

RUINS FROM NORTH-EAST.

A BRIEF ACCOUNT
of the
OLD PALACE OF
SOUTHWELL

And its history down to our own times

by

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With an Introduction by the Rev. H. Gray, M.A.,

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SOUTHWELL:

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DEDICATED
WITH EVERY TOKEN OF RESPECT
TO
THE LORD BISHOP OF SOUTHWELL.

INTRODUCTION.

The author of this little pamphlet has asked me to write an Introduction. I do so gladly, for Mr. Summers has, I consider, compiled a work of real utility, and herewith gives to the public in a form that is scholarly, accurate and concise, just such an account of the Old Palace of Southwell, and its history down to our own-times, as was badly needed.

The close connection between Southwell and York, of which ample evidence is afforded in the pages that follow, lasted from quite early times down to the middle of the Nineteenth Century. Any account of the Old Palace therefore, must needs dwell much on the links which have for generations bound us to the Northern Province - links which were rudely broken when Nottinghamshire was attached to the Diocese of Lincoln, in the Province of Canterbury, so recently as the year 1837.

The Palace itself fell into ruins during the troublous times of the Commonwealth Period, and no attempt has ever been made to restore it to its original dimensions. The present Bishop's Manor, which skilfully takes in much of the western part of the old ruins, was completed in the summer of 1907, when Dr. Hoskyns, the Second Bishop of the See, made it his episcopal residence.

This interesting story is well told by Mr. Summers, to whom all credit must be given for having conceived and executed a work of this kind. Others have assisted with valuable criticisms and suggestions, more particularly Mr. Hodgson, Priest-Vicar of Wells, and a former Curate of Southwell, whose admirable treatise on Archbishop Thomas II. has quite established him as an authority on a subject like the present.

I will only add in conclusion that I trust the courage and enterprise of Mr. Summers will be amply rewarded, and meet with that generous recognition which it so richly deserves.

H. GRAY.

Southwell,

June 29th, 1911.

The Old Palace of Southwell.

IN close proximity to the Cathedral Church of Southwell stand the remains of the Palace, at one time the residence of the Archbishops of York

A study of the composition of the stone of which it is constructed, and an examination of the geological strata of the surrounding district, might seem to reveal the fact that the stone was obtained from a local source, and in support of this theory we may observe that on the brow of the adjacent hill may still be seen traces of the quarry from which it could easily have been taken. On the other hand the remains of quarries at Southwell are small, and the amount of stone required for so large a house, when all the carving is taken into account, must have been enormous. This would seem to suggest that the material used for the Palace, like that of the Cathedral, came from the quarries near Mansfield.

The present ruins, which have nothing to do with the original building, date from the time of Archbishop Thoresby. Archbishops of York from the time of Oskytel (about 960) had lived there, and there was doubtless first a Saxon and then a Norman

Palace on the site of the present house and ruins, Thomas II. received envoys of the King at Southwell, and Gerard, as we relate below, died here.

Puttoc (1023) gave two large bells to the Minster which existed at that time on the site of the present one, and built a tower to contain them.

Kinsius (1051), although he had been a monk of Peterborough, was greatly in favour of the secular system at Southwell, and helped to develop it considerably.

Aldred (1060) built a large hall for the use of the Canons on the site of the present Grammar School, which afterwards became a college of chantry priests.

Thomas of Bayeux (1070), was the first Norman Archbishop.

Gerard (1100), died eight years later in his garden at Southwell, "by the visitation of God" as we should now say, but under circumstances which in a superstitious age seemed to connect his decease with magic and sorcery. Mr. Hodgson, in his illuminating history of Archbishop Thomas II., speaks thus of the event:—"The Archbishop had been dining, perhaps rather too well, and went for a walk in the garden 'near the dormitory.' He lay down to rest on a bank with his head on a cushion, his chaplains meanwhile walking near at hand. He not unnaturally fell asleep; and in the words of the chronicler, it was a 'fatal sleep,' for he never awoke from it. But the dreadful part was not so much his

death, but the fact that he had died without the rites of the Church, and that underneath the cushion was found a book, by Julius Firmicus, a writer on mathematics or astrology. His last moments had thus been given to the study of the black arts, and his sudden end was regarded as heaven's judgment on him for this sin. His body, says William, of Newburgh, was carried from Southwell to York by an unfrequented road, and on its arrival was not met by the citizens and clergy of the cathedral city, as was usually the case, but by noisy boys, who pelted the bier with stones. He was buried outside the cathedral without any funeral rites; but we are glad to know that his successor, Archbishop Thomas II., transferred his body from this unworthy grave to a more fitting resting place within York Minster."

Thomas II. (1109) was formerly Provost of Beverley. During his time the Saxon Church which had contained the shrine of S. Eadburh was replaced by the greater Norman building, of which the nave and transepts remain.

Thurstan (1114), founded the prebendal stalls of Beckingham, Dunham, and Halloughton.

Roger (1154), and Geoffry (1191), were both benefactors to the Chapter of Southwell.

Walter de Gray (1216) bought and gave the park of Hexgrave, near Southwell, to the See of York. He also built extensively and bequeathed to posterity the beautiful Choir of the Minster which is still much the same as when it left the builder's hands:

Godfrey de Ludeham (1258), belonged to a family residing some eight miles away, and took his name from the village of Lowdham where he lived.

John Romanus (1286) gave the Church at Barnby, near Newark, for the support of the Minster choristers. His name has been handed down to us as the great Archbishop-builder, inasmuch as his abiding work, the glorious Chapter House, though exceeded in size by several, is equalled in detail and beauty by none.

Henry de Newark (1296) in his earlier days had held a stall here.

Thomas de Corbridge (1300) spent the greater part of his short occupancy of the See (four years) at Southwell, where he died. He endeavoured to enforce the rules of his predecessor Romanus with regard to the Chapter, and did much to improve the Minster services.

So much for the Archbishops. Of the structure occupied by Archbishop Puttoc and his successors up to the time of John Thoresby, nothing is known, but this Prelate built a new Palace about 1360, and many alterations and additions were carried out by Cardinal Kemp and his successor William Booth during the reign of Henry VI.

The walls, in which are several pointed gables, windows with fragments of tracery of the Decorated period, fireplaces, and octagonal chimneys, clearly show its former extent and magnificence, and a good impression may be gained of the original plan of the building, surrounding as it did a courtyard.

Shilton tells us that "the state apartments may be supposed to have been to the east, the offices to the west, the living rooms to the south, and the chapel and great hall to the north."

In the spring of 1530 the once all powerful Cardinal Wolsey retired to the Palace with a retinue of 160 persons, and remained in residence until September. On his arrival he found the Palace itself quite uninhabitable, and had to remain for six weeks in one of the Prebendal houses till things could be brought into some sort of order. Cavendish tells us that he arrived at Southwell about the Thursday after Low Sunday, but could not live in the Palace until Whitsuntide. On Corpus Christi day he sang high mass in the Minster after having received two emissaries from the King during the early hours of the morning. At the ordinary services he usually occupied the present episcopal stall.

After leaving Southwell he proceeded to the manor-house at Scrooby in the north of the county, which then belonged to the See of York. His progress northwards was in many ways a triumph. Up and down the country-side, villagers and people flocked to meet one who, no matter how infamous and unpopular he might appear in the conduct of

public affairs, was to them only a Father-in-God, genial, charitable and kind, in the truest sense a friend of the poor. He had intended to reach the city for his enthronement shortly afterwards, but

was summoned south before that ceremony took place; was arrested, and in November of the same year died at Leicester Abbey on his way to London. Bishop Selwyn refers to this incident in the following lines:

" Here gloriously his summer days he spent in kingly state,
Here his last summer sadly pined,
Bow'd by the stroke of fate."

The Archbishops formerly possessed four parks in the vicinity of Southwell. One of them adjoined the Palace grounds, as did the park at Waltham, the ancient retreat of the Bishops of Winchester. Two more, Hockerwood and Hexgrave, are now divided. Another, Norwood, which is still intact, was purchased about 1650, by Edward Cludd, who built a house upon it, near what is now the middle pond. He was a friend of Cromwell's, and during the war a great power in the County of Nottingham. In the performance of marriage as a civil contract he became famous-or shall we not say infamous?-for the numerous rites which he celebrated under an oak. This veteran of the wood is still to be seen, although now lying on the ground and fast decaying. It would seem that after the Restoration Cludd, whose purchase was now of no avail, leased the house and park from the Archbishop. Cludd himself died in 1672. Norwood at any rate was in the hands of the Archbishop in 1690, as Dickenson says that the Residence House was largely built from money got from a sale of timber in Norwood Park in the time of Archbishop **Lamplugh**.

A considerable number of Archbishops have passed away at Southwell, and six are known to have been buried in the Minster. Their tombs have perished with the exception of that of Edwin Sandys now standing in the North Transept. This Prelate fled to the Continent in Mary's reign, and remained abroad till the accession of Elizabeth, when he was rewarded for his consistency and zeal. He was a man of fighting spirit, and often in his younger days, when Master of S. Catherine's College, Cambridge, was known to draw his dagger on occasion. He was also a great benefactor to Southwell, and after his translation from the see of London to that of York he made the Palace his constant residence, and died there on July 10th, 1588, a few days previous to the arrival of the Armada off our shores.

During the reign of Archbishop Williams the history of this ancient mansion as an archiepiscopal seat draws to a close, for he was the last occupant of the throne of York to be in residence here. At the commencement of the Civil War he fled into Wales and garrisoned Conway Castle in the cause of the King. The Archbishop's command in North Wales was superseded by that of Prince Rupert, the King handing over the castle to the Earl of Conway. This enraged the militant Prelate, who thereupon threw in his lot with the opposite side, and assisted at the storming of the town, which fell on August 15th, 1646.

Charles I. is known to have visited here on many occasions.

A tradition which has been handed down un-interruptedly relates the following :-" Shortly after his arrival he walked about the town unrecognised, and entering the shop of James Lee, a fanatical shoe-maker, whose premises are supposed to have been in what is now called King Street, requested to be measured for a pair of shoes. Lee on commencing the operation cast a keen glance at the monarch's features and instantly desisted. The King somewhat surprised urged him to proceed, but in vain. The shoemaker gave as a reason that the King was the very customer of whom a dream the preceding night had forewarned him, that the hand of fate was on him, and that no one would prosper who did anything for him. The King in dismay walked back to the Palace."

Early in May, 1646, Charles having secretly left Oxford, arrived once more at Southwell, staying this time at the " Saracen's Head," an ancient hostelry in Southwell, still existing and very little altered since that time. The Scotch Commissioners, to whom Charles finally surrendered, were then occupying the Palace.

With the departure of the Commissioners the Palace was given over to the Parliamentary troops, who now began to exercise their power in such a way as to render it unfit for habitation. The lead was removed from the roofs, and anything that could be made use of quickly disappeared. It was then left for the elements to complete the devastation the

army had begun. As no later Archbishop restored any part of it except the hall, it soon became a ruin. Many residents in the district still believe in the fallacy of the bombardment from Constitution Hill, but such could never have happened as an inspection of the walls will show.

After a time a house was built inside the walls, and the adjoining hall was adapted to serve for many purposes.

About 1882 Dr. Trollope, last Suffragan Bishop of Nottingham, began a restoration, hoping that in time the Palace would attain to something like its original beauty, and become the residence of the Bishops of Southwell. His plans were never fully carried out, and he only lived long enough to see the hall and staircase completed.

This work was undertaken with great care, and anyone now standing in the great hall can easily imagine that the building has stood in its present form (with the exception of the wainscoting) since Cardinal Kemp's time. The windows, containing a large portion of the original tracery, are filled with glass bearing the arms of former occupants of the Palace, and of families in the county.

Among the portraits which adorn the walls may be mentioned those of the following celebrities:- Kings James I. and Charles I.; Cardinal Wolsey; Archbishop Sandys; Archbishop Cranmer (who was born at Aslocton in the county); Lancelot Andrewes, Bishop of Winchester, and sometime a Prebendary

of Southwell ; Prebendary Sanderson, who at the Restoration was promoted to the Bishopric of Lincoln; Bishop Jeremy Taylor, of Down and Connor; William Mompesson, the hero of the plague-stricken village of Eyam ; Bishop Trollope ; and the present Bishop of Stafford, for over twenty years the beloved Bishop Suffragan of Derby.

During the episcopate of Bishop Ridding further improvements were made, but the Bishop resided at Thurgarton, some three miles away, the buildings at Southwell not being large enough for a residence, but serving very well for diocesan gatherings.

After the death of Bishop Ridding his successor, Dr. Hoskyns, quickly called in the services of Mr. W. D. Caroe, architect to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and by the instrumentality of funds liberally provided by the clergy and laity of the Diocese at the time when the latter was formed, took in hand the matter of the erection of a permanent episcopal residence-the Bishop's Manor as it is now called. This latter, which covers only a portion of the ground included in the Old Palace, combines most happily the old work and the new, and connects the ancient hall restored by Bishop Trollope with a part of the remaining walls of the ruin, including the south-west gable, though this last is now completely hidden.

The old masonry has stood the ravages of time so well that it has again been possible to cover the gable, which is now an interior wall lending support to a new roof.

The episcopal Chapel, though small, gives a most pleasing effect, and adjoins the grand stone staircase built by Bishop Trollope leading up to the hall.

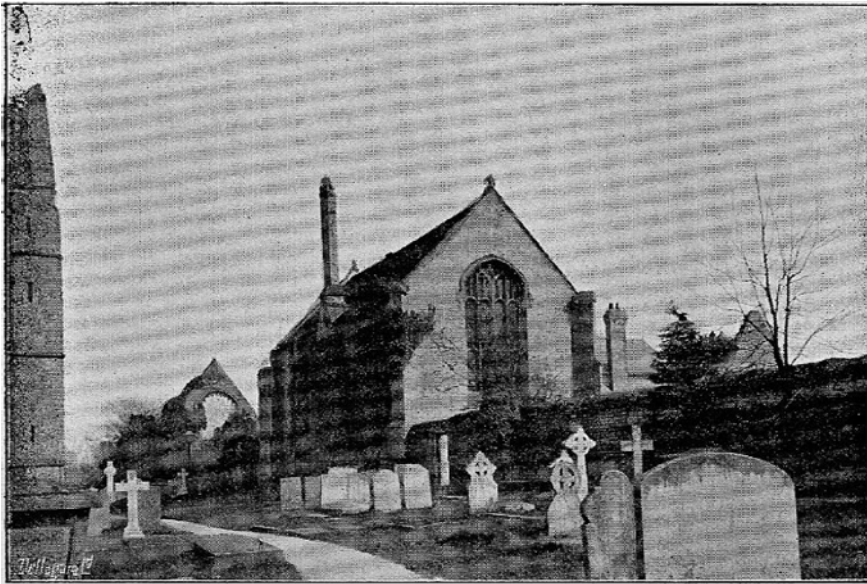
The view from the front of the house, which faces the south, includes a large portion of the park purchased by Cardinal Wolsey, and the remains of the fish ponds can clearly be seen from the windows.

On a plate fixed to the foundation stone within the porch can be seen the following inscription :-

"Domum hanc antiquam Archiepiscoporum Ebor : quondam deversorium Annos plusquam CCL dirutam desolatam, ad gloriam Dei et fratrum suorum commodum redintegravit Edwynus Episcopus de Suwella Secundus."

TRANSLATION:

"This ancient house, once a retreat of the Archbishops of York, was restored from the ruin and desolation of more than two hundred and fifty years, to the glory of God and the benefit of his brethren, by Edwyn, Second Bishop of Southwell."



THE BANQUETING HALL.