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### ORPINGTON CHURCH.

As Orpington Manor was paramount, and claimed jurisdiction, over all manors in St. Mary Cray, Hayes, Downe and Nockholt, so in like manner was Orpington Church the mother church, to which, until recent times, the churches of those four parishes were appendant chapels. As bearing upon the origin of parishes, of church-endowments, and of church-patronage, the fact that the supremacy of Orpington over St. Mary Cray, Hayes, Downe, and Nockholt, was maintained both for manorial and for ecclesiastical purposes, during so many centuries, is noteworthy. When we remember the importance, and dignity, which thus attached to Orpington Church, we are surprised that it is not of grander dimensions. Its interior is but 100 feet long. Sparseness of population might, in our times, account for its small size; as in 1377, Orpington contained not more than 290 souls; Downe, about 167; Hayes 104; and Nockholt 83.\* But, in the middle ages, population did not regulate the dimensions of churches.

Greater interest, however, attaches to the nave of Orpington Church, from the very fact that its walls have never been broken into, for the purpose of adding aisles. We therefore have, in this long narrow nave, the original lines designed by the architect in the eleventh, or twelfth, century. Its interior is  $64\frac{1}{2}$  feet long, and 22 feet 2 inches wide. High up in the south wall, near the chancel arch, are indications of an original round-headed window.

<sup>\*</sup> These figures are based upon the receipts for Poll Tax, Kent Subsidy  $\frac{123}{34}$ , in the Public Record Office.

These facts give reason for some interesting speculations, as to the date of the nave, and its walls. Could it have existed in A.D. 1032, when King Canute's wealthy chaplain, Eadsige or Eadsy, bestowed his large estate at "Orpedingtune" upon the monastery of Christ Church, at Canterbury, which he was then entering? It is quite possible that the eastern portion, if not all, of the present nave, then existed. From Eadsy's character we may infer that of the three churches, which were on this large estate when Domesday Survey was taken, one or more had been standing while he retained possession of the land. Of the three churches, one was assuredly here; perhaps some of its walls remain in this nave. A second church, technically "in Orpintun," was probably one of those which we now call Haves or Downe. The third church was that of St. Mary Cray, called in Domesday "Sentlinge."

Eadsy's holiness and learning had endeared him to Canute and to his queen, the good Ælfgifu or Emma. About three years after Eadsy had become a monastic canon of Christ Church, the bishopric of Winchester became vacant. Gervase, the monk, and Ralph de Diceto, say that the priest appointed to that see in 1035 was a chaplain of Canute's son King Harold, named Eadsine, or Eadsy. Somner calls him bishop of St. Martin's and archdeacon of Canterbury;\* but Battely says he was not archdeacon, although he was bishop of St. Martin's, and ultimately archbishop.†

Thus Eadsy, who was Archbishop of Canterbury from 1038 to 1049, may probably be identified with the wealthy owner of the estate at Orpedingtune.

Whether the existing nave, or its eastern portion, did or did not exist in Eadsy's days, or at the period of Domesday Survey, it is quite certain that this building was improved soon after the middle of the twelfth century, and at its close. The two members of the west doorway's pointed arch are adorned with mouldings, of the chevron and dog tooth ornaments, which indicate early Transitional work. The chancel arch, the south door of the chancel, and the groined lower

<sup>\*</sup> Somner's Antiquities of Canterbury, p. 152. † Battely's Second Part of Antiquities of Canterbury, p. 132.

stage of the tower, with its lancet windows and small trefoil-headed piscina, seem to be in the pure Early English style. The internal area of the tower's floor is about 14 feet square.

The conservative taste of later mediæval architects is shewn by the preservation, above and beside a later arch, of a walled-up lancet which was originally an outer window in the lower stage of the tower's east wall. In the fifteenth century it was left, in situ, when the north-chantry was built, against the east wall of the tower. The position of the tower, on the north side of the nave's east end, is remarkable, and should be noticed. Some wooden screen work, within the tower arch, was good. A shingled top to the tower was destroyed by a tempest many years ago.

Mural pulpits, of which several examples remain in the west of England, are unusual in Kent. In Foots Cray Church, the pulpit is now approached by means of a mural stair turret; and probably there was a mural pulpit here. In the nave's south wall, close to its east end, are two doorways, the upper of which being but five feet from the floor, seems to be so low that it could not well have led to a rood loft, but must have given access to a mural pulpit. On the north side of the nave, there is a blocked doorway; and, midway between it and the tower, is a rectangular shallow niche, five feet from the floor.

A canopied altar tomb in the porch is a peculiar, and interesting, feature of Orpington Church. Marriage at the church door was common; but interment there was unusual. Thomas Evyas, curate of Great Mongeham, in his will dated 1528, desired that he might be buried in the churchyard of his parish, at the south door, as nigh the porch as possible. William Makenade, in his will dated October, 1407, desired to be buried close to the entry of the south door of Preston Church, Faversham, in the churchyard.\* John Sesbritenden, chaplain, by will dated 1407, wished his body to be interred within the Belfry of All Saints Church, Brenchley.† Agnes Preyset, in 1513, desired to be buried in the Belfry of Ruckinge Church. No doubt all these testators had the

<sup>\*</sup> Archbishop Arundel's Register, i. 242.

same devout and humble feeling, which induced a rector of Orpington to be interred here, in the porch which he had made at the entrance of God's house.

Seldom however do we find, as at Orpington, a handsome altar tomb, with arched and crocketed canopy, in a church porch. Here, the tomb is on the north side of the western porch, which is 13 ft. 4 in. long and 10 ft. 8 in. wide. Thus, its position is very similar to that of a tomb in an ordinary belfry at a church's west end. This porch-tomb's canopy is handsomely carved, in chalk. Many, and varied, have been the suggestions respecting the tomb, some antiquaries having supposed that it had been removed from a position within the church. Fortunately, I have discovered the will of him who lies there interred, and it sets at rest all doubt upon the subject.

Nicholas, rector of Orpington, made his will on the 1st of August, 1370.\* He therein records the fact that, during his lifetime, he had newly built the porch; and that within his newly erected porch he desired to be buried. We thus know that the porch, and the tomb, were erected during the reign of Edward III. Rector Nicholas desired likewise, that to his body, in the tomb, should be tied a bull of Indulgence. granted to him by the Pope (volo quod bulla indulgencie mee corpori alligatur). Archbishop Stratford had been his patron and friend, therefore he directed his executors to provide that two or three priests should celebrate mass, for the souls of that Archbishop and himself, within Orpington Church. They were also to appropriate the sum of 40s. for the provision, in perpetuity, of lights to be kept burning at the elevation of the Host. For use in the church, he bequeathed an alb, and an amice (amicta), of the celebrated English embroidery. Robert, the vicar of Orpington, was to receive his best robe, and a legacy of 20s., on condition that he should recommend the testator's soul when he celebrated mass.

To his successor, in the Rectory of Orpington, he leaves his great *Portiforium*, noted according to the Sarum Use, and also his new Ordinal, on condition that such successor "shall

<sup>\*</sup> Archbishop Whittlesey's Register, folio 119a.

not receive any sum for dilapidations in respect of the five houses\* of the benefice, after the testator shall have caused them to be repaired."

To the "chapel" of St. Mary Cray (now its parish church) he devised a gilt chalice, and silver phials. To the "chapel" of Ocholte (Knockholt church), he left a vestment which he wore at mass in his chapel of Orpington. He was a literary man, and a great scribe, for he bequeathed to Master William de Tyryngton, + not only his silver beads, but The Chronicles written by himself.

His successor was John Wodehull, whose will, made in 1382, is recorded in Archbishop Courtney's Register, fol. 205b. It contains very little information. His executors William Topclyf, Richard Northwych and Walter Edward, were directed to give 40s. to the work of Orpington Church; a like sum to William, the vicar there, to celebrate masses for John Wodehull's soul; and a third sum of 40s. to John Houne of Orpington.

The north chantry, which was built in the fifteenth century against the east wall of the tower, is chiefly remarkable for the frequent repetition upon it of its founder's shield of arms. This armorial coat is skilfully used as an ornament, both on the exterior, and on brackets and arches in the interior, of the chantry. It bears a chevron between three trefoils slipt, which was the coat of the Rufford family. In two places it is impaled with a coat similar to that of the Gorges family, viz.: a bend, on a chief two mullets pierced. cannot discover what member of the Rufford family was connected with Orpington; nevertheless, that there must have been some connection is evident, from the fact that in the hamlet of Crocton, or Crofton, there was, at the Reformation, a chapel called the Rufford chantry.1 chantry, in Orpington Church, has been the property of the Harts and Dykes, of Lullingstone Castle, ever since King Henry VIII granted the manor of Orpington to Percival

<sup>\*</sup> Probably one house of residence in each parish, Orpington, St. Mary Cray, Hayes, Downe, and Knockholt.
† Probably identical with William de Tynnyngton, Prebendary of Lincoln, who in 1394 became Rector of Maidstone, by exchange with Guido de Mone.
‡ Hasted, Hist. of Kent, ii. 103.

Hart, Esq., in 1540 (32 H. VIII). Whether it had previously belonged to his ancestors the Peches, who owned Mayfield Place, does not appear. It is 15 feet long, and 10 ft 10 in. wide.

Thorpe, in his edition of the Registrum Roffense, gives on pages 964-7, a detailed account of the monuments in Orpington Church.

The most ancient are three memorial brasses. One commemorates William Gulby, who died in 1439.\* Another is that of a Rector of Orpington, Thomas Wilkynson, who died in 1511: the efficies upon this brass is remarkably good. The third brass commemorates a vicar of Orpington, John Gover, who died in 1522.‡

Several monuments, of the seventeenth century, are records of the residence, in the Parsonage, now called the Priory, at Orpington, of the Honourable Richard Spencer, and his descendants. This gentleman was a man of considerable position and influence in Kent. The second son of Robert, first Baron Spencer of Wormleighton, by a wealthy Willoughby heiress, he was born in or about 1593. He married a Kentish lady, Mary daughter of Sir Edwin Sandys of Northbourne. So good was his position in this county, that in 1640 he canvassed (although unsuccessfully) for election as one of the members to represent Kent in Parliament. Although his wife's brother vehemently espoused the cause of the Roundheads, Colonel Spencer was an enthusiastic Royalist, and raised about £60,000 for King Charles I, in money, as well as two regiments of horse. Consequently his liabilities drove him to reside on the continent. and ruined his estate. His young nephew, Henry third Lord Spencer, who married Waller's Sacharissa, Lady Doro-

<sup>\*</sup> Inscribed "Hic iacet Willelmus Gulby armiger qui obijt xxvi° die Januarij Anno Domini M°CCCC°XXXIX° cuius anime propicietur Deus, Amen."—Arms, a chevron between three cross molines.

a chevron between three cross molines.

† Inscribed "Orate pro anima Thome Wilkynson arcium magistri quondam prebendarij in ecclesia Sancti Wulffrani de Rippon et Rectoris de Harowe supra montem et Orpyngton qui obijt xiiio die Decembris Anno Domini MovaXI Cuius anime propicietur deus."

‡ Inscribed "Off your charite pray for the soule of Mr John Gover bacheler of bothe lawes and vicar of this church which decessid the vi day of August anno domini MCCCOCO XXIIo on whose soule Ihesu have merci."

thy Sydney, of Penshurst, was created Earl of Sunderland in 1643, and fell in that year gloriously fighting for his king at Newbury. From this young nobleman descended the Earls of Sunderland, the Dukes of Marlborough, and the present Earl Spencer. Although his uncle Richard, of Orpington, had several sons, none of them survived him. His infant sons Robert and John were buried in Merton College Chapel, at Oxford,\* and his fourth son, Richard, was interred at Orpington, having died in the ninth year of his age. Alice, daughter of Robert (?) Spencer, was baptized here January 25th, 1623.

Having survived until the Restoration, Colonel Spencer petitioned the King, in May, 1660, for appointment to the Provostship of Eton. + Failing in that, he in the following August sought to be established in the place of Vice Treasurer of Ireland, of which office the reversion had formerly been granted to him.; He pleaded that the late King Charles I had never paid to him £4,000, due for his services and expenses as Ambassador to the United Netherlands. He likewise recited his services, in conjunction with other gentlemen of Kent, in raising two regiments of horse and borrowing £60,000 for Charles I. His petitions, written at Orpington, are still extant among the Public Records. Dying on the 1st of November, 1661, in the sixty-eighth year of his age, this devoted Royalist was buried in Orpington Church. § His widow, surviving, was so reduced in circumstances that when a new lease of Orpington Parsonage was granted, which required her to pay to the Vicar £13 6s. 8d. per annum, she petitioned the King (in March, 1662) to beg the Archbishop to excuse her from this payment.

The King's consequent letter, to his Grace of Canterbury,

<sup>\*</sup> Folio edition of Hasted's History of Kent, vol. i., p. 137 note.
† Domestic State Papers, Charles II, vol. i., No. 155.
‡ Ibidem, vol. xiii., No. 23.
§ The shield upon his monument bears eight quarterings, I (Spencer) Quarterly arg. and gu., in 2 and 3 a fret or; over all, on a bend sable 3 escallops argent; 2, a fess ermine between 6 eagles' heads erased; 3, Three stirrups in pale; 4, On a cross 5 estoiles of 6 points; 5, Chevron between 3 cinquefoils; 6, Ermine on a chevron 5 bezants, a crescent for difference; 7, On a bend between 2 lions rampant, a wivern with open wings; 8, Parted per chevron, 3 lions passant gardant in pale. In the centre of the escutcheon is a crescent for difference.

|| Domestic State Papers, Charles II, vol. lii., No. 85.

fully justifies Goldsmith's later picture of the country parson, as "passing rich on £40 a year." The King states that the Vicar of Orpington had already "a competent provision of £60 per annum;" and his majesty intimates to the Archbishop that such a vicarial stipend is larger than the authorities had contemplated. The intention, says the King, was to augment all smaller church livings to about £20 per annum.\*

Mrs. Spencer died on the 26th of October, 1675, in the sixty-ninth year of her age, and was buried at Orpington.

The coheiresses of Colonel Spencer were both buried here; Margaret, wife of John Venables of Agdon, Cheshire, died on the 9th of March, 1675-6; and Mary, wife of William Gee of Bishops Burton, Yorks., on the 15th of November, 1702. Here likewise are monuments to Richard Gee, who died on 26th of October, 1727, and his widow Philippa, who died July 4th, 1744. As she was the daughter of Sir Nicholas Carew, of Beddington, her grandson Richard Gee assumed the name of Carew, and inherited the estates of Sir Nicholas Hacket Carew, his second cousin.

Other monuments commemorate Oliver, third son of the Rev. Thomas Watts (vicar) and Audrey his wife, who died in 1697-8, aged seven years; Benjamin Knight, citizen and stationer, who died July 19th, 1729, aged twenty-nine, and Arabella his relict, who subsequently married Richard Wilder, but died on September 15th, 1737, aged thirty-six.

The Register of Burials informs us that the Plague was rife in Orpington from Midsummer to Michaelmas, 1583. Thirteen persons were buried during that period who died of the Plague, seven of them being from one house. Among the surnames in this Register are those of Halfpeny, and Beast. It should be remarked that all burials are on the north side of Orpington Churchyard, which is but a few feet broad on the south side of the church.

<sup>\*</sup> Domestic State Papers, Entry Book vi., page 25.

#### RECTORS OF ORPINGTON.

The first Rector whose name is known to us was Hugh de Mortimer, a native of Poitou, Provost of Oriel College, Oxford, and Archdeacon of Canterbury. He held this benefice in A.D. 1254-70. In 1270, sitting as official of the Archbishop's Court, in Orpington Rectory house, he heard a suit pleaded here respecting Horton Priory.\* Fourteen years later Roger de Derteford was the fortunate incumbent; he presented a priest to the vicarage in April, 1284.† His subsequent tenure of the Rectory was short. Archbishop Peckham preferred a deacon to this valuable living, in January, 1288-9, and a minute record of the act of institution appears in the Register. It states that Master Reginald de Brandone, deacon, was instituted in the presence of Roger de Rowelle, Luke de Brek, treasurer of Hereford, Hugh de Penbroke, dominus Roger Burd, and others.‡ He was still holding this benefice in 1293.§

We fail to find any further records of the subsequent rectors until 1370, when Nicholas, rector of Orpington, made his will. His successor, John Wodehall (instituted in Oct., 1371), was one of the executors of the will of Archbishop Whittlesey.

Archbishop Courtenay presented his own chaplain, Master John Prophet, to the Rectory, on the 26th of November, 1392.\*\* He had, in 1382, been rector of Adisham. Orpington did not long possess this Prophet; during his short incumbency, land called "le Parsonys garden" was assigned to the vicar as a site for a vicarage house, on the 9th of April, 1393;†† but within a year from that time the Prophet had been called away, probably by appointment to some preferment under the Crown. Accordingly, King Richard II exercised the right of patronage for the next turn, and presented a chaplain named Thomas Stanley, who was instituted on the 6th of March, 1393-4.‡‡ Stanley resigned within two years, and John Wirsall was instituted on the 20th of October, 1395.§§

The next rector was John Wakeryng, a man of great eminence, who achieved high positions in the Church and in the State. He probably succeeded Wirsall in Orpington Rectory, which he quitted by exchange for a benefice in the diocese of Norwich. This exchange was consummated by the institution to Orpington on the 11th of

August, 1407,\* of Bartholomew Colman, who had been rector of Berton Torf, Norfolk. Wakering became Master of the Rolls in 1404; and in July, 1408, Archdeacon of Canterbury; made a canon of Wells in 1409, he was, from 1410 to 1412, conjoined with Sir Thomas Beaufort in the office of Lord Keeper of the Great Seal, and in 1416 became Bishop of Norwich. There he built the Chapter House (now destroyed), and began the Cloisters. He was buried in 1426 in Norwich Cathedral.

On the 25th of November, 1411, Colman quitted the benefice, by exchange with Henry Merston,† rector of Dodington, Cambs.; but Merston exchanged this living for a Canonry in St. Paul's Cathedral, in 1418, so that on the 7th of July in that year John Breche succeeded him here.‡

The ex-canon of St. Paul's, John Breche, retained this rectory for a longer time than his predecessors. In 1430 he was still the incumbent; but in July, 1433, John Bosham was rector. him succeeded Henry Burton, bachelor of law, who in course of time was content to accept a pension, of twenty-five marks per annum, out of the benefice, and thus to make way (by resignation) for Doctor Robert Dobbys, who was admitted to the Rectory on the 7th of August, 1455. After holding this rectory for twenty years Dr. Dobbes died and was succeeded by Thomas Wilkinson, M.A., who was instituted on the 22nd of April, 1475.\*\* Not contented with one benefice, Wilkinson obtained the rectory of Harrow-onthe-Hill, to which he was admitted on the 5th of February, 1478-9.++ He seems to have resided much at Orpington, but in addition to his two rectories he obtained a Prebendal stall at Ripon. After having held this benefice for thirty-six years he was buried here in 1511. and his monumental brass still remains in the chancel.

Wilkinson died on the 13th of December, 1511, and upon the very next day William Warham, Archdeacon of Canterbury (1514-35), was admitted to the benefice, by his brother the archbishop.‡‡ This church is dedicated to All Saints, yet in the record of the admission of a vicar (John Gower) on August the 30th, 1518, the patron is described as Archdeacon William Warham, rector of the church of the parish of Holy Trinity, Orpington.§§ At the time of the Reformation, some transfer of patronage was temporarily made by the Rector. We find that a layman, George Bysmor,

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* Arundel's Register, 315<sup>b</sup>.
‡ Chiohele's Register, 97.

∥ Ibidem, 199<sup>a</sup>.

** Ibidem, 113<sup>b</sup>.

‡‡ Warham's Register, 344<sup>a</sup>
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<sup>†</sup> Arundel's Register, ii. 62<sup>b</sup>. § Ibidem. 184<sup>b</sup>. ¶ Bourgohier's Register, 61<sup>a</sup>. †† Ibidem, 120<sup>a</sup>. §§ Ibidem, 365<sup>b</sup>.

gent., presented Richard Dryland to the vicarage on the 13th of October, 1541.\*

Maurice Clensche, rector of Orpington, was "deprived" of the living in 1566, and was succeeded, on the 27th of December, by Henry Dethicke, Bachelor of Divinity. Upon his resignation, John Matched was instituted on the 24th of May, 1570. John Bancroft, † nephew of the Archbishop, was made rector in 1608; he became Head of University College (1609), and Bishop of Oxford; he died in February, 1640. Henry Robinson succeeded him, and died in 1660. Robert Say, provost of Oriel, petitioned Charles II for this preferment, on the 22nd of June, 1660; his petition was supported by Dr. Gilbert Sheldon, and granted. Dr. Robert Uvedale was rector in 1696.

Henry Hall, a rector who died in October, 1763, was likewise incumbent of East Peckham, and of Harbledown, and Treasurer of Wells Cathedral. Dr. Charles Plumptre, archdeacon of Ely, and rector of St. Mary Woolnoth, succeeded him, and died in September, 1779. Dr. William Backhouse held the benefice for a short time, but resigned it in 1781; and was succeeded by William Clarke.

Among the Vicars of Orpington have been:— Admitted.

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1284
      William de Orpynton (Peckham's Register, 55<sup>a</sup>.)
       Robert (vide Will of rector Nicholas, A.D. 1370).
       William (vide Will of John Wodehull, A.D. 1383).
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John Adcock (M. D. B. and Courtenay's Reg., 216a). 1393

William Maundeby, x.,
John Creye, x.,
vicar of Willesden.

John Lichlade, x.,

John Lichlade, x.,

(Chichele's Reg., 65a.) 26 John Creye, x., 1411 Sept.

1415Aug. 17

Thomas Wolaston, x. (Chichele's Reg., 66). 13 1415Oct.

Roger Leke, x., rector of Cortlingstoke (Chichele's March 28 1416  $Reg., 85^{b}$ ).

\* Cranmer's Register, 385b.

<sup>†</sup> Bancroft's arms appear twice in a small window of the Rectory (Priory); impaled first with those of the University, and secondly with those of University College. The register of burials contains the following curious entry:—1631 Mr. Edmund Bancroft dieng September 28 at one of the clock in the morning was buried Sept. 29 at 9 at night.

† The marks against names of vicars are x, meaning "exchanged;" r., resigned; ob., died holding the vicarage.

- 1424 Feb. 14 Thomas Gedys, x., vicar of North Shoebury Chichele's Reg., 147b.
  1426 Dec. 28 Ralph Smyth, ob., vicar of Rainham (Chichele's Reg., 165b).
- 1428 Feb. 13 John Somery, r. (Chichele's Reg., 1712).
- 1428 Dec. 12 Gerard Nalwyk, r. (Chichele's Reg., 174b).
- 1430 Oct. 8 James Beek (Chichele's Reg., 184b).
- 1433 July 2 Gerard Naldewycke (Chichele's Reg., 199a).

  John Andrewe, r. 1 (2) and the second second
- 1461 June 11 Henry Bosewell, r. (Bourgehier's Reg., 81a).
- 1465 Aug. 26 Thomas Edmund (Bourgehier's Reg., 91<sup>a</sup>).

  Robert Taylour, ob. \(\begin{aligned} Morton D. B and C. \end{aligned}\)
- 1492 Sept. 14 Thomas Penyngton, r. Reg. 153a).
- 1492 Nov. 12 Robert Patynson, ob. (M. D. B. C. Reg., 153b).
- 1518 Aug. 30 John Gower, LL.B., ob. (Warham's Reg., 365b).
- 1522 Sept. 3 John Morton, r. (Warham's Reg., 375b).
- 1525 April 3 Richard Blagge, ob. (Warham's Reg., 384a).
- 1541 Oct. 13 Richard Dryland (*Cranmer's Reg.*, 385<sup>b</sup>). Christopher Tompson, ob.
- 1560 April 3 George Barr (Parker's Register, i., 342b).

# Hasted gives the following additional names of vicars:—

William Wood, ob. June, 1620 (buried here).

Christopher Monkton, ob. July 1, 1651 (buried at Hayes).

Henry Stiche, ob. Nov., 1670.

Benjamin Blackstone, ob. Jan., 1671 (buried at Chichester).

Robert Bourne, ob. Nov., 1687 (buried at Hayes).

Thomas Watts, 1687, resigned 1732.

James Whitehouse, ob. 1755.

Francis Fawkes, resigned 1774.

John Till, resigned 1777.

Henry Pratt, ob. 22 Oct., 1802.

## From the Parish Registers we add these names:-

Stephen Langston, 1806.

W Townley, 1816 to 1844.

G. F. Dawson, 1848.

W. Falcon, Dec., 1851, to April, 1866.

W. Gardner, 1867 to 1877.

E. F. Dyke, 1877.

# W. A. Scott Robertson.