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# THE RUINED CHAPEL OF ST. KATHERINE AT SHORNE, KENT.

## PART II.

BY GEORGE M. ARNOLD, F.S.A.

SINCE my communication upon this Chantry, which appeared on pp. 195—202 of Vol. XX. of *Archæologia Cantiana*, the following additional information has come to hand in reference to the building, the history of which was so obscure, that not only all circumstances of its foundation, but even the Saint of its dedication had been utterly lost.

Mr. Leland L. Duncan, in writing his Notes of Wills proved in the Rochester Consistory Court, has very kindly drawn my attention to a will of Thomas Davy of "Shornstrete" (book vii., fol. 77 A), bearing date A.D. 1516, and attested by Sir Thomas Elys, in which (he states) there occurs the following bequest:—

"To the reparacion of Saynt Kateren Chapell half a quarter of Barley."

It appears from such information as I can obtain that the Parish Church of Shorne contained neither altar, nor chapel dedicated to St. Katherine—hence that this legacy referred to the present building seems probable, if not incontestable.

If the witness, Sir Thomas Elys (who, according to Hasted, died Vicar of Shorne on the 18th March 1569) was (as I suppose) the then vicar, he affords a tolerable refutation in his own person of the idea that Shorne was at those periods an unhealthy parish, suffering often from the prevalence of ague; for protection against which a Saint "Sir John Schorne" was popularly invoked.

I do not know that the Saint possessed other shrines in Kent than at Shorne, at Lower Halstow, and at Canterbury Cathedral, though it is stated by one author that the adjoining Parish Church of Merston (probably in error for a parish in Bucks) contained one; but that he was venerated in the counties of Suffolk, Norfolk, Bucks, and Berks we possess much evidence.

Mr. Brent, in *Archæologia Cantiana*, Vol. XIII., p. 113, exhibited an illustration of six pilgrim signs in lead or pewter, denoting visits by their possessors paid to the shrine of Sir John Shorne; and at North Marston Church above referred to "Brown Willis" noticed (written up) the lines beginning "Sir John Schorne,

Gentleman, born, etc.," but no pilgrims' signs of the kind have been found in the restoration of St. Katherine's, Shorne, partly (it may be) from my objection to disturb the buried remains of men committed to Mother Earth accompanied by Christian rites.

That St. John Shorne's reputation for sanctity was considerable is illustrated by his shrine in the south aisle of St. George's Chapel, Windsor Castle, which was removed thither from North Marston by Papal licence, and from the circumstance that the offerings at it, after such transfer, amounted to as much as £500 yearly.

At all events the age would certainly have seemed to have weighed lightly upon the longevity of Sir Thomas Elys, since we find in the Rochester Wills that Thomas Page, under date so far back as 1st June 1495, willed "that my feoffees make or demise a state unto Sir Thomas Elis, now Vicar of Shorn, and to X or XII of the best disposed young men of the parish of Shorn, in a tenement called 'Normans' lying and sitting in Up Shorn, in the said parish, to have and to hold to them their heirs and assigns for ever; To the intent that they shall suffer the before named Sir Thomas Elis, Vicar of the same Parish, to have and to occupy the said tenement, as the Vicar's dwelling place, as long as he liveth, and there continueth Vicar, and if the said Sir Thomas decease, or be promoted to any other benefice, or cease to be Vicar, Then the said tenement to remain to the Vicar next succeeding him in like forme as it is granted to the said Sir Thomas, and so the tenement to be continued from Vicar to Vicar, in like forme as long as the world shall endure." For this certain masses and religious services (in the said will mentioned) were to be performed at certain times in the Parish "Church of Shorne," and (the testator continuing, adds) "when it shall fortune 7 or 8 of the persons that be enfeoffed to decease, Then I will that a new state be made by them who outlive, to the said Vicar for the time being, and X or XII young men as is before rehearsed, to the intent before specified, and so infinitely for ever."

Thus, if the said Sir Thomas Elys, the testamentary witness of Thomas Davy (the benefactor of St. Katherine) be the vicar of that name, and be also the vicar of that name mentioned in the will of Thomas Page of 1495, who died as above stated upon 18th March 1569, he must probably have attained the age of 100 years, a respectable evidence of the salubrity of his parish in his times.

Mr. W. Page, F.S.A., who has recently edited for the Surtees Society the Certificates by the Royal Commissioners appointed to survey the Chantries, Guilds, and Hospitals in Yorkshire, of the middle of the sixteenth century, was good enough to tell me that he had come across several similar instances to that of St. Katherine, Shorne, of Chantry Chapels about which nothing is known, and of which there has been no return in the Chantry Certificates, and congratulated me upon my fortune in finding the record in the Elizabethan Commissioners' return of concealed lands, which has shed some light upon the previous gloom, and has given us at all events the dedication of the Chapel.

The perusal of his interesting work brings to light several

instances of Yorkshire Chantries dedicated to St. Katherine, and possessing features very analogous to the Shorne Chantry—and of these I have noted the few following instances:—

A Chantry Chapel, about as far from its Parish Church as St. Katherine, Shorne, is distant from Shorne Church (about half a mile), is mentioned in the following entry:—

“The Chaunterye of Service wythyn the Manor of Toplyff.

“William Toppam, incumbent. The same Chaunterye is founded by th’ Erle of Northumberland to singe Masse and to pray for the soules of the founders and all Crysten soules.

“The same chauntry is dystaunt from the sayd parysshe church e dimid mile.

“The necessity thereof is saing of masse within the sayd manor. The same chauntrye is nether charged to the firste frutes or tenthes.

“The foundation is observyed, and kept accordingly.

“Goodes, ornamentes, and plate pertenyng to the sayd chauntrye, as apperyth by inventory, plate, nil, goodes, nil.

“First, a certen yerly rent comyng out of the Manor of Toplyff, fyve pondes payd by the receyvor of the said Manor, etc.”

The two following St. Katherine Chantries were locally within the fabrics of their Parish Churches:—

“The Chaunterye of Seynt Katheryne, within the sayd Church of Doncastre.

“Robert Myrfyn, incumbent. Of the foundation of John Haryngton, esquier (Licence to John Son of W<sup>m</sup> Hairington & Isabella his Wife to found a Chantry at the Altar of the Blessed Katherine in the Church of S<sup>t</sup> George of Doncaster 4 July 1453, Pat. 31 Hen. VI., p. 2 in 20) and Elizabeth hys wyeff, dated in the day of Cathedra of Seynt Peter [*sic*] Anno Domini MCCCCLVJ, and anno regni regis Henrici VII. XXXV. To th’ entente to pray for the soules of the founders and all Cristen soules, and to fynde one yerely obite there.

“The same chaunterye is within the sayd church. The necessitie is to pray for the soules of the founders and all Cristen soules. There is no landes sold ne alyenated sins the iiij<sup>th</sup> day of February, anno regni regis Henrici VII<sup>th</sup>, xxvij<sup>mo</sup>.

“Goodes, ornamentes, and plate pertenyng to the same, as apperyth by inventory, viz.:—goodes valued at xij<sup>s</sup> iiij<sup>d</sup>, plate xlj<sup>s</sup>.

“Firste thre acres of lande in Whitelay in tholdyng of Hugh Wyrall, esquier, vj<sup>s</sup>, etc., etc., whereof paiable yerely to the Kyng’s Majestie, for a tenth x<sup>s</sup> iiij<sup>d</sup>; to Wyndham for cheffe rent vj<sup>s</sup> viij<sup>d</sup>; to the sayd Wynham j rent x<sup>s</sup>; to Thomas Barnston for cheffe rent x<sup>s</sup>. In all xxxi<sup>s</sup>. And so remaineth vjlix<sup>v</sup> vj<sup>d</sup>.”

The following is the second instance of Chantry within the Parish Church:—

“The Service of Seynt Katheryne in the sayd Church of Rotherham.

“Richard Lyng, Incumbent, Havyng no foundation but of the ordynance of dyvers well disposed persons; To th’entente to pray for the soules of the benefactors, and all Cristen soules, and to do

dyvyne service, and to say Masse in the sayd Church at vj a clocke in the morning wynter and somer.

"The same is wythin the sayd church.

"The necessitie thereof is to pray for the soules departyd, and all Christen soules, and to do dyvine service in the sayd church. There is no landes ne sold, ne alyenated, sythens the Statute.

"Goodes, ornamentes, and plate pertenyng to the same as appereth by inventory, viz. :—goodes valued xij<sup>s</sup> vij<sup>d</sup>, plate lx<sup>s</sup>.

"Firste Robert Swaythe a parcell of ground called the Crawflatt x<sup>s</sup>, etc., etc.

"Whereof, paiaible yerely to the King's Majestie, p. a. x<sup>th</sup> viij<sup>s</sup>. To the Lorde Shrewsbury for Chyffe Rent vij iiiij<sup>d</sup>. To Master Denman for Chief Rent out of a parcell of Medowe in Broadmarse xvij<sup>d</sup>. To the Lorde of Marsburgh in the said Lordship xij<sup>d</sup>, in all xviij<sup>s</sup> viij<sup>d</sup>, and so remaneth ciiij<sup>s</sup> x<sup>d</sup>."

A reviewer of Mr. Page's work, referring to the Edwardine Statute, under which St. Katherine's, Shorne, was suppressed, alleges "that the Act states, with characteristic hypocrisy, that to chantries and the like was due a great part of superstition and errors in Christian religion, and it dissolved them avowedly to bestow their possessions on the erection of grammar schools, the general advancement of learning, and the better provision for the poor and needy; in reality the profits of a considerable part of the confiscated property were, within a few months of the passing of the Act, devoted to the prosecution of warlike operations in Scotland and Ireland, and other secular purposes—and Mr. Page is able to state, on the authority of the official reports of the Charity Commissioners, that not one grammar school was actually founded by Edward VI. throughout Yorkshire; some (it is true) were continued, but none were founded. When we consider the proportion that this vast county bears to the whole of England, we shall see the value of the statement in estimating the motives which, in sweeping away religious foundations, actuated the young King and his zealous advisers, who thirsted for the spread of education. Educational endowments (says Mr. Page) had to be left for later reigns, and largely to private munificence. The unique opportunity which the dissolution of the Chantries presented for advancing the cause of education was practically lost."

No doubt the "Capellanus" (Chaplain) attached to such Chantries was in a greater or less degree an educational factor in the locality, available for many a grammar school of the day, though doubtless his duties were mainly ecclesiastical and spiritual. Indeed, Canon Rock, in his *Church of our Fathers*, vol. iii., p. 124, writes: "The obligation usually consisted in saying Mass, and the canonical hours every day, besides the whole service of the dead once each week throughout the year, within the Chantry-Chapel itself, for the founder's soul; besides this the priest had to be in the choir of the church wherein his Chantry stood (if it were within a Parish Church) on all Sundays and holy days, singing and helping at the parochial services, and also to walk in public processions."

We know also from the records of our own county that eleemosynary benefits were attached to many chantries in favour of the poor; indeed, a weekly dole to the poor was usually provided by most founders of chantries amongst their other regulations. From the certificate of Sir X'tofer Clarke, "Chauntre of Hedcron" (Headcorn in Kent), we learn there was distributed "yerly by the foundation of the same Chantre:

"First, weekly every wake vij<sup>d</sup> to vij poure people of the Parish of Headcorn, xxx<sup>s</sup> iiij<sup>d</sup>.

"Item, an obit for the founder yerly xx<sup>s</sup>.

"Item, to the lights of the Crucifyx and sepulchre of our Lord God yerly iij<sup>s</sup> iiij."—*Valor Ecclesiasticus*, 1—63.

But a very interesting reference to St. Katherine, Shorne, in the first half of the last century, has been discovered since the publication of Vol. XX. of this Journal, and it occurs in the translation of Kalm's account of his visit to England on his way to America in 1748, a translation of a rare book made by Mr. Joseph Lucas, and published by Macmillan and Co. as lately as 1892. My attention was specially attracted by the translator's preface, who explains that Kalm was born in 1716, and in 1747 was commissioned by the Swedish Government and the Academy of Science (with joint subsidies from the Universities of Abo and Upsala) to visit North America for the purpose of investigating its natural productions. It appears that on the 17th February 1748 he reached London, and remained in England till the 5th August following, when, embarking at Gravesend, he did not return to the mouth of the Thames until the 27th March 1751, where at last his many perils by sea were terminated by the ship running ashore, and (their two pumps failing to keep the water under) they had to seek the nearest land.

The translator speaks of the extreme completeness of Kalm's Agricultural Notes in his account of England and survey of the country district, which he made from four centres, one of them being Gravesend, and then proceeds to state (p. xv.) that the illustrations or figures in the book (with the exception of that of the *Archæological Mystery* on p. 402 and the plan shewing its site) are reproductions of "Jungström's" figures. Jungström was Kalm's botanical assistant.

Upon turning to the text to see of what this "Archæological Mystery" near Gravesend consisted, I found with equal interest and surprise that it was none other than St. Katherine's Chapel, and I will now transcribe Mr. Lucas's translation of what Kalm wrote:

"15 July 1748. Churches—the ancient ones, mostly of flints, etc. I have mentioned above that nearly all the old churches in this part were built of flints, as Chadwell in Essex, Northfleet, west of Gravesend, and several others in Kent. To-day also we saw that many churches in Rochester were for the most part built of bare flint, only that they used some Portland stone among them.

"We went afterwards from the high road up to a hamlet where we saw an old Church, which they used as a malthouse.

"This was similarly almost entirely built of flints, only that the window-frames and mullions and the door posts were of Portland stone.

"The windows were quite small. There appeared, truly enough, bricks in the walls in one place and another, but it could at the same time be plainly seen that the wall had there been broken, and that the brickwork was the work of later times.

"We saw afterwards another Church (the description applies to Shorne Church), which similarly was for the greatest part built of flints, yet that Portland stone was here and there built into the wall. The window frames and tracery, as well as the door posts, were always, in all such old Churches, of Portland stone; also frequently the angles of the Church walls and the tower.

"The windows were mostly small enough, for which reasons we may conclude (1) That the brick kiln in former times seems to have been little known, or at least not specially used in this district. (2) That the use of glass also in those times was not very great.

"On the south side of another Church there have formerly been three large doors side by side, but they were afterwards built up with flints, and made only into small windows.

"Some of these old Churches now stood deep down in the earth, so that their floor was much deeper down than the outer surface of the Churchyard, a sign of their great age. Thus either the Church has sunk, or the earth in the Churchyard has been raised by the corpses and coffins buried there, with other earth that had been carried there, or all these causes together.

"I also noticed that in most places in this district, and also in Essex, they used the churchyards where they buried their dead as pastures for horses, donkeys, or pigs, but especially for horses. In some places the churchyard was used also as a hayfield or meadow, so that they mowed the grass before the cattle were driven in thither."

Kalm next tells us of his visit to Rochester: "Rochester is a beautiful town, tolerably large, and very old, lying on both sides of the river Medway, about 27 English miles from London. Here about are several hills, and part of the town also lies upon them, but still it is mostly down in the valleys by the river side. The houses are mostly of brick, some of them quite beautiful. There are several churches here, some of antique architecture. Over the river Medway runs a large stone bridge, which is reckoned to be one of the finest in England. In the town is a Cathedral and Bishop's Palace. A short distance below the town lies the famous Chatham, where the English men-of-war are partly built, repaired, and kept. In the evening we came back to Gravesend."

This translated text of Kalm does not, as will be seen, disclose his possession of any archæological knowledge. It is the account of an intelligent traveller and observer of Nature, collecting facts of natural history for his country.

He was staying at Gravesend, and it was in the month of July 1748, as we have seen, that he made the above excursion in the

course of his minute investigation into the husbandry of that district.

The translator (Mr. Lucas), commenting upon the above statement of Kalm's (after mentioning that the visited hamlet was Shorne), proceeds thus: "Kalm was the first writer who notices this ruin." The *Kentish Traveller*, fourth edition, 1790, has a paragraph, p. 116: "On the west side of the lane opposite to the house marked Mr. Maplesden's in the Map, the traveller will probably notice an Ancient Chapel or Oratory. There can be no doubt of its having been a sacred edifice, because in digging for the foundation of a contiguous building, a stone coffin and many human bones were discovered. In Mr. Thorpe's *Antiquities* is an engraving of the north-west view of this Chapel, but it is left to the researches of future antiquaries to ascertain when and by whom it had its original, no deed or other historical evidence having yet been met with relative to its institution or endowment. The Map referred to in the above note is on the scale of one inch to a mile. Mr. Maplesden's house is now called Pipe's Place, and a little cross-lane (into the above lane from the west and passing south of the ruin), is called 'Malthouse Lane.' I have not been able to find the alleged view in any of the thirteen plates in Thorpe's *Antiquities*. On August 10th, 1887, I visited the ruin when Mrs. Cheeseman (aged 84) told me that when she was young it was always called 'the Malthouse,' but that she did not know that it had ever been used as such. Kalm's description is accurate. The windows are all two-light, but the mullions are gone. This was a true Church; a Piscina and two sedilia are to be seen on the south side interior. The Architecture is pure early English, probably early 13th century. The curious history of the extinct Merston Church, close by, leaves room to suppose that this too was once a parish church. This venerable ruin forms part of a modern residence known as Ivy Cottage, and seems to be totally unknown to modern Archæologists."

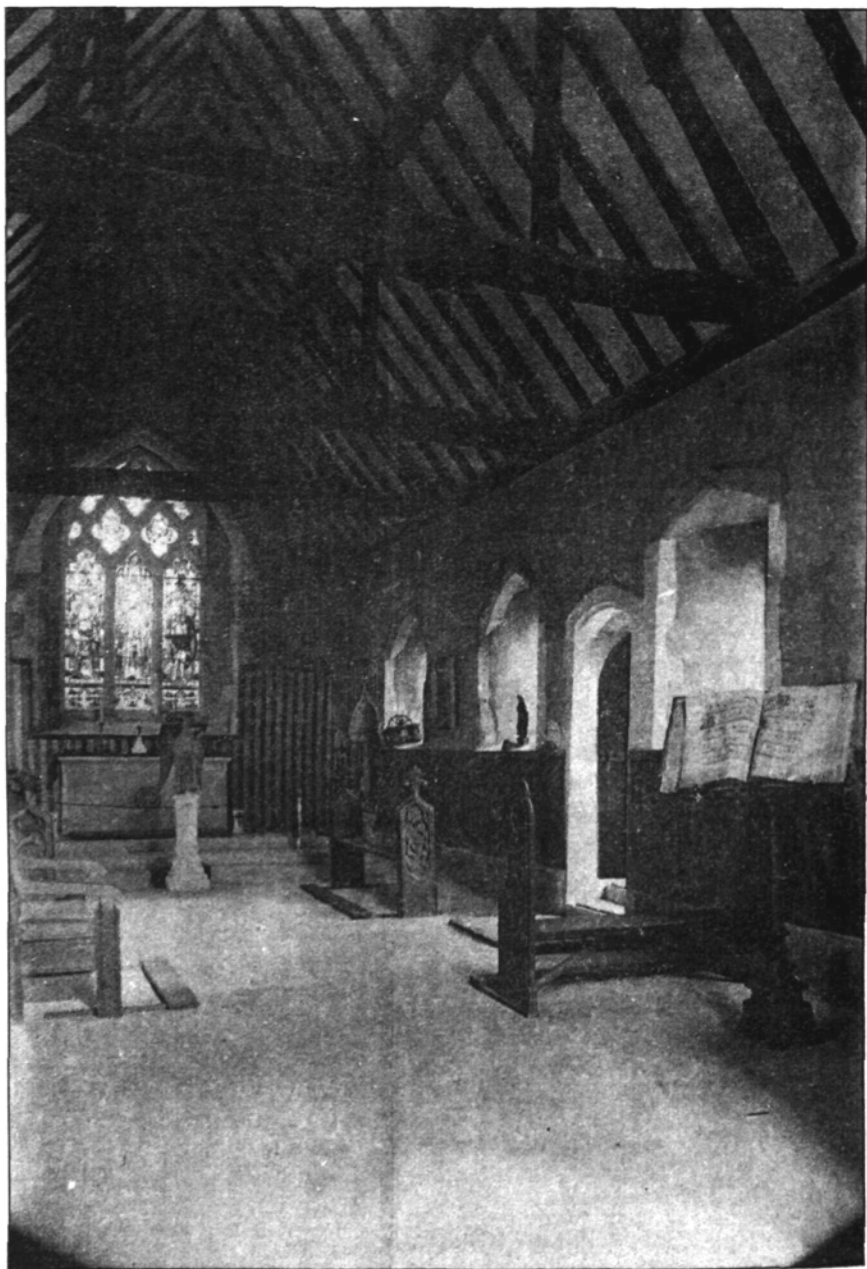
It is passing strange that Mr. Lucas could not find the engraving of St. Katherine's as a Malthouse, which appears in Thorpe's *Customale*, p. 116, the drawing for which is therein stated to have been taken in A.D. 1774 (the book itself being published some fourteen years afterwards); the view itself is reproduced in my previous paper, Vol. XX., p. 196.

Mr. George R. Wright, of the Leland Club, also kindly sent me a reference to the *Traveller's Companion (Canterbury)*, 1799, to which Mr. Lucas refers.

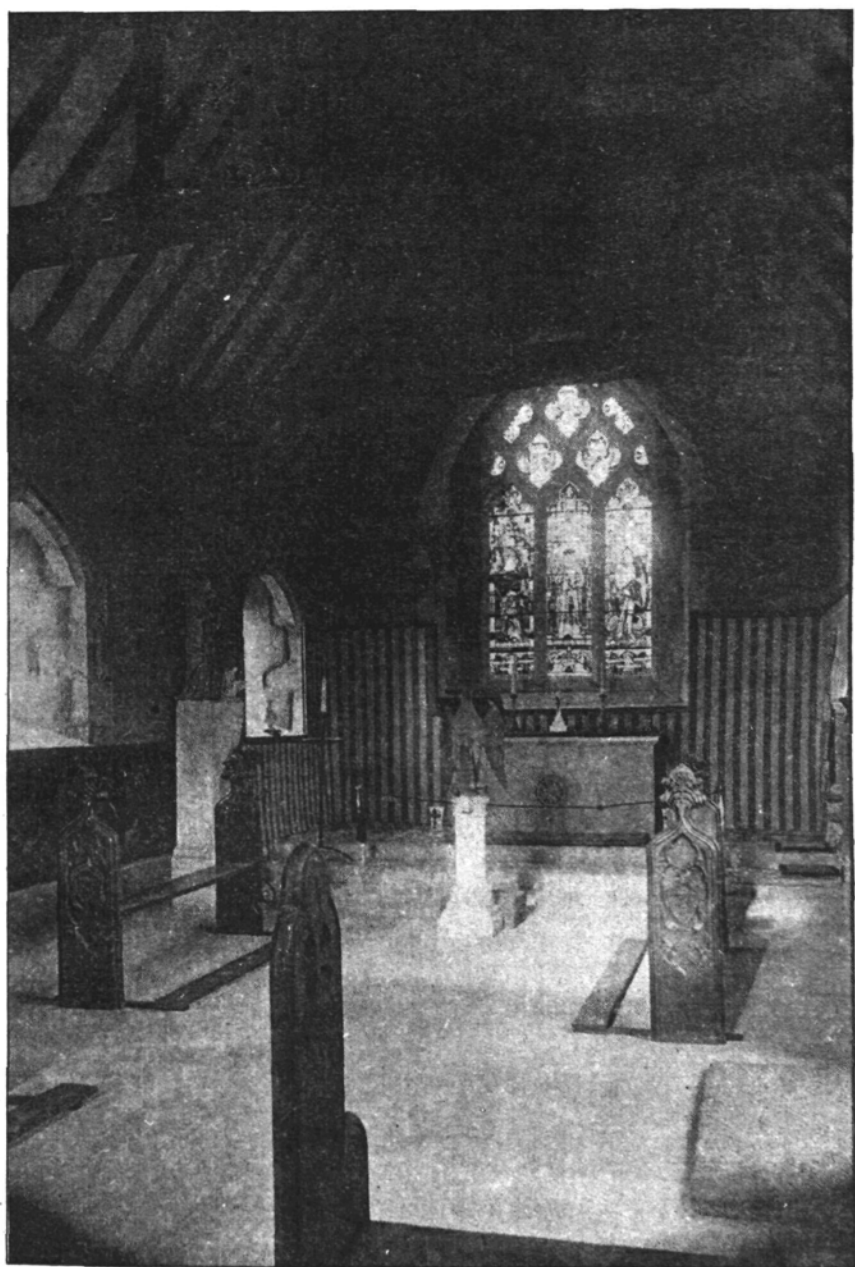
I am fairly satisfied that the Chapel formed no part of the possessions of any alien priory, since no mention of it occurs in the numerous extents of such priories made at various times, and especially at periods of warfare with France.

It has been suggested that it had some dependence upon the Chantry (now the College) at Cobham, but the accounts of the Cobham Foundation are extant at Hatfield House, where I have had them inspected, and though they are copious and contain





THE MALTHOUSE, RESTORED TO ITS EASTERN INTERIOR.



CONDITION TEMP. EDWARD VI. EASTERN INTERIOR.

entries of payments to chaplains in other hospitals, they possess no reference to St. Katherine's, Shorne.

Nor does it appear to have been dependent upon, or connected with, the Priory of St. Saviour, "Bermondsey," to which house the advowson of the parish belonged from the reign of Henry I. until the Reformation, since we have no reference to it in the annals of that house, nor in the minister's accounts at its dissolution.

I imagine there can be little doubt that a licence to alienate in mortmain was granted at the secularization of the property, but though I had the Court Rolls of Shorne (which are also deposited at Hatfield House) carefully examined, as well as a valuable list of deeds of the Cobham family in which Shorne is constantly mentioned, yet no mention of the Chapel could be traced.

Doubtless those Court Rolls, etc., have remained at Hatfield since the grant of the manor by King James I. to Sir Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury (son of William, Lord Burleigh), and it is interesting, and may be by parenthesis mentioned, that as late as the time of King Charles I. the practice of supplying the Parish Church of Shorne at Easter with green rushes appears from those Rolls to have been retained and enforced.

Again, the documents in the British Museum contain much interesting matter about Shorne, but remain silent as to our Chapel. Its history subsequent to the Queen's grant to Haselwood and Thornlynson is also a mystery. Inquisitions upon the death of each of those men have been searched for in vain, so also licences for them to alienate, and for any deeds of bargain and sale executed by them, but all without result; nor is there any further reference extant to the fee farm rent of 2s. reserved to the Crown upon the transaction.

Information which might lead to the establishment of any connection between St. Katherine's and the ancient manorial lords would be distinctly useful, such as Sir John de Nevill, John de Cobham, Sir Arnold Savage, Walter de Shorne, Arnold de Shorne, Henry de Shorne, Sir John de Northwood, and others, while, on the ecclesiastical side, any trace of the institution of any clerk to the chaplaincy would be valuable, the absence of any record of which is not very explicable.

Walter, Bishop of Rochester, who came to that See in the twelfth year of King Stephen, confirmed to the Priory of St. Saviour, Bermondsey, King Henry I.'s gift of the Churches of Shorne and Cobham, and this instrument is attested amongst others by "Nicholas Cappellanus de Scornes," which is strangely enough the first and the last appearance of the incumbent of St. Katherine's Chapel of Shorne which ancient records have yet revealed to us.

The illustrations shew the eastern interior of the Malthouse of the eighteenth century, now restored to its probable condition in the first year of Edward VI., the period of its suppression, and for them I am indebted to the kindness and skill of Mr. Winch of Court Lodge, Shorne.