again. He knows that neither dirge nor requiem can profit the disembodied spirit which, from the moment of its liberation,

“Hath no part in aught that's done
“Beneath the circle of the sun.”

We will now return from the Palace and make our way down to the Village Church. As we go, I would point out the tower of the church in the sister (or brother) parish of Abbot's Langley, and the beholder would be pleased, I think, to see the white tower and long low Vicarage embosomed, as it appears from that spot, in thick wood. And I would take this opportunity to give the notion that I myself have of the personal character and habits of Edmund of Langley, whose birth-place we have just left, and whose tomb we are now about to see.—He was the fifth son, as I have said, of Edward III., and his historical importance will be acknowledged, when you bear in mind that it is from him that the House of York had its name, though

not its title to the throne.* In a note, I give the genealogy of Edward's family; here, I will speak rather of his personal character. I could venture to think him a good old English nobleman, one of the olden time. He is represented too by Shakspeare, who followed the old chronicler very closely, to have been slow, if not dull; quite unfit to stem the torrent which Richard's misgovernment had caused to set in against the throne. At the end of the 2nd act of Richard II. in Knight's Shakspeare, is given from Harding's Chronicle, this description of Edmund in early life:—

“ Edmonde hyght of Langley, of good chere,
 “ Glad and merry, and of his own ay lyved,
 “ Without wrong as chronicles have treved;
 “ When all the Lordes to Councell and Parlyament
 “ Went, he wolde to hunt and also to hawkyng;
 “ All gentyll disporte, as to a Lorde appent,
 “ He used, aye, and to the pore supportyng.”

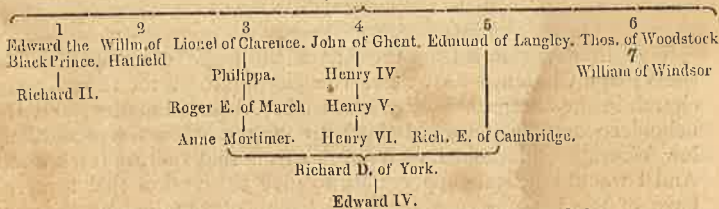
Froissart fully corroborates this sketch of a too easy and not very energetic man. At the time of Bolingbroke's landing at Ravenspur, he was Regent of the Kingdom for Richard, then absent in Ireland. This was a crisis quite beyond his powers. The words which Shakspeare puts in his mouth on hearing of the landing of Bolingbroke, describe with something like *naïveté*, the consternation of a good-natured man in trying times. His speech is worthy of Scott's Abbot's Boniface† when the English invaded the Halidome of Kennaquair.

Edmund.

“ If I know
 “ How or which way to order these affairs,
 “ Thus disorderly thrust into my hands,
 “ NEVER BELIEVE ME.”—Shakspeare, Richard II.

However he raised troops, and marched towards Bristol to meet Richard on his return from Ireland. He then threw himself into Berkeley Castle, and finding that he could not hold the place against the assault of the impetuous Bolingbroke, he came out to him and the two joined their forces. It is with much skill that Shakspeare puts in the mouth of this kindly man, the feeling description of Richard and Henry when entering into London. Much I wish that I had not first made acquaintance in that dreary book, Enfield's Speaker, with

* Edward III.



See Shakspeare's Henry VI. Second part. Act II. Scene 2nd.

† “ My brain,” said the poor Abbot, “ is dizzied with the emergency. I am not, I think, more a coward than others, but speak to me of marching and collecting soldiers and calculating forces, and you may as well,” &c., &c., &c.

The Monastery, C. XXXIV.

the beautiful scene, which ensues between the Duke and Duchess when she bids him fulfil his promise to tell the rest, after that "weeping had made him break the story off of their two Cousins' entry into London." We can imagine how speedily Edmund withdrew from the Court of Henry; how he shut himself up in his palace at Langley; how tenderly he received the hapless Richard's body, perhaps brought by his invitation; and how he was well content that his bones should lie near his bones. He seems to have been twice happily married; the second time to the daughter of Thomas Holland, Earl of Kent, yet his dying recollections returned to his earlier love, Isabel, the daughter of Pedro the Cruel, King of Castile, who had died, 1394. He gave special directions that he should be buried near to Isabel's grave. Chantry Chapels were appointed and endowed for the Duke and Duchess, and at least two priests were salaried according to the superstition of the time, to sing masses for them and their kindred. You must understand that they were buried in the conventual church on the hill. Probably their bones were not disturbed, but when the conventual buildings were demolished, the monument was removed to the village church.

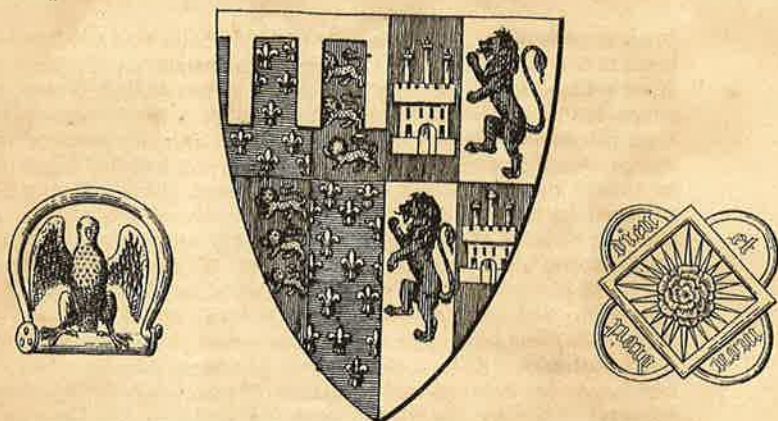
At this church I will suppose you to have arrived with me, you will find it almost equi-distant from the railroad in the lowest part of the valley, and from the summit of the hill on which the palace stood. Many have doubted whether there was originally a *parish* Church cotemporary with the Monastic establishment. Certainly there is a complete absence of any *early* architectural work. I believe that there is no trace of anything earlier than the decorated style, still I could think that there were always a parochial system and building. Probably it was little noticed while the priory was standing; but by degrees it became more prominent; and, at the time of the suppression, it received the trophies and adornments of the rival sanctuary. I shall not describe its architecture here, further than to say, that it has some good, though square-headed, windows, in what must have been an aisle, or chapel, north of the chancel. The tower is well-proportioned and well-built. The west window shows to advantage now the gallery is removed, and there is no doubt, that, were the church reseated, the effect of the whole would be very pleasing. I do not pretend, however, to lecture architecturally, but only to point out small matters worthy of note from their antiquarian and historical interest. I would therefore, take the visitor to King's Langley Church, straight towards the eastern end, where, within the communion rails, may be seen against the northern and southern walls, two altar tombs, as they are commonly called, of white and black marble. They are somewhat correspondent in style and size, but one is profusely adorned with the escutcheons of a younger son of England's Plantagenet King's, and with the arms of Castile and other coats.* The other

* Edmund of Langley, says Camden, in his Remains, was the first who took the white Rose as a device or *imprese*. He took also the falcon in a fetterlock, to show that he was shut out from the crown. His great grandson, Edward IV. when he succeeded to the throne, *opened* the lock in the device as he bore it.

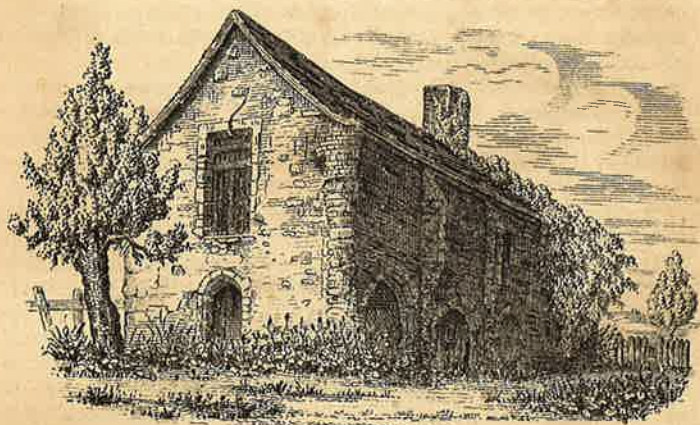
tomb is quite plain. There appears to be no doubt that the decorated tomb is that of Edmund of Langley. One would like to adopt the King's Langley opinion, that the tomb, corresponding in size and shape, is that of the discrowned Richard, but it hardly seems older than the present century. There is a singular circumstance connected with Edmund's tomb, which, I believe, I had the honor first to notice; the original slab having disappeared, perhaps having been removed for the sake of its brass, it is now covered with a portion of the altar stone of the church. Three, out of the five, crosses usual on such altar slabs, are still plainly visible. In the passage between the pews, just outside of the rails, lie several encaustic tiles; many are interesting and some are very rare. A small tile emblazoning the lions of England, in a space four inches square, was pronounced by a good authority, (Rev. C. Boutell,) to be almost unique. There is, besides, on the floor, at least one other "brass," but of no historical interest. That by the vestry door, belonging to Mr. Chenies, of Gifre's, (now Jeffries' farm) relates, that by his first wife he had five sons and four daughters, and by his second marriage, he had four sons and five daughters, and the united family of eighteen children is accurately represented. The visitor would find in the vestry a singular notice, or circular, about Touching for the King's Evil. There is also a large altar-tomb, with two effigies in the north aisle of the chancel; this is frequently declared to be that of Piers Gavestone, who, the reader will be surprised to hear, was probably buried at King's Langley. Weever, in his *Funeral Monuments*, states as much; he says, that after the favorite of Edward II. was beheaded at Blacklow Hill, near Warwick, (a place called in consequence, Gaveshed) the body lay for two years in the Church of the Friars-Preachers, at Oxford. Then Edward caused it to be brought with great pomp to the Church of the Friary, at King's Langley. The Archbishop of Canterbury, four Bishops, and many Abbots were present, but few of the nobility came. "Their great stomachs would not give them leave to attend." The tomb just mentioned, at all events, could not have been Gavestone's. The armorial bearings are those of the Verney family, and there is this much corroboration of the Varney claim, that, according to Clutterbuck, in recent times a house in the village was called Varney's lodgings. Clutterbuck gives a genealogy of the Varneys, which would connect this Varney with the Standard-bearer at Edge Hill. The pulpit is pleasing, but its carving is domestic in its character, rather than ecclesiastical. I would venture to pronounce it of the date of James the First's reign.

It must be admitted even by the parishioners of Abbot's Langley, that the chief antiquarian interest lies at King's Langley. Still it is quite time that we cross the valley, and attempt to describe the antiquities of the former parish. I will only mention, as we repass the station, that the name which was once regularly assigned to it by the railway authorities, was the Home-Park Station. The Paper Mills adjoining, are still called the Home-Park Mills. This keeps up the memory of the Home-Park belonging to the palace, which was

Plate III.



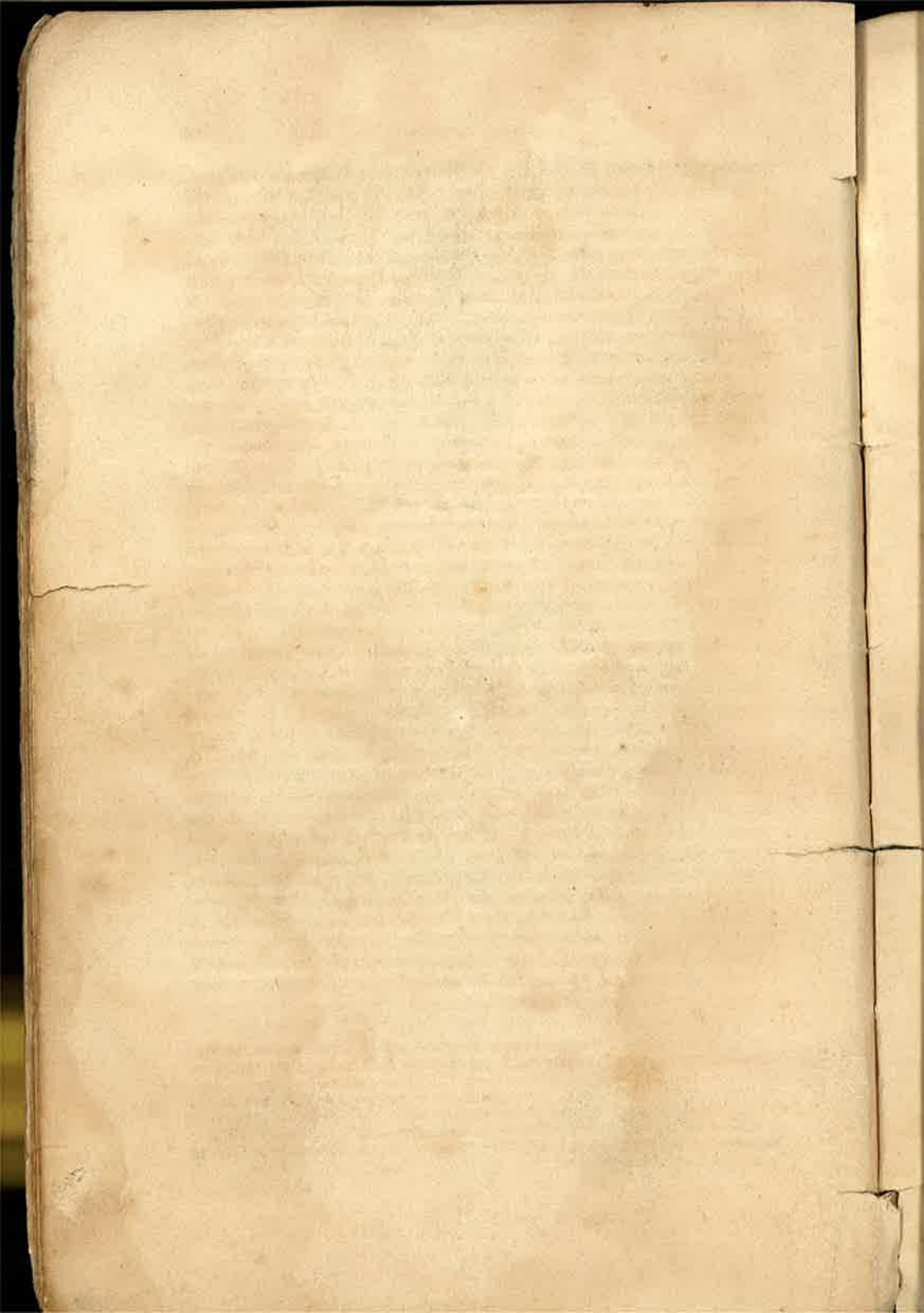
Arms and Devices of Edmund of Langley



The present remains of King's Langley Palace.



Money token issued at King's Langley



granted by Edward IV. to Thomas Betts, prior of King's Langley, to be held in pure and perpetual alms. In a field at the back of the mill, close to the old high road, and called Little London, have been found lately traces of a mediæval habitation. This, it has been suggested to me, may have been the remains of one of the Park lodges. In a writ of Richard II. to remove Geoffrey Chaucer from his post as clerk of the works at Childerne Langley, mention is made of "*logias nostras infra parcos nostros.*" The southern boundary of the park is thus given in the survey made in Queen Elizabeth's reign, to ascertain the necessary repairs for the fencing, "from Bury Bushes and unto Abbot's Gate and thence to the ryver." We ascend from the railroad to Abbot's Langley by a hill, which still retains its unpleasing name of "*Gallows Hill.*" Here, as on the verge of his jurisdiction, extending across the county to Barnet, once stood the tree which carried out the stern decrees of abbatial justice. It will be consistent with the plan followed hitherto to take advantage of our walk up the hill, for such particulars as can be given of the early history of Abbot's Langley. It was given by Egelwine Swartz, or the black, to the Abbey of St. Alban's at so early a date, that Edward the Confessor, confirmed the grant to Leofstan, the abbot of his day, who (in another sense of the word) was *his* confessor. Domesday Book records that in addition to a Norman lord and a knight, there was then at Abbot's Langley a "resident clergyman." "*Ibi est presbyter*" are the words. King John confirmed anew the grant of the parish to the abbey. He limited, however, the application of its revenues to the purchase of cloth for the monks' dresses. This corresponds singularly with the credible derivation given for the name, Serge Hill. It has been said that the pleasant seat of S. R. Solly, Esq. was so called, because the produce of its grounds were formerly devoted to the purchase of serge for the Benedictine dresses.* The manor remained in the hands of the monks without incident, until the time of the dissolution, when, says Newcome, it was valued to the commissioners at £62 15s. 11½d. per annum. The manorial estate became royal property and continued to be so until 1641. James I. granted it to his son Charles I., and in 1626, the first year of his reign, the King held a court at the Manor House. Fifteen years after this, it passed into the hands of Thomas Combe, the founder of the market lectures in St. Alban's, and other towns. By him it was demised to two colleges (Trinity College, Oxford, and Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge) with whom he associated a third party, a relation of his wife, Ann Greenhill.

* The Bill of Sale of the advowson of Abbot's Langley, at the time of the Reformation, has been kindly submitted to the writer by S. R. Solly, Esq. It is very short and simple, and begins as follows:—"This bill made the 28th day of September, in the thirtieth year of the reign of our Sovereign Lorde Kyng Henry VIII. witnesseth that I Edward North, Esq., treasurer of the revenues of the augmentations of our said Sovereign Lorde the kyng croune have received of William Ibrgrave of Langley Abbott in the Countie of Herts, Esq. the some of two hundred pounds sterling," &c., &c., &c.

The historical character of which Abbot's Langley has to boast is Nicholas Breakspear (Adrian IV.), the only Englishman who ever became Pope. He was the cotemporary of Thomas á Beckett. I think some persons are surprised to find that he lived at so early a date. I am slow to believe the story asserted by some, that he fled from the monastery of St. Alban's in disgrace, and that through his dulness he had been denied the tonsure. It seems agreed that he rose at Rome through his administrative ability, and it is more *probable* that he had been honorably despatched to that city on some official or diplomatic errand. His stirrup was held by the Emperor Frederic, and he is said to have granted to Henry II. the title of King of Ireland. Matthew Paris (page 71 of the Edition, 1640,) gives a very circumstantial account of the rejection of Nicholas Breakspear at the Abbey of St. Alban's, and of the address with which the Abbot Robertus, subsequently conducted an embassy to Adrian IV. He was either choked by a fly, or poisoned by a citizen, whose son he had refused to make a cardinal. Clutterbuck points out that Fuller seems hardly to believe the story of the fly which he relates—"this fly in the large territory of St. Peter had no place but his throat to get into." It is difficult, however, to know exactly when Fuller is serious. I hardly know whether the times of George II. are archæological; but I must not forget to mention that Langleybury, the woods and position of which must strike every one who comes up from the railway, was built by Lord Chief Justice Raymond, who, on being promoted to the peerage, took the title of Baron Raymond of Abbot's Langley. The title became extinct at the death of his only son. The father is best known among legal men as the author of Raymond's Reports. "The son was not," says Lord Campbell, "very distinguished." The Latin inscription on his monument seems to speak of him as a confirmed invalid, whose only aim was to live a simple and not useless life.* Langleybury may be seen on the right as the visitor walks up Gallow's Hill. There was a house, called Langleyburie, in much earlier times, on the site, and an entry is found in the parish registers as early as the year 1555, when it was in the occupation of the Childs. The Manor House vindicates its claim to the title by its quaint gables and tall brick chimneys. It is of some antiquity, and, either this house, or that at the Hide Farm, was occupied by Strong, or Strange, the *builder*, under Wren, the *architect*, of St. Paul's Cathedral. This person lies buried in St. Peter's Church, in St. Alban's, and his monument under the organ recites the particulars which give an interest to his career. Under the *one* Bishop of London, Henry Compton, and the *one* architect Wren, he was the *one* builder of our noble metropolitan cathedral. The house outside the church gates, at Abbot's Langley, on the left hand side,

* Hanc sententiam tumulo inscribi voluit,
Nec fallere vitam

Ultima laus est—

quæ modestiam animi pariter et indolem avitæ et paternæ laudis, si per ægrum licuisset corpus emulam, satis indicat.

beyond the cottage lately built for the residence of the curate, is of some age, as may be seen from its chimneys, and from its internal structure. I am informed that there are traces of an earlier building on an adjoining site. It is very probable that the ecclesiastical residence was on this property.

Now, it is quite time to consider ourselves as arrived at our church, well worthy as it is of careful examination, by any one who can "read" with architectural skill the various changes that our old parish churches have gone through. It consists of a tower, nave, and chancel, and two nave aisles. The plan of the church is perfectly regular; but, an aisle having been built at the south side of the chancel, much larger than the chancel itself, a very irregular appearance has been given to the whole interior. Within the recollection of this generation, this chancel aisle was walled off from the rest of the church, and a Sunday school was held in it, admittance to which was obtained through a low door. Some fifteen years ago it was thrown into the church, by a process called at Abbot's Langley "turning an arch." The architectural feature of the church, may be said to be, the two pairs of Norman arches at the west end. I fear that they are indebted to the plasterer, at least, in part, for their peculiarly fresh appearance; but the solidity of the shafts and the style of the mouldings, billeted and zigzag, are their own. I believe the church to have been originally Norman, and to have terminated at the east end in an apse, having at the west entrance a low square Norman tower. Then it was rebuilt by degrees, much as was the nave of St. Alban's abbey; and the chancel as having been the last finished, shows the latest architecture—it has perpendicular mullions, while the aisles have decorated windows. The corbel-heads under the beams show, more clearly than is usual, the symbolism that was intended by such things, for, in the nave, these heads are hideous and fiendish—there is the common burlesque of vices in monastic cowls. In the chancel all is pleasing and holy—angelic figures are supposed to be playing or singing. This certainly corresponds peculiarly with the idea that once was entertained, that the nave was supposed to represent earth, and the chancel, heaven. This, however, is mentioned simply as an antiquarian fact, without the slightest wish to revive or press the notion. The decorated windows in the chancel aisle and the early English arch at the tower end, have been noticed by antiquarian visitors as very good of their kind. The font is engraved in the book of fonts, published by Van Voorst.* It is there ascribed to the fourteenth century, and is generally considered to have been emblazoned. It has the emblems of the four Evangelists, alternated with blank escutcheons. There are two large monuments to the Lords Raymond; both are in the allegorical style which seems so unsatisfactory to the taste of this day; indeed, the monument of the Lord Chief Justice represents a regular scene, to which a key is

* I need hardly say that the basin which is lamented in the letter-press to that engraving, has been removed, and the font itself has been raised out of the bricks in which it was sunken.

given in a Latin sentence above the figures. Considered as sculpture the group is interesting, and the masons who moved the monuments from their former unjustifiable position, valued the whole work of the larger memorial at £2000. A singular and unpleasing taste once prevailed in this church, viz., to have the space under a family pew excavated to be a family vault. This has been done in three instances, but, of course, will never be repeated. There are a few brasses, one to Robert and Elizabeth Neville, A. D. 1475; it adds the reflexion, "this world is but a vanitie; to-day a man, to-morrow none." There is a larger brass in the central aisle to commemorate Thomas Cogdell and his two wives; it is interesting chiefly as showing that so late as A. D. 1607, a man, in circumstances to afford such a memorial, was not ashamed to be styled "yeoman." The original table of commandments is preserved in the vestry. They are painted on wood, of the date 1621, and may be supposed to have been executed in obedience to the cannon of 1604, which ordered such a table to be set up in every church. The commandments are followed by a distich in honor of the king in whose reign they were executed, viz., James I. who took as his motto, "*Beati Pacifici.*"

"Oh, glorious king, long may his joys encrease,
"He hath thy wars subdued by his peace."

The church is dedicated to St. Laurence, and the church restorers of the year 1838, or thereabouts, thought well to put up a gridiron in more than one place. The vestry is peculiar, being an encroachment into the building rather than, as more usual, an excrescence from it. It is of very recent date, but the masonry shows that there was always a recess in the corner of the north aisle, perhaps to allow space for the rood loft stairs; or, to form, as now, a back ground for the pulpit.

The registers of this parish are very ancient. They begin in the year 1538, the very year in which parish registers were ordered by Henry VIII. for the whole kingdom. The injunction by Cromwell, which commanded the Bible of largest print for all churches, prescribed register books for all parishes. Before this time, the monastic obituaries and other records had supplied their place. A parliamentary inquiry was ordered some years back into the state of all registers. It appeared from the report of this commission that out of the 11,000 parishes in this country only 812 have registers of an antiquity as high as ours. Of these 812, however, 40 have the advantage of anterior entries. In these the local authorities in 1538 incorporated such existing materials as they possessed in other books. Our registers are kept with some *hiatus valde deflendi* from 1538 to the present date. The earliest book is remarkably well written, but it is evident that a day-book, or rough book was kept, and the register book made up—as Cromwell directs—once a week, in the presence of a churchwarden. They do not fail through the critical times of the civil war. I observe, however, a peculiar laconism in the entries, e. g. "Buried was"—"Baptized was"—the names, too, seem to partake

of the puritan taste of that day. We have "Abed-nego," "Damaris," &c. I have found much interest in the frequent examination of these books. They show the antiquity of the peasantry of the place. The names of the present labourers are found 300 years ago. [For instance, Puddyfatt, Dell, Deacon, Ewer.] Then some seem to have been among the gentry. The gradual degradation of a name may also be traced. Thus, we have De la Marre, becoming by degrees, Dolamore, as common with us to this day. They show, too, that there is nothing new under the sun. Boys were drowned 300 years ago in the same ponds as now ("in stagno de Waterdell"), and fruit-gatherers fell from trees in the same orchards where they meet with accidents now-a-days. The affidavit book as to burial in woollen is kept carefully from the time of the act being passed (30th Charles II.) to its repeal in 1814. It would appear that several of the higher families voluntarily paid the £5 penalty rather than be subjected to the course prescribed by the act.

On leaving the church and village, we should turn our steps to the left towards Bedmont. Immediately we should pass the fine old trees on the Lawn of Langley House, and directly after these we come to Cecil Lodge, the ancient dower house of the Salisbury or Cecil family, whence its name. Here the mother of the present Marquis is said to have passed her honeymoon. Just on the entrance to Bedmont, on the left hand, is Breakspear Farm, the site of the residence of Nicholas Breakspear. Camden, however, says, that his family lived near Uxbridge, and his father's name is said to have been Robert de Camera. Perhaps the Latin name may have denoted some office he held as Chamberlain or Steward. It is understood that the Breakspear family passed afterwards into King's Langley, and my friend, the Rector of St. Alban's, is clear in his recollection that he once baptized a Breakspear. We will trust that this was a collateral descendant of the pope's. There is not a stone on or about the present building that can claim to have been standing in the twelfth century. The late proprietor, however, not unnaturally, advertised as one of the recommendations of the property when about to be sold, that it had been the "birth-place of the only English pope." "Bedmont," I conclude, is a corruption of "Beaumont;" particularly as the latter name is always pronounced hereabouts as if written "Beament." It is a very pretty hamlet, the cottages are partly grouped around a deeply sunken pond which, perhaps, was excavated to form a causeway for a road. This pond is surrounded by chesnut trees, and the water is generally fresh and clear. The reputation of the hamlet is scarcely so pure, but there can be no room for despairing of God's blessing on the means of grace and of education, which are now, earnestly and anxiously, brought to bear on the old and the young among its inhabitants.

* In the vestry is a tablet to the memory of one John Lewis, who was vicar 54 years, and who was succeeded by John King, who lived after his institution, 53 years. King, however, was deprived of the living, in 1662, for non-conformity.

From Bedmont, a lane would take any visitor in a diagonal line direct to the station, from which the reader is imagined to have set out. This paper, therefore, may now be brought to an end, and the writer is not afraid to do this, by assuring anyone who may come to Abbot's Langley with these pages in his hand, that he will find at the Vicarage every readiness to explain or point out to him, any of the historical objects or places, which have been here so imperfectly described. To such readers as are little likely to find their way to these villages, a parting suggestion is respectfully offered, that they should in a similar spirit examine the antiquities about their own homes. Surely, the dreary lane or barren heath, which dismays us on a winter-morning's walk, would be less uninteresting if connected in our thoughts with some historical event, or with some old religious foundation. We need not be too anxious to prove to others the exact amount of good it will do us to know these things. We may plead that much of the Saxon element in our language, may be made clear to us, by noticing the names of places and their explanations. We may urge that something of historical knowledge may be refreshed by thinking over the dates and reigns in which various changes took place. Or, if unable to assign a better reason why we feel interested in the sayings and doings of earlier days, we may always fall back on the old heathen sentiment—

Homo sum ; humani nihil a me alienum puto."

"Myself a man, and one of human race,

"All human things I feel it mine to trace."

H. H. Clarke
H. H. Clarke

St. Albans Architectural & Archaeological Society

Patrons:

THE MARQUIS OF SALISBURY, K.G. THE EARL OF ESSEX.
THE EARL SPENCER, C.B. THE LORD BISHOP OF ROCHESTER, D.D.

President:

THE EARL OF VERULAM, *Lord-Lieutenant*.

Associate Members:

- | | |
|---|--|
| Ames, Lionel, Esq. | Hutchinson, the Rev. J., M.A. |
| Andrews, S., Esq. | Hutchinson, the Rev. B. |
| Aspithall, A., Esq. | Hargreave, O., Esq. |
| *Burney, Ven. Archdeacon, D.D.,
F.R.S., V.P. | Jobbins, Mr. J. B. |
| Bell, Mr. James | Kemble, J. M., Esq., M.A. |
| *Buckler, J. C., Esq. | Kimpton, T., Esq. |
| *Buckler, C. A., Esq. | *Lipscomb, J. T., Esq. |
| *Blagg, T. W., Esq. | *Lipscomb, the Rev. C., S.C.L. |
| Brooks, W. Jun., Esq. | *Lipscomb, the Rev. F., M.A. |
| *Blomfield, the Rev. G. B., M.A. | *Lipscomb, J. T. N., Esq., M.D. |
| Brandon, Ralph, Esq. | Lydekcker, G. W., Esq., M.A. |
| Belson, the Rev. W., M.A. | Lydekcker, Mrs. |
| *Bennett, Mr. William | Lytton, Sir E. L. Bulwer, Bart.,
M.A., and M.P. |
| Burchell, H. H., Esq. | Laing, G., Esq. |
| Brooks, Miss | Laing, G. E., Esq. |
| Clutterbuck, Robert, Esq. | Laurence, J., Esq. |
| Casey, T. Esq., M.D. | Lowe, R. Grove, Esq. |
| Cobbold, R. T., Esq. | *Mountain, the Rev. W. H., M.A. |
| *Cabbell, B. Bond, Esq. | *Nicholson, the Rev. H. J. B., D.D.,
F.S.A. |
| Crofton, Anthony, Esq. | Newcome, the Rev. H., M.A. |
| Currie, Arthur, Esq. | Nicholson, the Rev. H. D., B.A. |
| *Clarke, J., Esq. | *Prodgers, the Rev. E., B.D. |
| Camberlege, C. N., Esq. | Pearson, the Rev. C. B., B.D. |
| Cust, the Rev. Arthur, M.A. | Proctor, the Rev. G., D.D. |
| Donaldson, T. L., Esq., Prof. Arch.
V.P. | *Puller, C. W., Esq. |
| *Dixon, J. B., Esq. | Pickthall, the Rev. T., M.A. |
| Dimsdale, Charles J., Esq. | Rochester, (the Lord Bishop of), D.D. |
| Dickinson, J., Esq. | Ryder, the Hon. Granville D. |
| Demain, the Rev. H., M.A. | Russell, W. S., Esq. |
| Debenham, G., Esq. | Salisbury, (the Marquis of), K.G. |
| *Espinasse, James, Esq. | Spencer, Earl, C.B. |
| Evans, W. H., Esq. | Starkey, the Rev. Ar., M.A. |
| Evans, J., Esq., F.S.A. | *Smith, Abel, Esq. |
| Faithfull, the Rev. P., M.A. | Southwell, the Rev. M. R., M.A. |
| Faithfull, the Rev. J., M.A. | Solly, S. R., Esq., M.A., F.R.S., V.P. |
| Finch, the Hon. General | Solly, B. Horsman, Esq. |
| Frampton, the Rev. C. T., M.A. | Seymour, the Rev. Sir J., Bart., M.A. |
| *Franks, A., Esq. | Verulam, the Earl of |
| Gee, the Rev. R., M.A. | *Wigg, Francis, Esq. |
| Gape, Thomas F., Esq. | Wigg, Mrs. |
| *Grant, Ven. Archd., D.C.L. | White, Alfred, Esq. |
| Hollingsworth, D., Esq. | Wortham, the Rev. W., M.A. |
| Halsey, the Rev. Fitzmore, M.A. | Woollam, John, Esq. |
| *Hawkins, the Rev. E., M.A. | Watkins, the Rev. H. G., M.A. |
| Halsey, T. B., Esq., M.P., V.P. | Way, Albert, Esq., M.A., F.S.A. |
| Hall, the Rev. H., M.A. | |

It is requested that any communications having reference to the Society, may be sent to the Secretary, REV. HENRY D. NICHOLSON, Saint Albans.

N.B.—Those names marked with a star are Life Subscribers.