ARDEN OF FEVERSHAM.

BY LIONEL CUST, C.V.O., LITT.D., F.S.A.

Arden of Feversham is a name well known to Shakespearean students, and yet to many most probably little but a name, so that few are really acquainted with the details of the domestic tragedy which casts a curious if lurid light on the manners and customs in England in the middle Tudor period. A chance discovery among the muniments at Rockingham Castle, Northamptonshire, belonging to the Rev. Wentworth Watson, brought to light a bundle of deeds relating to the Abbey of Faversham and the acquisition of this property by the noble family of Sondes, with whose representative, Earl Sondes, it still remains. This abbey, founded by King Stephen in 1147 and dedicated to The Saviour, in which Stephen, his queen Matilda, and their elder son were buried, was, in spite of its unblemished report, too rich a prize to escape the net of the notorious Dr. Layton, the chief agent of Thomas Crumwell, and had been sequestrated in 1538. Henry VIII., pursuing the Tudor family policy of raising up a new nobility in England to counterbalance the feudal influence of the great families, made ready use of the opportunities afforded by the confiscation of Church property by distributing it among the officials to whom the task of spoliation had been entrusted, with ample rewards to those who shewed the greatest zeal in carrying out the King's wishes. History is familiar with such names of new men as Sir Thomas Audley, Sir Richard Rich, Sir Edward North, Sir Thomas Pope, Sir Bryan Tuke, and others, who laid the foundations of many a new noble family by their share in the spoils of the Church. In Kent the greatest of these recipients of royal favour was Sir Thomas Cheney, K.G., Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, while Sir Anthony Aucher, Sir Thomas Moyle, and others shared in the same privileges. Among other properties assigned by the King to Sir Thomas Cheney were the lands and revenues of the Abbey of Faversham. Not the least prominent of the land-grabbers was Sir Edward North, a pushing lawyer, who was Clerk of the Parliament, and, in 1541, was appointed treasurer of the Court of Augmentations,

created by the King to deal with the distribution of the confiscated Church property. The capacity for amassing money was enormous among the new men of the Tudor régime. Besides the advantage derived from his grants from the King, North profited enormously by marrying in succession two wealthy widows, becoming possessed in each case of their fortunes. The first was Alice Squire, a Hampshire lady, who had been previously married, first to Edward Mirfyn, of London, secondly to John Brigadine or Brockendon, of Hampshire. By her first husband she became possessed of the estate of Kirtling, which she brought to the North family, who own it still, and she had a son and a daughter Alice. North was created a peer in 1554, and died in 1564, having married a second wife Margaret Butler, widow of Sir David Brooke, and of two previous husbands. Sir Edward North, when Clerk of the Parliament, had in his office a young man of good family, by name Thomas Arden or Ardern, who had a remarkable capacity for business, which he greatly furthered by marrying his master's step-daughter, Alice Mirfyn. Holinshed describes them as "Arden a man of a tall and comelie personage, and matched in marriage with a gentlewoman young tall and well favoured of shape and countenance." Arden became thereby closely related to his wife's half-brothers and sisters, Roger North, afterwards second Baron, Sir Thomas North, the translator of Plutarch, Christian, wife of William Somerset, 3rd Earl of Worcester, and Mary, wife of Henry, 9th Lord Scrope of Bolton. Arden was of great assistance to his chief in the Court of Augmentations, and was rewarded for his services with the lucrative post of Commissioner of the Customs of the port of Faversham. Once established at Faversham, Arden obtained from Sir Thomas Cheney a grant of some of the Abbey lands there, and took up his residence in a house by the Abbey Gate. There he continued to amass wealth, and to dispossess other owners of Abbey lands, until he became the foremost citizen in Faversham, and in 1548 served the office of Mayor. Three years later Arden was murdered by his wife, who in her turn suffered death for her crime. They left one surviving daughter, Margaret, who married John Bradborne, of Faversham. Thomas Arden, by his will dated 20 December 1550, left various charities to the poor of Faversham, and made provision for a yearly sermon to be preached on the anniversary of his death. The bequest of charities seems to have been contested successfully by his daughter, but the sermon was preached as directed for several years afterwards.

The bundle of deeds preserved at Rockingham Castle relates to the property, formerly part of the Abbey, which was eventually purchased by Sir George Sondes from Edward Appleford. The deeds are summarized as follows :—

"Hen. 8 by patent 16 March in y^e^ 31^th^ yeare of his raigne (1540) granted unto S^r^ Tho. Cheyny and his heirs the site of y^e^ monastery of ffaversham withall ye premisses within y^e^ walls which y^e^ said Edw. Appleford hath now sold."

"ffrom S^r^ Tho. Cheyny y^e^ premisses came to Tho. Ardern, who sould y^e^ same to John Edmonds and Thomas Oldfield, who y^e^ first yeare of Queen Eliz. joine in a feoffment of y^e^ premises to John Bradborne of ffaversh^m^, gent., and Margaret his wife and y^e^ daughter and heire of Tho. Ardern to y^m^ and the heirs of their bodys, who by their deeds dated in y^e^ 8 and 9^th^ years of y^e^ Queene bargaine and sell all y^e^ said premisses to John ffinch of ffeversham, gent., and to his heires for ever. Bradborn and his wife suffer a recovery in ffaversham Courte."

"John ffinch by his deed bearing date 14^th^ of Aug. in the 19^th^ yeare of y^e^ Queene (1577) bargained and sould all the said premisses to Tho. Strensham, Rich. Dryland and Robert Strensham of London, gent. Tho. Strensham and Rich^d^ Dryland by deed dated 21 November 23 yeare of y^e^ Queene (1580) release all their right to y^e^ said Robert Strensham, with y^e^ daughter of Robert Strensham y^e^ premisses come to Appleford."

Another deed exists, dated 3 Nov. 10 Eliz. (1568) in which Margaret, widow of John Bradborne, granted to Robert Eyre of Boughton under Blean, Esq., Richard Barrey of Barham, Esq., Richard Parrett of Sandwich, Esq., and Robert Fagg of Faversham, gent., hereditaments in Abbey Street, the Churchmead, the Abbey Green, the Sextry, the Washhouse Croft, the Thornehouse and meadows at Faversham to the use of herself for life; remainder to the use of Nicholas her son by said John Bradborne, and the heirs of his body in tail; remainder to the use of Thomas Northe, Esq., and Edward Northe, his son, their heirs and assigns. This was Sir Thomas North, translator of Plutarch, step-brother to Mistress Alice Arden. Nicholas Bradborne sold this property to John Finch, who had purchased the other portion, and it all eventually was acquired by Sir George Sondes.

Those who believe that a curse is attached to the ownership of property robbed from the Church can find corroboration in the story of the Abbey lands at Faversham. Thomas Arden, their

first occupier, was murdered by his wife. The property was eventually, as stated above, acquired by Sir George Sondes, who was created Earl of Feversham. He had two sons, of whom the elder was murdered by the younger, who in his turn was hanged for this crime. The estates passed through more than one female descent to the present Earl Sondes, whose main seat, Lees Court near Faversham, was destroyed by fire a few years ago.

One of the deeds at Rockingham Castle is an indenture from Thomas Arden to Thomas Dunkyn of Faversham, dated Aug. 3, 1545, relating to a messuage and other property in the Abbey Street by the Abbey Gate. Thomas Dunkin was Mayor of Faversham in 1546 and the family continued to reside at Faversham for several generations. In Holinshed's account of the murder it is stated that "Master Arden having beene at a neighbour's house of his, named Dumpkin and having cleared certeine reckonings betwixt them, came home." The deed mentioned is signed in full *p' me Thomam Arderne.* The sight of the murdered man's own handwriting, and the mention of the man, who was to be the last person to see Arden alive outside his own house, give new life and interest to the actual tragedy. The story is told very curtly in the Wardmote Book of Faversham, which, however, records the names of all persons concerned in the crime. A much more detailed account is given in Holinshed's "Chronicle," describing the various attempts made by Mistress Arden on her husband's life, before her purpose was actually achieved.

As a successful man of business, Thomas Arden was thoroughly typical of the modern spirit. In achieving his objects he seems to have had little regard for the feelings of others, so that he made many enemies in Faversham. He enjoyed every advantage which worldly prosperity could bring, including a wife, highbred and handsome, on whom he lavished every luxury, and to whom he grudged nothing in uxorious complacence. Yet this lady had compromised herself with one George, or Thomas, Mosby, or Morsby, "a black swart man," a tailor by profession, who had pushed his way up to be steward in Sir Edward North's house. Arden was not unaware of his wife's intimacy with Mosby, but chose to treat it with indifference, relying on his wife's pride and fidelity. This very toleration on her husband's part seems to have increased Mistress Arden's hatred for her husband, and to have driven her further and further in her course of guilty familiarity with Mosby, until they determined together to take Arden's life

PLAN ADAPTED FROM EDWARD JACOB'S *History of Faversham*, 1770.

a: Parish Church. next to the town. F: Field where the search-party found Arden's body after the murder. g: Inner Gate of the Abbey. h: Standard Quay. r: Anchor Inn. f: Abbey Gate t: Globe Inn.

Their first attempt, according to the account in Holinshed, was by poison administered to Arden by his wife at breakfast, just before he left home one day to go to London on business. The poison was obtained from a neighbour, a painter, one William Blackbourne, a lover of Mosby's sister, Cecily Pounder, who was a party to the plot. Their names are given in the Wardmote account. Mistress Arden was however unskilful in mixing the poison, which Arden was unable to swallow, suffering only temporary inconvenience, so that he escaped death without knowledge of how nearly he had encountered it. At this point there comes into the story one John Greene, also a tailor at Faversham, and a servant of Sir Anthony Aucher at Preston, close by. Greene had a grudge against Arden on account of some transaction about the Abbey property, and gladly joined in the plot upon Arden's life. Mistress Arden then offered to Greene to pay ten pounds to any ruffian whom Greene could procure and prevail upon to take her husband's life. It was thought advisable to make an attempt in London, whither Greene set out on horseback. He was accompanied as far as Gravesend by George Bradshaw, a goldsmith at Faversham, who had served as a soldier in France. On Rainham Down they met a ruffian coming from Rochester, who was known to Bradshaw as Black Will, "as murthering a knave as anie is in England." Bradshaw pointed him out to Greene, saying that "he knew him at Bullongne, there we both served. He was a soldier, and I was Sir Richard Cavendishe's man, and there he committed manie robberies and heinous murthers on such as travelled betwixt Bullongne and France." Bradshaw did not wish to renew this acquaintance, but Greene, thinking Black Will a suitable instrument for Mistress Arden's purpose, took him to Gravesend, and there offered him the ten pounds to murder Arden, an offer readily accepted by Black Will. According to the Wardmote account Black Will was fetched over from Calais by "the earnest sute, appointment, and confederacye of the said Alice Arderne," but Holinshed's account is so detailed as to be more credible. Black Will accompanied Greene to London, where Greene pointed out Mr. Arden, and it was arranged that Black Will should wait in St. Paul's Churchyard until Arden came out of the Cathedral, and should then take advantage of the crowd to deal him a fatal stroke. Holinshed says: "Black Will thought to have killed Maister Arden in Paules Churchyard, but there were so manie gentlemen that accompanied him to dinner, that he missed of his purpose." Greene now got hold of Mr. Arden's servant,

Michael Saunderson, also described as a tailor, who was engaged to be married to Mosby's sister, and by threats and bribery forced him to be a party to the plot against his master. In London Arden lodged at a certain parsonage house in Aldersgate, and his servant Michael promised Greene to leave the door of this house unlocked, so that Black Will could enter by night and have access to Arden's bedroom. Partly, as it would appear, through Michael's fear for his own life, and through his having aroused his master during the night, Arden got up, and finding the front door unfastened, shut and bolted it himself, thus frustrating a third attempt upon his life. Greene next discovered from Arden's maidservant when her master was returning home to Faversham, and arranged that Black Will should waylay him on Rainham Down between Rochester and Faversham. Michael was a party to this plot, and when his master reached Rochester, Michael pretended that his horse wanted shoeing, and let his master, as arranged, ride on alone. As it happened, Mr. Arden met a number of gentlemen (including, apparently, Sir Thomas Cheney himself) on the road, and joined himself to them, so that when they passed Black Will he did not dare to shew himself.

In no ways daunted by these repeated failures, Mrs. Arden, Mosby, and Greene devised a new plot. It was known that Mr. Arden had made an appointment to visit Sir Thomas Cheney at Shurland across the Swale, so Mrs. Arden engaged Black Will and a second murderer, by name George Shakebag (called Loosebagg in the Wardmote account), who lay concealed in an outhouse on Sir Anthony Aucher's property at Preston until Arden had started for the Isle of Sheppey, with intent to murder him "in a certain browne (broome?) close betwixt Feversham and the ferrie." Arden started early in the morning, when Michael, as previously arranged, made an excuse for leaving his master and returning home. Owing, however, to Black Will not knowing his way, or, according to one account, owing to fog and river mist, Arden accomplished his visit to Shurland and returned unmolested. Mistress Arden and Mosby now tried a fresh line of action. The annual fair, held at Faversham on St. Valentine's Day, 14 February, had hitherto been held partly on ground belonging to Mr. Arden, partly on ground belonging to the Corporation of Faversham, the receipts being apportioned between the two properties. Arden, however, had so contrived, evidently during his mayoralty in 1548, that the fair in 1550-1 should be held entirely in his own grounds, so that he secured the whole profits. Arden thereby had become very unpopular in the

town, and Mistress Arden and Mosby arranged for Mosby to provoke her husband to a dispute at the fair, so that, when a tumult arose, Arden might receive a fatal wound. On the previous Sunday, according to Holinshed, Mistress Arden and Mosby sealed this compact by receiving the Sacrament together. The attempt failed, however, because Arden declined to be provoked by Mosby's insults. The conspirators were now driven to desperation, and they held a council of war at Mosby's sister's house in Faversham, when they decided to murder Arden in his own house. Mosby, who was a coward as well as an adulterer and a murderer, was aware of the risk involved in this decision, but was prevailed upon by Mistress Arden to make the attempt. Holinshed gives a vivid description of the crime that was now committed under Mistress Arden's personal direction:—

"Thus she being earnest with him, at length hee was contented to agree unto that horrible devise, and thereupon they conveied blacke Will into Maister Ardens house, putting him into a closet at the end of his parlour. Before this, they had sent out of the house all the servants, those excepted which were privie to the devised murther. Then went Mosbie to the doore, and there stood in a nightgowne of silk girded about him, and this was betwixt six and seven of the clocke at night. Master Arden having beene at a neighbors house of his, named Dumpkin, & hauing cleared certeine reckonings betwixt them, came home: and finding Mosbie standing at the doore, asked him if it were supper time. I thinke not (quoth Mosbie) it is not yet readie. Then let us go and plaie a game at the tables in the meane season said Maister Arden. And so they went streight into the parlor and as they came by through the hall, his wife was walking there, and Maister Arden said: How now, Mistresse Ales: But she made small answer to him. In the meane time one cheined the wicket doore of the entrie. When they came into the parlor, Mosbie sat downe on the bench, having his face toward the place where blacke Will stood. Then Michaell Maister Ardens man stood at his Masters backe holding a candle in his hand, to shadow blacke Will, that Arden might by no meanes perceive him comming forth. In their plaie Mosbie said thus (which seemed to be the watchword for blacke Wills coming forth) now maie I take you sir if I will. Take me (quoth Maister Arden) which waie. With that blacke Will stept forth, and cast a towell about his necke, so to stop his breath and strangle him. Then Mosbie having at his girdle a pressing iron of fourteene pounds

weight, stroke him on the hed with the same, so that he fell downe, and gave a great grone, insomuch that they thought he had been killed.

Then they bare him awaie, to laie him in the counting house, & as they were about to laie him downe, the pangs of death coming on him, he gave a great grone, and stretched himselfe, and then blacke Will gave him a great gash in the face, and so killed him out of hand, laid him along, tooke the monie out of his purse, and the rings from his fingers, and then comming out of the counting house said: Now the feat is done, give me my monie. So Mistres Arden gave him ten pounds: and he coming to Greene had a horse of him, and so rode his waies. After that blacke Will was gone, Mistresse Arden came into the counting house, and with a knife gave him seven or eight picks into the brest. Then they made cleane the parlor, tooke a clout, and wiped where it was bloudie, and strewed againe the rushes that were shuffled with strugling, and cast the clout with which they wiped the bloud, and the knife that was bloudie, wherewith she had wounded hir husband, into a tub by the wels side; where afterwards both the same clout and knife were found. Thus the wicked woman, with hir complices, most shamefullie murdered hir owne husband, who most extremelie loved her all his life-time. Then she sent for two Londoners to supper, the one named Prune and the other Cole, that were grocers, which before the murder was committed, were bidden to supper. When they came, she said, I marvell where Maister Arden is; we will not tarie for him, come ye and sit downe; for he will not be long. Then Mosbie's sister was sent for, she came and sat down, and so they were merie.

After supper, Mistres Arden caused hir daughter to plaie on the virginals, and they taried, and she with them, and so seemed to protract time as it were, till Maister Arden should come, and she said, I marvell where he is so long; well, he will come soon I am sure, I praie you in the meane while let us plaie a game at the tables. But the Londoners said, they must go to their hosts house, or else they should be shut out at doores, and so taking their leave, departed. When they were gone, the servants that were not privie to the murder, were sent abroad into the towne; some to seeke their maister, and some of other errands, all saving Michaell and a maid, Mosbies sister, and one of Mistres Ardens owne daughters. Then they toke the dead bodie, and caried it out, to laie it in a field next to the Church yard, adjoining to his garden wall, through the which he went to the Church. In the meane time it began to

snow, and when they came to the garden gate, they remembered that they had forgotten the kaie, and one went in for it, and finding it, at length brought it, opened the gate, and caried the corps into the same field, as it were ten pases from the garden gate, and laid him downe on his backe streight in his nightgowne with his slippers on; and betweene one of his slippers and his foot, a long rush or two remaned. When they had laid him downe, they returned the same way they came through the garden into the house."

Mistress Arden then made a pretence of great anxiety, on account of her husband's failure to return home. "Whereupon the maior and others came to make search for him. . . . The maior going about the faire in this search, at length came to the ground where Arden laie: and as it happened, Prune the grocer getting sight of him, first said: Staie, for me thinke I see one lie here. And so they looking and beholding the bodie, find that it was Maister Arden, being there thoroughlie dead, and viewing diligentlie the maner of his bodie and hurts, found the rushes sticking in his slippers, and marking further, espied certaine footsteps by reason of the snow, betwixt the place where he laie, and the garden doore. . . ."

It did not take long to discover evidences of the murder in the hall, but Mistress Arden denied all knowledge of the crime, and defied any investigation. The servants however confessed to their share, and that of Mistress Arden and Mosby. Mosby had taken refuge in the neighbouring inn, the "Flower de Luce," kept by one Adam Fowle, where he lodged, and was discovered in bed there. So damning were the evidences of his guilt, that he confessed his crime. The murderers, Black Will and Shakebag, had made their escape, as did Greene, and Blackburne the painter. Mistress Arden however accused Bradshaw of being privy to the plot, and he was arrested. Retribution followed in due course. Alice Arden was condemned to death and burned at Canterbury; Michael, Arden's servant, was hanged at Faversham, while Elizabeth Stafford, the maid, who assisted her mistress in the crime, was burned there. Mosby and his sister were hanged at Smithfield. Bradshaw protested his innocence of the actual crime, but was condemned and hanged in chains at Canterbury. Greene was taken a few years later and hanged between Ospringe and Boughton. Adam Fowle, the innkeeper, was arrested but was not condemned. Black Will escaped to the Continent but was

eventually taken and burnt at Flushing. Shakebag and the painter were not heard of again.

One of the first entries in the Diary of Henry Machyn, of London, printed for the Camden Society in 1847, relates to this crime.

"(1550-1) The xiij day of Marche was hangyd, in Smyth-feld, on John Mosbe and ys syster for the deth of a gentyll man of Feyversham, one M. Arden the custemer, and ys own wyff was decaul (?) . . . and she was burnyd at Canturbery and her sarvand hangyd ther, and ij at Feyversham, and on at Hospryng, and nodur in the he way to Canturbery, for the death of M. Arden of Feyversham [and at Flusshyng was bernyd Blake Tome for the same deth of M. Arden]," the last entry being a later addition to the Diary.

Various extracts from the Privy Council Book relate to the condemnation and execution of the various criminals, Cicelye Poundere (widow), Thomas Mosbye, Alice Ardeyrn, Bradshaw, Michael Saunderson and Elizabeth Stafford. Greene was captured through the agency of Mr. North, who was instructed to "enlarge one Bate out of the countere, who convayed away one Greene, of Fevershame, after the Murdere of M^{r} Arderne was ther don, and undertaketh to brynge forthe Green again, yf he may have libertie; providinge that he take sufficient sureties, either to become prisoner againe, or else to bringe forthe the said Greene." Greene was taken and brought to Faversham, and hanged in chains "in the high waie between Ospring and Boughton against Feversham." In June, 1551, occurs "A letter to S^{r} William Godolphine Knighte, of thanks for his diligence in the apprehencion of Blacke Will, that killed M^{r} Arderne of Feversham, and to send him in saufe garde, with promise of paymente for the charges of the bringeres." Black Will was not brought back to England but was burnt at Flushing.

It is evident that the murder of Mr. Arden was a topic of great general interest in London, and it is not surprising therefore to find it told at length in Holinshed's Chronicle. The history of this famous Chronicle is curious on its own account from a literary and bibliographical point of view. It dates back to the printer and publisher, Reginald Wolf, who acquired the notes collected by Leland, the antiquary. He employed Raphael Holinshed as translator, and projected an universal history and cosmography, of which the portions devoted to England, Scotland and Ireland were

allocated to Holinshed, William Harrison and Richard Stanihurst. Wolf died in 1573 before the Chronicle was completed, but his successors in the trade carried on the scheme, and the first edition of the Chronicle was issued in 1578, Holinshed being responsible for the history of England down to 1575. Holinshed died in 1580, and when a new edition was projected the editorship was entrusted to John Hooker, alias Vowell, assisted by Francis Thynne, John Stow and others, who collected and supplied additional material. The new edition was printed in 1586, and issued in folio in January, 1586-7. The attention given in high quarters to this Chronicle is shewn by the numerous excisions which took place in the new material, presumably through an objection on the part of the Queen and her ministers to too close a survey of current politics. Some of the excised matter was contributed by Francis Thynne, and referred to the county of Kent, such as "The Lives of the Archbishops of Canterbury," "A Treatise of the Lords Cobham" and a "Catalog of the Lord Wardens of the Cinque Ports." John Stow, the celebrated chronicler, had acquired the manuscript material from Leland, and others collected by Reginald Wolf, from which he compiled his famous "Annals." In addition to his work as a chronicler he revised and re-edited the edition of Chaucer's poems, which had been issued by William Thynne, father of Francis Thynne. It would seem probable therefore that Francis Thynne was engaged with Stow in his antiquarian work and supplied material from Kent for this purpose. An account of the murder of Mr. Arden at Faversham is found in Stow's manuscripts in the British Museum.

William Shakespeare came to London in the summer of 1586, and it may be surmised that it was from the new amplified edition of Holinshed's *Chronicle,* which was published a few months later, that he drew many of the plots for his historical dramas. He can hardly have escaped taking notice of the story of the Arden murder. Shakespeare's own mother was Mary Arden, and her father's name was Thomas and one of her sisters was named Alice. There is no evidence whatever of any relationship between Shakespeare's mother's family and the well-known families of Arden in Cheshire and Warwickshire, to one of which Thomas Arden of Faversham probably belonged. It was on the gentility, however, of the Arden family that Shakespeare founded his own claim to gentle birth and the right to bear arms. The fact also that Alice Arden, the

murderess, was half-sister to Sir Thomas North can hardly have been unknown to Shakespeare, seeing that North's translation of *Plutarch's Lives* was one of Shakespeare's principal sources of reference. Very little has been established as to Shakespeare's life in London at this date, but it is generally accepted that he joined the company of actors which bore the name of the Earl of Leicester and later that of Lord Strange, that he had some skill as an actor, and that he was specially employed to prepare and revise plays for actual performance on the stage.

Recent research has shewn that this company of actors visited Faversham in 1590, and it may be presumed that Shakespeare was one of their number. In 1592 there was issued a small quarto edition of a play entitled: "The Lamentable and True Tragedie of M. Arden of Feversham in Kent, who was most wickedly murdered by the meanes of his disloyall and wanton wyfe, who for the love she bare to one Mosbie hyred two desperat ruffins, Black Will and Shakbag, to kill him," etc. This quarto consists of 37 pages, including title, and was "imprinted for Edward White, dwelling at the lyttle North dore of Paul's Church at the Signe of the Gun, 1592." Like other quarto plays of this date this edition is extremely rare, only three copies being known. One of the copies, sold in the sale of Shakespeareana from Mostyn Hall in 1907, fetched as much as 1210 guineas. A second edition appeared in 1599, printed by J. Roberts for Edward White, and a third in 1633, printed by Eliz. Allde "dwelling neare Christs Church." To this last edition is prefixed a very lively woodcut shewing the actual murder of Mr. Arden while playing at tables. In each edition the play is printed continuously, without division into acts and scenes.

Taking the plot as a whole the play follows fairly closely the story as given in Holinshed, but it is misleading to speak, as Mr. Swinburne does in his *Study of Shakespeare*, of the author's thoroughly Shakespearean fidelity to the details of the prose narrative on which his tragedy is founded. There are a great many additions to the story, mostly of local origin, which suggest that the account in Holinshed and the play are both based on one original more detailed account, and that the play is not a mere adaptation from a story in a book, a matter of some importance in trying to discover the authorship of the play. An examination of the play will shew where it differs from the account in Holinshed. A description with copious extracts was given by Charles Knight among the doubtful plays in his Pictorial Edition of Shakespeare. The

play itself in its entirety is accessible to readers in the reprint attached to Edward Jacob's *History of Faversham*, published in 1770.

It opens with the introduction of a quite new character, one Mr. Franklin, a lawyer friend of Mr. Arden, and the confidant of his domestic troubles, especially that of the intrigue between Mosby and Mistress Arden. Arden, who prides himself on being "by birth a Gentleman of blood," resents his wife's familiarity with so low a man as Mosby, whom he describes as "a servant of Lord Clifford."

> A Botcher, and no better at the first,
> Who by base brocage, getting some small stocke,
> Crept into service of a Nobleman:
> And by his servile flattery and fawning
> Is now become the Steward of his house
> And bravely jets it in his silken gowne."

A botcher was another name for tailor, and "base brocage" is probably intended for pimping. Mosby was really a servant to Lord North, and there was no Lord Clifford at the date of the murder, the alteration being probably made to prevent scandal in the North family.

When Mistress Arden comes on the stage we learn at once of her intention to take her husband's life, but she still retains her powers of cajolery over an uxorious man. Arden, announcing his intention to go to London with Franklin, addresses his wife as follows:

> Sweet Love, thou knowest that we two *Ovid* like,
> Have often chid the morning, when it gan to peepe,
> And often wisht that dark nights purblind steeds
> Would pull her by the purple mantle backe,
> And cast her in the Ocean to her Love.

Both Shakespeare and Marlowe for certain, and most other Elizabethan dramatists, had read Ovid, whose works were a text-book in the schools of the period. Marlowe actually translated a number of Ovid's Elegies about 1589, and the voluptuous tone of these translations seems to be very much in consonance with Arden's amorous words to his wife. The lines sound more like Marlowe than Shakespeare.

The next character introduced is Adam Fowle, landlord of the inn, the "Flower de-Luce," at which Mosby was staying. He comes

THE MURDER OF THOMAS ARDEN ON 15TH FEBRUARY, 1550.

(From a woodcut published in 1633.)

to patch up a quarrel between Mosby and Mistress Arden. The lady repents and says

> Stay, Adam, thou wert wont to be my frend,
> Aske Mosbie how I have incurred his wrath,
> Beare him from me these pair of silver dice
> With which we plaid for kisses many a tyme,
> And when I lost, I wan, and so did hee.

These silver dice are mentioned by Holinshed, and this errand was the cause of Fowle's narrowly escaping death for complicity in the crime. We then come to what is a kind of underplot, perhaps worked up for dramatic reasons. Mosby's sister, whose name we know from the Wardmote account to have been Cecily Pounder and to have been a widow, is called Susan in the play, and is courted by Michael, Mr. Arden's servant. She has also a lover in a local painter, called Clarke in the play, but named Blackbourne in the Wardmote account. Michael, the servant, is worked up by love and jealousy to any degree of villainy, and expresses his willingness to murder anybody, Arden in particular, and if necessary his own elder brother, a farmer of Bocton (or Boughton), provided that he can get Mosby's sister for himself. He is jealous of the painter's powers of cajolery, especially because

> He has sent a dagger sticking in a heart,
> With a verse or two stolne from a painted cloth,
> The whiche I hear the wench keepes in her chest.

Shakespeare was familiar with "painted cloths," as his father had no less than eleven in his house at Stratford; but painted cloths were ordinary articles of furniture at that date, as Sir Sidney Colvin has shewn in his article in "Shakespeare's Book of Homage" (1916). On the other hand the note about Michael's elder brother, the farmer at Boughton under Blean which lies between Faversham and Canterbury, is a local touch, which could only have been added by some one acquainted with the locality. Mosby and Mistress Arden fall out again, and she taunts her lover with his low birth, seeing that she is

> Descended of a Noble house,
> And matcht already with a Gentleman.

She admits Arden's superiority over Mosbie, but at the same time continues to plan his death.

The painter Clarke is now introduced as a leading character in the plot. Mosby suggests a poisoned portrait of Alice to be given to her husband, and says

> I happen'd on a Painter yester-night
> The onely cunning man of Christendome:
> For he can temper poyson with his oyle,
> That whoso looks upon the work he drawes,
> Shall with the beames that issue from his sight
> Sucke venome to his brest and slay himselfe.
> Sweet Alice, he shall draw thy conterfet,
> That Arden may by gazing on it perish.

Alice is, however, frightened by this idea, because of the danger of being poisoned herself by the painting. They fall back therefore on the simpler plan of poisoning Arden in his food, which miscarries, though Mistress Arden narrowly escapes her husband's suspecting her of the attempt. Meanwhile Mosby does not abandon his idea of poison, and consults Clarke as to the possibility of a poisoned crucifix, which Clarke offers to make, describing to Mosby how he avoids risk himself while mixing the poison:

> Ill tell you straight
> How I doo worke of these impoysoned drugs.
> I fasten on my spectacles so close,
> As nothing can any way offend my sight,
> Then as I put a leafe within my nose,
> So put I rubarbe, to avoid the smell,
> And softly as another worke I paint.

All this story of poisons is very un-Shakespearean, and Holinshed only records the attempt to poison Arden at breakfast. Poison in the manner denoted was reputed to be as prevalent in Italy, where the *aqua tofana* of the Borgias had much repute, and to have spread to France, where Queen Catherine de Medici among others enjoyed an unenviable and probably quite unfounded notoriety. About 1592 Edward White, who published "Arden of Feversham" that year, also published a play generally attributed to Marlowe, entitled "The Massacre at Paris; with the death of the Duke of Guise," in which the incident of the poisoning of the old Queen of Navarre by a pair of poisoned gloves occurs.

A new character is now introduced, as in Holinshed, in the shape of Greene, "one of Sir Antony Ager's men," who had a quarrel with Arden about some of the Abbey lands, and was thirsting for his blood. Mistress Arden has no difficulty in enlisting Greene in the plot, and he now takes command of their

enterprise. It is decided to murder Arden in London. Greene riding to London with one Bradshaw, a goldsmith, meets on the road a ruffian, whom he recognises as Black Will, a disreputable soldier known to Bradshaw during King Henry VIII.'s expedition to Boulogne. Black Will also recognises Bradshaw, who introduces him to Greene. In the play Black Will appears in company with another villainous rogue, by name George Shakebag, though in Holinshed's account this Shakebag only comes on the scene at a later date in the story. Greene notes these two ruffians as just the men for Mistress Arden's purpose, but evidently has to get rid of Bradshaw. This is done in the play, though not in Holinshed, by what seems to be an ingenious ruse, perhaps based on some notorious piece of local burglary. Bradshaw is represented as under a charge of receiving stolen property, and is going to London to clear himself from the charge. Black Will reveals, or pretends to reveal, to Bradshaw what really happened. The episode is worth quoting at length, as it is a good illustration of the manners of the period.

BRADSHAW. Of late Lord Cheiny lost some plate,
Which one did bring, and soulde it at my shoppe,
Saying he served Sir Antony Cooke.
A search was made, the plate was found with me,
And I am bound to answer at the Syse.
Now Lord Cheiny solemnly vowes,
If law will serve me, he'le hang me for his plate,
Now I am going to London, upon hope
To finde the fellow: ho, Will, I know
Thou art acquainted with such companions.

WILL. What manner of man was he?

BRADSHAW. A leane faced writhen knave,
Hawke nosde, and verye hollow eied,
With mighty furrowes in his stormye browes;
Long haire down his shoulders curled,
His chinne was bare, but on his upper lippe,
A mutchado, which he wound about his eare.

WILL. What apparell had he?

BRADSHAW. A watchet satin doublet all so torne,
The inner side did beare the greatest shew,
A paire of threed bare velvet hose seame rent,
A wosted stocking rent above the shoe,
A livery cloake, but all the lace was off!
Twas bad, but yet it served to hide the plate.

WILL. Sirra Shakebagge, canst thou remember
Since we trould the bowle at Sittingburn,
Where I broke the Tapster's head of the Lyon
With a cudgill stroke:

SHAKEBAGE. I, very well, Will.

WILL. Why it was with the money that the plate was sould for;
Sirra Bradshaw, what wilt thou give him
That can tell thee who soulde the plate?

BRADSHAW. Who, I pray thee, good Will.

WILL. Why twas one Jacke Fitten
He's now in Newgate for stealing a horse,
And shall be arrainde the next Sise.

BRADSHAW. Why then let Lord Cheiny seek Jack Fitten forth;
For I'll back and tell him who robbed him of his plate,
This cheeres my hart. Mr Greene, I'le leave you,
For I must to the Ile of Sheppy with speede.

Bradshaw therefore turns back, and Greene gives him a letter to Mistress Arden, saying that he had found the murderers, with whom he proceeds to Gravesend and London.

The introduction of Jack Fitten and the stolen plate must allude to some other crime of local celebrity, which could only be of interest to natives of the county. Lord Cheiny is Sir Thomas Cheney, who never was created Lord Cheney, though his uncle and his own son were both raised to the peerage. Sir Anthony Cooke of Gidea Hall in Essex was a man of considerable note, and father-in-law to Lord Burghley and to Sir Nicholas Bacon. The "Lyon" at Sittingbourne was probably as well known as the "Flower de Luce" at Faversham. The description of the robber Fitten makes a good stage villain. Black Will was evidently a big blustering bully and murderer, but Shakebagg was a villain of colder and more diabolical wickedness. He takes in the text a more prominent part than Black Will, and occasionally bursts into poetry, which seems rather out of place on his lips.

I cannot point my valour out with words
But give me place and opportunitie,
Such mercy as the starven Lyones
When she is dry-suckt of her eager younge
Shews to the prey that next encounters her
On Arden so much pity should I take.

And again—

> Black night hath hid the pleasure of the day,
> And sheting darkness overhangs the earth,
> And with the blacke folde of her cloudy robe,
> Obscures us from the eiesight of the worlde,
> In which swete silence such as we triumph.
> The laysie minutes linger on their time,
> As loth to give due audit to the howre;
> Till in the watch our purpose we compleat
> And Arden sent to everlasting night.

One hardly expects a murderer, lurking in wait for his victim, to be of such a literary turn of mind.

Greene, as stated in Holinshed, employs Black Will to murder Arden in London. Further local colour is introduced in the play by an amusing episode, which accounted for Arden's escape from a new plot to kill him. The nave and portico of St. Paul's Cathedral were an accepted place of meeting for business men in the City, in Paul's Walk and Duke Humphrey's Walk, and the Stationers had their stalls placed out in St. Paul's Churchyard against the walls of the Cathedral. Black Will and Shakebag conceal themselves where they can waylay Arden in the crowd as he comes out of St. Paul's. In the play we have this interlude. A prentice in charge of a stationer's stall (such as Edward White's) says:—

> 'Tis very late, I were best shut up my stall,
> For here will be old filching, when the presse comes forth
> Of Pauls.

He then lets down the window of his stall, and in so doing breaks the head of Black Will. This leads to a row between the prentice and Will, during which Arden leaves St. Paul's with Franklin, and in company with others goes to supper "At the Nag's head, at the 18 pence ordinary." Black Will is left lamenting his broken head.

Meanwhile Arden has been lecturing his man Michael on his infatuation for Susan Mosby, and Michael in revenge lends a ready ear to Greene's plot to murder Arden in his bedroom at Aldersgate. Michael, who is an arrant coward, has such a nightmare in his sleep that his cries wake up both Arden and Franklin. Arden finds the door left open, and bolts it, scolding Michael for his negligence. Arden and Franklin return by river to Faversham, evidently by Gravesend or Chatham, for they escape an ambush on the road at Rainham Down in spite of Michael's treachery, owing to a chance meeting on the road with Lord Cheiny and his retinue. Cheiny

invites Arden and Franklin to dinner at Shurland in the Isle of Sheppey. Meanwhile at Faversham Mistress Arden and Mosby fall out with mutual recriminations. Mosby reveals to the audience his intention, after disposing of Mr. Arden and his accomplice Michael, to make away with Mistress Arden also, and get possession of all the Abbey lands. He taunts the lady, but his unkindness only whets her determination to make an end of Arden. She conceals the murderers until Arden and Franklin start for the Isle of Sheppey to keep their engagement to dinner with Lord Cheiny, when they go forth to conceal themselves in a Broom Close on the river bank near the ferry. The ferryman, who takes Arden and Franklin across the water, is full of talk, and discourses, among other matters, of the Man in the Moon:

> I, but you had not best to meddle with that moone
> Least I scratch you by the face with my bramble-bush.

It would be difficult to explain why such a foolish remark was introduced, were it not remembered that in 1591 John Lyly published "*Endimion, the Man in the Moone*, played before the Queenes Majestie at Greenewich on New Yeeres day at night, by the children of Pauls." These remarks of the ferryman evidently refer to a performance of this play, perhaps in 1590, at Faversham, from which the Man in the Moon in Shakespeare's "Midsummer Night's Dream" was probably also derived.

The new plot to murder Arden miscarries in a humorous fashion, for a thick mist and fog come on, the murderers quarrel, and Shakebag himself falls into a ditch. Arden returns home in safety. A new character is introduced in one Dick Reed, who, like Greene, has a grievance against Arden about land, but he takes no part in the proceedings, and is not among those "wanted" later on for complicity in the murder.

A violent altercation now takes place between Arden and Mosby in Arden's house, not at the fair as in Holinshed, in which Arden fights and wounds Mosby. Mistress Arden cajoles Arden into forgiving Mosby, and induces him to visit Mosby in his sick room and apologize. This weakness on Arden's part only nerves his wife and her accomplices to immediate action. In the play Arden has invited Franklin, Bradshaw, and Adam Fowle to supper, these characters being re-introduced instead of those mentioned in Holinshed probably in order to save the introduction of new characters. The actual murder takes place very much as narrated in Holinshed, and Black Will and Shakebag receive their money

and depart upon "two lusty geldings" provided by Michael by order of Mistress Arden. The body is removed into the counting-house, and Alice Arden and Susan Mosby do their best to remove all traces of the crime. The guests arrive, and Mistress Arden pretends great anxiety about her husband. All go out to search for him except Mosby, Michael, Susan and Alice, who carry the body out into a neighbouring field, where it is found in the snow by the mayor and watch. Discovery and retribution follow in due course. Mistress Arden protests her innocence, but Mosby, who is a coward, as well as an adulterer, murderer and robber, confesses and reveals the whole crime. We learn the fate of the criminals as told in Holinshed and in the Wardmote account at Faversham. The dramatist has, however, a peculiar interest in the fate of Shakebag, who disappears entirely in the official accounts of the crime. This irrepressible villain before he leaves the stage informs the audience that

> In Southwarke dwels a bonnie northern lasse,
> The widow Chambley, i'le to her house now
> And if she will not give me harborough,
> Ile make bootie of the Queane even to her smocke.

We are even further informed that Shakebag did go to the widow Chambley's house, but that she refused to take him in, whereupon he murdered her in the most brutal, cold-blooded way, and then took sanctuary across the water, but later on

> being sent for out
> Was murdred in Southwarke, as he past
> To Greenwitch.

The tragedy of "Arden of Feversham" evidently appealed to the popular fancy, which always has been attracted to domestic dramas of a lurid kind.

In 1736 George Lillo, the dramatist, set to work to furbish up "Arden of Feversham," which he did not live to complete. The new version was, however, produced at Drury Lane in 1759, and kept the boards up to the close of the eighteenth century.

Who wrote the play of "Arden of Feversham" printed in 1591? It is not only one of the earliest plays to be printed in quarto, a presumption in itself that it had some special success on the stage, it is also the first play of the sort dealing with actual domestic life of the date, in which real men and women are represented, who might even have been known to persons in the audience. Sir Thomas North, the translator of "Plutarch," was still alive

when the play was printed, and Alice Arden was his own half-sister. The play throws a valuable light on the home-life of the wealthy gentry both in London and the provinces. It is more than a mere transcript of a sordid crime. The characters are well-drawn and with a master-hand, and each is a good acting part. Mistress Arden herself may rank with Clytemnestra and Lady Macbeth in this particular, that throughout the story she remains a highbred lady. Beneath the cruel exterior of the deliberate murderers, the woman can always be detected. Like Clytemnestra, she justifies her hatred of her husband by his infidelities, but she brings no proof before the audience, as did Clytemnestra. Like Lady Macbeth she maintains a bold front until after it is all over, when she breaks down at the sight of the blood from her husband's body, which she has shed herself. So strong a part is it for an actress of ability, that it is almost incredible that it should have been written to be performed by a boy. Of the other characters in the play Arden himself excites but little sympathy, and Franklin is the quiet gentleman-like friend, who is unexpectedly involved in this tragedy. Mosby is the modern Ægisthus, craven, adulterous, plausible, treacherous, without a spark of true affection even for the woman, who has been dragged down to his level. Michael, the servant, is drawn from the life, the timorous knave, not without some sense of service to his master, but governed by his love for Mosby's sister, and by his genuine terror of Black Will. The two murderers are types of the Elizabethan villain, the first and second murderers of many a stage performance. Shakebag, who disappears so entirely in the official narrative, that no warrant seems to have been issued for his arrest, is evidently introduced and the part written up in the play to provide some actor with a good part. The complementary villainy of Black Will and Shakebag is a good piece of dramatic construction.

The play has received praise and commendation from literary critics of high eminence, such as Swinburne, Tieck, and it is said Goethe, by whom it has been felt that it is worthy to be ranked with either Shakespeare or Marlowe, or, failing them, some contemporary dramatist of equal skill and literary power. Shakespeare himself was a member of the Earl of Leicester's, or Lord Strange's company of actors from 1586 onwards. It is now known from documentary evidence that this dramatic company visited Dover and Canterbury in 1587, Dover in 1588, Faversham in 1590 and Canterbury in 1592. It may be assumed that Shakespeare was one

of the company, in which case he would have been familiar with the main road from Gravesend to Dover, and the various inns and places of interest on this route. It is accepted now that Shakespeare both took part as an actor himself, and was employed by his manager to revise and prepare plays written by others for performance on the stage. If "Arden of Feversham" was performed at Faversham in 1590, Shakespeare must have had a hand in the performance. No claim was, however, put forward by him or his friends, or by his earliest editors, not even by Lillo, who adapted it for the stage, for authorship of "Arden of Feversham." It was not until 1770 that Edward Jacob, in his "History of Faversham" put forward a direct claim for Shakespeare's authorship, and adduced certain literary evidence in support of his contention. The list of phrases or words used by Shakespeare and also in "Arden of Feversham" is not very convincing. Words like "taunting letter," "painted cloth," "mermaid's song," "basiliske," "lean-faced," "white-livered," "precisian," "interrogatories," are obviously only such as might be found in any writer of the same period. The most remarkable occur in Mosby's tirade on Mistress Arden, already quoted, where the line

> that shewed my hart a raven for a dove

is echoed by a line in "The Midsummer Night's Dream,"

> Who will not change a Raven for a Dove?

And again in the same context,

> And now the raine hath beaten off thy gilt
> The worthless copper shews thee counterfet,

which has an echo in King Henry VI., Part III., II., 2,

> Iron of Naples, lin'd with English gilt.

Such coincidences indicate little more than a common literary garner for all Elizabethan writers.

Christopher Marlowe was born at Canterbury only thirteen years after Alice Arden had paid the penalty for her crime at the stake in that city. There must have been many people alive in Marlowe's youth at Canterbury who had actually witnessed this terrible scene of retribution, followed as it was by the execution of Bradshaw, the goldsmith, whose body probably hung in chains, as was the custom, after his death. All the high road from Gravesend to Canterbury must have been well known during his short life to Marlowe, who as a boy may have seen at Ospringe the body of the

murderer, Greene, still rotting on the gibbet. The road from Gravesend to Dover was infested by tramps, highwaymen, and ruffians of every sort, and the solitary traveller can never have been safe. The gradual filtering back of the rabble from the army, which went under Henry VIII. to Boulogne and Terouanne, must have been a source of constant danger to peaceful citizens, and Black Will must have been one of many ruffians in this line of life. Exposed places like Gad's Hill and Rainham Down were notoriously dangerous. Shakespeare with his company of fellow actors became no doubt well acquainted with the amenities of the Dover road, but cannot have had the same intimate knowledge of local incident, as must have been the case with Marlowe. There are local allusions in "Arden of Feversham" which would have meant as little to Shakespeare as the local allusions in the Introduction to "The Taming of the Shrew" would have been to Marlowe, such as the fogs and mists of the Isle of Sheppey, the journey by horse and water to Shurland, the theft of plate from Shurland, and Michael's allusions to his brother the farmer at Boughton. Marlowe's short life was spent between Kent and London, and he met his death in a tavern brawl at Deptford.

Among the friends and associates of Marlowe, who were suspected of sharing his "damnable opinions," were Sir Walter Raleigh, Thomas Harriott the mathematician, Thomas Kyd the dramatist, and "Mr Thinne of Wilts." This Mr. Thinne is probably Francis Thynne, the antiquary, who resided with his cousin, Sir John Thynne at Longleat. It may be conjectured therefore that Francis Thynne was responsible for the materials used by the dramatist in "Arden of Feversham."

The number of incidents in North Kent, which occur in the plays connected with the joint names of Marlowe and Shakespeare, seems to point to a close association of the two poets and dramatists, in which Marlowe took a leading part, until his premature death left Shakespeare alone in the field. Swinburne does not hesitate to attribute "Arden of Feversham" to either Marlowe or Shakespeare, unless there was some dramatist (not one of those at present known, such as Kyd or Lodge or Peele) who could rise to a height equal to theirs. As Swinburne declines to admit "Arden of Feversham" among the works of Marlowe, he is constrained to give it to Shakespeare. The patches of true poetry which occur in "Arden of Feversham" could be more easily given to Marlowe than to Shakespeare. Even if the question of authorship must

ever remain unanswered, it may be said of "Arden of Feversham" that Marlowe was in some way responsible for it, and that Shakespeare was certainly acquainted with it, and perhaps acted a part in it himself.

One of the few scraps of genuine evidence concerning Shakespeare's early stage career is the attack made on him by Robert Greene the dramatist, warning his literary friends against that "upstart Crow beautified with our feathers." This attack was published in 1592, the same year in which "Arden of Feversham" was printed for the first time. It has already been stated that in this play the character of Shakebagg, the second murderer, has been written up so as to take a prominent part in the action of the play. Shakebagg says more, and what he says is better stuff than that put in the mouth of Black Will. The character parts of these two ruffians offered good opportunities for actors. May not Shakebagg be another humorous allusion to Shakespeare, like Greene's sneer, "the only Shake-scene in a countrie?" According to the local account the second murderer's name was Loosebagg, not Shakebagg, which name only appears in Holinshed, and does not there take part in the actual murder of Arden. One can imagine Shakespeare even writing up the part for himself, or Marlowe doing so to poke fun at his fellow dramatist.

One more detail may be noted, though perhaps of too little importance to be taken into real consideration. Shakebagg, in whom the dramatist takes a singular interest, finishes his career of crime by the murder of one widow Chambley near Southwark, a detail which has no bearing on the story of Arden and his wife. Among Marlowe's friends accused like him of disseminating irreligious doctrines was Richard Cholmley, who was eventually arrested by order of the Privy Council. Wit in a circle of friends like Marlowe's was not refined, but the similarity of names may be nothing but coincidence.

It is possible to follow Swinburne in his high estimate of "Arden of Feversham" as a play of unusual dramatic and literary merit, without going the length of attributing it to Shakespeare. At the same time it is difficult to go elsewhere than to Shakespeare or Marlowe for the authorship of such a play. The suggestion therefore is offered that the play is one worked up from Francis Thynne's account of the murder of Arden of Feversham by Marlowe and Shakespeare in conjunction, for performance during their tours in North Kent in the years 1590, 1591 and 1592.

Facsimile of the Indenture, dated 3rd August, 1545, with the autograph signature of Thomas Ardern.

APPENDIX I.

TEXT OF THE INDENTURE OF 3RD AUGUST 1545.

THIS INDENTURE made the thirde day of August in the xxxvijth yere of the reigne of our Soveryng lorde Kyng henry the eight by the grace of God of England France and Irland Kyng Defender of the fayth and in yerthe of the Churche of England and Irland the supreme hedd betweyn Thomas Ardern of Faversham in the Countie of Kent gentylman on the one part and Thomas Dunkyn of Faversham foreseid yoman on that other parte. Witnesseth that the seid Thomas Ardern for the some of fourscore and tenne pounds of good and lawfull money of England to the seid Thomas Ardern his executors or assignes by the seid Thomas Dunkyn his heires executors or assignes in manner and forme folowyng well and trulye to be contentyd and payde hathe gyven granted bargayned and solde and by these presents doeth clearly gyve execute bargayne and sell unto the seid Thomas Dunkyn all that his mesuage or tenement barne stable and little thatched house gardeyne impaled and a peece and parcell of pasture and marishe called the Nether Grene and a peece of pasture and marishe land lying between the Crycke or Key at the Standred and a stone style standyng at a place ledyng to the Home callyd (blank) and all other his lands tenements and hereditaments which nowe be in the tenure and occupation of John Castlocke sonne of William Castlocke. And another small peece and parcell of pastureland lying in the Upper Grene on the west syde of the Hye wey there adjoyning to the premysses conteyning by estimation halfe an acre be it more or lesse and all the woode and trees growing in and uppon the premysses or any parte or parcell of the same, all whiche premysses barns do lye and be within the libertye and jurisdiction of Faversham foreseid faythfully with all his right title and interest whiche he the seid Thomas Ardern hathe in and to the same of any parcells thereof and all the charters wrytyngs escrypts and mynyments whiche the same Thomas Ardern hath in his owne custodye or may lawfully come bye con-

cerning the premysses or any part of the same to have and to holde the seid messuage, lands, tenements and other the premysses with the appurtenances, charters, wrytyngs, escerpts and mynyments unto the seid Thomas Dunkyn his heires and assignes to the use of the same Thomas Dunkyn his heires and assignes for ever. And the said Thomas Ardern covenanteth and granteth for hym his heires executors and administrators unto and withe the seid Thomas Dunkyn his heires executors and assignes by these presents at this side the feast of the byrthe of our Lord God next comyng after the date herof to make or cause to be made unto the said Thomas Dunkyn his heires and assignes all such lawfull and sufficient assignation in fe simple of and in the premysses with the appurtenances and any parte or parcell thereof as the said Thomas Dunkyn his heires and assignes on his and theyr termes covenantyth at the only coste and charge in the lawe of the same Thomas Dunkyn his heires or assignes shall be devysed or advysed for the present assurance and sure makeing of the premysses with the appurtenances to the seid Thomas Dunkyn and his heires and for the utter extinguyshment and avoydyng of all the right title and interest of the same Thomas Ardern and of his heires and assignes and of all other person and persons and thyr heires in and to the same for ever and further that the seid Thomas Ardern his heires and assignes shall hereby discharge the premysses ageynst our seid Sovereygn Lorde the Kyng his heires and successors of all the tithes and other yerly rentes goying oute and to gowth (go out) of the premysses or ony parte therof for ever and to delyver or cause to be delyuered to the seid Thomas Dunkyn his heires or assignes all the foreseid evydences charters wrytyngs and mynyments concerning the premysses or ony parte or parcell of the same and the true copyes of all such evydences and wrytyngs as therein that concern the premysses or any parte therof with other landes, beyng in the custody of the seid Thomas Ardern at this side of the feast of Seynt Michell the Archangell next comyng after the date hereof And that the premysses with the appurtenances from the seid feast of the byrthe of our Lorde God shel be clearly discharged of all and all manner forthwith of annuyties or annuall rentes and rent charges and of all other encumbrances whatsoever And that the said Thomas Dunkyn his heires and assignes shall from the seid feast of Seynt Michell the Archangell peasably and quyetly for ever have holde and occupye and enjoye the seid mesuage lands and tenements and other the premysses with all and single the

appurtenances without just and lawfull evaccion or interruption of person or persones whatsoever And where the seid Thomas Ardern cannot nor may withoute the Kynges Majesties lycence of alienation alyenate the ryght to the seid Thomas Dunkyn in favore foreseid as is agreed betwen the seid parties that the seid Thomas Ardern shall sue a lycense for the same whiche lycence the seid Thomas Ardern covenanteth to delyver unto the said Thomas Dunkyn his heires and assignes over the Kynges Majesties Greate Seale of England at this side the seid feast of Seynt Michell the Archangell toward the charge whiche sute the seid Thomas Dunkyn covenanteth to pay unto the seid Thomas Ardern at the delyvery of the same lycence unto the seid Thomas Dunkyn thirtye shyllyngs of good and lawfull money of England for the charge bargayne and sale of all the premysses and true and faythfull performance of all the covenants foreseid on the behalfe of the seid Thomas Arderne his heires executors and admynystrators to be performed and kepte the seid Thomas Dunkyn covenanteth unto and with the seid Thomas Ardern by these presents to pay or cause to be payde unto the seid Thomas Ardern his executors and assignes the foreseid some of fourscore and tenne pounds in manner and forme folowynge that is to witt at the insealyng hereof forty and fyve pounds whereof the seid Thomas Ardern acquyteth the seid Thomas Dunkyn his heires executors and admynystrators forever by these presents And at the feast of the Purificatyon of our blessed Ladye the Virgin next ensuing the date herof other fortie and five pounds for the charge purchase bargayne and sale of the premysses with the appurtenances in manner and forme foreseid by the seid Thomas Ardern to the seid Thomas Dunkyn his heires and assignes for ever bargaynd and sold. In witnesse wherof the parties above seid to these presents theyr seales severally have putt. Gyven the day and yere above written.

Facsimile of Arden's signature.

(Red seal, circular, $\frac{7}{8}$ inch diameter, a lozenge of four quarters, the dividing ridges forming a cross. Size of indenture, $15\frac{3}{4}$ inches long by 14 inches high over all.)

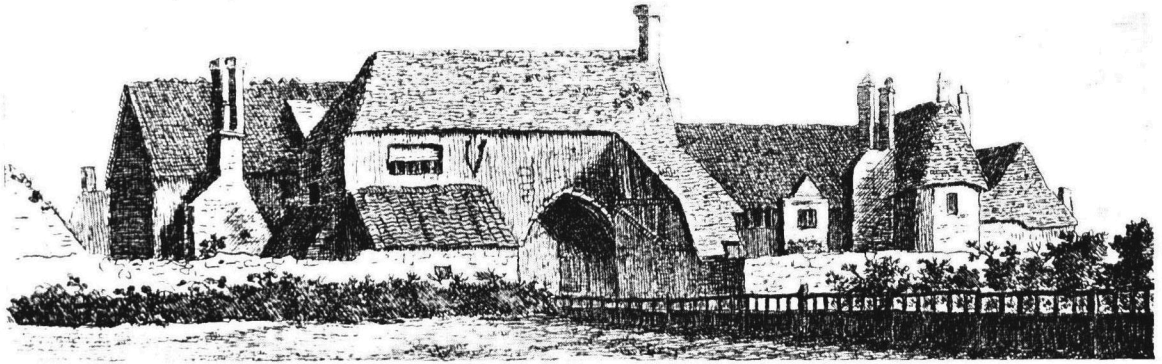
APPENDIX II.

TOPOGRAPHICAL NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

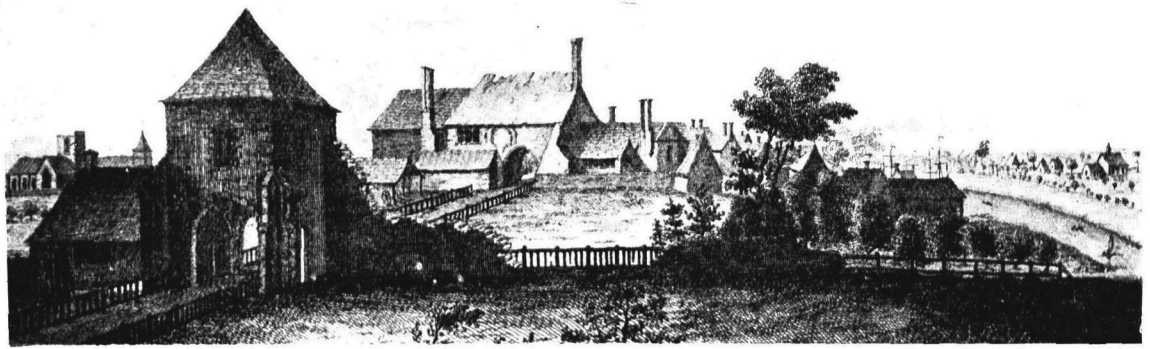
Of the famous Abbey of Faversham, founded originally as a Cluniac monastery, but changed, between 1227 and 1288, into a house of unreformed Benedictines, very little survives above ground.

The monastery was surrendered on 8th July 1538. In a grant of the property, the indenture being dated 10th May of the following year, reference is made to those of the Abbey buildings which the King had already "ordered to be pulled down and carried off the same premises," shewing that the demolition was then, at least in part, accomplished; while the supplemental schedule enumerates none but domestic buildings—"houses, edifices, barns, stables, dovehouses" and "outyards," the "brewhouse" and a certain "tenement," together with "one close adjoining the grange." The silence of both documents on the subject of the church is significant.

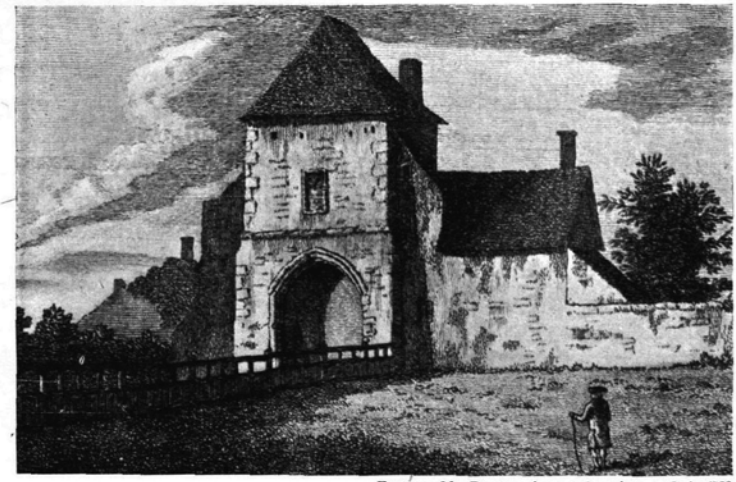
By the time that Thomas Southouse wrote his *Monasticon Favershamiense*, 1671, the church of the monastery had been "so totally long since demolished, that there is not so much as a stone or underpinning left to inform posterity whereabouts it stood." The Refectory, however, still remained entire, though degraded into a store for ladders "and other little fruiterer's trumpery." The only surviving feature of the Refectory worthy of remark was an old inscription, cut in stone on the north door, "in characters of that age: *Jesus Christ have mercy on me.*" The Refectory was subsequently destroyed by order of Sir George Sondes. "On the east parts of the Refectory," continues Southouse, "stands some part . . of the Abbot's lodging, . . in which are an antient chamber or two, whose roofs are ceiled with oaken wainscot, after the manner of some chancels. On the west side of this Refectory standeth a building of stone, which opens with two doors into the Refectory or Hall, and with another into the close, northwards, which I take to be the Almonry." Of "the Bakehouse, Malthouse and Brewhouse . . the tattered skeletons . . . remain yet



FAVERSHAM. Outer Gateway of the Abbey, from the North. *F. Perry.*

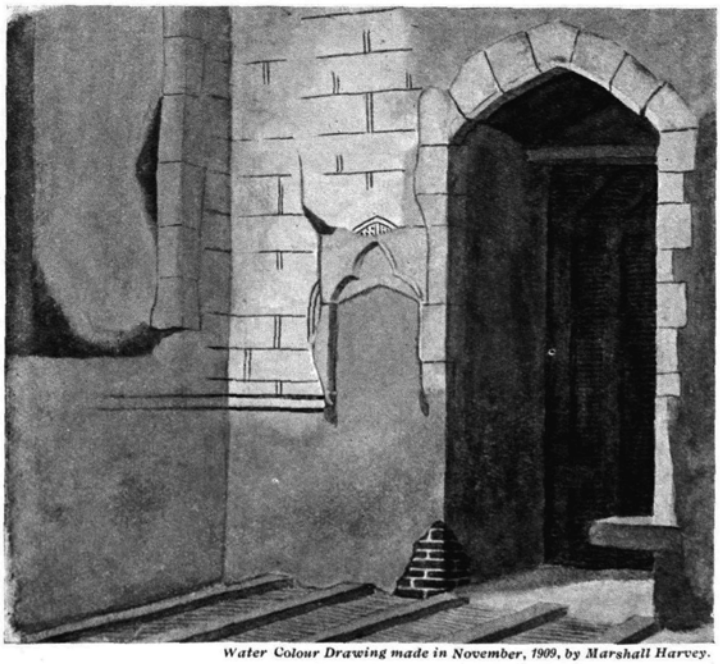


FAVERSHAM. Inner and outer Gateways of the Abbey, from the North-West. *S. & N. Buck, 1735.*



Engraved by Pouncy, from a drawing made in 1758.

FAVERSHAM. Inner Gateway of the Abbey, from the South.



Water Colour Drawing made in November, 1909, by Marshall Harvey.

FAVERSHAM. South-East corner of the Oratory in the Abbey Guest House.

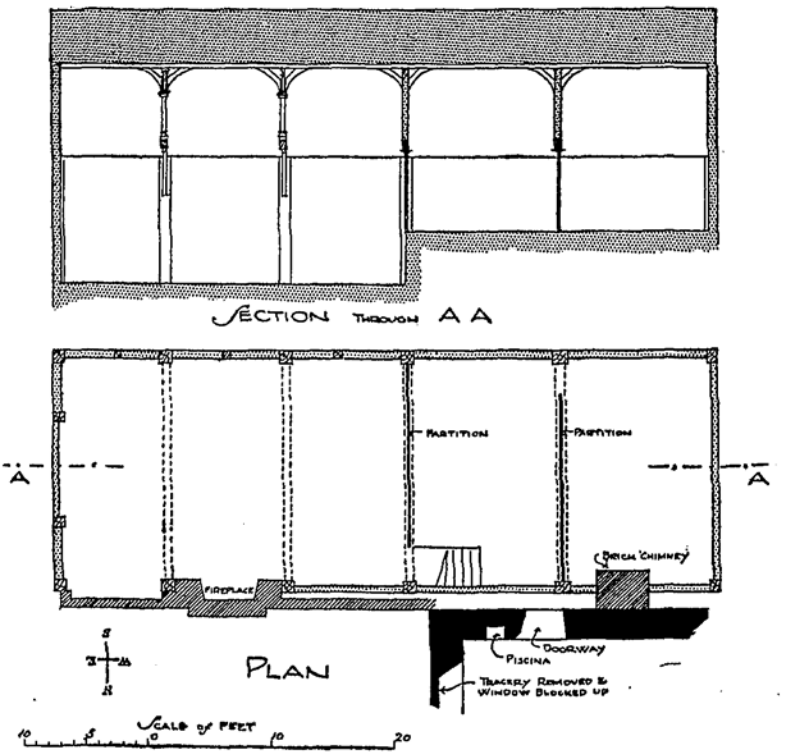
visible." The kitchen (which contained a timber 30 feet long, that must have been a tie-beam of the roof, or possibly the lintel of a gigantic open fireplace) was pulled down in 1652, the stone of its foundation being utilised in the paving of Court Street. The labourers engaged in digging up the foundations of the kitchen discovered an arched subterranean vault, which had probably been nothing else than "a sewer to convey the sullage and water from the kitchen." The stables "stood in what we call the Abbey-close, at distance from the other offices." The buildings comprised "one Palfrey stable, which was for the saddle nags and geldings of the Abbot. This stable stood upon the ground whereon Sir George Sondes hath lately built his Farmhouse." Thus conclude Southouse's valuable topographical notes, published in 1671.

The engraving by the Bucks, dated 1735, shews both inner and outer gateways then standing—the former with a pyramidal roof; the outer gate a more extensive structure, with a range of buildings attached to it on either hand, east and west. "At the outer gate was the Porter's lodge, ... yet a dwelling house," writes Lewis in 1727. An enlarged view of the outer gate, from a slightly different aspect, is depicted in the engraving by F. Perry, 1774. The eastern range of this gate-house was presumably the residence of Arden, who is stated to have "lived in a house by the Abbey Gate," and no other situation accords so well with Holinshead's description. Arden's house must, at any rate, have been one of those standing on the east side of Abbey Street; for its garden, bounded by a wall, extended as far as the field (F on the plan) immediately adjoining the churchyard. It was through a doorway opening in the said garden-wall that Arden's body was carried after the murder, the self-same doorway through which he used to pass when he attended church, skirting on his way the very field where ultimately his body was discovered by the search-party.

The parish church (as it appeared previously to the disfiguring alterations which Dance made in 1754-5) is shewn on the left-hand side of the Bucks' engraving. On the extreme right, to west of the creek, is depicted a small church, which, though it rather resembles that of Oare, is actually more nearly in the position of Davington Priory. The church of the latter, however, had lost its eastern limb long before 1735, the date of the engraving.

But to return to Faversham. The fact that, in Jacob's plan, the inner gateway of the Abbey is not shewn across the roadway, but only as a block on one side of it, would lead one

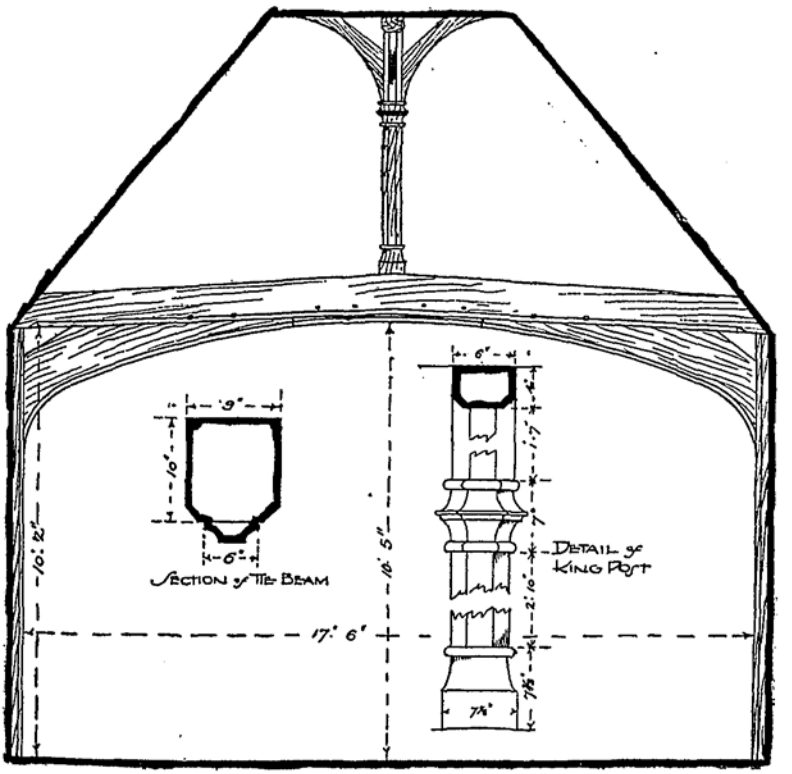
to suppose that the arch had been demolished between 1735 and 1770. The drawing for Pouncy's engraving of the gateway from the south was made, according to Francis Grose, in 1758. Grose adds that this inner gate had then (1774) lately been taken down. In his *History of Kent*, volume ii, 1782, Edward Hasted distinctly states that both gateways had already been removed, the wording of the passage giving no hint of any



FAVERSHAM.—GUEST-HALL OF THE ABBEY.
(Longitudinal Section with plan. Measured and drawn by Marshall Harvey.)

interval of time having elapsed between the disappearing of the two gateways. "There are now," he says, "hardly any, even of the ruins, of this Abbey and its numerous buildings left. The two gate-houses remained till within these few years, but becoming dangerous through age, they were lately taken down." All that

now survives of the inner gateway is the stone-work of the east wall of the arch, now incorporated in the west wall of the house (cottages 63 and 64) on the east side of Soudes Place, at the point marked g on the plan. The outer or southern gateway (marked f on the plan) apparently was still standing in 1770, but nothing now remains of it except portions of the guest-house on the east



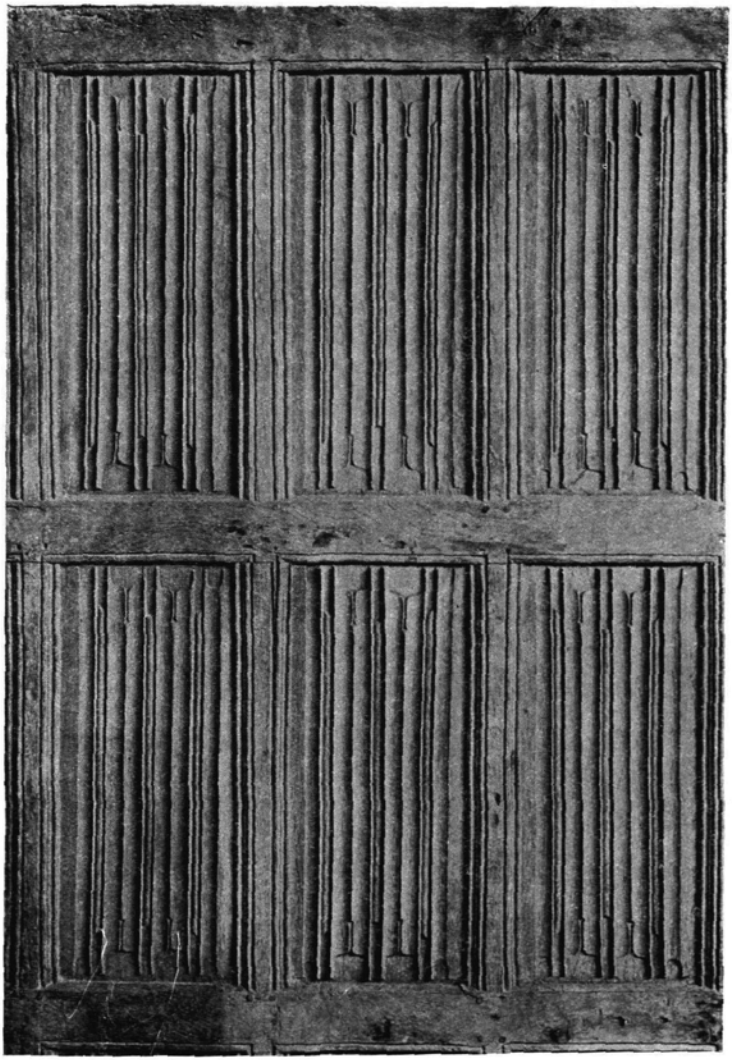
FAVERSHAM.—GUEST-HALL OF THE ABBEY.
(Transverse Section with details. Measured and drawn in November 1909 by Marshall Harvey.)

side of Abbey Street, opposite the end of Stockwell Lane. Just south of the guest-house building, on the east side of the street, is another ancient house, now numbered 81. This might possibly have been Arden's residence, but, being much smaller than the other, is not so likely to have been occupied by a man of Arden's

circumstances as the larger, the more imposing guest-house. The latter contains a large hall, with tie-beam and king-post roof. The stone fireplace, four-centred, having Gothic quatrefoils in the carved spandrels, together with the linen-fold panelling (comprising upwards of 500 feet superficial) which lined the walls to an average height of 10 feet, was sold through the agency of a firm of London dealers, Messrs. Hindley and Wilkinson, in 1909, and was removed to Dorney Court, Buckinghamshire. The stone fire-place has been set up in one of the bedrooms there; the panels in the great hall. Most of the panels measure either 1 ft. 9 ins. or 2 ft. 3 ins. or 2 ft. 9 ins. in height, sight measure. Two of them, comprising the top part of a door, are only 9½ ins. high. I desire to thank the owner, Major (now Colonel) Charles Palmer, for his courtesy in permitting me to examine and photograph the panelling after its removal to his house, and while it lay stored there, previously to being re-fitted.

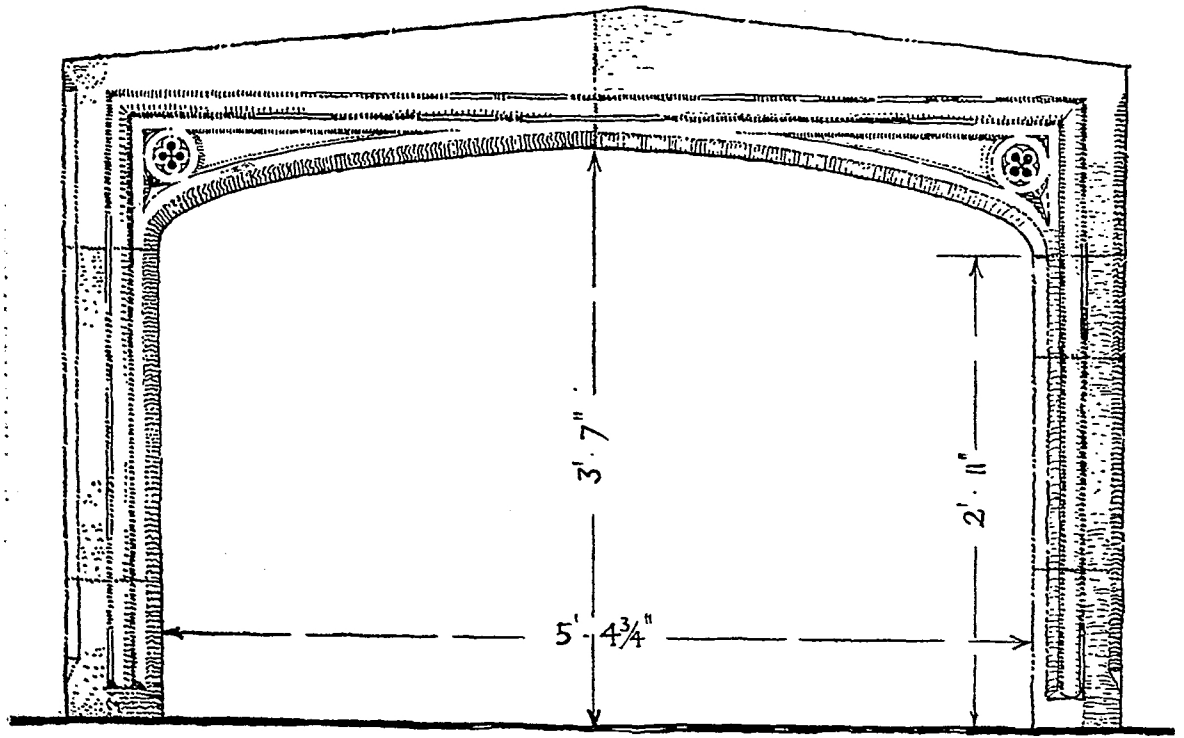
An old engraving depicts three panels "from an ancient carving in wainscot in the house on the east side of the Abbey gate." These carvings no longer exist, or, if they do exist anywhere, were taken away from their proper position long before the linen-fold panelling above mentioned. The drawings made for the engraver appear to have been of extremely poor quality, the dolphins affronted in the base of the first and third panels being barely recognisable. The shield on the left displays the Sagittarius, badge of King Stephen. In the royal arms in the centre the arms of France modern exhibit the three fleurs-de-lys disposed in a very unusual way, viz., one and two instead of two and one. The order, moreover, is transposed, the arms of England occupying the first and fourth quarters, a sufficiently rare arrangement. The design of the carvings belongs to the Dissolution period, *i.e.*, about 1525 to 1540.

Some time in 1909 there was opened up a small chamber, presumably an oratory or chapel, in the upper storey on the north side of the Abbey guest-hall. The doorway, forming the entrance to this chamber on the south side of the same, had a stone frame, with depressed two-centred head. Close to this doorway, and between the latter and the east wall of the chamber, were found the remains of a sacrarium or lavatory, shewing that the chamber had formerly served for the celebration of mass. In the stone head of the sacrarium a sculptured trefoil was sunk. The wall above and around exhibited traces of masonry pattern, distempered in red outline on the plaster groundwork. The east

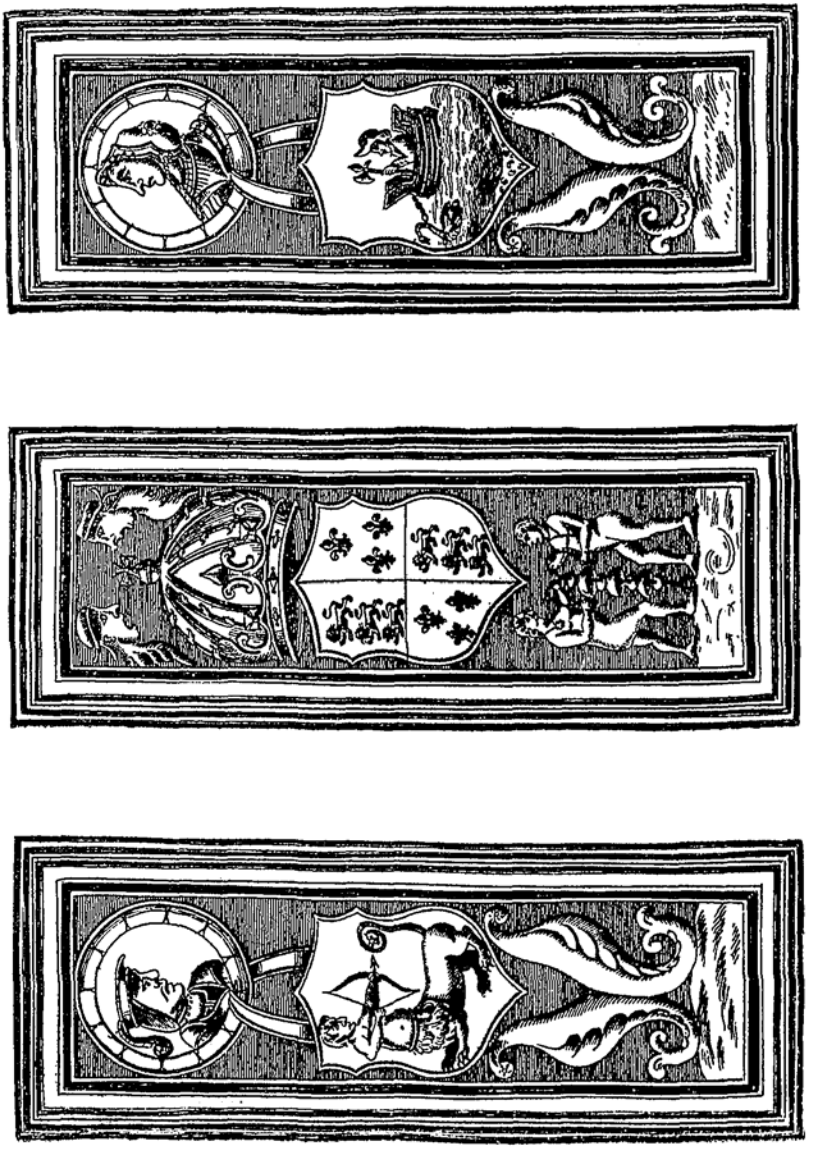


Photo, Aymer Vallance.

FAVERSHAM. Specimen of panelling removed from the Abbey Guest Hall.



FAVERSHAM.—STONE FIREPLACE, FROM THE ABBEY GUEST-HOUSE, NOW AT DORNEY COURT, BUCKS.



FAVERSHAM.—CARVED PANELS FORMERLY IN THE ABBEY GUEST-HOUSE.
(From an old engraving.)

window had been walled up, after having been robbed of its tracery. These remains appeared to date from the late-thirteenth or early-fourteenth century. All traces of the range of buildings which were situated over the arch of the outer gateway, and extended westward on the north side of Stockwell Lane, have disappeared.

The Globe Inn (t on the plan), number 34, on the west side of Abbey Street, has a handsome doorway of the first half of the sixteenth century. The doorhead is four-centred, having, sculptured in the left-hand spandrel, the initial letter B, and, in the right-hand spandrel, a tilting shield charged with a plain cross.

AYMER VALLANCE.

NOTE CONTRIBUTED BY C. H. DRAKE.

I do not know whether or not the ancient west wall of the tenements at the eastern end of the old Abbey farmyard was part of a building. There is a short piece of return wall on the south side, adjoining the Shooting meadow; but I doubt whether it is original work. Moreover, it lies to the eastward of what was presumably the boundary wall of the Abbey. There is also a bit of old wall on the west side of Standard Square, near the railway line, traditionally said to have been the site of the Abbey mill.

A few years since, when a sewer was being laid, a culvert was cut into at the bottom of Abbey Street, in front of the Anchor Inn, running east and west. It was an arched passage of rough stones, at some depth below the present road level.

It is much to be regretted that next to nothing is known of the Abbey Church. That it was, however, no mere oratory, as it is sometimes supposed to have been, but a building of some considerable magnitude, is evident from the number of chapels and altars which it contained (see Arthur Hussey's Extracts from Wills, published in the *Antiquary*, February 1906). I suppose the Abbey Church stood to north of the inner gateway; and if the cloister, with its buildings, was northward of the Church, this point would not be far from the northern range.

NOTE.—Thanks are due to the Rev. Wentworth Watson, of Rockingham Castle, for kindly lending the Deed of 1545 for

reproduction; to Mr. Lionel Cust for transcribing the same, as also for his generosity in defraying the cost of photographs to illustrate his article; to Mr. George Clinch for the loan of old engravings for reproduction; to Mr. C. H. Drake for his valuable note; and lastly, to Miss Churchill for researches, kindly undertaken at my request, to ascertain the date when Faversham Abbey ceased to be Cluniac and became Benedictine.—[Ed.]