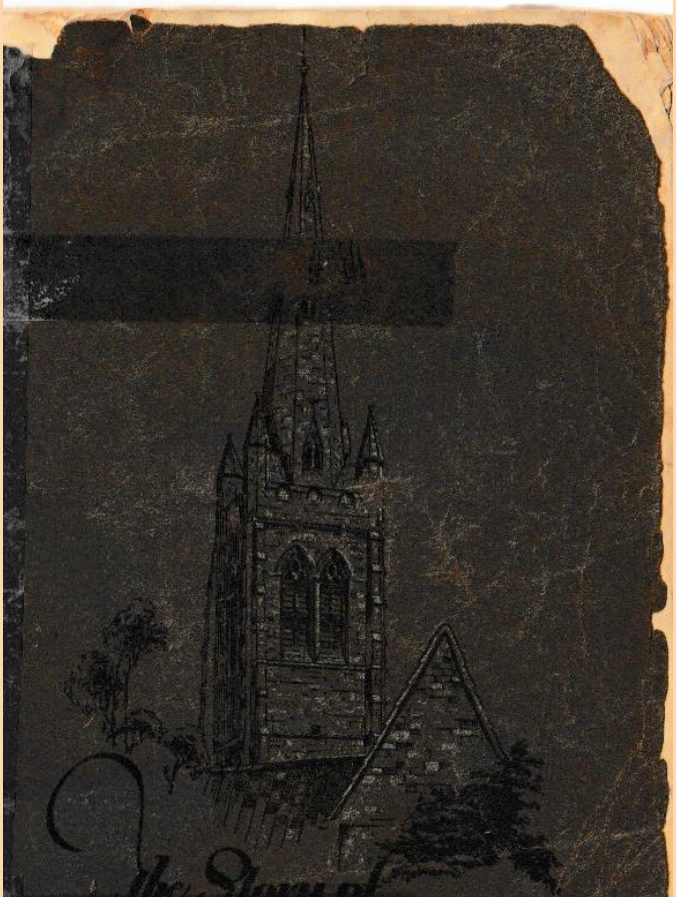

The Story of

OAKHAM CHURCH, SCHOOL AND CA[illegible]TLE

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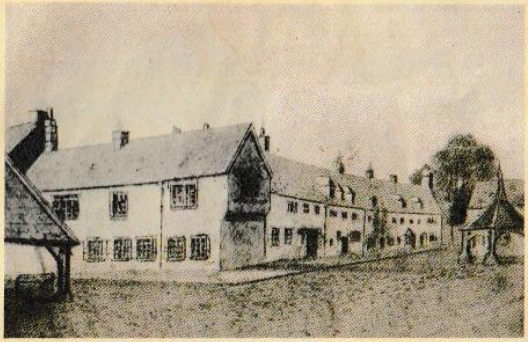

OAKHAM SCHOOL AND MARKET PLACE 80 YEARS AGO.
(From a pencil sketch by the late Mrs. Hassan).

The Story of OAKHAM CHURCH, SCHOOL and CASTLE

Illustrated

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TO VISITORS

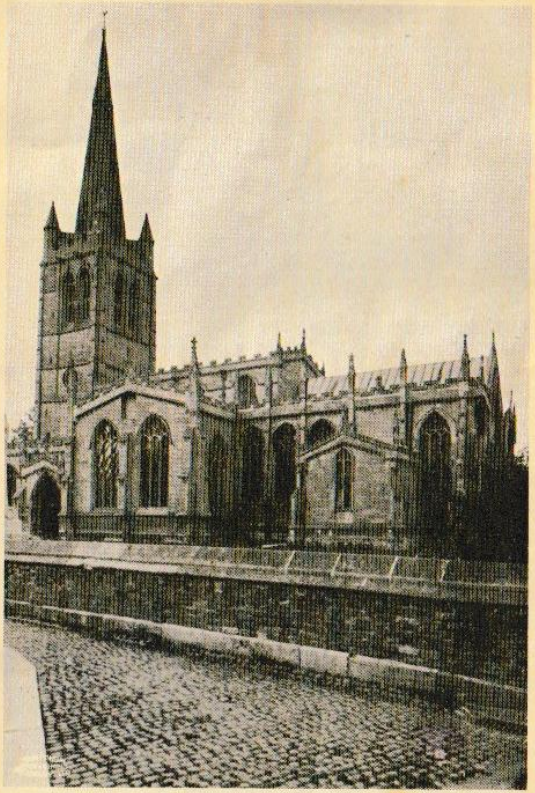
At the request of a large number of visitors to Oakham Church this handbook has been prepared. To help visitors to see other interesting buildings in the town, particulars of the ancient Chapel of St. John and St. Anne, the Elizabethan School and the Norman Castle, have been included. The handbook is for the ordinary visitor rather than for the archæological expert, and thus is simple in character.

I would be most ungrateful, if I did not frankly state, that this handbook has only been made possible through the generous help of the firms who have advertised therein. I, therefore, do not hesitate to ask visitors to Oakham to read the advertisements, and should they require to purchase goods in the town, to kindly patronise the firms whose subscriptions have been the means of printing the handbook.

The articles on Oakham Castle, Oakham School and the Foundation of St. John and St. Anne, record the names of the writers. I am grateful to Mr. A. Hamilton Thompson, Mr. Doherty and Mr. Hawley for their kindness in undertaking the work. For the information on the Church many sources have been referred to. Should there be any inaccuracies in the information given, the fault is mine, and not the sources I have used.

A. Edward Fraser,

1932. *Vicar of Oakham.*



Photo—Heawood & Son.

The Exterior, Oakham Church.

Photo—Heawood & Son. *Copyright.*

The Market Cross.

Photo—Heawood & Son. *Copyright.*

Interior, looking East.

OAKHAM CHURCH

TO make it easy for the visitor to Oakham Church, with but a short time to dispose of, it would be well to point out some of the interesting details, although the entire building is worthy of a prolonged study.

Site.—There have been three churches, all of considerable size, built on this site, one in the Norman period, one in the thirteenth century and the present church.

Font.—All that remains of the Norman church is the bowl of the font, date c. 1180 A.D. This is circular and decorated with a handsome arcade of interlaced semi-circular arches, the capitals of the small shafts being carved with waterleaf foliage. The base of the font is that of the old churchyard cross, which was probably destroyed in the days of Cromwell.

Thirteenth-Century Church.—In the thirteenth century and during the reign of Henry III a church of considerable size existed. Of this church the portions remaining are the south porch complete, with the inner doorway; the chancel arch, excluding the corbels; the window (now filled in) in the east wall of the south transept. It might be that the pillars in the north and south transepts originally formed part of the nave arcades of the thirteenth century church, seeing that the capitals betray a strong resemblance to similar mouldings of this period. They appear to have been used by the designers of the present church, who formed the double transepts by using the old pillars to support the arches which are later in date. The musician fixed in the south wall of the tower is probably from the thirteenth century church.

The thirteenth century church, cruciform in shape, consisted of tower and spire in the centre, nave, north and south aisles, transepts and chancel, and it is interesting to note that the line of junction of the old thirteenth-century roof, with the east face of the tower, can still be seen.

The general features of the architecture of this period can be seen in the nailhead ornament of the capitals in the south porch, the section of the mouldings of the arches are grouped in square-shaped order.

The string course beneath the windows of the south aisle, inside the building, indicates that the lower part of the south wall belongs to this period. It is continued round the inner walls of the south transept. The north transept also has a thirteenth-century string course, and in its east wall is a piscina of the same date with a fluted bowl and an edge-roll with two fillets, one on the edge, the other on the soffit.

Trinity Chapel.—About the end of the thirteenth century the north chapel was added to the chancel. This chapel has a very interesting history. It was the particular treasure of the Convent of St. Peter of Westminster. The intimate connection between Oakham Church and the wealthy Abbey of St. Peter's at Westminster dates back to the time of the Conquest. Edith, Queen to Edward the Confessor, had been granted the manor of Rutland, including Oakham and its church. Upon her death in 1075 A.D. the fruits of the church went to the Abbey of Westminster, and the advowson of the church remained in the hands of the Dean and Chapter of Westminster, as successors to the Abbot and Convent, according to one authority until about 1850 A.D. This seems to be incorrect. James Wright in his *History of the County of Rutland*, printed in 1684 A.D., states :—

> "After the desolution of Westminster Abbey, King Edward VI, in the 4th year of his reign, granted among other things the Advowson of the Vicarage of the Church of Okeham to Nicolas Ridley Bishop of London and to his successors for ever; and this was by his Charter dated 12 day of April in the said 4th year of his reign.
>
> "The Vicarage of Okeham is valued in the Kings Books, at 28L. 3s.
>
> "The present Patron is the Bishop of London."

The patronage of the Vicarage of Oakham is now in the hands of W. H. M. Finch, esquire, of Burley-on-the-Hill. Oakham included the four chapels of Egleton, Langham, Barleythorpe and Brook. In the village of Langham a family of yeoman farmers produced a boy, Simon, who became a monk at Westminster in 1349 A.D. and shortly afterwards became Abbot. Edward III made him treasurer of the realm in 1360 A.D., Bishop of Ely in 1362 A.D., Chancellor in 1364 A.D., and Archbishop of Canterbury in 1366 A.D. The Pope conferred upon him in 1368 A.D. the Cardinal's Hat. He died in 1376 A.D., leaving his great wealth to the Convent.

The Convent, to commemorate Archbishop Langham, and probably using some of the wealth left by him, rebuilt the north chapel about 1450 A.D. The walls were made higher and the arches connecting it with the chancel were raised to a height corresponding to those of the nave, but the old stonework was kept, the heightening being effected by lengthening the columns and bases.

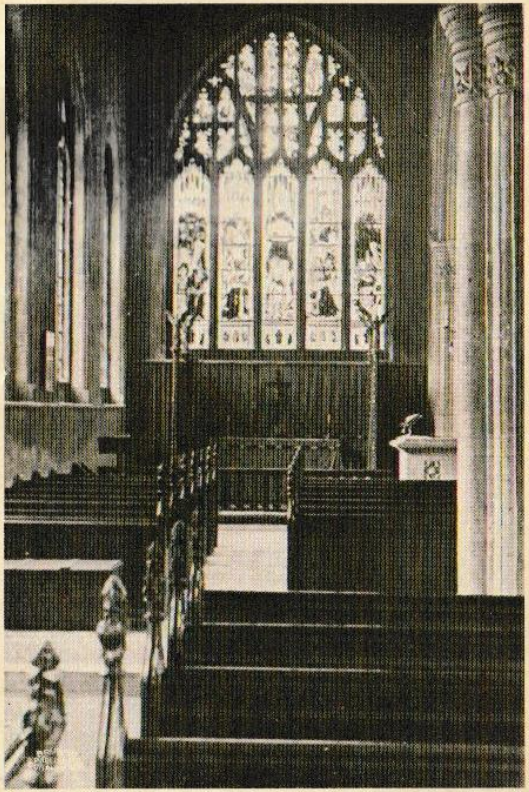
This chapel is dedicated to the Holy Trinity.

With such intimacy between Oakham and Westminster it is not surprising to find that there was very considerable clerical activity in Oakham. In the thirteenth century there were six priests labouring in Oakham, probably members of the Convent, or more likely secular priests paid by the Convent. They are said to have lived in a house near the Market Place. This house may have been Flore's House in the High Street, which still has its early English doorway, or it may have been the old Vicarage, now the Sanatorium of Oakham School. Flore's House and another house, No. 19 Northgate Street, still have in the entrance hall the original piscina, probably used for washing the hands.

It may have been that the priests formed some sort of College of Chantry Priests, and their connection with Westminster would infer that they lived a common life. These six priests did everything that was done in Oakham. Not only were they the clergy of the town, but the doctors, sick nurses, lawyers and schoolmasters. It is, therefore, not surprising that we find Oakham School in our midst. In Elizabethan times, Archdeacon Johnson must have found some remnants of their work.

Oakham School was founded in 1584. Some are of the opinion that there was a school at Oakham before the Grammar School was built by Robert Johnson; but I do not agree. Boys of Oakham may have been taught by the chantry priests before chantries were suppressed. It is incorrect to say that Oakham and Uppingham schools were founded by Archdeacon Robert Johnson. Johnson was not made Archdeacon till 1591.

Fourteenth Century Church.—During the first quarter of the fourteenth century, shortly after 1300 A.D., the rebuilding of the nave was taken in hand.



Photo—Heawood & Son. *Copyright.*

Chapel of the Holy Trinity.

It seems that the Norman and thirteenth-century churches had a central tower, where the nave, transepts and chancel joined. This tower now disappears and the space occupied by the tower was thrown into the nave. An entirely new tower and spire was built at the west end of the church.

The chief feature of the nave arcades is the elaborate carving of the capitals. If the visitor will inspect the capitals, starting from the east, he will find that they are instructive. The aim was to teach through the eye. Thus, starting with the capitals on the south side, we get a complete story. The south was the side of light and joy. All processions on joyful feasts, turned to the south, after leaving the altar, as to the side of light.

Capitals.—The carving on the eastern respond sets forth the three fundamental truths of Christianity. Looking at the carving, we find :—

1. The risen Christ rescuing Adam and Eve from the jaws of death. Note the open mouth of death from which Adam and Eve come and Christ holds in His hand the standard of Victory. There was an old belief that the first souls to be rescued by the risen Christ were the first parents.
2. The Annunciation. Blessed Gabriel appears to the Holy Virgin at her prayers to announce the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ.
3. The Assumption. God the Father, holding in His Hand the Orb, crowning the Blessed Virgin in Heaven.

The first capital shows the symbols of the four Evangelists. The human form of St. Matthew, the Lion of St. Mark, the Ox of St. Luke, the Eagle of St. John. These Evangelists proclaim the teaching set forth on the eastern respond.

The second capital is carved with angels, who again take up the message of the four Evangelists and sing the same good news.

The third capital appears to represent local feeling. The Abbey of Westminster gathered in the Great Tithes, leaving but little money to those ministering in the town to carry on the actual work. The fox thus runs away with the goose that laid the golden eggs, leaving the small goslings disconsolate. Next is the monkey unable to move by reason of the heavy weight attacked to the collar. He is unable to do his work through lack of funds. Next is a man with a

large broom sweeping the place clean. The fox and the man are probably meant to represent the attitude of the Abbey of Westminster, the monkey, the local priests, and the goslings the inhabitants.

This interpretation is local tradition but the fact remains that the Great Tithes are still collected on behalf of the Dean and Chapter of Westminster.

The western respond shows the pelican picking her breast to feed her young with her own blood. This takes up the message of the first three pictures in stone, for it is the ancient symbol of the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. The Saviour feeding His children with His Body and Blood.

Turning now to the capitals on the north, we find the same idea of teaching with the eye. The north was the land of darkness. When the church processions were penitential in character, leaving the altar, they turned to the north side of of the church, the land of darkness.

The eastern respond has a beast-like figure with a human head, playing upon a musical instrument; the figure ends in foliage. This respond is damaged, probably the stone, at a later date, was roughly knocked away to make room for a three-decker pulpit, or like the responds of the chancel arch, damaged by later screenwork. The screens have since been destroyed and there is no record on the subject.

The first capital is very beautiful. There is a man's face and from his mouth issues foliage. It has been suggested that the foliage represents a poisonous leaf.

The second capital shows grotesque heads and limbs, expressing human emotions, such as pain, and a magnificent dragon, biting itself, suggesting Satan and the sting of sin.

The third capital is a somewhat similar design of heads and hands. The art of the Mason was that, in a wonderful way, he could express in stone equally well the emotions of pain, grief, joy, fun, etc. This can be seen in the various carved faces both in the interior and exterior of Oakham Church.

The western respond emphasises this teaching by its picture of the Fall. It is the expulsion of our first parents from the Garden of Eden. There is to be seen the Angel with the flaming sword executing his work. Eve is shown handing to Adam an apple, and above Eve's arm is a Devil's head attached to a serpent's body.

In the early fourteenth century the transepts were evidently

heightened in proportion to the new nave. Thus in the north transept we get a curious piece of architecture. The arch abuts awkwardly upon the adjoining column. It would seem that in carrying out this work of heightening, the arcade was raised by building loftier arches without raising the column. In the south transept, which was remodelled somewhat later, the columns were heightened, but still retaining the old capitals. The arches are not so lofty.

Fifteenth Century.—The tower and spire were completed during the fourteenth century, but the spire was heightened in the early fifteenth century at the expense of Roger Flore, probably about 1430 A.D.

Spire and Roger Flore.—Roger Flore in a codicil to his will dated 20th October, 1425 A.D., refers to the voute of "Okeham stepil" in words which, transcribed into modern English, read as follows:—

> "And if the voute of Oakham steeple be not made in my life the which I have made covenant of with Thomas Nunton, mason, to give him 5 mark* for the workmanship (of the which I have paid him a noble on ernest) I will the same covenant be fulfilled of my good after my decease as soon as my neighbours will ordain for the stuffe that shall go thereto of the which stuffe Richard Oxenden hath paid to Fairchild £.† 13s. 4d. for freestone."

Probate of his will was granted 20th June, 1428 A.D. He drew the codicil to his will 28th October, 1425 A.D. In those times as a rule it did not take long to obtain Probate: he may have lived to see the year 1428 A.D.

In the west face of the tower there are three niches containing statues of our Lord Jesus Christ, St. Peter and St. Paul. "Peter," the weathercock, appears to be the original one dating about 1430 A.D. and there are two interesting repair plates on the bird showing dates 1632 A.D. and 1737 A.D.

Lady Chapel.—In the fifteenth century, about 1480 A.D., the south wall of the chancel was pierced and a chapel dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary was built. Attached to this chapel was a building of two storeys, used as a priest's house. The lower storey now only remains, but from the outside, some traces of the second storey may be made out. There is a small "priest's door" in the south wall of this chapel

* 66s. 8d. † The figure giving the amount of £ is illegible.

Photo—Heawood & Son. *Copyright.*

Interior, looking from the South door towards the North Transept.

Photo—Heawood & Son. *Copyright.*

The Plate.

dedicated to our Lady and outside is a very fine holy water stoup.

The church, as completed, was a church with five altars. The dedication is to All Saints and the Blessed Virgin Mary. The north chapel is dedicated to the Holy Trinity, the south chapel to our Lady, but we do not appear to know to whom the altars in the north and south transepts were dedicated.

Interesting Details.—There are one or two further interesting items to see.

Close to the pulpit is a decorated bracket whereon stood a figure of some saint. Under the bracket is a carved crowned head, and this is thought to be the head of King Henry VI (1422–1461 A.D.).

The decoration of the southern corbel of the chancel arch, near the carving of the Assumption, shows acorns, probably alluding to the town Oak-ham.

Over the north door is a bracket and it is thought that it probably carried a statue of St. Christopher, the guardian against storms and tempest. It is within the bounds of imagination to think of the townsmen of Oakham, in years past, as they passed to the south of the church on their way to work in the fields, raising their hats to St. Christopher, asking a blessing and good weather. Rutland has always been a very rich agricultural county.

The window near the north door is a magnificent example of Perpendicular work.

The cornice in the chancel shows curious flower ornaments, probably a compliment to the local family of Flore. Roger Flore died in 1428 A.D. He was a very great benefactor of the church.

In James Wright's History, aforementioned, printed in 1684 A.D., he gives drawings of various arms which appeared in the glass of the chancel and other windows of the church. "In a chappell, on the South side of ye Chancel," namely the Lady Chapel, was the crest of "Flore alias Floure." This is the same as the flower ornaments in the cornice of the chancel. Unfortunately this old glass has all been destroyed and lost.

In the Trinity Chapel is an altar tomb of the fourteenth century. It is enriched by sunk quatrefoils displaying shields carrying what looks like a sheep bell. It seems certain that these represent wool-weights rather than sheep bells. At the

time this tomb was erected, Oakham owed a great deal of its prosperity to the wool trade. Nobody seems to know whose tomb it is. Roger Flore was a wool merchant, but he died in 1428 A.D. and this tomb seems to be earlier in date. Another great family of wool merchants were the Warnes, but unless the tomb is opened none can say whose resting-place it is.

In 1648 A.D., James Wright records, under the heading of " Monuments remaining in the Church of Okeham " :—

(1) " In a Chappell on the South side of the Chancel, on a Plate of Brass fixt in a Marble Gravestone "
Francis Waryn.

(2) " In the body of the Church, about the Verge of a Gravestone."
William Flore and Elen his wife.

(3) " Near the North building, on a Gravestone adorn'd with Brass Plates and Sculpture."
Thomas Flore.

This third monument mentioned may be the altar tomb we still have in the Trinity Chapel. The slab of stone on the top of the tomb has marks showing a brass had been fixed thereon. The brass known to James Wright was dated 1483 A.D. The altar tomb would appear to be earlier than this, but it is thought by experts that we find traces of conservatism in design. Thus, although the tomb looks like fourteenth-century work, it is possible that it is of a later date.

On the west wall of the south aisle there is a small alabaster figure of Anne, daughter of Andrew Burton, who died, aged 15, in 1642 A.D., the year that the Civil War broke out. The following is written of this delightful child :—

" Reader stand back ; dull not this marble Shrine
With irreligious breath ; the Stone's divine,
And does inclose a Wonder ; Beauty, Wit,
Devotion, and Virginity with it.
Which like a Lilly fainting in its prime,
Wither'd and left the World ; deceitful Time
Cropt it too soon : and Earth the self same Womb
From whence it sprung, is now become its Tomb
Whose sweeter soul, a Flower of matchless price ;
Transplanted is from hence to Paradice."

The roof of the Trinity Chapel is fifteenth century and its details are excellent.

The niche in the north transept is late fourteenth century and carried a life-sized figure of a saint whose identity is now lost.

The Oakham Bible, in the case in the south transept, is a MS. Latin Bible written on vellum and is dated soon after 1200 A.D. It is in a fine English hand and the writing is excellent. The binding is late sixteenth century and is stamped with the inscription in gold, " Ex dono Thome Pilkington." It is thought that the Bible belonged originally to a monastic house.

Among the church plate are two fine Elizabethan chalices and patens, a Charles I chalice dated 1638 A.D., a George I wine flagon dated 1725 A.D., and a George II bread plate dated 1742 A.D.

The Oakham Register dates back to 1564 A.D., the sixth year of the reign of Elizabeth, and is in a very good state of preservation.

In the Trinity Chapel will be found a framed photograph of a document in the British Museum. The document records the grant of William the Conqueror of Oakham to Westminster Abbey. The Abbey had received the gift previously from Edward the Confessor on the death of Edith, his Queen, and this document seems to be a re-affirmation of such gift. Reading from line 30 of the grant the word " Ocham " can be read. The curious part of the document is that the date thereon is incorrect, and rather suggests that the monks, having lost the original document recording the gift by Edward the Confessor, faked a document to support their claim to Oakham. In preparing a faked document it was not an unusual thing to take the seal from another document. The wax was warmed and then slit down the middle. New string on the faked document was inserted and the wax pressed together again. The photograph was presented by Arthur Hawley, esquire.

In the vestry are two handsome Jacobean presses containing a library of fourteenth and fifteenth century volumes. These were given to the Vicar in 1616 A.D. by Anne, Baroness Harrington, of Exton. The books deal with theology, history and common law. The Lady Anne Harrington, wife of John, Lord Harrington, departed this life at her house, in the Parish of St. Botolph, Bishopsgate, London, on the 25th day of May, 1620 A.D., being Ascension Day, and was buried at Exton.

The history of local events is full of colour and interest.

In 1349 A.D. the church was the scene of a gruesome event. A man was detained in the gaol of Oakham Castle because he was said to have stolen four cows. He accused some people in the neighbourhood of having committed the theft, but the judges found that they were innocent, and he was condemned to be hanged. This sentence, however, was carried out unskilfully, and after he had hanged the allotted time, his body was taken to Oakham Church to await interment. While so waiting he revived, and after a series of adventures received a royal pardon.

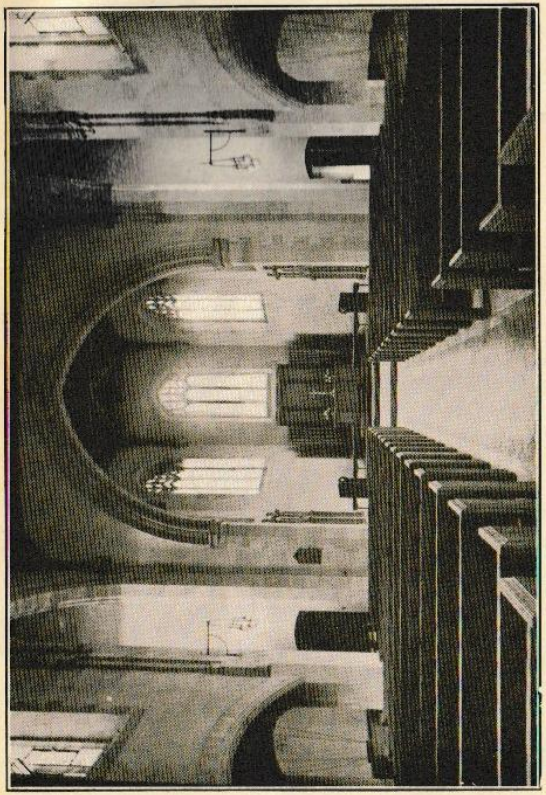
From the following instances it would appear that the fifteenth-century religion in Oakham was not so rosy as we sometimes think. The good old days people talk about were probably much inferior to our present time. This is worth pondering, for I am certain the Church in England is striving its utmost to serve our nation. That never has our Mother Church been more alive to its responsibility, and more anxious to satisfy the spiritual needs of our generation.

Memorandum of Bishop Fleming (1420–26 A.D.).—" A man drowned himself in a well in Oakham and was given ecclesiastical burial. A commission was appointed to enquire whether he showed signs of repentance, etc., before death ; if not, the churchyard to be interdicted and the body exhumed. He was buried by Sir John Lacy, chaplain of Dyngley. The body was ultimately exhumed."

Memorandum of Bishop Russell (1480–94 A.D.).—" A.D. 1488. Complaint by parishioners of Oakham against the Vicar, that whereas he ought to find two priests beside himself, this year he has served mostly alone : he sits in the quire without surplice, and there was never any vicar there that any man can remember, but they had good surplices of their own, two or three. The Vicar's deacon doth not do his duty of ringing the day bell and curfew at prime or sundown. He should have strawed the Church again at Easter as of old time accustomed. He does not say mass more than twice a week, and when he says none we cannot understand he hears any for he goes to and fro like a layman more than a priest. At matins and evensong he hath but few in the Church, and book hath he none at home. These various grievances are redressed by the Bishop's orders."

Visitors to Oakham Church should inspect the exterior of the church. It is rich in carving of great variety. On the nave roof is a double crucifix, that is to say, a figure of Christ on both sides of the Cross. When the crucifix over the south porch was blown down and smashed, a photograph of the nave crucifix was made and the crucifix over the south porch carved from the photograph and fixed.

In 1930 the exterior of the church was under repair. Messrs. Higgs & Son of Oakham repaired the stonework of the building, and Messrs. Furse & Co., steeplejacks, of Nottingham, pointed every joint of the steeple, inside and outside, repaired the tower and regilded the weathercock, " Peter." This work was carried out in a very satisfactory manner under Mr. H. F. Traylen, F.S.A., architect of Stamford. With an ancient building like Oakham Church it is necessary to keep constant watch on the fabric, and we are anxious to raise a fund so that the interest therefrom will enable us, year by year, to carry out repairs. The roof space is considerable and the lead and timbers must be constantly watched.



Copyright.

War Memorial Chapel, Interior.

OAKHAM SCHOOL

By F. C. Doherty,
Headmaster.

Oakham School was founded in 1584 by Robert Johnson, Archdeacon of Leicester, who was the only son of a distinguished merchant and man of public affairs at Stamford. Educated at Peterborough and at Clare Hall and Trinity College, Cambridge, in an age when the University was deeply moved by the influence of the New Learning, with which were associated the great names of Erasmus and Roger Ascham, he was keenly interested in education, and did much to aid its cause in his own county of Rutland. From 1574 to 1625 he was rector of North Luffenham, where a brass in the church records his benefactions in the shape of schools, hospitals and other charities. It is impossible to omit in passing the name of his grandson Isaac, who married the Lady Arabella, daughter of the Earl of Lincoln, and sailed in 1630 for New England, where he founded the city of Boston.

Like all Elizabethan schools, Oakham was designed to carry on the educational work which had previously been in the hands of the religious communities up and down the country, and which had lapsed by reason of the suppression of the monasteries. It affords an excellent illustration of the gradual conversion of such a school into a modern public school in the accepted sense of the term. The inscription over the door of the old school records the purpose of the founder, the provision of instruction in Latin, Green and Hebrew, according to the custom in the Reformation schools, where the dead languages were taught mainly for the opportunity they gave for the study of the Bible and of ancient philosophy, as well as for communication with other nations, since Latin was the official language of the time.

The statutes and ordinances drawn up by Robert Johnson were so carefully thought out that they governed the administration of the trust for two hundred and fifty years after his death. They provided among other things that the schoolmaster should teach scholars from the town of Oakham without pay, if their parents were poor, and boys from the neighbouring villages and other places according to their parents' ability to pay. Sixteen scholarships and other

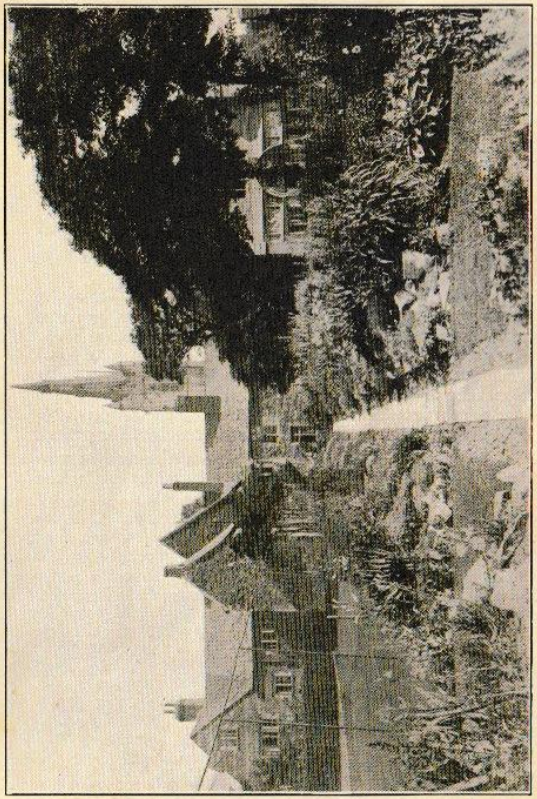
exhibitions from the school founded by him at Cambridge, and tenable at Clare, St. John's, Sidney Sussex and Emmanuel, still enable Oakham boys to go on to the University. In 1904 the constitution of the school was remodelled in its present form. Since that date it has enjoyed the full status of a public school, with representation on the Headmasters' Conference, and has gradually been enlarged until it now possesses accommodation for two hundred and fifty boys. The tradition of scholarship which flourished so strongly in the nineteenth century still continues, as the honours lists show, and it still fulfils its founder's purpose, though on a far larger scale and broader basis than he ever contemplated.

Among the buildings, the following are specially noteworthy.

The Old School.—Standing on the north side of the churchyard, and built in 1584, this was for three centuries the only school-room. It was restored in 1723, when the present large windows replaced smaller and older ones, and again in 1904, when the fine timbered roof was uncovered, and the museum instituted. It was at this time that the decoration of the walls with frescoes representing the story of *Gareth* from the *Morte d'Arthur* was executed by Mrs. Florence, sister of the then headmaster, and the list of School Exhibitioners at the University added as part of the general scheme. The museum, the only one that the county of Rutland can boast, contains a remarkable collection of antiquities of all periods, brought together at various times from different sites in the county, and well repays inspection. On the west wall in a steel case hangs the original charter granted by Queen Elizabeth in 1587.

The School House.—The present building, facing Market Street and the Square, with its ancient Butter Cross and stocks, was built in 1853 on the site of the original Hospital of Christ in Oakham, long used as a school-house. It has been extended at various times, the latest additions—a fine library, classrooms and music rooms—being completed in 1928.

The Sanatorium.—This, the sixteenth-century vicarage of Oakham, with its beautiful grounds, was acquired by the Trustees of the school in 1880, and has been converted into an admirable sanatorium. A fine original doorway on the east side betrays its ecclesiastical origin. Enlargements have been carried out at the west end of the building which are entirely in keeping with the older portions.



The Sanatorium and Front of School Chapel.

The War Memorial Chapel.—This chapel was begun in 1924 and dedicated by the Bishop of Peterborough on 29th November, 1929. It is perhaps the finest small school chapel in the country. Designed by Mr. G. E. S. Streatfield and built by Messrs. Bowman, of Stamford, it takes the form of a Latin cross, with very short transepts, and a short chancel ending in an apse. At the west end is a narthex surmounted by a gallery for the choir and organ. The sculptures on the west front, which represent the common sacrifice and suffering of the nation, are the work of Mr. F. W. Sargant, the sculptor-brother of the last headmaster, and on either side of the door are panels bearing the names of boys and masters of the school who fell in the Great War.

Doncaster Close.—At the north end of Church Street lie the playing fields, the chief portion of which takes its name from Dr. Doncaster, who was headmaster from 1808 to 1846. Overlooking this are the fives courts and miniature range, the Junior House, and Wharflands, a new boarding-house with additional class-rooms and a fine block of laboratories. From here the school grounds extend right down to the railway, and are being taken into use as more space is required for games.

The Register of Old Oakhamians shows a record of two hundred and forty exhibitioners at the Universities during the past hundred years, among them being the names of many who have since become famous in Church and State. Oakham School still carries out the intentions of its founder, and Oakham boys grow up in surroundings worthy of their traditions and their mission in the world, and carry away with them that sense of inheritance from the past which should be one of the most valuable parts of every boy's education.

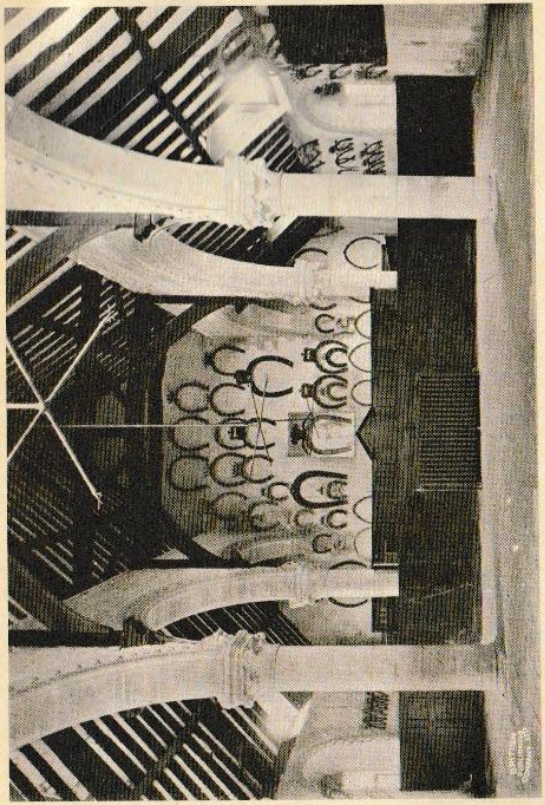
OAKHAM CASTLE

It seems that the earliest authoritative mention which we have of a Manor House at Oakham, is in Domesday Book, which was drawn up in 1086. We know that William the Conqueror was then in possession of the Hall at Oakham, and that the Hall, in all probability, included a permanent dwelling place, which was occupied by some tenant under the king.

The Lordship of Oakham belonged, before the Conquest, to Edward the Confessor, being part of the royal domain, and it was granted by him to his wife, Queen Edith, on condition that, on his death, she should grant the Church of Oakham, with its chapels, to the Abbot and Convent of Westminster. The Church of Oakham, with the chapels of Egleton, Langham, Barleythorpe, and Brooke, was thus separated from the Manor, and became the possession of the Abbey of Westminster, which held it until the suppression of the monasteries.

The Hall of Oakham was granted by the Crown, in the time of Stephen, to Robert de Ferrers, and descended to his son Walkelin. Walkelin de Ferrers was the second of the family who held this Manor, and it is to him, almost certainly, that one may attribute the erection of the existing Hall. He held the Manor for a long time—from about 1165 to his death in 1201, and upon his death the Manor and Lordship of Oakham passed to his son Hugh, who married one of the Says of Shropshire. They had no children, and at Hugh's death the Manor and Lordship reverted to the Crown. In 1207 they were granted, for a fine of 700 marks and seven palfreys, to Hugh's sister Isabel, and her husband Roger Mortimer. From Roger and Isabel the estates descended to their second son Robert, and from him they passed to his widow, Margaret de Say. She married a second husband, William de Stuteville; but, on her death, the Manor and Lordship probably reverted to the Crown once more. Thus, about 1220, the first stage of the history of the Castle ended, with its final severance from the descendants of the house of Ferrers.

Before going on to the later history of the Castle, we must examine the Hall, which is the permanent witness to the connection of the Ferrers family with Oakham. I have said, that the Hall which is mentioned in Domesday Book must



Interior, Oakham Castle.

Photo—Heaviside & Son.

have had, in all probability, some building upon the spot. The term "Hall" implies the centre of the jurisdiction of a Manor, and is applied in Domesday to what we should call a manor house. The Hall of Oakham in the eleventh century was probably a building of pre-Conquest date, and had very little in common with the Castles which were founded in England after the Conquest. We know from the Bayeux tapestry what a Saxon hall was like. It was a two-storey building, with a living room on the first floor, and, apparently, a vaulted cellar in the basement. It was approached by an outside staircase. The type was faithfully preserved till long after the Conquest, as we know from that interesting hall which may still be seen at Boothby Pagnell, near Grantham. This hall at Oakham, although it belongs to the same type of building, has a somewhat different plan, and was not constructed till certainly more than one hundred years after the Conquest. The older hall, of which we read in 1086, probably stood a considerable time, until it was eventually replaced by this building. But a curious thing is that during that period—the eleventh and twelfth centuries—and until some time after this hall was constructed, we hear nothing of a castle at Oakham.

A castle, so far as regards England, has been proved definitely to be a Norman novelty, introduced at the Conquest, and, in one or two cases, by Normans during the reign of Edward the Confessor. The first English castles of which we can speak with certainty are castles which were built by Normans, one in Herefordshire and the other in Essex. These castles were entirely distinct things from the *burhs* of which we hear so much in the "Anglo-Saxon Chronicle." As a matter of fact, the *burhs* of which we read were simply towns, fortified habitations of communities, while the castle was the habitation not of the community, but of the individual, and was intended not only to protect, but to overawe the community.

Of these Norman castles the earliest type was universally the earthwork castle, constructed on fairly high ground, where we have a mound for the keep, and where there is a bank, such as one sees at Oakham, surrounding the whole of the enclosure or bailey. Such castles were very common indeed in England after the Conquest, and were usually simply masses of strong earthwork, with timber foundations.

Very rarely indeed were stone castles built in England until the twelfth century began. The most prominent feature of the early Norman castles was the artificial mound, with a wooden keep on the top. It was very rarely, until late Norman times, and in most cases not until the reign of Henry II that one finds the type of improved stone castle, of which the great feature is the tall, stone rectangular keep. Here, at Oakham, the curious thing is that although we have a bailey or ward which is surrounded by a bank, there is no trace of any mound which bore a wooden keep, and there certainly has never been one of those strong rectangular keeps of stone. We have to deal here with what one may call a keep-less castle, of which the main defensive feature was a great bank surrounding the main enclosure. I believe the original castle here consisted simply of this bailey with its encircling bank.

The type of fortified post, therefore, that we see here, differing in a very essential feature—the absence of a keep—from an ordinary Norman castle, may more truly be called a fortified hall or manor house. Oakham was the head of a very large and extensive manor, which was of great importance in later times. In the thirteenth century, a stone wall was built so as to surround the top of the bank, and the enclosure containing the original manor house, surrounded by a large bank of earth, was converted into a castle. But in the twelfth century, in which the present hall was built, the enclosure would still have been called a hall. Such fortified halls are not at all unknown in different parts of England. There are several examples of them in the south of England right through the Middle Ages; and few parts of the country are without so-called "castles," which more properly deserve the name of manor houses.

This castle at Oakham was, then, a large fortified manor house, with an earthen bank round it, protected at first by timber, and surrounded on all sides by a very broad ditch. It was in the thirteenth century that it was definitely called a castle. It certainly never formed one of the great military posts which played such important parts in the history of the twelfth century. The site was not one which would have been of very much importance from a military point of view. One can compare it with the Castle of Grantham, of which nothing remains except in the names of one or two streets.

The site is very similar, and probably Grantham Castle was no more than a fortified manor house, the head of an important manor, without any distinctive features which we definitely associate with a strong military castle.

The hall itself shows a plan which is comparatively unusual and is very much like that of the nave of a church. With regard to the development of this type of plan there was an extremely interesting article a few years ago in *Archæologia Æliana*, the Transactions of the Newcastle Society of Antiquaries. The writer, Mr. Hodgson, in speaking of such halls, derives them from the aisled halls of the infirmaries of monasteries. You will all remember that magnificent thirteenth-century hall to be found at Peterborough. Mr. Hodgson thinks that from such infirmary halls, the centre of which formed the main room, while the aisles were occupied by patients, the owners of manor houses may have derived the plan of the aisled hall. In this plan, the dais was at the far end of the hall; and the floor of the central portion or nave was slightly raised above the aisles, which were used by servants going to and from the kitchen. Among thirteenth-century aisled halls one may mention the great hall of the Castle of Winchester, and at Leicester there still exists a hall in the Castle, of the same type, which, however, was divided into nave and aisles by wooden and not stone arcades.

The plan of the hall at Oakham, in relation to the subordinate buildings, can only be reconstructed from a comparison with other buildings of the time with which we have an acquaintance. The hall would be entered at its lower end, through the original doorway, in the most easterly bay of the south aisle. The present doorway has been simply cut through a window opening at a much later period; while the older doorway has been closed up. The high table, or dais, would occupy the further end of the hall, and there would be tables down the centre of the hall, while the aisles would be clear for the passage of the servants. This building would form the great centre of the life of the manor house. Not merely the lord of the Castle, and his friends and retainers, would feast at the high table, but the household after meals would in all probability go to sleep here. The doorways which remain in the east wall, to the right of the entrance, doubtless led to the kitchen and buttery; and the whole eastern bay may have been divided from the rest by a transverse

wooden screen, as was usual in the halls of the later Middle Ages.

There was very little privacy in mediæval life, and most of the common life of the castle was conducted in the great hall. There were other chambers in the Castle, attached to the hall; and one of these was probably the private room of the lord of the manor. Of their date or plan it is impossible to speak with certainty. I would suggest that originally this hall was the one permanent stone structure in connection with the castle, while the other buildings were probably of timber. As time went on, no doubt, these temporary buildings would be superseded by buildings of stone; but these have perished, and only traces of their foundations are left.

With regard to the architectural details of the hall, they point very clearly to a period within the ten years between 1190 and 1200; they might be a little earlier, but possibly—very likely—a little later. The well-cut, rounded arches are of Norman character. The columns, massive though they are, are very much more slender than those employed in ordinary Norman construction, and are characteristic of that transition from heavy to light construction, which marked the last quarter of the twelfth century. Among the decorative details of the building I may remark the advanced form and variety of the dog-tooth employed in the arches, capitals, and jambs of the windows, and, more striking still, the extremely beautiful foliage of the capitals. This foliage is very often compared to the foliage in the choir of Canterbury Cathedral. It is very clear that the people who worked here must have been acquainted with the classical type of scultpure, both of foliage and of the human figure which was employed on the continent of Europe, especially in Burgundy and the Isle of France, at this period. The foliage, with its very long, stiff stalks, and leaves which bend over, is thoroughly typical of this species of classical carving, and is very much finer than most of the sculpture of the period to be found in this part of England. You may have remembered noticing the capitals at Edith Weston, which shew also to some extent the same elegance as we find here, though not in so high a state of development. The nearest place to Oakham, in which parallel sculpture may be found, is the little church of Twyford, a few miles away, in Leicestershire.

Another interesting example of the same kind of work, less elaborate than at Oakham or Twyford, is in the north arcade of the church at Grantham. The Lordships of Grantham and Oakham were often in the same hands. I have already referred to the similarity between the sites and, probably, between the plans of the two castles. Here again we have a point in common between the two places. And, at a later date, when the towers of the churches at Oakham and Exton were built, there can be little doubt that the great steeple of Grantham formed a common model for both. At the ends of the arcades you will notice there are no half pillars or responds, such as one usually finds, but the arches spring from corbels composed of figures of animals resting on a bracket supported by two heads. The sculpture here, and in the figures which form the stops of the hood mouldings of the arches, is of the classical type already mentioned. There is no doubt that these corbels took the place of responds to make more room for the high table at the top, and more room for the entry at the bottom of the room. Exactly the same thing occurs at Auckland Castle, at the end of the arcades near the original position of the dais.

The Hall, then, was finished at the death of Walkelin Ferrers in the year 1201, and I have already shown you how the Manor seems to have passed out of the hands of the last heirs of the Ferrers family in the early part of the thirteenth century. In 1227 the County of Rutland was granted by Henry III to his brother, Richard, Earl of Cornwall, who became King of the Romans. But it was not until 1252 that he received the Lordship of Oakham in part payment of £500, his wife's dower. He died in 1272, and the Manor and Lordship of Oakham were then granted to his son, Edmund, to hold in fee, with the shrievalty of Rutland. The Earls of Cornwall were also Lords of the Castle of Rockingham at this period.

Edmund, Earl of Cornwall, first cousin of Edward I, died in 1300, and it is in the inquisition which followed his death that we have the first of those details with regard to the Castle which show us something of its actual state and plan in the later Middle Ages. Outside the enclosure was a garden. The fish-ponds, windmill and watermill were worth £8; the pasture of Flitteris Park was worth £5; the underwood, 5s.; the herbage of the "little Park," 13s. 4d. The inquisition gives no account of the state of the buildings.

It is generally agreed that the outer court which lies upon the north of the main enclosure was employed as the garden of the Castle, and that the broad ditch which lies between the two courts, and crosses it, was known as the fish-pond.

It is very probable that the wall round the main enclosure was raised about the middle of the thirteenth century, by Richard, Earl of Cornwall, after he came into possession. It is very difficult to make out a definite date from the details of the stonework. They are of a very plain kind indeed. The most interesting feature of the wall is the small round tower which projects from the west curtain; but apart from this, there was no serious attempt to provide the wall with flanking defences. The general character of the work appears to be of the thirteenth century, and it is most likely that Richard was responsible for the fortifying of this place, and for its conversion from a manor house into a castle, with a strong stone wall; and he also may have heightened the bank upon which the wall is built.

The question is raised when one comes face to face with these fortifications of the Castle, as to the methods employed for its defence with regard to the outlying country and also with regard to the town. There was apparently an entrance at the back of the Castle, at the north-east corner of the outer or garden court, which led into the country outside. At the south-west side of the same court, covering the west end of the fish-pond, is a broad oblong platform, which seems to have acted as a kind of outwork on the side of the town. Very likely this mound was thrown out towards the church in order to protect the Castle, in case the inhabitants of Oakham should take the part of the enemy. On the east side of the court it is very clear there was not only one bank with a ditch beyond it, but also a second ditch beyond the counterscarp of the first. The enlargement of the bank on either side of the north-eastern entrance is a noticeable feature. This would enable the defenders, in case of a siege, to plant stone-throwing engines at this point. The outwork upon the side of the town was no doubt constructed for a similar purpose.

To proceed with the later history of the Castle; Edmund, Earl of Cornwall, had married Margaret de Clare, the sister of the Earl of Gloucester. She, after his death, kept Oakham Castle as part of her dower. Her second husband was Piers

Gaveston, who died in 1312. After his death Margaret de Clare married a third time. Her husband was Hugh de Audley, who was created Earl of Gloucester in 1320. She was Lady of Oakham in 1316. Her third husband rebelled with Thomas of Lancaster against Edward II. In consequence he was deprived of the Castle. His wife, however, at a later date, pleaded that a grant of the Manor had been made to her in 1320, but that the letters patent had been stolen during the civil war, which ended with Thomas of Lancaster's execution at Pontefract in 1322.

In 1322 Edward II granted the Manor to his brother, Edmund, Earl of Kent, who held it till the beginning of the reign of Edward III. It was then that Hugh de Audley's wife put in her plea, and begged for a renewal of her letters patent. Edward III restored the Manor to her, and ordered the Earl of Kent to give it up. Margaret and Hugh de Audley held it until 1347. Margaret died in 1342. Before that time the reversion had been granted (1336–37) to William de Bohun, Earl of Northampton, and in 1347 he may be said to have come into possession of the Castle and Manor.

In 1360, William de Bohun died. His son, Humphrey, second Earl of Northampton, succeeded, and married Joan, daughter of Richard, Earl of Arundel. The Manor and Castle of Oakham were assigned to her as part of her dower, for payment of 140 marks. But she had to render 40 marks yearly to the King until her son should come of age.

She and her husband had no son, but two daughters, one, Eleanor, who married Thomas of Woodstock, Duke of Gloucester; the other, Mary, who married Henry, son of John of Gaunt, and became the mother of Henry V. The result was that the annual payment of 40 marks continued, so long as Joan held the property.

Here the history of the Castle begins to be extremely obscure. The King seems to have taken it again into his hands. One comes across several letters patent in the reigns of Edward III and Richard II, most of which relate to the prisons of the Castle. In the reign of Richard II the prison was not kept very well, and the townsfolk on one occasion at least aided prisoners to escape. Consequently in the year 1380 a commission was issued to William Flore and Sir John Basyng, Sheriff of Rutland, and William de Burgh, to enquire into the state of the gaol. Richard Raile, one of

the keepers of the prison, received several pardons for letting people escape from prison, but was eventually superseded by a more efficient gaoler.

In Richard II's time constables of the Castle, appointed by the Crown, are frequently mentioned. Richard granted many important Lordships to his favourites, and as most of these continued in the royal favour for only a very short time, changes were frequent. In 1385 there is a grant of the Castle to Robert de Vere, Earl of Oxford, to whom Richard granted the splendid title of Marquess of Dublin and Duke of Ireland. Robert was banished in 1387, and the Castle seems to have been granted to a former owner, Joan, the mother-in-law of Henry IV, and grandmother of Henry V, with reversion to Edmund of Langley, Duke of York, the King's uncle, and his son Edward, Earl of Rutland.

The Castle, however, was granted, in reversion after the persons already mentioned, to Thomas of Woodstock, Duke of Gloucester, who died in 1397. The Duke appears to have held the Castle and Manor in possession by a slightly later grant, probably in consequence of an agreement with the other persons interested. After his death it was granted to Thomas, Earl of Warwick. He lost favour with Richard II and was banished, and it was then granted to Thomas Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, who held it for about a year. He was also banished in consequence of a quarrel with the future Henry IV. After his banishment the Castle was granted to Edward, Earl of Albemarle, son of the Duke of York, and his male successors. He had been created Earl of Rutland in 1390, and was, as we have seen, one of the grantees in reversion. In 1398 he was created Duke of Albemarle, and the Castle was handed over to him in return for his surrender of the title of Earl of Rutland. He also received several other manors as part of his compensation.

In 1414 new claimants for the Manor came up in the persons of Anne, daughter of Thomas of Woodstock, and her husband, William Bourchier. She sought for a renewal of the grant made to her father, for herself and her husband. As the Duke of Albemarle had nothing to bring forward in reply, it was granted to the petitioners.

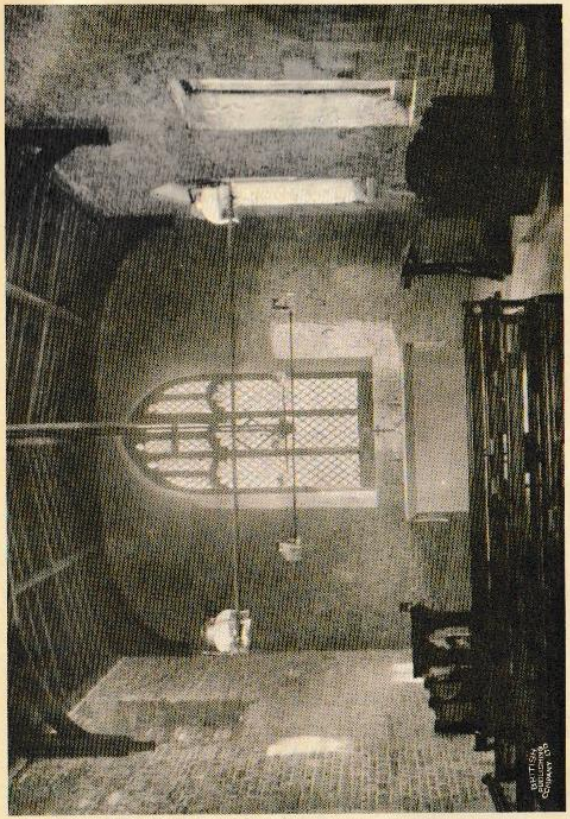
After this several sub-tenants seem to have held the Castle. On the 19th September, 1460, the widow of Humphrey Stafford, Duke of Buckingham, had a grant of the Castle,

Manor and Lordship, as part of her dower. She died in 1480, and her son, the second Duke of Buckingham, died in rebellion against Richard III in 1483. After his execution, Henry, Lord Gray of Codnor, had a grant of Oakham, Egleton, and Langham. He held them until 1495, when they were granted back to Edward, Duke of Buckingham, and were held by him until he was executed in the reign of Henry VIII.

Later history records a grant to Thomas, Lord Cromwell, in 1538. A new grant was made to his son, and afterwards his grandson held it. The Cromwells alienated the Manor in 1596 to the Harringtons; and they in their turn sold it to the first Duke of Buckingham. The second Duke parted with it to Daniel Finch, Earl of Nottingham, from whom it came into the hands of the present proprietors.

A note may be of use with regard to the famous horseshoes. The origin of the custom has been very much discussed. It is said to have reference to the arms of the Ferrers. It is not very likely that they bore a definite shield of arms until some time after they had lost their connection with this Castle. This traditional origin of the horseshoe rests upon no definite documentary evidence before Camden in 1598. What seems to be a reasonable explanation of it was given by Mr. Hartshorne many years ago. He, looking at various documents of Edward I's reign, found there was a money payment charged by the bailiff of Oakham for the passage of vehicles through the town. The giving of the horseshoe may have arisen from the commutation of the money paid for carriages, or, even more probably, it may have been simply a custom paid by noblemen riding on horseback through the town.

It may be well to emphasise once more the anomalous position of this Castle, as compared with the remaining castles of England at the time it was founded. It was simply an important manorial residence, with a somewhat higher bank than usual, and a timber stockade. Various defences were added as time went on, and what originally was a strongly fortified manor house, was converted into a castle. A strong residence of this kind is a very much rarer and more unique thing than the actual possession of a strongly fortified castle would be. There are the remains in England at the present time of a large number of castles, but there are few twelfth-century manor houses, and none in which there



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Interior of the Chapel of St. John and St. Anne.

Photo—Heywood & Son.

remains a building of beauty and interest equal to the Hall of Oakham. The only domestic building of the date which may fairly be compared with it is the Hall of Bishop Auckland Castle. There, however, the original arrangement was changed by its conversion into a chapel at the Restoration. It is larger than the Hall of Oakham, but its details are conspicuous for their simplicity. At Oakham, on the other hand, we see one of the most elaborate displays which we possess of sculptured ornament, worked at a period when the sculpture of figures and foliage alike was rising to its full vigour, and formed an essential part of the architectural equipment of the English stonemason.

A. Hamilton Thompson.

HOSPITAL OF ST. JOHN AND ST. ANNE, OAKHAM

At the north end of the narrow strip of land lying between the railroad of the Midland Railway Company and Gas Street stands the Chapel of St. John and St. Anne, the only building that remains of the hospital of that name, which was founded by William Dalby in 1399.

Of the birth and parentage of William Dalby nothing is known. His surname suggests that he or his forbears came from Leicestershire. By trade he was a merchant of the staple. He was married. His wife's Christian name was Agnes, and he had a daughter Katharine, who was the first wife of Roger Flore of Oakham.

The idea of founding the Hospital came to Dalby late in life, when, reflecting that the flower of his life had been spent in the care of earthly occupations, and the levity of pleasures, and desiring to offer an evening sacrifice to the Highest, to the honour of God and of St. John the Evangelist and St. Anne, Mother of the glorious Virgin Mary, he, by licence of Richard II, King of England, built, erected, made, founded and established a certain Hospital upon certain land belonging to him, called Chamberlyn's Close, in the Parish of Oakham.

The Hospital was to be of two chaplains, of whom one was to be warden and perpetual, and the other removeable, and of twelve poor men ; to pray for the welfare of the King and his

Consort, Queen Isabella, so long as they lived, and for their souls when they departed from this light, and for the souls of his consort Anne, late Queen of England, and of his lord and father, and lady and mother (Edward the Black Prince and Joan the Fair Maid of Kent) deceased, and for the welfare of William Dalby and Agnes his wife, whilst they lived, and for their souls when they departed from this light, and for the souls of all the faithful departed.

Chamberlyn's Close, which consisted of a messuage or dwelling-house and some two acres of land, probably was so called after William le Chamberlyn, a previous owner, who was sub-constable of the Castle of Oakham in the year 1379 and afterwards. Dalby chose the eastern half of the Close as the site for his Hospital, and on the northern half of the site built a chapel, a house for the poor men, a house for the Warden and another for the Chaplain. It is probable that the whole of the site was surrounded by a wall, and not only the north end where the Hospital buildings stood. The chapel was built not far from the north-east corner of the site ; just south of it, and abutting upon the eastern wall, was the house of the poor men, perhaps a two-storied building, the north end of which, it would seem, at one time projected north in front of the east end of the Chapel : if so, presuming that it was a two-storied building, little light could have reached the inside of the Chapel through the east window. It may be that the square-headed window, now blocked up, high up in the wall to the north of the altar, was put in to remedy this defect ; and it may account for the existence of the long two-light window in the south wall of the Chapel. In the north-west corner of the Hospital precincts was the house of the Chaplain ; the house of the Warden was on the south side of the quadrangle. The outside walls of the poor men's house and of the Chapel and of the Chaplain's house formed part of the wall which enclosed the Hospital. In the north wall, between the north-west corner of the Chapel and the north-east corner of the Chaplain's house, was a door leading to the outside world. The messuage or dwelling-house which is referred to in the early records as " the house of William Dalby," must have been situate just north of the Chapel and outside the precincts of the Hospital. Dalby was living at Exton when he obtained the licence to found the Hospital, but soon afterwards he moved to Oakham. The door in the

north wall of the Chapel, now blocked up, suggests that Dalby lived in this messuage, and that this door was built to give him access to the Chapel without entering the Hospital. Immediately opposite the north door was a door in the south wall of the Chapel, doubtless for the use of those living in the Hospital.

Having built the Hospital and made his Ordinance for the government of the same, in accordance with the requirements of the licence, Dalby's next step was to provide for the endowment. By the licence he was authorised to give the patronage of the Hospital to the Prior and Convent of the House of St. Anne, of the Carthusian Order, juxta Coventry, and authority was given to the Prior and Convent to pay to the Hospital a yearly rent of £40, secured upon their lands.

On the 26th of October, 1404, an agreement was entered into between William Dalby and Prior Robert Palmer and the Convent, whereby the Prior and Convent in consideration for the sum of 577 marks (£384 13s. 4d.) paid to them by William Dalby undertook to pay a yearly rent of £20 to the Warden of the Hospital and his successors, for the sustenance of the Warden and the Chaplain and the poor men ; which rent was to be a charge upon the lands and tenements belonging to the Prior and Convent in Edith Weston for ever. This agreement which was afterwards confirmed by Letters Patent of Henry IV, dated 13th December, 1404, fell far short of the original scheme for the patronage and endowment of the Hospital. Dalby's subsequent action suggests that he was not only disappointed but annoyed. He executed a deed whereby after his death the patronage of the Hospital was to be vested in his son-in-law, Roger Flore, and his heirs, and he took other steps to provide for the endowment of the Hospital. Death, however, put an end to this scheme. The agreement with the Prior and Convent was confirmed by Letters Patent of Henry IV on the 13th December, 1404 : Dalby died soon afterwards. Probate of his will was granted in 1405.

He was succeeded as Patron by his son-in-law, Roger Flore. The family of Flore, later written Flower, had been known in Rutland for two generations before Roger Flore first saw the light. According to the Visitation of Rutland, 1618–19, William, father of Roger Flore, was at one time Sheriff for the County : it is, however, more probable that the Sheriff was William, brother of Roger Flore, and identical with William

Flore, who was one of the Knights of the Shire for the County in 1382 and 1384. Roger Flore first appears in history as one of the Knights of the Shire for Rutland in 1397. Two years later Edward, Duke of York, granted to him for life the keeping of his Park of Flyterys and the warren of the Wardship of Oakham. Roger Flore was a man of note in his time : a man of sound judgment and great ability ; and he was well educated ; he would write both English and Latin. In the Parliament of 1416 he was speaker of the House of Commons and again in the Parliaments of 1417, 1419 and 1422. He was also Steward of the Duchy of Lancaster, and the records of the time show that throughout his life he was much occupied in business of public and local importance. His marriage to Katherine, daughter of William Dalby, took place some time before September 1398 ; Thomas, his heir, was a child of this marriage. His second wife was Cecilia, daughter of ——— Samon, by whom he had several children. His will, which was written by his own hand, shows him to have been wealthy, generous and of refined tastes : and that notwithstanding his position and wealth, he was a devout and humble servant of God. The steeple of the Parish Church testifies to his generosity to Oakham. To the Hospital he bequeathed fifty shillings in aid of the upkeep of the Chapel and of the ornaments of the altar. Probate of his will was granted in 1428.

Roger Flore was thorough in all that he undertook. He had not long been Patron before he re-opened negotiations with the Prior and Convent of St. Anne, with the result that the Prior and Convent undertook in return for the sum of 350 marks (£366 13s. 4d.), paid to them by Roger Flore, to pay a further yearly rent of £20 to the Warden of the Hospital upon the same terms and conditions as those prescribed in their agreement with William Dalby.

Some years later, as executor, with John Clerk, of Whissenden, of William Dalby's will, he with his fellow executor conveyed to the Warden of the Hospital one toft and sixty-four acres of land and six acres of meadow in Oakham and Egleton in part satisfaction of William Dalby's intended endowment.

William Dalby had made an Ordinance for the government of the Hospital, reserving to himself and Roger Flore, and to no other, the right to alter and amend it. This was the document upon which Roger Flore framed his Ordinance ; a very long and interesting document containing concise and

definite rules for the general good government and welfare of the Hospital. To this his Ordinance Roger Flore attached his seal at St. Paul's Cathedral on the 7th of March, 1421–22, in the presence of John Coventre and John Botiler, Aldermen of the City of London, and others. Afterwards it was sent in turn to the Abbot of Westminster, the Vicar of Oakham, the Bishop of Lincoln, the Dean of Lincoln, the Archdeacon of Northampton, the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Prior of Christ Church, Canterbury, who, by attaching their seals, severally signified their approval of the Ordinance. A counterpart of the Ordinance, in excellent condition, is amongst the muniments in the keeping of the Dean and Chapter of Westminster Abbey.

Thomas Flore succeeded his father as Patron of the Hospital. During his tenure of office, in the year 1437, the rent payable by the Prior and Convent was reduced from £40 to 40 marks (£26 13s. 4d.) by mutual consent. To understand this concession it is necessary to remember that England had been at war with France almost since the beginning of the century. The cost of maintaining the English Army in France had severely taxed the resources of the people in England.

Thomas Flore died in 1483 ; he was succeeded, as Patron, in turn by Roger Flore, Richard Flower of Whitwell (died 1523), Roger Flower of Whitwell (died 1527) and Richard Flower of Whitwell (died 1540).

A year or more before the death of Richard Flower of Whitwell, with the dissolution of the monasteries, the Manor of Edith Weston, being the property of a religious house, had become the property of the Crown. The Hospital, however, still continued to receive the annual payment of 40 marks, which was a charge upon the Manor ; which suggests that the provisions of the ordinances of William Dalby and Roger Flore, for the saying of masses and prayers for the souls of deceased benefactors and others, had long fallen into disuse : and that the Hospital was considered to be merely a bede-house. In 1551 Edward VI granted the Manor, with many other properties, to William, Marquis of Northampton, for services rendered to the Crown, and the payment of a sum of money. He, however, did not hold it for long, and, after passing through several hands during the next few years, sometime before 1580, it became the property of John Flower of Whitwell. This John Flower, who was the seventh and last of that family

to be patron of the Hospital, was son of Richard Flower of Whitwell, who died in 1540. At the time of his father's death he was only five years of age ; which may account for much in his character. He appears to have been extravagant and unscrupulous. Not long after he had become possessed of the Manor, "having gotten into his hands and possession divers of the Auncient Records," he refused to pay the rent charge of 40 marks to the Hospital. John Birkett was then Warden. Deprived of these documents, he was unable to bring an action at Common Law for the recovery of the rent : but there was a Court to which he could apply, the Court of Requests, and in that Court he lodged a Bill of Complaint in *forma pauperis*. John Flower was summoned to appear before that Court. The decision of the Court is not known, but, from later complaints of John Flower's failure to pay the rent, it would appear that the Court decided in favour of the Warden.

The Hospital had fallen upon evil times, but worse were to follow. Some eight or nine years later, as the result of an inquiry held locally, the lands belonging to the Hospital were held to be Concealed lands, that is lands devoted to superstitious uses, and as such to be by Act of Parliament the property of the Crown. In 1590 the Crown sold the lands to William Tipper and Robert Dawe. The inquiry had been held upon information laid by Tipper and Dawe. These men and their confederates made considerable sums of money by searching the country for lands upon which some charge for religious purposes had been made in the past. Their organisation must have been admirable ; there was hardly an acre in England devoted to such purposes which escaped their notice. As a reward for their services the Crown, to whom such lands by Act of Parliament belonged, sold the lands to them ; and they in turn disposed of them to willing buyers, presumably at a profit. It was not their custom in the deeds of sale to disclose the price received by them for the lands sold.

In 1591 John Flower mortgaged his estates to Henry Allen of Wilford, in the County of Lincoln. It might well have seemed that the days of the Hospital were now numbered ; but this was not to be. In 1593 Robert Johnson, Rector of North Luffenham, who had already spent a considerable amount of his own fortune in founding his schools at Oakham and Uppingham, and a Hospital in each town, bought the

lands which had been sold to Tipper and Dawe, and afterwards, having purchased the Patronage from Henry Allen, in 1597 obtained a grant from Queen Elizabeth, by Letters Patent, to refound the Hospital. By this grant the Patronage of the Hospital was vested in Robert Johnson and his heirs ; and the Bishop of Peterborough, the Dean of Peterborough, the Rector of North Luffenham, the Rector of Uppingham, and the Vicar of Oakham, and their successors, were appointed Governors of the Hospital *ex officio*.

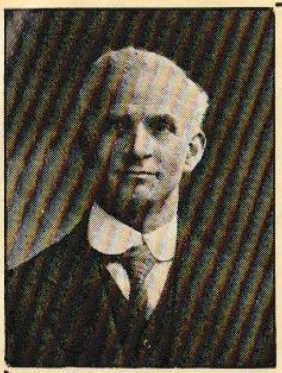
Robert Johnson died in 1625. Of the history of the Hospital during the troublous years of the reign of Charles I and of the Commonwealth nothing is known. An official report of the Hospital made in 1665 states that the revenue of the Hospital at that date amounted to £44 13s. 4d. Ezekiel Johnson, grandson of Robert, was Patron. The Warden, Mr. James Watts, Rector of Ridlington, was paid £6 13s. 4d. ; the Sub-Warden, £5 per annum. There were then six poor people, men and women, in the Hospital, whose allowance was £3 2s. 7d. per annum, "besides salt beans, firing straw, etc.", amounting to almost three pounds per annum, which was divided amongst them : and there was a washerwoman whose salary was forty shillings per annum.

From the year 1663 the proceedings of the Governors have for the most part been carefully preserved. The heaviest item of expenditure over a number of years was the cost of repairing and maintaining the buildings. In later times one at least of the old buildings was used as a quarry to provide material for repairs.

In 1845 the Midland Railway Company, for the purposes of the Peterborough to Syston Railway, acquired practically the whole of the western half of the Hospital site. Such of the old buildings as then remained, with the exception of the Chapel, were demolished. During last century the Chapel was at times used as a place of worship : it is now once more used for that purpose.

The constitution of the governing body to-day is the same as that ordained by the Grant of Queen Elizabeth. Captain W. D. Johnson, of Ketton, descendant of Robert Johnson, is the Patron. The funds of the Hospital are distributed amongst poor people ; for the most part amongst residents in the County of Rutland.

ARTHUR HAWLEY.



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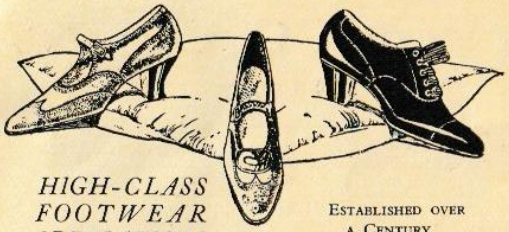

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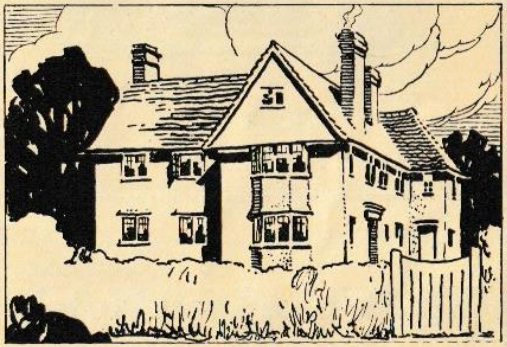

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