

THE CHURCH.

FOR eight long centuries at the least has the Church of Gosberton extended its kindly shelter to devote and earnest worshippers. Overlooking the entire range of events which are chronicled herein, and viewed by almost every person mentioned in these pages—for eight hundred years has our noble church though not always in its present form—stood in the midst of the village, a fitting subject for the pride of residents, or for the admiration of passers-by.

None can fix the date of the earliest church here. Although no *ecclesia* is mentioned in Domesday Book there is circumstantial evidence of its existence in the Saxon name Gosberdchurch. The Domesday commissioners, not being specially instructed to make returns of churches, acted on their own judgment, and in some counties omitted them partially, and in others altogether.¹ The inference to be drawn is clear. But were this pre-conquest edifice of stone we have now no trace of it. Of the Norman building which followed we have many remnants, and of these we shall speak hereafter. This church, later documents tell us, was not far distant from the sea, and was liable to the sudden incursions of its angry waters. Shingle was dug up under the floor of the Nave during the recent restoration, while sea-weed has been turned up in digging in the fields hard by.

¹ Rev. J. C. Cox, LL.D., F.S.A. "How to write the History of a Parish." p. 106.

The earliest appointment of a rector of Gosberton, so far as the records we have searched shew, was when Richard de Alteberg was instituted in 1208 or 9; but, while the list of incumbents during this century is complete, no mention of the church occurs before the time of Thomas de Rye, viz.: in 1291. Prior to the year 1288, the tithes had always been paid to the Pope, but in that year Pope Nicholas IV. handed them over for a period of six years to Edward I. for the purpose of defraying the cost of a crusade. So that they might be paid in full, the king ordered a taxation which was begun in all parts of England in 1288 and was finished in the province of Canterbury in 1291, and of York 1292, this was under the direction of John, Bishop of Winchester, and Oliver Sutton, Bishop of Lincoln. Gosberton contributed £33 6s. 8d., and for purposes of comparison let us look at the sums taken from other places in the Deanery of Holland.¹

				£	s.	d.
Eccl'ia de Fraunton	...	...	...	36	6	8
Eccl'ia de Algerkyrk	...	...	...	60	0	0
Eccl'ia de Sutt'ton	...	...	...	36	13	4
Vicaria ejusdem	...	...	...	13	6	8
Eccl'ia de Wyketoft	...	...	...	30	0	0
Eccl'ia de Swynesheved	...	...	...	36	13	4
Eccl'ia de Byker	...	...	...	17	6	8
Vicaria ejusdem	...	...	...	13	6	8
Eccl'ia de Donyngton non taxatur q'a est Templar'o				0	0	0
Vicar ejusdem	...	...	...	6	0	0
Eccl'ia de Quadav'yng p't' pens'	...	...	...	13	6	6

¹ Taxat. Eccl. P. Nich. IV.

Eccl'ia de Goseb'kyrk p't pens'	...	...	...	33	6	8
Eccl'ia de Pyncebek	...	...	...	66	13	4
Vicaria ejusdem	...	...	...	20	0	0
Eccl'ia de Surflet p't' pens'	...	...	...	32	13	4
Eccl'ia de Spaldyng	...	...	...	53	6	8
Eccl'ia de Guappelade	...	...	...	73	6	8
Eccl'ia de Holbeck	...	...	...	120	0	0

Not until 1535 *temp: Hen: VIII.*, when tithes ceased to be forwarded to Rome, was it deemed necessary to hold a new survey. The rents resolute then recorded¹ are: Sir Thomas Tempest 5d., Lord Willoughby 6d., Abbot of Peterburgh 4s. 9d. Frankpledge 2d., Heirs of Thomas Darley 7½d. Abbot of Swineshead 2d., Duke of Richmond 4s. 7d. Sir John M'ham² 6d., John Bolles 8d., Maurice Barkeley 2d., Thomas Holland 2½d., Edward Cawode 2d., and on the day of the anniversary of Thomas Edmonde from his foundation 8s., And from the foundation of Sir 'Thomas Tempest for the salary of the organist 6s. 8d., amounting in all to 27s. 7d., and the clear yearly value of the Chantry of the B. V. M. is put down at £6 13s. 4d. while Gosberkirk is entered at xiijs.

Ten years later as a preliminary to the appropriation of the revenues of all chantries and collegiate churches another survey was taken, and from this we get the name of another of our vicars, Henry Toplif or Topplys.

The clear yearly value of the living of Gosberton in the time of Queen Anne was £45.³

¹ Valor Eccles.

² Markham

³ Ecton. Thesaur. Rerum Eccles. p 258

CHANTRY CERTIFICATE.¹

Cantaria Beate Marie in
Gosberton.

Chantry of the B. M. in
Gosberton.

Fundacio ignoratur, Sed ut asseritur ex relatione parochianorum ibidem quidam Thomas Tempest miles et alii feoffaverunt Ricardum Baron et alios inhabitantes ibidem in diversis terris et tenementis ea intencione ut invencerent unum capellanum perpetas divina celebraturum in ecclesia ibidem pro animabus eorundem et aliorum fidelium. Quorum exitus et proficua quidam Henricus Toplif nuper incumbens ibidem habuit et percepit qui moriebatur ante festum Sancti Michaelis ultimum preteritum. A quo die exitus et proficua terrarum et tenementorum predictorum remanent in manibus dictorum feoffatorum et tenencium premissorum Parochiani communicantes ibidem sunt quatuor centum quinquaginta et duo.

The foundation is unknown ; but as it is asserted by the relation of the parishioners there, a certain Sir Thos. Tempest, Kt., and others, enfeoffed Richard Baron and other inhabitants there in divers lands and tenements with the intention that they should find one chaplain to celebrate divine services forever in the church there for souls of the same [feoffees] and of other faithful [people]. The issues and profits of which a certain Henry Toplif, late incumbent there had and received ; who died before the feast of St. Michael last past. From which day the issues and profits of the lands and tenements aforesaid remain in the hands of the said feoffees and of the tenants of the premises. The parishioners communicating there are 452.

Terre et tenementa predicta valent per annum ixli viijs. vjd.

The lands and tenements aforesaid are worth by the year 9 li 8s. 6d.

Redditus resoluti et alie reprise exeuntes extra terras predictas per annum xs. ijd. obolum dimidiam quadrantem.

Rents resolute and other reprises issuing out of the lands aforesaid by the year, 10s. 2½d. and half-a-farthing.

Clarus valor terrarum et tenementorum predictorum repris deductis per annum, viij li. xviijs. iiijd. quadrantem dimidiam.

The clear value of the lands and tenements aforesaid, reprises deducted, 8li. 18s. 3½d and a half.

Bona catalla vel alia ornamenta ibidem dicte cantarie pertinentia. xxixs.

Goods and chattels or other ornaments there, to the said chantry pertaining, 29s.

¹ Lincs. N. and Q. II. iv. pp. 115-116. Per late Rev. S. B. Sealy.

In 1721 the Dowager Lady Thorold gave £200 to the Church which was increased by another £200 from Queen Anne's Bounty.¹

An inventory made c. 1800 includes a communion table and green cloth, silver cup, chalice and paten, weighing about 66 oz., 2 boxes for the offertory, a table of degrees, a chest with three locks in the vestry—a very ancient one still in its old place—a store in the vestry, a pulpit and reading-desk made in 1722—a three-decker, which Vicar Bragg removed and had a table made from, to be kept as an heirloom for ever, at the Vicarage—a large Bible, 2 large Common Prayer books, the Kings Arms, and Ten Commandments, a church clock and a timepiece, five bells and their frames, two surplices, 10 register books—the first 1559,—1595, imperfect, and the second beginning in 1659.

There were formerly several gilds in connection with the parish church. The earliest known in England was founded by Orcy, a friend of Canute, at Abbotsbury, in honour of God and S. Peter. Primarily their object was one of mutual assistance, burial of the dead and prayer for souls, subsequently developing into the Craft-gilds; the fore-runners of the modern trades' unions. A great feature of these gilds, which were usually in connection with an altar in the parish church, was an annual feast, in which the poor were invited to take part, and a pageant which took place on the Saint's day. Several such gilds flourished

¹ Ecton: *Thes. Rerum Eccl.*

at Gosberton long ago, but we know little more of them than their bare existence.

In 1498, on April the 4th, John Stybarde of the "Gilde Blessed Marie de Gosberkyrk" and the same person on April 25: of the "Gilde of B. V. M. Gosberkyrk" respectively, appears at the Manor Court of Dobbledike as a defaulter, and at every court between that time and Oct: 28.¹ Again in 1527 we meet with "Robert Cawood, Alderman of Guild of S. Mary of Gosberkyrk."² We know nothing of its foundation; but it would undoubtedly be connected with the Lady Chapel, in which at the present day the meetings of the Communicants' Gild, with the Vicar as Warden, are held every month.

The Gild of Corpus Christi in Gosberkirk, foundation uncertain, having Roger Pishey for its incumbent, who was at that time 68 years of age, is mentioned in the Chantry Certificates, c. 1547.³

The Gild of S. John the Baptist is met with in the year 1465, when the great windows of the South Transept was filled with heraldic glass and Latin Inscriptions, beginning, "Pray ye for the souls of," (enumerating various persons) "and for the brethren of the Gilde of S. John the Baptist, who caused this window to be made in the year of our Lord, 1465."⁴ One of the nave windows adorned with painted glass once bore the Latin Legend, "Pray ye for the souls of the brethren and sisters of the Gilde of S. John the Baptist who caused this window to be made."⁵

¹ Dobbledike Manor Ct. Rolls, per Lady Eliz. Cust.

³ Record Off. Chant. Certifs. Linc. 73.

² Id.

⁴ Holles.

⁵ Id.

The Church is dedicated to SS. Peter and Paul. We find it known by this name in 1419, when Thomas de la Launde in his will leaves his body to be buried there,¹ viz. "in the choir of S. John." The large Chapel on the south side of the Chancel has been variously known in recent times as the Lady Chapel, the Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament, and S. Catharine's. The latter name we have only found on the old print of the Church by Morton, in 1795. There seems to be no authority for the second name; but the number of the testamentary burials in the Lady Chapel in early times point to it as the largest and most important. It is just possible that what in earlier days was known as the Lady Chapel having suffered violation, was re-dedicated to S. Catherine. Yet, lacking authority for this, it would surely be better that it should hereafter be known by the name of the Lady Chapel only, than, as at present by three distinct appellations, the cause of endless confusion.

Closely interwoven with the history of the Church is the story of its incumbents—a story which leads us far back through the centuries to very primitive times, back to the days of the Papal Interdict—we wonder if the parish priest continued his ministrations at Gosberton during these troublous times regardless of Papal interference?—a story which carries us back to days of darkness, of ignorance and superstition; but now and then we come upon a name which flashes like a great beacon light across the ages, whose lustre is not yet dimmed.

¹ Gibbons, *Early Linc. Wills.* p. 129. In 1268 it appears to be dedicated to S. Peter alone.

THE INCUMBENTS.

RECTORS OF GOSBERTON.

- 1208 Richard de Alteberg, presented by Bp. Hugh de Wells.
- Nov:3 Hugh Burgundia (Vicar).
- 1229 Magister Richard Devon, presented by Robert de Rye.
- 1230 Gilbert de Freilli, presented by Robert de Rye.
- ? Henry de Bratona or de Bretton (Rector in 1245).
- 1272 Thomas de Rye (Subdeacon), presented by Sir
12 Id: Nicholas de Rye, on the death of Henry de
Ap. Bratona.
- 1296 William de Langetoft (Capellanus), presented
18 Kal: by Sir Ranulph de Rye, Kt., on the death of
Dec. Thomas de Rye.
- 1312 John de Rye (Acolyte) (Rector in 1333), presented
4 Non. by Sir Ranulph de Rye as guardian of Edmond,
Dec: son of Sir Nicholas de Rye, on the death of
William de Langetoft.
- ? Ralph de Broke (Rector in 1335).
- 1344 John de Grimesby (Priest); presented by Sir
11 Kal: Nicholas de Rye, Kt., on the resignation of
Nov: Ralph de Broke.
- 1349 John Warde (Priest), presented by Sir Nicholas
10 Kal: de Rye, Kt., on the death of J. de Grimesby.
Oct.
- 1354 William de Clee (Priest), presented by Sir
10 Kal: Nicholas de Rye, Kt., on the resignation of
Mar: John Warde.

- 1361 William de Wykeham (Clk:) presented by
3 Id: Sir Nicholas de Rye, Kt., on the death of
Oct: Wm. de Clee.
- 1364 Andrew de Stratford (Clk:) presented by Sir
Id: Nicholas de Rye, on the resignation of Wm.
Feb: de Wykeham.
- 1362 Dns: Philip de Weston, presented by Sir
5 Id: Nicholas de Rye, on the resignation of A. de
Ap. Stratford, appointed to a prebend in York
Cathedral.
- 1370 Dns: Giles de Cloune, presented by Symon
July 6 Symeon, Thomas Logas and William de
Wodethorp, on the death of Ph. de Weston.
- [Inquisition as to Vacancy, etc.]
- 1381 Dns: Robert Loterynton (Priest), presented
Nov: 15 by Symon Symeon, Domicellus, not stated.
- 1392 Thomas la Warre (Priest), presented by Sir
Nov: 6 John la Warre, Kt., on the death of Ds: R.
Loterynton
- 1394 Mag: Peter de Dalton (Clk.), presented by Sir
Dec. 15 John la Warre, Kt., on the resignation of T.
la Warre.
- 1402 Thomas Toneton (Caps.), presented by Robert
Nov. 20 Waterton, Lord of Gosberkyrk, on the death
P. de Dalton.
- 1404 Richard Flemyng, presented by Robert Water-
July 29 ton, Esq., on the resignation of T. Toneton.
- 1408 D's. Thomas de Barnesley, presented by Robert
Waterton, Esq., on the resignation of R.
Flemyng.
- 1410 Thomas Toneton (Priest), presented by Robert
Sep: 14 Waterton, Esq., on the resignation of D's.
T. de Barnesley.

- 1428 Nicholas Dixon (Priest), presented by the king
May 24 (Henry VI.), on the death of T. Toneton.
- 1432 Mag: Robt: Thwaytes (Priest, S.T.B.), pre-
Feb. 14 sented by William Bothes, Master of St. Nic-
holas de Pontefact, on the resignation of N.
Dixon.
- 1449 Mag. John Burgh, M.A., presented by the
Ap: 10 Prior of Nostell, on the resignation of Thos:
Thwaytes.
- 1461 Mag: Richd: White (Priest), presented by
Aug. 15 Henry Sotehill, by grant from the Prior and
Convent of St. Oswald, Nostell, on the resign-
ation of John Burgh.
- 1471, Oct. 1st. Appropriatio Ecclesie de Gosberkirk.

VICARS.

- 1471 Richard Milys (Clerk), presented by the Dean
Oct. 22 and Chapter of Lincoln, on the resigna-
tion of Rich: White.
- 1602 George Dyer (Clerk), presented by the Dean
Oct. 2 and Chapter of Lincoln (with whom the
patronage has ever since remained), on the
death of the last incumbent.
- 1604 Mark Somerscales (Clerk), presented on the
Oct. 11. cession of Geo: Dyer.
- 1624 Henry Bell (Clerk), presented on the death
Oct. 15 of last incumbent.
- 1662 John Burkitt, presented on the death of the
Sep. 2 last incumbent.

[Henry Golding, described as minister, 1644-5].



THE REV. JOHN TOPHAM, M.A.

- 1670 Thomas Pedder, LL.B. (not stated).
Ap. 14
- 1681 Robert Nussey, B.A., presented on the cession
July 22 of T. Pedder.
- 1702 Thomas Collins, M.A. (Clerk) presented on the
Mar. 22 death of Robt : Nussey.
- 1704 John Manby (Clk), presented on the resign-
ation of T. Collins.
- 1716 Thomas Townsend, A.B., presented on the death
Dec. 18 of last incumbent.
- 1751 John Austin, M.A., presented on the death of
Aug. 30 last incumbent.
- 1759 Wyat Francis (Clk), M.A., presented on the
June 7 death of the last incumbent.
- 1781 Philip Williams, M.A., presented on the death
Feb. 1 of the last incumbent.
- 1830 John Calthrop, M.A., presented on the resigna-
Mar. 2 tion of last incumbent.
- 1846 John Bragg, M.A., presented on the death of
Mar:26 last incumbent.
- 1853 John Topham, M.A., presented on the death of
May 30 last incumbent.
- 1879 Sparks Bellett Sealy, M.A., presented on the
Nov. 14 death of last incumbent.
- 1895 Edgar Torr Hudson, M.A., presented on the
May 8 death of last incumbent,