

## The Presidential Address

The Very Rev. R. H. MALDEN, Dean of Wells, then delivered an address, entitled 'The Growth, Building and Work of a Cathedral Church'. This will be printed by the Oxford University Press.<sup>1</sup>

The President was thanked for his address, on the proposition of the Rt. Rev. Abbot E. Horne, seconded by the Rev. Preb. G. W. Saunders.

After lunch the members left for

### WEST MONKTON

to visit the Church of St. Augustine (Rev. R. K. Pagett, Rector).

Mr. E. E. TROTMAN, following some words of welcome from the Rector, read a paper entitled 'Notes on the Manor and Parish of West Monkton', which, with additional material, is printed in Part II of this volume.

Dr. F. C. EELES, O.B.E., described the building, as follows :

The Church of St. Augustine, West Monkton, is one of the rather larger churches of the Taunton area, and is remarkable not only for its fine and severely plain tower, but also for being one of the most westerly churches possessing a clerestory. As is well known, there are very few churches farther west that have this feature. Generally speaking it does not accompany the waggon roof, though there are some cases of it, such as Shepton Mallet, Banwell, Congresbury, Crewkerne, Wellington and Cullompton.

As West Monkton Church stands now it is almost entirely in the Perpendicular style. But it contains evidence of earlier work in a late thirteenth-century window re-used at the west end of the south aisle, and also in the chancel arch. One or two stones, moreover, re-used in later times, appear to show characteristic Norman axe-dressing. We may perhaps conclude then that there was a much earlier church on the site of the present nave, the chancel of which was rebuilt in the

<sup>1</sup> Since our Annual Meeting this and another little publication entitled 'Abbeys: their Rise and Fall', also by the Dean of Wells, have been published by the Oxford University Press, price 1s. 6d. each.

fourteenth century, the date of the existing chancel arch and of the former east window. In the middle of the fifteenth century the tower was built; soon afterwards the south aisle was added and a little later the north aisle, and probably the clerestory with it. That the tower was built before the clerestory is shown by the existence of the line of the earlier and lower roof on its eastern face inside the church. Early in the nineteenth century, perhaps about 1820, a small vestry was added to the north side of the chancel. In 1866 some alterations were made in the seating and in 1883 there was a drastic enlargement and rearrangement of a disastrous kind.

As in some other churches in the district, notably Hatch Beauchamp, Orchard Portman, Wilton and Kingston, modern reconstruction has been carried out in such a manner as to make it difficult to read the story of the building, on account of the re-use of old work and the skilful imitation of old methods of building. Before the enlargement, the aisles only extended to the east end of the nave. There were no chancel aisles. In the church safe fortunately is preserved a copy of the faculty granted in 1883 for the new work. This included adding aisles to the chancel, re-flooring and replastering the whole building, the provision of new altar and altar-rails, pulpit, font, desks, reseating, and also for a new three-light east window with new glass and the moving of the old glass to the west window. This was done under an architect named Strawbridge, and the structure was handled in the following manner:

The north aisle was lengthened one bay alongside the chancel eastwards to join the vestry, two new arches being made, one from the west, the other from the north side of the chancel, the old east window of the aisle being re-used on the north side of the extended portion. Something similar was done on the south side; the aisle was extended eastwards with two arches, one from the west, the other from the chancel; the three-light window displaced by the new arch was re-used in the east end of the extended aisle; the displaced chancel doorway was rebuilt near the east end of the south side of the aisle; the extended part of the aisle being left without a window on the south side. This was in order to accommodate a large mural monument formerly on the east wall of the aisle,



which then had no window. The east end of the chancel was largely rebuilt, at any rate externally; a new east window of rather coarsely designed Perpendicular tracery in three lights being substituted for a beautiful fourteenth-century window of four lights, the fourteenth-century rear arch being retained. The Victorian restorers frequently substituted tracery of an earlier type for Perpendicular work, owing to their mischievous theories about later gothic work being 'debased'. But the writer cannot recollect any other instance where they reversed the process. The explanation would seem to be that they abolished the old east window partly because it was in four lights—a feature they disapproved of in east windows—and also because they wanted to make the building architecturally uniform. Moreover, there was a desire to erect a memorial window to the late rector and the old window had four lights of 14 in. width, while the new one was made with three lights of 21 in. width. It is amazing that this incredible piece of vandalism (as well as other uncalled for destruction of the fine pulpit and other fittings) appears to have passed without protest. Had such things occurred a quarter of a century earlier it would not have been surprising, but it is difficult to realize that they were done so recently as 1883.

The Central Council for Care of Churches fortunately possesses a photograph of the church from the south-east before all this mischief was done. It shows the window very clearly. It was one of the most graceful and beautiful fourteenth-century windows in the county; it contained stained glass of great importance which was most improperly moved to the west window in the tower. The photograph shows a central mullion with an extra member which forked and divided it into two equal sections of two lights each. These had cinquefoiled heads and above them the tracery consisted of two pear-shaped lights trefoiled, springing from the sides and meeting in the centre, making an ogee-shaped enclosure for the main lights below, with a small lozenge-shaped light between them and leaving space for a quatrefoiled vesica above. The lozenge-shaped upper part of the tracery had a pear-shaped cinquefoiled light in the centre below, supporting two quatrefoiled vesicas above with a plain angle light at the top of the window. There was a hood mould with plain stops.

We now describe the building in detail.

The east window has already been referred to. On the south side of the chancel is a Perpendicular window in three lights cinquefoiled; the mullions run to the head of the window with tracery divided into three sections, two panels in the centre and one at each side, trefoiled. This form of tracery, with the omission of the small central apex light, is found in all the windows of the north aisle and clerestory, but without labels in the clerestory. The label stops are square in the case of these two windows.

The re-used small doorway, once in the chancel, has quatrefoil ornaments in the spandrels between the arch and the label, which has square terminals.

The south aisle has rather large plain battlements. The side windows, two to the east and one to the west of the porch, are in two ogee-headed lights, with tracery in two trefoiled panels; their labels have head-stops. The porch is also embattled: it has a low gable up which the battlements run. The outer doorway is of a usual type with small shafts carrying the innermost order of the arch, their capitals adorned with leaf ornament. Above is a sundial with an inscription partly flaked away but including the name Timothy Lock and the date 1725. The inner doorway has narrow mouldings and above it an angel image bracket. In the east wall of the porch is a holy-water stoup with an arch showing traces of its having been worked in preparation for something else and a very perfect moulded basin.

The west window of the aisle is in two lights, uncusped, with plate tracery containing a circular light. It is re-used work of late thirteenth-century date, but has a later label.

The north aisle is embattled in like manner, but the side windows are in three lights. Their labels have head-stops, now worn and broken. There was once a north doorway opposite the south porch, but it has been walled up and an ugly chimney has been built outside it. The west window of the aisle is in two ogee-headed cinquefoiled lights with two trefoiled tracery lights. The clerestory has windows similar to those of the north aisle, only shorter and without labels. It has no parapet, but it retains a large portion of a richly carved cross over the east gable.



Internally, the arcades are very similar : of the usual local fifteenth-century type, with clustered pillars, hollow mouldings continued round the arches and small moulded capitals to the shafts. The capitals on the south side are ornamented with small paterae or leaf ornaments ; those on the north are plain.

The difference in date between the two aisles is not very great, but the south aisle is probably the earlier, because the clerestory, which must be later than the tower, has windows similar to those of the north aisle. It is possible that the battlements were added to the south aisle, when the north aisle was built.

The tower has four stages and is very lofty, probably about 100 ft. high to the top of the battlements. It has double buttresses with plain offsets just below each string-course. The string-courses are massive : the high plinth is carried round the deeply moulded west doorway to form a label to it ; a string-course runs across below the window sill : another which marks the top of the lowest stage of the tower is curved in like manner to form the label of the west window. This window, set rather deep in the wall, is in three cinquefoiled lights with tracery lights in two panels subdivided into three lights each : it has a transom of a different character, evidently a comparatively modern renewal made when the glass was transferred from the east window. The next stage is plain on three sides : on the south it has a shallow niche with its canopy enclosed by a square label, a curious combination found in a few places in West Somerset, e.g. Winsford. Above this niche is a two-light window with a transom, having cinquefoiled lights and a quatrefoil in the tracery, in proportion rather like the west window, the next string-course curved round its head in like manner. The next or third stage of the tower is plain on all sides. In the belfry stage the windows are of two lights, set high up, with plain transoms and tracery like the south window below. The top string-course has prominent grotesques in the centre and at the corners. There is little space beneath the embattlements. These have four deep embrasures a side and massive continuous mouldings, the treatment reminiscent of that in several local towers, e.g., Norton Fitzwarren and Nynehead. At the north-east corner

is an octagonal staircase turret, which projects eastward as well as northward, with small embattlements at the top, scarcely higher than the rest of the tower. The steps of the staircase are unusually steep with very narrow treads in the upper part.

The material of the tower is from the local shaley beds of the Devonian series, and its very rough surface was originally plastered. A certain amount of this remains, but most of it has come off leaving the tower walls in an unprotected condition.

This remarkable tower may be compared with that of Norton Fitzwarren. There we find many of the features closely parallel: the proportions of buttresses, belfry windows, battlements and string-courses are the same. Norton has additional grotesques sitting on the corners of the lower string-courses, and only three stages: it has no large south window in the lower part. But there is a niche of the same type, only smaller, and a small narrow window above it. The treatment of the west doorway and the (shorter) west window is similar. The staircase turret is much the same, save that it does not project eastwards.

Both towers have similar arches of three recessed orders chamfered, the two inner orders fading into the respond.

There can be little doubt but that the two towers are from the same hands.

The date is probably just after the middle of the fifteenth century.

This would put the south aisle of the church towards the middle of the century, and the north aisle and clerestory to some time before the end.

The nave has a good waggon roof with five purlins and leaf bosses, not of great size. The wall plates are large and have a richly carved trail between mouldings above and below. At the foot of each brace is an angel holding a shield. The chancel roof is modern, the aisle roofs flat and plastered.

The chancel arch has two recessed orders chamfered: it is of the fourteenth century. Another relic of the same period is the plinth of the south wall of the chancel. Above the chancel arch is an unusually large expanse of wall which



must have formed the background to the rood. The piscina niche with a trefoiled ogee-head and small balls in the sunk spandrels seems to have been re-set in a higher level when the chancel was pulled about in 1883. The head has a glass groove and was at one time part of a window.

At the east end of the south aisle is a plain piscina, the drain of which is carved with a cat's head instead of the flower or ball sometimes found in this position.

The north aisle has a mutilated trefoiled ogee-headed piscina of earlier date in the small section of wall east of the respond of the arcade, and close to the projection for the rood-loft staircase, the exit from which to the screen is blocked: the doorway into it is some feet from the ground.

The west window contains the glass, or rather some of it, removed from the east window, to make room for a memorial window in 1883. It consists of four lights, one in the centre above the transom, and three below it. The upper one represents the Ascension. The left-hand one below shows Simeon holding the Christ child, with rays coming down from golden light above in which is a small dove. In the central light is our Lord carrying the cross, with a similar treatment of rays coming down from a lamb at the head of the light. In the right-hand light is our Lord wearing the crown of thorns and a small crown of thorns above the rays. The whole work is executed in enamel paint, the colours are brilliant and rich, and in each case there are striking backgrounds of rolling clouds and golden light. The centre light at the top is signed 'Gray & Son Fecit 1827'. The style is very much the same as that adopted by Pearson a good deal earlier. These lights are 14 in. wide. Those of the present east window are 21 in. Thus the width of glass in the east window is now 63 in.—thrice 21, whereas it was formerly four times 14 in., that is 56 in. With the extra mullion this brings the total width of the window to about the same as at present, reckoning the additional mullion. The lights of the old window were taller than would have been required for this glass as it is now, so it is not impossible that there may have been more.

Between the north aisle and the north chancel aisle is a piece of screenwork made up of parts of seventeenth-century seating with a cornice of early eighteenth-century type, no doubt from

the destroyed pulpit or reading-desk. On one of the cross-pieces are incised the following remains of an inscription :

EST MOVNCTON, THESE SEATES  
HOVSE OF LAMBRICKE TO REMAINE  
A°. DMI : 1614  
RCHE, TO AND FOR THE VSE OF THE  
NOSSE OF THE SAME GENTLEMAN

In the base of the tower stands a seat the back of which contains four panels carved in low relief with designs based on Italian models of the kind which became so popular here in the second quarter of the sixteenth century.

The font is modern. A much worn fifteenth-century octagonal basin with quatrefoils in the panels stands in the churchyard to the east of the porch, raised upon some pieces of window tracery.

Until the unfortunate restoration in the nineteenth century the church possessed a fine pulpit and sounding board of late seventeenth- or early eighteenth-century work. It is shown in an old photograph preserved in the church and must have been of the same type as the pulpits at Kingston, Bradford, Crowcombe and Nettlecombe.

#### MONUMENTS

There is an interesting series of seventeenth and eighteenth-century mural monuments.

Above the eastmost pillar on the south side of the nave is a large one of white marble flanked by small pillars and surmounted by a shield of arms in front of a pediment and a crest above. The long inscription is illegible from the ground as the paint has worn out of the lettering. To read it would require a scaffold. It is difficult to think that this is the original position.

Against the north chancel wall is a lias slab to William Kinglake, physician, 1660.

On the south chancel wall is a large white veined mural monument to Richard Musgrave, second son of Richard Musgrave, formerly of Nettlecombe, who married the Hon. Dame Rachel Speke, daughter of William Wyndham of Orchard Wyndham and relict of Sir George Speke of Hazelbury, Wilts, who died 1727.



In the north aisle near the east end is an oval cartouche in a wreath with a shield of arms below, to George Musgrave, 1693.

Farther west is a tablet signed by T. King, Bath, to William Sanford, son of John Sanford, rector here, who died in 1806.

On the wall farther west is a slate slab surrounded by a low relief border with a gold background, to Elizabeth Musgrave, 1708, Edward Musgrave, 1719, and their children down to 1786. This is a very attractive piece of local work.

On the south wall of the south chancel aisle, formerly against the east wall before the aisle was extended, is a massive but somewhat clumsy mural monument consisting of a large urn in a niche with swags above and mantling outside, and a long verbose inscription below to Alexander Popham, Rector of West Monkton and Clayhidon, *d.* 1738, erected by his son in 1767. Somewhat unusual for its period, it is more like the work of the time of the Peninsular wars, and is lacking in the grace and refinement one associates with the middle of the eighteenth century.

On the south aisle wall, west of the south door is a mural monument consisting of a tablet flanked by pillars and surmounted by a pediment and a shield of arms to Thomas Rich, Rector of East Quantockshead, 1699. It is attractive but roughly executed and not of the highest quality.

On the west wall of this aisle is a small brass to Anne Rich, 1713. A brass figure—a half-effigy in academical costume, dating from *c.* 1460—was found in the church safe in 1944, and has been figured and described by Mr. A. B. Connor (p. 79). The church plate is described in *Proceedings*, xlvii, 175-6.

#### WHIPPING-POST AND STOCKS

Mr. ST. GEORGE GRAY said that the whipping-post and stocks situated in the churchyard on the south side of the church were in good condition considering their age, but in order that their life might be prolonged his wife had recently treated the whole of the woodwork with a preservative solution.

The accompanying photograph (Plate I) had been taken by himself some thirty-five years ago.<sup>2</sup> Mrs. Mary Yard, the

<sup>2</sup> Photographs of some interesting North-country stocks are to be seen in *Proc. Soc. Antiq. Newcastle*, x (1902), 298-9.

centenarian who was born at West Monkton and lived in the same cottage, at Burlinch Plantation, for sixty-seven years, and who died on 15 October 1935, could well remember people being put into these stocks. As a child she saw the first railway train run into Taunton.

The history of parish stocks and whipping-posts has sometimes been misunderstood. As they have often been removed from their original position on the village green or in the market-place and erected in the churchyard as in a kind of 'museum', it has been supposed by those who found them there that they had some connection with ecclesiastical discipline. This, however, was never the case, although their use was often in the control of the incumbent and churchwardens in a lay capacity.

Stocks were employed from early times as a convenient method of securing recalcitrant prisoners. In 1376 Edward III was petitioned by Parliament that stocks should be set up in every village, apparently for the punishment of those who had committed minor offences. The sight of a troublesome neighbour, exposed to ridicule in the stocks, appealed to the boisterous English sense of humour until comparatively recent times, and fear of this punishment acted as a wholesome deterrent.

The drastic measures against vagrants and sturdy beggars, taken by the Tudors, were initiated by the Act of 22 Henry VIII, which provided for whipping at the cart-tail. A somewhat milder Act of Queen Elizabeth, passed in 1596, was the cause of the general provision of whipping-posts for the discouragement and punishment of the same type of offender; but it is not to be thought that whipping-posts were unknown previously. Parishioners were very rarely, if ever, whipped at the post in their own parishes. The punishment was freely inflicted on wandering beggars—men, women and children—who were being passed to the parishes on which they were chargeable. The whipping of female vagrants was not forbidden until 1791.

It is believed that there are few whipping-posts remaining in England to-day. Perhaps the most famous is that to be seen at Coleshill,  $8\frac{1}{2}$  miles E.N.E. of Birmingham. Then there are stocks and whipping-posts at Gretton and Apethorpe in



Northamptonshire. At Lewes Castle Museum, the stocks and whipping-post from Horsted Parva, Sussex, are exhibited. On the village green at Roydon, Essex, the whipping-post and stocks and the old prison built of oak may be seen.<sup>3</sup>

The *Tatler* in 1905 described the stocks and whipping-post of Ufford, Suffolk—'near the top of the post are iron clasps in which the wrists of the culprit were held, whilst undergoing punishment'.

At St. Leonard's Church, Shoreditch, there were hand-stocks and a whipping-post. They were originally on the village green, where the 'Horns Inn' stood later. The thatched roof over them was set up on disused water-pipes of wood from the London streets. The whipping-post was in 1905 described as complete, with the iron wrist-locks.

In the *Quarter Sessions Records for Somerset*, covering the Commonwealth period, attention is drawn to the bad condition of the stocks in the Tythings of North Petherton, at Spaxton, and at Stathe in the parish of 'Gregory Stoke'. Rates were made to meet the necessary expenses of repair. (*Som. Rec. Soc.*, xxviii, 124, 128, 242, 256.)

An incomplete list of stocks still remaining in the county is given in *Somerset and Dorset Notes and Queries*, xxiv (1944), 131, as follows: Bradford-on-Tone, North Cheriton, Creech St. Michael,<sup>4</sup> Faulkland (Norton St. Philip),<sup>5</sup> Lovington,<sup>4</sup> West Monkton, Tintinhull and Trull.

To these may be added the examples at Churchstanton, Fitzhead, Stoke St. Gregory (six holes, as at West Monkton), Templecombe and Wembdon.

The Langport stocks, which were removed in 1837, were burnt by the church caretaker in 1906.

The stocks of Chard are now exhibited in the Somerset County Museum. Formerly they stood in the Shambles at Chard Town Hall; previously to that they were kept in the old parish pound.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>3</sup> A photograph of the group appeared in the *Daily Mail*, 24 February 1924.

<sup>4</sup> These examples are not now *in situ*, and although they are believed still to exist they may be described as having fallen into decay.

<sup>5</sup> The stone post by the stocks at Faulkland was probably used as a whipping-post.

<sup>6</sup> *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.* lxiii, 151. 'Two fellows named Silvester and Courtenay were prominently conspicuous under the pillars of Chard market-

Stocks are preserved in the Town Hall at Axbridge, 'together with the apparatus formerly used in bull-baiting, and a money-changing table dated 1627'.

The town stocks of Yeovil, which stood in the Borough, between the pillars of the old market-house, were last used in 1846 to punish a drunken man.

In 1859 an intoxicated chimney-sweep was confined in the stocks for four hours in the market-place at Martock for insulting two ladies.

With the kind permission of the Rev. R. K. Pagett tea was provided for the members on the Rectory lawn, after which those who had helped to make the excursion a success were thanked by the Excursion Secretary. After tea the gardens of Glebe Court were visited by the kindness of Lt.-Col. V. B. and Mrs. Thurston.

house with their feet in the stocks on Wednesday last, for non-payment of fines inflicted upon them for drunkenness' (*Sherborne Journal*, 25 June 1857).

David Harris was put into the stocks at Chard, c. 1868, for stealing a tobacco-box at a fire.

One of the latest dates for the use of stocks must be the case of Mark Tuck, a rag and bone dealer, of Newbury, Berks, who was sentenced to five hours of this punishment on 11 June 1872 (*Bygone Punishments*, by Wm. Andrews).