

A HANDBOOK AND GUIDE
TO
PLACES OF SPECIAL INTEREST
IN THE TOWN OF
TEWKESBURY
AND THE
SURROUNDING NEIGHBOURHOOD

WITH ENTRIES PARTICULARLY ON

THE OLD HOUSES
THE BOWLING GREEN
MYTHE CASTLE
SITE OF HOLME CASTLE
DEERHURST CHURCH
THE SAXON CHAPEL
EASTNOR CASTLE
BUTLER'S BIRTHPLACE
SUDELEY CASTLE
TODDINGTON HOUSE
SPOONLEY VILLA
HAILES ABBEY &c

FOURTH EDITION

With Ten Extra pages of Text, and the whole Illustrated with

SIXTEEN FULL-PAGE LOCAL VIEWS

TEWKESBURY

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PUBLISHER'S NOTICE.

*THE FIRST EDITION OF THIS LITTLE WORK
MADE ITS APPEARANCE IN THE YEAR
OF QUEEN VICTORIA'S JUBILEE, AND THE
PRESENT ISSUE MARKS THE THIRD TIME
A REPRINT HAS BEEN CALLED FOR.*

*THIS VERY ENCOURAGING EVIDENCE
OF APPRECIATION OF ITS CONTENTS HAS
INDUCED AN EXTENSION, AS WELL AS A
THOROUGH REVISION OF THE INFORMATION
IN EACH NEW EDITION, AND BY
THESE MEANS THE ORIGINAL OUTCOME
OF THE LABOUR OF LOVE OF A FEW
LITERARY FRIENDS WHO HAD FOR LONG
BEEN INTERESTED BY RESEARCH AND
ENQUIRY INTO THE NATURE AND PAST
HISTORY OF THE RICH ARCHEOLOGICAL
TREASURES OF THE LOCALITY, HAS GROWN
INTO A BOOK OF 100 PAGES.*

*TEWKESBURY'S ARRANGEMENTS AS A
PLACE OF RESIDENCE, ALSO ITS ITEMS OF
INTEREST FOR VISITORS ARE MENTIONED,
AND IT IS HOPED THIS NEW EDITION
WILL MEET WITH APPROVAL.*

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TEWKESBURY.

An Introductory Chapter treating on the attractions of the Town generally.

Apart from its fame and inexhaustible treasure-house of interest and delight for the archeological student and those who are admirers of old-time architecture and associations, the beauty of its situation in one of the most lovely districts of the Severn Valley, and advantages which it derives from its close proximity to this noble river and the Shakespearean Avon, attract large numbers of visitors and tourists to Tewkesbury in the holiday seasons. To such, and particularly those whose visit may be very brief, it may prove convenient to give at the outset a resume of what the town is and has that is calculated to win interest and enlarge enjoyment.

It is the aim of the information which appears in this introductory chapter to furnish the visitor with an easily understood description of the place, before entering upon the details which more particularly relate to the many well-kept mementos it retains and give so vivid an impression of the quaint and pleasing appearance it wore in the days of the Tudors.

Tewkesbury a healthy, conveniently situate, and deeply-interesting Town.

While Tewkesbury's primary objects of admiration are its grand Norman Abbey Church, and the numerous ancient half-timbered houses which form so picturesque a variation with those of modern erection in the principal streets, its situation on the "classic Avon," with the broad Severn rolling by and for several miles washing the boundary lines of the Borough, endow it with attractions of the gentle craft of angling. Besides this, Tewkesbury will be found in the van of progress and lacking in few, if any, of the essentials of a thoroughly up-to-date small provincial town. In the all important manner of sanitation, its arrangements are maintained in a most satisfactory state, the local authorities sparing neither labour or expense to cause the health report of the borough to compare favourably with that of any place in the kingdom. The same careful thought is also given to the water, and the town is served

from the Cheltenham Corporation's Works at the Mythe (less than half-a-mile distant) with a full permanent supply of carefully-filtered water at a high pressure, for domestic use and other necessary purposes.

The Abbey Church.

For a full description of this magnificent building and its early history and associations, the reader is referred to a special handbook* a new edition of which is always on sale, and will be found crowded with most interesting text matter and well illustrated.

A New Handbook and Guide to Tewkesbury Abbey Church : containing a very comprehensive History and Description of the abbey, with an interesting account of the Restoration of the Church and purchase of Abbey House, the Ancient Gateway, and Lands. Seventh Edition: with Plan of the Church, large Frontispiece and 7 other views. *Price 6d.* North, Tewkesbury.

The Church with its exterior appendages, the ancient Gateway and a portion of the large mansion between the Gateway and West end of the Church (known as the Abbey House, and the residence of the Vicar), are nearly the whole of what remains of an extensive Monastery which was founded here in the early part of the twelfth century. In the Church are a number of monuments and monumental chapels of exquisite architectural beauty, commemorative of Robert FitzHamon, its Norman founder, and of members of the distinguished families under whose patronage the Abbey establishment increased in wealth and importance until the time of its enforced surrender (in 1539) to the Commissioners of King Henry VIII., who were charged with the dissolution of the English Monasteries. At their instigation it suffered in common with most of the other ancient Abbey Churches, being in chief part reduced to ruins. The clerestory of the chancel (or east end) has seven beautiful windows of ancient stained glass representing scriptural personages, and of others who had been—in the course of three centuries following the foundation—associated with the Abbey, and of the armorial bearings of their families. The fabric of the interior has examples of the varied styles of ecclesiastical architecture which prevailed during Medieval times.

In 1874, the first steps were taken in a movement for the thorough restoration of the edifice, and during the subsequent years the costly work has been so successfully continued as to permit of the building now being viewed in by far the most perfect state it has worn since it was so regardlessly treated by the king's agents in 1539.

The Abbey is open for inspection every week-day from 9.30 a.m., except during the hours of divine service, but not on Christmas Day or Good Friday.

Other Religious Edifices in Tewkesbury.

Holy Trinity Church, in Oldbury Road, lies a little distance back from the High Street, to which it is open by Trinity Street. It was erected in 1837, with a view of meeting the spiritual needs of the inhabitants of a new district that was gradually springing up in the parts of the old parish where it stands. A special

parochial district has now been assigned to the Church for the work of the Viacr. Architecturally the building has little on it to notice, but the interior fittings have from time to time been much improved. Several windows are filled with Scriptural subjects, and on the walls are mural tablets commemorating deceased members of the congregation. Attached to the Church are commodious School buildings. The patronage of the benefice rests with trustees.

The three principal Nonconformist Churches have each a place of worship in Tewkesbury, with schools connected.

The Wesleyan Chapel occupies a prominent site at the Cross, where it was erected in 1878, and took the place of the former chapel in Tolzey Lane, the buildings now used by the Y.M.C.A. John Wesley occasionally visited Tewkesbury and preached in the open-air to large congregations in the immediate vicinity. Near the centre of the field on the high ground above Perry Hill Gardens there stood until about the year 1870 a large spreading tree which from time immemorial had been called "Wesley's Elm," the tradition being that Wesley on one occasion (it being a market day) from beneath its branches addressed a very large gathering of village people and others who had come in to hear him. The Wesleyan Society first formed in Tewkesbury and had their meeting place in Long's Alley, Barton Street, and here John Wesley is said to have frequently conducted the services.

The Baptist congregation have a large place of worship, to which schools are annexed. It lies back from the thoroughfare on the south side of Barton Street, about a 100 yds. from the Cross, and is approached from the street by a broad courtyard, which in days gone by formed the entrance to the back premises of an old hostelry called the "Star and Garter Hotel." The Baptists early formed a society in Tewkesbury, and their meeting place, with a burial place attached, is situated in Old Baptist Chapel Yard, at the lower end of Church Street.

The Congregational Church building, which has seen much enlargement and had its interior arrangements improved in later years, faces the thoroughfare near the top of Barton Street. Commodious school buildings are attached to the chapel, and there is a burial ground at the rear.

The roman Catholic Church, with a Priest's residence attached is situated on Mythe Hill, close beside the Worcester road. It was (in part) a transformation, about the year 1865, from other buildings which had occupied the site, and since its completion, service has been held here and a congregation gathered. Previously to its opening, members of the R.C. congregation attended the place of worship at Kemerton.

The Salvation Army hold their services at a building in Nelson Street.

Educational Establishments.

Imperial legislation of later times has altered considerably from their former arrangement the facilities for the elementary education of the Tewkesbury youth, and in its far-reaching effects has wiped out of existence all but a single one of the several very excellent private schools that were once successfully conducted in

the town or immediate neighbourhood. This is a High School, conducted by a lady principal (assisted by an influential School Council), at Avonbrook mansion. The Grammar School is now associated in its support and control with the Government Board of Education and the Gloucestershire County Council. Of Elementary Schools there are several ably staffed, and, according to the Government Inspectors' periodic reports, on the whole, securing very excellent results.

The buildings devoted to instruction are exceptional in their capacity and convenience for so limited a community, and the provision recently of the great building for Grammar School and technical instruction work, beside the Gloucester Road near the Abbey, and the fine block of County Council schools, in Chance Street, give evidence that there was no stint in outlay in furnishing such additional accommodation as was for the time deemed requisite.

Halls and other Public Buildings.

The requirement of local accommodation for private and public assemblies—either for business or pleasure—is abundantly well met.

The Town Hall, in High Street, is available on hire for the purposes named, with the consent of the Council. On the ground floor are the large room of the Corn Exchange, the Court and Jury rooms. A stone staircase leads to the second floor, where are the Council Chamber with small retiring room, and a handsome Assembly room, which is suitably arranged, and has its walls adorned with painted portraits of several former members of Parliament and Mayors of the Borough.

Philharmonic Hall and Theatre.—This building is conveniently situate at about midway along Barton Street, and being a large and conveniently-arranged Hall it is the favourite place for entertainments given in Tewkesbury. It has a good stage for theatricals, with suitable dressing rooms, and companies of great repute frequently occupy its boards.

Until about the middle of the last century the Hall proper was the Meeting House of the Society of Friends (a Quaker's Chapel), but as the number of members of the congregation lessened by death or removal, the regular meetings ceased, and ultimately the building was sold to some local gentlemen who adapted it to its present uses. In the rear is an old graveyard opening to Saffron Road.

Tolzey Hall, in Tolzey Lane, near the Cross, was the chapel of the Wesleyans for a long period previously to the erection of the new building. It is the meeting-place of the local branch of the “ Young Men's Christian Association,” for whose purposes the premises have been adapted. The old chapel forms a convenient hall for lectures and other gatherings.

Reading Rooms and Clubs for Indoor Recreation.

Of this character of institution two are maintained in Tewkesbury, the one as a general subscription membership Club, and the other specially for Working Men's patronage.

The Town Club—by which name the subscription institute is known—is towards the abbey end of Church Street. It has very excellent accommodation in the form of a well supplied reading-room, supplemented with a lending library, and billiard and recreation rooms. The admission to membership is by nomination and with approval of the committee of management. The Club, which is a great convenience to the town, has had a long and successful career and is well patronized.

The Working Men's Club has its head-quarters at the Old Railway Station, in High Street (immediately opposite Quay Street). Here a convenient set of rooms provide suitable space for the Club's operations, which comprise the provision of well supplied reading and recreation rooms.

Local Commerce: Industries of the Past and Present. A Lost Mustard Growing Fame.

The old-time vocations on which the townsfolk chiefly depended have, like those which followed them, disappeared off the scene. The cultivation of large areas of land with the mustard plant was pursued on a very wide scale, and the quality here grown and manufactured won remark from several early writers. Shakespeare immortalized it in his play of *King Henry the Fourth*, with the words put on the lips of Sir John Falstaff:

“ He's a good wit ? hang him, baboon ! His wit is as thick as Tewkesbury mustard. “

Mr. Bennett in his invaluable *History of Tewkesbury*, in mentioning the subject, quotes from Fuller's *Worthies of England*, as follows:

“The best of England (to take no larger compass) is made at Tewkesbury. It is very wholesome for the clearing of the head, taken moderately, and I believe very few have ever surfeited thereof. It is generally used in England : and the jest is well known, of two serving men contending about superiority : ‘ My master,’ saith the one, ‘ spends more in mustard than thine does in beef.’ Whereunto, the other returned, ‘ the more saucy men his followers.’

Other oft repeated remarks are –

“ He looks as if he lived on Tewkesbury mustard.” *Ray's Proverbs*.

“ If he be of the right stamp, and a true Tewkesbury man, he is a choleric gentleman, and will bear no coals.”—*Cens .Lit.*, VII.,288.

Some of the older houses and warehouses in the town still retain (or until recent times did) on the story next the roof airy apartments with thickly-concreted floors on which the mustard-makers used to spread the seed after harvesting to ripen and dry before sending it to the mill for conversion into the pungent condiment, for the growth and manufacture of which they had won such fame. It has often been

queried how the reputation thus evidently so well established was completely lost afterwards.

A memory of the writer, bearing on this subject, may not be without interest in preserving: In 1857-8 the Severn navigation scheme, by which the Ham Wier and Locks were constructed, was carried out. The enormous quantity of soil excavated in the formation of the new river bed and channel was piled up to a great height on the Ham bank over the whole surface now seen as withy-rod beds and stagnant water holes, from which clay for brick making was dug. In the summer following the throwing up of these high walls of earth patches of them were golden yellow with bloom of the mustard plant, and it was conjectured that it had sprung from seed or rootlets that had long lain passive below the ground but on being turned up near the surface had taken growth.

Barley growing, and its conversion into malt, was also once extensively followed here, and old malthouses were till later years abundant as back premises in the town.

The Old Staple Trades.

Other industries which formerly flourished for awhile were gloving, worsted combing, nail making, framework knitting of stockings and other hosiery, lacemaking, and silk dressing. The most largely developed and successful of these was the framework-knitting, but as modern machinery supplanted the hand looms the trade was rapidly drawn away to Nottingham, Leicester, and other places where the new appliances were in use.

The final collapse of the old staple trades occurred within a few years of the holding of the exhibition of 1851, silk-throwing being the last to succumb to the outside opposition. The sixties saw a large extension of the building trade and important contracts far and near were secured and proved the means of introducing into the town a large staff of more skillful and consequently higher paid class of workmen. About the same time the flour-milling business also witnessed a great development of the grain and flower trade by the erection (in 1864-5) of the Borough Mills, which considerably increased the number of hands for whom employment was found in those branches, whilst for awhile—dating its origin from about the same time—an enterprising firm of boot manufacturers established here a factory for the wholesale supply of their goods. This was ultimately removed to Bristol, and the premises where it was conducted—situate on the banks of the Avon, on the western side of Church Street—were next occupied as a shirt and collar factory.

With all the fluctuations of its commercial fortunes the old town has bravely borne, and signs of progressive improvement in the ordering of its public affairs, and of active enterprise on the part of its business men, are gratifying indications for the town's prosperity.

Tewkesbury easily reached by Rail, Road, or River.

The town has the advantage of being easily reached. By the Midland Railway it is conveniently accessible from all parts; the pedestrian, cyclist, and those who in fine weather select an excursion by river for the journey will not soon forget

the pleasant experience of a trip on beautiful Severn from Gloucester or Worcester to Tewkesbury, or through the picturesque Avon valley from Evesham.

**Exceptionally good facilities for Rowing and Boating
pleasure of all kinds.**

Summer time recreation and pleasuring has little to compare and nothing to surpass what is to be found in boating, and no place could be better placed than Tewkesbury for its enjoyment, as here both the Avon and Severn are available, and the boatyards where craft of any kind are to be had on hire, are within a few minutes' walk of the centre of the town. Several handsome and conveniently-fitted river steamers are also on hire, and are suitable for parties from 100 to 150 persons.

Bright Prospects for the Angler.

The two fine rivers, Severn and Avon, which provide such excellent places of recreation for boating folk, are no less attractive as sporting grounds for the angler, and so widespread is the fame of the streams amongst the followers of the "gentle art," that great numbers visit the banks with the appliances of their craft, and if at all expert with rod and line—and favourable conditions of water and wind prevail—there are few but carry home with them a well-filled creel of fish. A word of advice here may not be out of place, but found useful. It is this—that, to lessen the chances of disappointment, it is recommended that strangers to the streams in this neighbourhood, before starting for the riverside, take a local angler into their confidence as to where the quarry is likely to be found at home on the particular occasion when they are seeking it, as to calculate chances by the flow and colour of the water, &c., is only possible to have been well over the ground before. There are times when heavy bags of roach and chub are taken with the fly, bream and perch in bottom fishing, and pike (or "jack" as they are here usually called), by trolling, but such encouraging luck usually only falls to those who know the best angling spots well. The kingly salmon, and his sly kinsman, the speckled trout, are now and then lured with a deftly-dropped fly from their native element into the fish basket. Other members of the finny tribe largely taken here are twaite, flounders, bleak, dace, and eels—the latter in great quantities in autumn and early winter months, in the nets, when there is a strong flood current running. Great catches of elvers—the supposed fry of the eel—are made about April, being brought up on the spring tides from the Severn Estuary.

Bridges over the Rivers.

Over the river Severn and Avon, which here have their confluence at two points—the one at "Avon's Mouth" off the Ham, and the other at the mouth of the Mill Avon—opposite the Lower Lode—are several bridges, some of which call for special remark.

The Long Bridge, or "King John's Bridge," as it is now often called, carries the roadway leading towards Worcester over the Avon, a short distance from the top of High Street. It is an old and, in its way, picturesque structure, that readily engages the artist's eye, and so forms the subject of many pleasing pictures. It has

been well cared for—a most necessary matter, as the force of the water the Avon pours down at flood time, especially in winter, when on the breaking up of severe frosts huge sheets of ice are brought down on the stream and come into violent contact with the masonry of the bridge, test its stability to the utmost.

The Mythe Bridge.—This bridge, which crosses the Severn, at the Mythe, and was designed by the great engineer, Mr. Thomas Telford, was erected in 1822, and with its long line of road approaches cost 35,000 pounds, subscribed by shareholders. The light elegance of its construction and proved durability have marked it one of Telford's many most successful works. By its construction the great advantage was gained of direct high road communication with Ledbury, Hereford,, and Mid-Wales from Tewkesbury, without the use of either ford or ferryboat for crossing the Severn. The villages of the district on the opposite side of the river to Tewkesbury also benefitted by having much easier access to their market, yet notwithstanding that heavy tolls were taken the traffic fell altogether short of expectation, and as a commercial enterprise the venture proved an utter failure. By a combined effort of the County Councils of Gloucestershire and Worcestershire, the bridge was in 1891 thrown open free of toll, the occasion being marked by great public rejoicings.

Other Bridges.—After traversing King John's Bridge, the Worcester road is carried over the Old Avon by an ironwork bridge of three arches, erected on stonework piers. As with the Long Bridge, this structure has frequently to withstand a pressure of flood waters which test its stability severely. Looking up the Avon from the Long Bridge, at about 300 yds. distance, the strong iron girder bridge of the Tewkesbury and Malvern Railway is seen, and looking downstream the eye catches sight of an ironwork span bridge which carries the roadway leading to the Quay.

The Battlefield: Scene of the Fierce Struggle for the Kingdom between Edward IV. and Queen Margaret.

A pleasant and interesting hour may be spent in a stroll through the fields (all within a mile of the Abbey) which, on Saturday, May 14th, 1471, were the scene of the decisive engagement between the Yorkist and Lancastrian forces.

The Abbey Mill---Ancient Malthouse—and Victoria Pleasure Ground.

The neighbourhood of the Abbey Mill has, by later time improvements, been made quite an attractive part of the town. The Mill is seen with much of the same look it has worn since the last important changes in its fabric were made about the middle of last century. The Abbey had its mills for grinding corn and probably these occupied the same site, but the superstructure of the existing building has few marks of antiquity about it. Being subject to considerable wear and tear, the Mill has undergone frequent repair and alterations and these in course of time have amounted to a reconstruction of most parts above the water line. The existence of a mill at the point in 1471 by the statement of early writers on the battle, in mentioning the retreat of the fugitive Lancastrians from the battlefield. Holinshead says the carnage “ was terrible at a mill in the meadow fast by the town,” where great numbers of soldiers were drowned.

The Old Malthouse.—Separated from the Mill by what is now a tastefully laid out entrance to the public pleasure ground, is a large building which is known as the “ Abbey Malthouse,” the side wall of which (facing toward the Mill) is of very interesting construction. A line of great buttresses of 15th Century style strengthen the wall, and happily having escaped the ravages of decay to which probably the other parts of the building in chief part succumbed before being rebuilt for use as a malthouse (a purpose it long served), they still give the building an antiquated appearance which is much admired. The old stone side wall and its strong supports are remains of an appendage of the Monastery, which was called in the inventory taken at the destruction of the establishment (in 1539) the “ great barn next to the Avon.” Thus as an interesting link in the chain of associations which unite the present with the past the place has won appreciation and to preserve it from the chance of demolition it has been bought by the town.

The Victoria Pleasure Ground.—The site of this pleasant and perfectly arranged place was anciently part of the highway from Tewkesbury to Gloucester, and from time immemorial, prior to its conversion to its present purpose, had been locally known as “ Pound Wall,” the name probably having had its origin in the close proximity of the Mill pound on the Avon. The change dates from 1897, previously to which the spot had, with the exception of the narrow roadway, been covered with rank weed growth and rubbish heaps, and the Mill Pit was partly occupied with two islets, covered with rough growth on which the tethered horse or donkey was now and then seen placed for pasture. Few passed along the road and, being comparatively useless in the form it had got, it was, with the consent of the public authorities, levelled, laid out, planted with trees and shrubs, and step by step made to form a pleasant public resort, as well as the local memorial of Her late Majesty Queen Victoria’s Diamond Jubilee. The Russian gun (which since brought to the town in 1836 has had many locations) is a Crimean War trophy, being one of the many canon captured in the Sebastopol arsenal after the reduction of the forts. The band stand was erected by voluntary subscription in 1905. Free admission is given to the ground, and in the fine season it is largely used alike by the townsfolk and visitors.

The Mythe and Mythe Tute.

The Mythe is Tewkesbury’s beautiful suburb, and the situation of much that makes the town attractive. Here, in the Severnside meadow, closely contiguous to Mythe Bridge, are the extensive filtering beds and pumping station of the Cheltenham Corporation Waterworks: on the hill directly facing the works is the lower level storage tower; and on the highest point of Mythe Hill (about half-a-mile further along the Worcester Road) is a lofty square-built ornamental brick tower, surmounted by iron cisterns of great capacity, which carries the filtered water at a level that enables Cheltenham to be served by it. The beautiful bridge of Telford, across the Severn here has been referred to on a previous page, and also the Roman Catholic Chapel which stands by the roadside a short distance from up the hill. A little way further on beyond the Chapel, the ancient building called Mythe Castle comes into view, standing near the top of Paget’s Lane, amid the outer gardens of the mansion, Tute House. The old Castle is mentioned on a following page, and what is known of its antecedents is there. Several handsome mansions and villas have a fine situation on Mythe Hill, and it is hardly possible to conceive a healthier or more desirable place of

residence. The beautiful eminence, known as Mythe Tute, must, however, after all else is recounted be regarded as the primary attraction of the neighbourhood. It is reached by a public pathway that passes from the road along the brow of the Hill in front of the water tower, a few steps beyond which a stile is crossed and the tumulus reached. From its summit splendid views are obtained over the interesting Severn valley to the long range of Malvern Hills and far away into the counties of Worcester and Hereford: in the opposite direction is a magnificent landscape, the eye roaming over many miles of the fertile valley of the Avon to the Bredon range on the north-east, and away to the more distant Cotswolds on the south. Far back in years this fine eminence had a widespread goodly repute, and it received several visits of royalty on an occasion when King George III. was on a visit to Cheltenham.

Business and Recreational Facilities.

The business life conveniences of most communities depend very considerably on the facilities for its conduct that are in the hands of the Postal authorities and those engaged under them, and like dependence on the prompt discharge of the comprehensive transactions that have now to be carried out over the post office counter is felt in many directions of private life. For these reasons it is a most satisfactory assurance to know that the arrangements of the Tewkesbury postal district in each department are most convenient and reliable.

Suitable recreational provision is in plenty. Summer time finds cricket, bowls, rowing, and tennis clubs are in full swing, and for winter time hockey and football associations are kept going. The Cricket Club have a large and well-kept practice and match ground, with pavillion attached, situate on the bank of the Swilgate Brook, the entrance being within a few steps of the Gander Lane bridge. By arrangement with the committee the use of the cricket field is available for several other out-door pastimes. The winter evenings are appreciably relieved by frequent operatic, theatrical and other entertainments given by professional or amateur performers, and the practice of high-class music is encouraged by the maintenance of a Philharmonic Society.

Accommodation for Visitors to the Neighbourhood.

It is pleasing to know that with the progress of time and easier means of travelling, there has been a large increase in the number of those who on tour visit Tewkesbury, or select it as their holiday resort. Their comfort is well catered for here at several admirably-appointed and well-manged hotels. The principal of these are the Swan, the Anchor, and the Black Bear in High Street; the Hop Pole and the Bell in Church Street; the Plough and the King's Head in Barton Street. Besides these there are about twenty other licensed houses in the town, at several of which special arrangements are made for the accommodation of visitors. The Coffee House Co. have a Tavern, with dining, tea, and assembly rooms attached, at the Cross; and there are several other places of entertainment of a similar kind in the town. Lodgings at private houses may also be obtained by a little persevering enquiry.

The Old Houses of Tewkesbury.

Past Associations and Present State.-----A Timely Restoration Movement.

Beautified as Tewkesbury now is by the creditable way in which its many specimens of domestic architecture of by-gone centuries are cared for, a time is well within the memory of many old residents of the town, when so little consideration was given to the preservation of these old houses that it seemed probable the time was not distant when all except that next the Swan Hotel—which there had long been a general desire should be preserved—would have disappeared to make way for shops and dwellings of modern style and construction. Happily, however, with a change of ownership came an altered feeling as to the value to the town of the best of these archeological treasures. Many historical old buildings had gone, while most of those that remained were in a very dilapidated state, and decay that would have been irremediable was fast overspreading them; but happily an era of restoration arrived soon enough to save a few of the most interesting. This was not accomplished in several instances without an outlay even far greater than the actual value of the property, so that their preservation for the town's benefit represents a praiseworthy evidence of the public spirit and self-denial of those who have handed them down to posterity.

Earliest Steps taken to preserve the Old Houses.

Special note is here desirable in regard to several of the earlier restorations. The handsome overhanging house in Church Street, immediately opposite the Post Office, was the first taken in hand; this was in 1865, and the transformation worked by the restorer was a surprise to all who knew what the appearance of the house was previously. About the same time one of the most ancient of street fronts near the top of High Street had disappeared, by the clearing away of the premises of the Woolpack Inn, to provide a site for the erection of the residence now known as "Trafalgar House." This is on the south side of "Moffat House," adjoining which, on the north side, was another half-timbered house, the interesting structural features of which had for a long time been hidden behind a thick rough-cast coating. On this property changing hands, the new owner spent a large sum on its reconstruction, and in making it once again a beautiful specimen of an old English private home. It is known as "Northend House," and being next to the old Black Bear Hotel, the two places together are the striking features of one of the prettiest views of this part of Old Tewkesbury.

The other special mention called for is of the fine old mansion at the Cross, which must be regarded as the chief ornament of a place the repute of which rests so much on its wealth of old time architecture. This noble residence, the interior arrangement as well as the exterior appearance of which testify to its former importance, is supposed to have been the town house of the later Lords of Tewkesbury. For a long time prior to its undergoing restoration it had been the home of the Collins family, the last of whom, Mr. Thomas Collins, was the eminent church builder and restorer, who died in 1900, and whose memory was perpetuated by his fellow-townsmen and friends far and near, in the interesting and most beautiful window and mural tablet seen in the south transept at the Abbey Church. On the tablet is briefly recognized the fact that Mr. Collins was "always zealous in preserving the

ancient beauty of his native town.” These few words have a deep significance for those who knew the man and his day, and how freely he entered with his whole heart, his means, and his able hand upon every project calculated to the end named. The finely-restored Old Houses of Tewkesbury and its re-beautified Abbey speak to his skill, and the district of new houses on Cotteswold Road and in the vicinity of the Railway Station to his generous forethought for the town’s future well-being.

On the perfect restoration of his own house at the Cross, Mr. Collins spared neither time nor cost; its noble exterior constitutes it the striking feature of the centre of the town, and those who may be privileged with a view of the interior will gain most vivid and valuable impressions of the design and arrangement of a superior mansion in Medieval times.

The work of restoration has been continued, the neat and attractive appearance of the thoroughfare being now and then enhanced when some spirited owner is tempted to remove the plaster from off his street front and open to view again the curious oak framing.

Some ancient Houses much in their original state.

The best of the ancient half-timbered houses here now seen in the street fronts much in the state the burgesses and their visitors in the olden time viewed them, are

THE WHEAT-SHEAF INN (High Street)
“CLARENCE HOUSE” (opposite the Swan Hotel)
THE OLD COACH OFFICE (next the Swan)
“YE OLDE HAT SHOPPE” (next the Bank, Church St.)
THE BELL HOTEL (opposite the Abbey Gateway)

The three of the above in High Street, and also the Bell Hotel, are of special interest for both artist and antiquarian, as they have undergone but little alteration.

Uncertain date of several of the principal Old Houses.

The style of architecture is the recognized basis on which the date given of all early ecclesiastical building rests, and by adopting the same principle in determining the time of erection of the more prominent and interesting of Tewkesbury’s ancient houses, the conclusion may be accepted as correct even though dates appear on several which suggest much later construction than does the style. The 16th century in the course of its fourth decade witnessed the suppression of the monasteries, also saw a great advance made in the improvement in the dwellings of the people which is known to have been in progress during the half-century prior to the Reformation of the Church. The reigning power in these times was the Tudor, and the domestic architecture set down as dating from their day is called from them the Tudoresque style; it would appear to have reached its best during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and so has also won the distinguishing title of the “ Elizabethan style.” It was in Tudor days—1485-1603—the best of Tewkesbury’s existing Old Houses were built—probably early in these reigns, and the dates appearing on some of them were so placed by their owners at the time when the fabric underwent repair, probably when the timbers received—according to ideas of “ improving “ which may-be were

then popular—their first coating of plaster. On a later page, in the introductory remarks of the special paper relating to the Old Houses, further interesting reference is made to the style and period of these buildings.

A Singularly Quaint Block of Front Street Houses.

Distinct, however, from the houses identified as of the Tudor or Elizabethan style, the town contains very many which have continued to the present from times long before the era of “ Good Queen Bess, “ and at least one block of these are particularly interesting. They formed three separate dwellings till a few years ago, but now are altered into two, one being a licensed house with the sign of the “Berkeley Arms,” and the other a pastry cook’s establishment, and are situate in Church Street, immediately opposite the Old Hat Shop. The premises next the inn have, over the shop front, a row of carved oak window lights in what is called arcade work, which has been perfected to pattern of what was discovered of the original , when the plaster which had long covered it was taken off. Several other houses of a similar type are still seen in Church Street, and till late in the last century there were many in High Street also, the sites of which are now covered with new business places.

The construction of these “ oldest of the old “ houses, where it has remained intact through the centuries that have passed since their erection, is of a very rough and rude kind: huge oak beams hewn in some neighbouring woodland, and seemingly innocent of any further preparation than the sawing and chiselling of mortices and tenons, and the augering out of the holes to receive those strong wood pins, which when once driven home have held fast enough to defy the stormy wind and tempest of hundreds of years to break asunder the huge timbers or panels they were employed to hold together. In the intervals, or panels, formed by the framework, uprights made of split branchwood were fixed close enough to keep in its place an interlacement of the twigs and leafy brush which had been stripped of the branches. This “ walling “ was now made solid and surfaced-up with a thick coating of a sort of conglomerate called locally “ wattle-and-dab,” which proved wonderfully weather-resisting though composed of little else than red marl, of which there was an abundant supply always at hand. The erection was now ready for the rough timber lengths, tough lathing, and ponderous stone tiles from the hillside quarries of the Cotswolds that had to form the roof, and when this was on, the simple structured arrangements of the interior that remained for completion was carried out. Places thus constructed are numerous here still, and are no doubt identical with the style adopted generally for the street business houses and smaller dwellings in pre-Elizabethan times.

A “ TIT-BIT “ of 15th-Century Work.

As beforementioned, the late Mr. Thomas Collins had throughout his career shown very great interest in such of the Old Houses as retained in their original form structural features worth preserving, and of his own freewill, and often at much self-sacrifice, would persevere with the only steps likely to give the opportunity of carrying out his wishes. With the object named in view—their careful repair and preservation—he became the owner of several of the half-timbered houses that now make the thoroughfares attractive and win the high approval of visitors on their substantial appearance. Of the properties referred to, and the decay of which was so arrested, may be mentioned—the house with the unique overhanging gables next the

Swan Hotel; the two dwellings (formerly in one) facing the Hop-Pole Royal Hotel; One of a pair of small houses with some tracery work on the front nearly opposite the Crescent; and that portion of the ancient block of buildings in Church Street which adjoins the Berkeley Arms.

It is to the front of the tall-gabled houses last mentioned the visitors attention is here called. Mr. Collins became the owner of this old place about 1890, the chief feature of interest noticeable about it up to then having been the singularity of appearance given by its unusually tall gable. The place had fallen into a very dilapidated state, but it had got into the right hands at last to be saved for future admiration. As the restoration work on the front progressed, the chipping off of the plaster on the outside of the first story revealed the existence of the remains of some carved arcade work of the rich Pointed style of the 14th Century, and which had evidently once crossed the front from one side to the other, although on its discovery, portions of it had decayed away. Mr. Collins resolved on perfecting it as it was in its original form, and the admirable way this was carried out has held back from disappearance a most attractive “Tit-Bit” of old time taste and ingenuity.

Remains of “ Old Tewkesbury.”

The carefully-compared paper on the Old Houses of Tewkesbury, which was a contribution to the first issue of this handbook, by Mr. H.P. Moore and his brother Mr. Frederick Moore, with the well versed aid of their friend, Mr. Collins, will be again found included with this contents. This is the fourth time of its reproduction, and as on each occasion it has undergone a revision which has called for addition to the contents, it has much overgrown the original limits. Yet it is necessary, apart from all that is there contained, to make special reference to the advantages of situation and the interesting (and in some instances romantic) antecedents of a few of the principal places mentioned.

The “ Black Bear of Warwick.”

The first glance caught of this interesting old hostelry, as the visitor by road from the direction of Worcester or Evesham enters Tewkesbury, is suggestive of a romantic and storied past, and give rise to a desire to know of its olden day associations. In his charming work, “ MALVERN CHASE ,” the Rev. W.S.Symonds treats of it as a popular gathering place in the times of the Wars of the Roses, and carries the mind back and engages his readers’ interest with an engaging word picture of an assemblage there in those stirring days. Tewkesbury was then an important centre of ecclesiastical life; the sway of its Abbot and the influence of the fraternity which peopled its Monastery were felt over a considerable area of the southern and south-western English counties and in Glamorganshire. At this time Mr. Symonds introduces his readers to the “ Black Bear of Warwick ,”—as he so appropriately re-names the Inn, from its old sign having borne representation of a Bear and Ragged Staff (the arms of the Earl of Warwick),--a miracle play is about to be performed in the Abbey, and from far and near the people have come in to witness it, among the rest “ Master Hildebrande de Brute,” the hero of the story, who thus relates his adventures on this occasion:

“ The landlord of the ‘ Black Bear ‘ reminded me of Chaucer’s landlord in his prologue to the Canterbury Tales as fit to be a ‘ marshall in a hall; a right merrie man , wise and well taught.’ The stables were opposite the hostelrie on the banks of the river. The space in front was crowded with franklins and their wives and daughters, and monks skilled at hunting with greyhounds and hawking; and friars who were favourites with the franklins and ever ready to beg from those who had anything to give. As we rode up, the head Forester of the Chase of Gloucester was quaffing a goblet of hippocrass with a monk of Bredon, who was begging a puppy for his kennel and taking his share of the potation for which the forester paid. Then there were country gentlemen and their dames, some quaffing goblets of ale and others attending to their steeds; with nuns from Gloucester who could sing right sweetly as in Chaucer’s time, and pretty country girls with country bumpkins fresh from the plough. All these had come in for the miracle play at the Abbey, and had assembled round the best hostelrie in Theocsbury. The landlord had the ‘ best victual ‘ and plenty of it, but those who wished to eat had to feast under a wooden shed by the side of the Avon, for all the chambers were occupied by persons of quality.”

Even though this entertaining little story is purely imaginary as regards its application to the “ Black Bear of Warwick,” the scene here is a faithful and engaging reflex of the sights, customs, and usages of the times of which he writes, and it is a fair example of the easy and pleasing way in which Mr. Symonds combines history and romance in this delightful work.

The “ Black Bear “ must have been a house well known to travellers in far back days, its appearance as well as style of construction indicating great age, whilst its prominent situation at the entrance to the town and beside one of the most important high roads of the West of England, when the roads and rivers represented the only available means of intercommunication, must have made it familiar to all who had dealings with or now and then passed through the town. Thus, as a house of call for those living in other places, it would have been a popular resort of the townsfolk to do business, talk over the news, and re-cement old friendships.

The inn property is sure to have formerly extended down to the Avon, but more than half that part of the premises on the river side was in the 18th Century made to form the site of a large distillery, and so continued till about the year 1870, when the trade was discontinued, and the place transformed into a brewery and wine and spirit vaults.

The Bell Hotel.

The appearance of this handsome and well-preserved house suits admirably the commanding position it occupies at the entrance to the town from the direction of Gloucester and Cheltenham, and the wide open space in front of the Abbey gives an unobstructed view of it. The date 1697 appears on the front, which marks a time when the building underwent an important work of restoration, or, as is quite possible, when it was changed from a private residence to an hotel. This idea of its being formerly a family mansion gains ground for credit from the fact of no early mention of the place as a house of entertainment being found, and the site it occupies was certainly within the Abbey precincts or bounds in pre-Reformation times. It may not be far out then to regard it as dating from the time when those who had been

successful in the scramble for the confiscated lands of the Monastery applied their possessions to the secular uses for which they seemed best adapted. With the space from the hotel down to the lower boundary of the Bowling Green attached this must have formed an extensive and delightful residence and pleasure grounds, and would be occupied by a succession of well-to-do residents of the town from soon after 1539 till a century-and-a-half later, when the prominent position the place occupied suggested its being more likely to prove remunerative as a public than as a private house.

“ The Bell “ is a gem of the ancient half-timbered style of domestic architecture. In later years its accommodation has been increased by wings of new buildings, and in the course of the excavations for these remains were turned up which conclusively proved that the burial ground had once extended across what is now the high road between the hotel and the churchyard.

The Bowling Green.

This beautiful appendage of the Bell Hotel has had the well-merited fame of one of Tewkesbury's foremost attractions from time immemorial, and as years have sped and circumstances have made its existence better known, it has been one of the chief inducements to many from afar to pay the old town a visit, whilst in summer time large parties from the manufacturing towns in the Midlands make it the rendezvous for their annual outings. The long centuries through which its existence can be traced have endowed the Green with a cluster of associations of interest to many, independently of those who find pleasure in what was a popular recreation in medieval times. There appear to be but few of the gentle outdoor games of early days indulged in still, but one such is the ancient game of bowls, in which the monks of old, as well as the good folk of to-day, sought and found a pleasant and agreeable means of amusement. That this was so is borne witness to by the fact of each of the more important Monasteries having had its bowling green, and no doubt the beautifully laid-out and well-kept area attached to the Bell was that on which the brotherhood of the Tewkesbury house frequently spent some of the hours allowed for relaxation.

Bowling Greens of the Old Monasteries.

In a useful little work entitled “ *The Precinct of a Gothic Minster,*” by the Rev. Mackenzie E. Walcott, M.A., it is stated that at Westminster the Bowling Green was on the south side of the Infirmary Garden; at Canterbury on the east side of the Cemetery; and at Worcester and Durham on the west side of the Cloister. Here, at Tewkesbury, it was a little further away, but within a stone's throw of the Monastery gate, and the exceptionally pleasant situation of the place for the purposes of recreation fully justified the choice made, even though it may have meant a slight departure from the usual course. The early Benedictines are credited with having given a very free translation to the strict rules enjoined by their saintly founder. As the Tewkesbury community became more wealthy, they did not hesitate to give mind and body a little extra relief from the trying ordeal to which both were alike subject, and former austerity being made less severe they thought it no sin to indulge in some of the pleasures which broke the tedium of lay folk life. The gulf that often so much lessened the free intercourse between layman and ecclesiastic was thus bridged over, and could that wonderful row of yews which bounded the Green on its western

confines but recount the scenes enacted four centuries ago on the beautiful turf-clad lawn it now (as then) bordered, what pleasing pictures might appear of the friendly relations that existed between the portly monks within and the principal townsmen without the Abbot's domain. That the enjoyment of bowling greens was shared in by the people, and the game of bowls very popular in the days gone by, is known by the fact that it was one of several games proscribed for many years, not from any fault with the recreation itself, but because the youths of England neglected their archery practice to play bowls.

What " John Halifax, Gentleman," says of the Green.

A very beautiful mural monument on the wall of the South Ambulatory of the Abbey Church, at the point where it opens to the South Transept, commemorates Dinah Maria Mullock (Mrs. Craik), whose charming work, *John Halifax, Gentleman*, has done much to attract visitors from afar to Tewkesbury. Mrs. Mullock immortalises the Bowling Green in the same vivid and delighting style she treats of the whole of the scenes and characters to which she introduces the reader. The Green here appears as a lawn attached to the residence of a Quaker tanner, Abel Fletcher. The friendless boy, John Halifax, has been discovered, and at once engaged the affection of Phineas, the crippled invalid son of Abel Fletcher. John is induced not to go away until he has heard whether Abel Fletcher can find him employ. Phineas gets the lad, whilst awaiting his father's return home, to accompany him into their garden, and it is in the conversation which follows on their reaching the place, that we have the Green and its surroundings so faithfully described, just as they may be seen and enjoyed to-day.

Phineas uses crutches, but at John Halifax's entreaty consents to forego their use for the moment, and allow himself to be carried into the garden on Halifax's back. This pleasing colloquy then ensues.

" Please take me to that clematis arbour; it looks over the Avon. Now, how do you like our garden ? "

" It's a very nice place."

Certainly it was . A large square, chiefly grass, level as a bowling-green , with borders round. Beyond, divided by a low hedge, was the kitchen and fruit garden—my father's pride, and this old-fashioned pleasure was mine. When, years ago, I was too weak to walk, I knew, by crawling, every inch of the soft green, mossy, daisy-patterned carpet, bounded by its broad gravelled walk; and above that, apparently shut in as with an impassable barrier from the outer world, by a three sided fence, the high wall, the yew hedge, and the river.

At the end of the arbour the wall which enclosed it on the riverward side was cut down—my father had done it at my asking—so as to make a seat, something after the fashion of Queen Mary's seat at Stirling, of which I had read. Thence, one could see a goodly sweep of country. First, close below, flowed the Avon—Shakespeare's Avon—here a narrow, sluggish stream, but capable, as we at Norton Bury sometimes knew to our cost of being roused into fierceness and foam. Now it slipped on quietly enough, contenting itself with turning a flour mill hard by, the lazy whirr of which made a sleepy, incessant monotone which I was fond of hearing.

From the opposite bank stretched a wide green level called the Ham—dotted with pasturing cattle of all sorts. Beyond it was a second river, forming an arch of a circle round the verdant flat. But the stream itself lay so low as to be invisible from where we sat; you could only trace the line of its source by the small white sails that glided in and out, oddly enough, from behind clumps of trees, and across meadow-lands.

They attracted John's attention. "These can't be boats, surely. Is there water there?"

"To be sure or you would not see sails. It is the Severn, though at this distance you cannot perceive it; yet it is deep enough too, as you may see by the boats it carries. You would hardly believe so, to look at it here—but I believe it gets broader and broader, and turns out a noble river by the time it reaches the King's Roads, and forms the Bristol Channel.

All of a sudden the Abbey chimes burst out, and made the lad start.

"Whats that?"

"Turn again Whittington, Lord Mayor of London," I sang to the bells; and then it seemed such a common-place history, and such a very low degree of honour to arrive at, that I was really glad I had forgotten to tell John the story. I merely showed him where, beyond our garden wall and the invisible high road that interposed, rose up the grim old Abbey tower.

"Probably the garden belonged to the Abbey in ancient time—our orchard is so fine. The monks may have planted it; they liked fruit those old fellows."

"Oh did they?" He evidently did not quite comprehend, but was trying, without asking, to find out what I referred to. I was almost ashamed, lest he might think I wanted to show off my superior knowledge.

"The monks were parsons, John, you know. Very good men, I dare say, but rather idle."

"Oh indeed. Do you think they planted that yew hedge?" Now, far and near, our yew hedge was noted. There was not its like in the whole country. It was about fifteen feet high, and as many thick. Century after century of growth, with careful clipping and training, had compacted it into a massive green barrier, as close and impervious as a wall.

The clematis arbour, the yew hedge, and many other delights here so charmingly pictured in *John Halifax, Gentleman*, are still carefully kept, and form objects of interest for many visitors who have read Mrs. Craik's book and are wishful of acquainting themselves with the scene of its inception.

The Ancient Building at the Mythe, commonly called "King John's Castle."

One other place of archeological interest mentioned in pages which follow, and which calls for special note here, is the ancient structure at Mythe, which for long was known only by the high-sounding name—"King John's Castle." The nomenclature of old places often provides a key for the unveiling of knotty points of

their history. No such value, however, appears to attach to it in this case, and so traditional or written information is forthcoming to tell of, or even to suggest, what its purpose may have been in olden times. It was probably existing long before the Monastery was brought to an end, but no mention is forthcoming to associate it either with that place, or even to lead to its recognition as a possession of those who held the Lordship.

Yet the place has an antiquated look, most inviting of curiosity as to its past, and an inventive writer in one of the county papers included "Mythe Castle" in a series of articles he contributed to its columns under the title of "The Baronial homes of Gloucestershire." These narrations were serviceable only as showing what an apt journalist can make out of a very small amount of reliable information. The reader is told that the Roman general Ostorius Scapula tarried some time at a castle at the Mythe; that the Roman road from South Wales to the Tyne ran through Tewkesbury, taking the same route as does the present Worcester road and so being commanded by Mythe Castle. This remarkable statement is supported by the amazing announcement that "on the Mythe Hill, around the present edifice, remains of a strong Roman fortification were noticeable prior to the year 1810; since then the place has been much interfered with." The "Toot tumulus," he recognizes, not as a natural mound, but as an earthwork "thrown up by the Saxon garrison of the Mythe sent out from Holme Castle to defend it when the Danes were ravaging the country in 878." Later on the tumulus is identified as "the site of the barbican of the Mythe Castle, and as the Toot had water *surrounding* it, it would be an exceedingly advantageous position, though, as a matter of fact, not so good as one as the Mythe itself."

These extracts from the article alluded to are enough to show that the writer was not really conversant with the place, indeed some of his statements are so opposite to what is actually the case as to raise a doubt if he had ever visited it.

The building is of quaint construction, and the style of some parts of its architecture is identified with that of the period of Henry VII. A clue by which to account for the existence and former uses of the place is thus obtained. Instead of the baronial castle, more modest and unassuming residences grew common in the country; those of the landed proprietors who had during the previous troubled times dwelt for safety within the precincts of the town built manor houses on their own estates, which neither by the situation they occupied or the design of their construction—some having their courtyards or gardens surrounded with quite formidable defences—were secure from attack of predatory hands. It is probable the ancient building at the Mythe was erected at this time, and for a long period formed a local residence of the wealthy owners of the Mythe estates.

A Legendary Mythe Chapel.

Tradition speaks of an ancient chapel at the Mythe, and it may have stood on or near the site where alone the castle is now seen, and have had a burying ground attached to it. The idea is strengthened by the finding of a stone coffin in the course of some excavations in the garden, not far from the old draw well. This occurred about 1885, and in 1889, whilst the pipes running from the Waterworks Pumping Station at the foot of the Mythe Hill to the great Water Tower beyond Mythe House were being laid, enough human bones to fill a wheelbarrow were dug up close by the field stile at

the upper corner of the garden and the starting place of the field pathway leading to Shuthonger Common.

The extensive use of oak in Ancient Houses accounted for.

When an old Tewkesbury house is now demolished, to make way for a freer circulation of air or more modern structure—as many are in the course of years in the closely-built lanes and alleys—the quantity and soundness of the oak beams and flooring that is found to have been consumed in its first erection surprise those who to-day know sound well-seasoned English oak as one of the most valuable of home grown timbers. But, of course, when these old houses were first built many of the hill-sides around were covered with forests which extended in some instances for many miles in length, and were principally filled with oak. Where the soil was particularly favourable to the growth of the oak (as in the Forest of Dean and many other parts of Gloucestershire it is still recognized to be), some specimens of the “ brave old oak “ reached an astonishing size. A forest of oak as is referred to existed on the hill-side near Winchcombe, and a giant relic of this forest, with a girth of 26 feet, was found on Sudely Lodge Farm.

The produce of “ the brave old oak “ was not only the chief reliance of the Tewkesbury house builder of early days, for rooms panelled and or wainscotted with oak, oak tables, oak chests, and oak furniture of all kinds were universal, much being very fantastically and in other cases very richly carved. But the state and fashion of things is now greatly changed, and the old oak carved goods, if in fair preservation and at all curious, are bought up at to reappear for admiration and use in the modern fitting up of rooms after the old style.

Details of the Principal Ancient Houses of Tewkesbury.

[The introductory text of this section prefaced a paper by Mr. FREDERICK MOORE and Mr. HENRY PAGET MOORE, and—supplemented by descriptive details of the more interesting of the Old Houses,—was read before several societies devoted to archeological study which paid Tewkesbury a visit during the early and most interesting stages of the work of restoration at Tewkesbury Abbey. The particulars they gave of this ancient architecture of the town formed an incitement to further enquiry and research, and the pages which follow contain what is now known of the various places referred to.]

As the tourist or traveller visits or passes through Tewkesbury for the first time, he cannot fail to be impressed by the quaint and nearly obsolete style of many of the dwellings which meet his gaze in the streets, and to see in them the most telling evidence that, whatever may have been its vicissitudes in modern times, the old town was in days of yore a place of considerable wealth and commercial importance. These old houses in fact constitute—apart from its magnificent Abbey Church—the most noticeable feature of the place, and being, as they are, more numerous in proportion to its size than in almost any other town in the kingdom, have come to be regarded by the inhabitants in the welcome light of something worth preserving as connecting them with the storied memories of the past, and by visitors as constituting an undoubted right to the local title of the “ Ancient Borough .“

These houses are all of them constructed with a framework of timber, the panels being filled in with plaster, and in their plan and construction are identical with the specimens of similar styles of early domestic architecture which are found in Bristol, Exeter, Chester, Coventry, and some other of our English towns.

Little attention appears to have been paid to the external appearance of these half-timbered houses in the disturbed and warlike times which preceded the reign of Henry VII., but from that period a great change took place. The wars of the rival houses of York and Lancaster were at an end. The time which followed was comparatively happy and peaceful, and through six successive reigns the domestic architecture of England continued to be cultivated, and, as regards external appearance, reached its highest state of perfection. The homes of England became as fair to look upon without as they were happy within. In the reign of Henry VII, some of the nobility and the wealthy classes began to build their houses with brick, but timber continued in use with the great body of the people, rich as well as poor. Not only houses in the country, but streets in villages and towns were formed of timber in the ingenious old style, but with special regard to beauty of appearance.

This class of domestic architecture, which in its earlier state is called the Tudor style, and in its later state the Elizabethan, may be taken approximately as the style of the sixteenth and early part of the seventeenth century. In its chief characteristic it is essentially Gothic, resembling that of the ecclesiastical buildings, but some parts are altered and others added, to suit the difference between church and house architecture. In the gables (with their crowning pinnacles), in the porches, the doors, and the general form of the mullioned windows, the resemblance is obvious; but chimneys, which are not required for the church, are characteristic of the house, and the overhanging of the floors and the projection of the windows are still more striking differences. As the walls throughout were formed of nothing more substantial than timbers and plaster, the overhanging of the stories was perhaps chiefly required to protect them from the weather. For the overhanging of the first floor story there was another reason, which especially applied to streets. Commodities of all kinds were exposed for sale in the open fronts of the shops, and were protected from the weather from the overhanging story. The convenience of passengers also would doubtless be attended to in those times—when umbrellas had not been brought into use—ladies might then “go a shopping” even on a wet day, and walk the length of whole streets under a complete covering of overhanging stories.

Such are the characteristics of the old houses now in Tewkesbury, and they can easily be recognized in the Gothic pointed front and mullioned windows of the “Wheat Sheaf Inn,” in the high and sharp roof of the house adjoining the Swan Hotel, and in the embayed and dormered windows, recessed doors, floors projecting over each other, and roofs overhanging all of them, which are to be observed in numbers of houses in our principal streets, and which, although they are in most cases coloured and plastered, and whitewashed over, still retain the picturesque forms of the olden time.

It is at night, with a bright moon and clear sky, that these old-world buildings are seen to most advantage. Then they throw their long dark shadows across the street from one to the other, seeming as if they had come from three centuries ago to converse silently in the sleep time of the modern world on the events of those far

off days when they themselves were young and fresh. Then, they hold their grotesque heads and quaint old tops up against the sky, and mark upon it, in sharp, vigorous outlines, the long, straggling, irregular, picturesque appearance of the streets, which in the solitary quietude of midnight peculiarly impresses one with the idea of their antiquity.

The old houses are mostly in the front street; there probably were others detached that have long since gone, for, certainly, the style was well calculated for dwellings surrounded by garden grounds, where carved and pointed gables, overhanging floors and galleries, and projecting windows and porches, must have had an effect in the highest degree varied and pleasing. It may be added of them, that as fantastic as may be their exterior appearance, it is fully equalled by the interiors, many of the better ones having spacious, though low-ceilinged rooms, panelled with oak, aged to ebon blackness and most elaborately carved and ornamented, whilst the number of passages and small rooms, cupboards, presses, nooks and corners is almost bewildering.

While so much has been said and written concerning the magnificent Abbey Church of Tewkesbury—and very deservedly so—but little had been done previous to the introduction of photography to bring the humbler monuments of this time-honoured town before the public, except by Habershon; by Briton, in his “ Half-Timbered Houses;” and by a neighbouring artist, Rowe (of Cheltenham), who published a series of lithographs of the “ Old Houses of Tewkesbury ,” in 1839.

At either entrance to the town are half-timbered houses of early date, the “ Black Bear “ at the High Street entrance, “ The Bell “ at the Church Street, and what was a part of an old Tithe Barn at the Barton Street (the latter now transformed into two dwellings), whilst here and there through the streets and lanes are to be found more or less perfect buildings, from the mansion to the humblest cottage, leaving us examples of the skill and taste of our forefathers in adapting the materials at hand for use and beauty.

In the absence of any written account or ancient plan of the town, it is to-day an interesting study—but at the same time difficult to suggest—what were the various ramifications of streets and lanes, bearing in mind how important it was in those days to make the thoroughfares as narrow as possible, and also the fact that many of the modern brick fronts have behind them at the present time the ancient half-timber framed buildings.

The broader thoroughfares, it may fairly be presumed, possessed intermediate rows of houses or shops, similar to those at Ledbury and other places. In many of the old Tewkesbury houses fine examples of ancient tapestry were to be seen as late as about the middle of last century, but these and most of the old oak carving which in the form of chimney pieces, cupboards, &c, were then to be seen amongst the interior fittings have also been carried away as “ curiosities “ to enrich the storehouses of collectors, but which would have been of much greater interest had they been retained here.

In his walks and studies in all parts of the town, the antiquarian will find abundant material to interest and occupy his attention, and which will afford him much pleasure in its inspection.

As before remarked the methods of restoration repair adopted with the street fronts of half-timbered properties in the town in recent times have been the means of bringing into view again much quaint work of the old-time builders that had for long been beneath thick coatings of plaster. Thus the appearance of the houses has been improved and their identification become easier. In the list which here follows of the more interesting portions of “ Old Tewkesbury “ the particulars given have been brought up to date, and are described succinctly as they occur in the three principal thoroughfares.

Old Houses in High Street.

Starting on a tour of inspection at the upper or north end of the town—that is at the turn for the Mythe, the eye is occupied with one of the most pleasing views the street, and which Sowden treated engagingly in the painting of which the engraving that appears as a frontispiece to this book is a copy.

The Black Bear.

The “ Black Bear “ Inn at the angle of the roadway and the street, which is the prominent object of view, is one of the most ancient of the house properties now seen here, with an appearance that certifies the greater part of it dating back into days when in hostelry design more attention was given to inside comfort than to the outside gloss which modern fashion has seemed to regard as so essential. In the reference to this building that appears on page 23, the reader is told of the romantic associations with which Mr. Symonds has endowed it in his popular work, *Malvern Chase*. Many appendages of the old Inn which seemed to cement it more closely with the days of the Stout Earl disappeared in the course of alterations made in transforming a commodious market room into the present handsomely fitted-up bar. There is still to be seen swinging high-up at the roadway corner a sign with the representation of “ a Bear chained to a Ragged Staff “—the Warwick cognizance in the fifteenth century, but it is modern painting and does not follow much the old style figure which may be seen very carefully reproduced in the heraldic tilework floor at the Abbey. A gilt model of the Warwick bearing was fixed up over the roadway side entrance , and this was removed when the alterations were made about 1870. We should add that the structural changes made as time grew and usages altered were quite necessary to meet the requirements of a public Inn.

The exterior, however, continues much in its original state, with the exception of the High Street front, and here, as is found in many other instances, the lower story was brought out about 18 inches for the enlargement of the room at some former time, and thus well-nigh obliterated the projecting timbers of the second story and the carved story posts below.

A decayed Stocks and Whipping-Post.

At the roadside immediately opposite the Bear, and close by two large elm trees (of which only one remains), a public stocks and whipping-post had stood from time immemorial till most parts of it went to decay, and about 1860 what remained was removed. Portable stocks took the place of those decayed, and these were set-up as occasion needed in front of the old Town Hall till 1857, and for a few yeasers afterwards (till this form of correction was done away with) on Bredon Road near the Gasworks.

Footnote. It may be mentioned that the punishment of a certain number of hours in the stocks was meted out chiefly in vagrancy cases, and in proved charges of drunkenness where those convicted were unable or unwilling to pay a fine. Flagellation at the whipping-post was abolished here a long period before the Stocks were swept away.

An Artist's Tit-Bit.

At the Bredon Road turn, close by the large elm tree, are several old-style Cottages which, with the contrast presented by the handsome modern mansion, North House, make a view of the part of a very pleasing picture.

“ Northend .“

Passing down the street, the residence next the Bear, and now named “ Northend ,“ is in its carefully restored state a very fine specimen of old-time house building, but here again the lower part has been brought forward, and until 1874 the carved story posts were buried behind modern wood and plaster work, but then shown again, and add much to the appearance of the front.

Red Lane and the Neighbourhood.

Here there is much to engage interest and attention. On the opposite side of the street, facing across to the lane entrance, is a house with a quaint gable, in which is a carved oak beam, forming a Tudor arch, having a floreated boss, in the centre covering the intersections of the moulded ribs. The bosses on the other beams have evidently been chopped off. Up the passage leading to this house is a curious old three-storied building, the lower part being built with great blocks of stone, upon which rest heavy overhanging oak timbers supporting two other stories. In the first of these may still be seen the remains of the 15th-century traceried carved oak window frames which formerly went all along the front.

Academy House.

On its south side Red Lane forms the property boundary of a fine Elizabethan style mansion, which is locally known as “ Academy House .“ Conspicuous features of the exterior are some curious lead conducting pipes of Queen Anne's time, and bearing the date 1701. The carved oak barge boards of the gables on the part facing towards the river, and the massive oak doors with their iron hinges, &c, deserve notice. The interior has much of interest both in structural form and arrangement, and these include (in the front sitting-room on the ground floor), an elaborately-carved oak mantelpiece, on which the Royal Arms of the Jacobean period,

with figures on neither side. In 1897, the property having in some parts got very dilapidated, underwent considerable repair, and it was then that the old stucco coating of the front was removed and the timber work exposed; but this was so roughly constructed and defective in form before a lot of facing boards made to match the pegged framing were put on, that it is questionable if it was ever intended to be shown free of a plaster facing on the street side.

Why called “ Academy House “

The residence acquired its title of “ Academy House “ as having for eight years in the early part of the 18th Century been the location of a Presbyterian School carried on by Rev. Samuel Jones, who removed his academy from Gloucester to Tewkesbury in 1711, and having died here in 1719, his remains were buried in the east end of the chancel aisle of the Abbey. Some of those who had been scholars with Mr. Jones afterwards reached high places, two of whom were Archbishop Secker and Dr. Butler, bishop of Durham.

Red Lane itself.

This is but a narrow way leading from the High Street to the side of the river Avon and there joining a road that connects with the Quay. Though the appearance of the lane itself may not be thought very inviting it has of later years seen great improvement by the utilization for other purposes of two old disused malshouses there situated, the one being reconstructed as stabling and coachhouses, and the other as a commodious drill hall and recreation room for the local Rifle Corps. The lane is not without interest for those interested in antiquities, as in the wall of Red Sandstone blocks, which it is conjectured may in by-gone times have extended a long distance and formed part of a boundary wall of the town in this direction. The idea finds support in a wall about a dozen yards in length with five buttresses and coping chiefly of soft red sandstone which can be seen a short distance along the roadway at the bottom of the lane.

Following the Ancient design.

A little below Academy House, but on the opposite side of the thoroughfare, an old overhanging residence is noticed, the upper stories of which the then owner himself restored. It is done in a very plain way without any of the imitative board stripping so largely used in many of the places, and thus its own form was closely followed. In its repaired state this place shows what probably was the original appearance and most of the substantial but more plainly fronted street houses.

The property forming auctioneers’ offices (facing Station Street), has had the original timber work of the front again brought into view, and about the fabric other old-time interesting details of construction meet the eye.

Quay Street and the Quay.

Antiquity wiped out by Modern Progress.

The street just below leads to what was a very busy scene in days of yore—when so much of Tewkesbury’s well doing was dependent on the river traffic. But the order of things at the Quay gradually underwent change as railway communication developed, the old had to give place to the new, and such few relics of the past it possessed likely to have been valued now-a-days as antiquities, soon disappeared. The bridge which crossed the Avon here, and which (in 1822) was replaced by the present iron span bridge, was of early date and style, with arches, and built principally of the soft red stone, which having been largely used in many of the old walls toward the Avon was probably considered specially suitable for withstanding moisture.

Vestige of an old Inn Sign.

After passing over the bridge—at the corner of a roadway which opens to the Severn Ham—is a large building which for a long period was a public house, and in its later days was called the “ Star “ but formerly it had been known as the “ Admiral Benbow “ and the figure still (1908) seen in the wall facing towards the roadway, was intended to represent this brave old naval commander, who—as the old song goes—

“ When he had lost both his legs,
He fowt upon his stumps. “

A glance at the Severn Ham.

From the point where the ancient sign of the “ Admiral Benbow “ is seen it is but a few steps into the beautiful expanse of meadow land, the Severn Ham, of which the Avon washes the banks and forms the boundary on the one side and the Severn on the other. For a long period it was known amongst the patrons of horse-racing as one of the best flat race courses in the kingdom. The last horse-races there were held in 1852. From the Ham at this part an interesting view of the Avonside face of the town from the Quay to the Abbey Mills is obtained.

The Walk down High Street resumed.

“ Nortonbury House.”

A few doors below Quay Street is an ancient premises to which a late owner, on completeing the top story, gave the name of “ Nortonbury House “—in recognition, we presume, of the pleasant scenes Mrs. Craik called up in her most charming work. Since the work in the upper part of the front was carried out and the lower has had a fashionable modern shop front inserted. An early tile in this house has the representation of four fleur-de-lis in a cross.

The Co-Operative Street Premises.

The front of this establishment, which is situate nearly opposite the last named, underwent repair amounting almost to entire re-construction, in 1906, and it being one of the old plastered-over houses, the society’s committee of management was asked to adopt the style that had generally for many years been followed in the doing up of ancient house fronts. To this wish consent was ultimately given, and the

work was carried out as now seen, the finishing touches including the affixing of a date which accredits the first erection of the premises to the second decade of the 14th Century.

Medieval Cottage Architecture.

A few doors farther down, a property, which in its repair half-a-century ago was given quite a unique appearance, meets the eye. Actually it was originally two small houses which had been thrown together, and one of these was a cooperage which, like other of the business places of that day, had an open front to the shop where those employed could be seen following their vocations. Many such examples of early house building were amongst the Tewkesbury street dwellings which have in recent times been cleared away to provide sites for modern erections. The rooms of the upper story are found chiefly in the roof, which gives the architecture a quaint cottage-like appearance.

A specimen of 1606 Style of Renovation.

The Trinity Street opening to the High Street is next passed, and about 50 yds. below is a premises which in its street gives unquestionable signs of old style building but no visible evidence of half-timbered work is seen. It does not appear to have undergone much change in the upper stories, and the modern shop front (introduced in 1845) suits better than is sometimes seen in the parts above it. It has long been the location of a chemist and druggist establishment. The date 1606 appears on the house and this is thought to signify the time it was re-built. In the side passage of the residence is the inscription in Roman characters, " DEU. REG. AMIC."

Curious Old Inscription over a Chimney-Place.

The house next door, where an extensive ironmongery trade is carried on, is of far back time erection, but the alterations it underwent about 30 years ago effectually eradicated all exterior appearance of antiquity. Whilst this was in progress, the workmen in removing the plaster from the wall above a chimney-piece in one of the rooms brought to light again a curious inscription that had evidently for long been hidden. It was written in bold Old English characters, and though much defaced was easily legible. It ran as follows:

**Three things plesth booeth God and man. Concorde
Be twene bretheren Amytie betwene neyghbowers:
And a man and his wyfe that agreeth well to gether
Fower thinges hurt much thr site of man Teares,
smocke, wynde, and the woorst of all to se his
frends unluckye and his fose happye.
These fivfe thinges are rare sene A fayer Yonge Woman
With ought a lover, a Yonge Man with ought myerth
An old uesurer without money ane greate fayer
With ought theffes A fayer harne with ought music.**

An exceptionally perfect Old House.

“ The Wheatsheaf Inn “—a short distance further down towards the Cross—is a real “ tit-bit “ of the Old Houses of Tewkesbury, and bearing but little mark of change it may worthily be regarded as a unique and valuable specimen deserving of very great care being bestowed on its careful preservation. It has from time before local knowledge been a public Inn and popular resort of village folk on market days. The style of the street front differs from all the other ancient houses in the town, and this increases its value as an interesting relic of the past and adds interest to its inspection.

A bunch of “ Restored “ Houses.

In close proximity to the Wheatsheaf are three places which—as though envious of the antique beauty of their near neighbourhood—have each undergone the process of restoration which has done so much to improve the town. The first of this trio of improved fronts is a decorator’s business place and residence facing an old Inn on the opposite side of the street. Most of the ancient structural work in this house has also been well cared for when alterations from time to time have been made. It has a ceiling with carved and moulded ribs centred with carved boss, also a stone chimney-piece of Tudor design. The ceiling continues across what is now the side passage but was evidently once part once part of the room. The oak doorway and curious carvings of nondescript animals above, at the passage entrance, are other interesting examples of Tudor work.

The old “ Fleece Inn.“

This—the second of three recently restored houses—is two doors below. Licensed victualling houses were in the old coaching days in great number, and here was the “ Fleece Inn ,“ next it was the “ Cross Keys,” next the “ Swan,“ next the “ White Hart,” and directly opposite the “ Black Dog.” The “Swan “ is the only surviving Inn of those named. The “ Fleece “ was ultimately devoted to its present use as a wine and spirit stores and manager’s residence. Conforming to wishes expressed to them on the matter, the owners (about 1902) had the half-timbered front restored into the perfect form now seen.

A Skillful replica of the Ancient work.

The grocery and provision stores opposite is the third of the houses here particularly mentioned as having had their plaster coats taken off and an old-day pleasing appearance given back to them about the same time. In the case of this house, so thorough was the work (in 1893) gone through with, as to amount almost to an entire reconstruction of the street front. It will be noticed that in the first floor front—that above the shop—the contractor closely followed some of the best original work in the ancient houses most successfully, and so “ genuinely ancient “ does even the new work appear, that a searching eye is needed to distinguish the old work from the new. In the first floor front room is a piece of fine old oak panelling.

“ Swan Hotel Inn and Tavern.“

So reads the bold gold lettering which, crossing the whole width of the front, forms the sign of Tewkesbury’s principal hotel. The “ Swan “ is an ancient

tavern, being mentioned in records as far back as the days of Edward VI. (1547-1553). This seems to furnish reliable grounds for supposing the house to have been in existence in the days when Tewkesbury Abbey continued intact, and the monks that peopled the ancient Monastery were a very influential circle amongst the denizens of the town. Evidently it has at various times undergone important alteration, and it also was enlarged by the addition to its accommodation of that of another Inn, known as the “ White Hart ,“ which stood between the Swan and the old house next below. There are markings discernible on the hotel front that show where the conversion of the two properties into one was effected. Though unquestionably an erection of early date the plain brick front is without any exterior feature visible from the thoroughfare for it to be regarded as a half-timbered house. It was the prominent place of call in the coaching times, and won wide fame for the ever ready hospitality it dispensed to travellers. The last of the coaches that passed through Tewkesbury twice each day was the “ Royal Mail “—which carried the mails between Cheltenham and Malvern,—but stopped running shortly after railway communication was opened with Malvern, in 1864.

‘ Clarence House.’

Immediately opposite the Swan is one of the best conditioned of the Old Houses that remain much as they were in the past. It is known as “ Clarence House,“ and is full of interest outside, and in some parts of the inside also, for the student and admirer of work of Medieval artificers. Some savants who have given the fabric close attention, have expressed the opinion of its having once been surmounted by a gable—or perhaps a pair of gables of similar style to those of the ancient house standing near on the other side of the road. They have formed their opinion from the appearance of the top of the roof in front having at some distant time undergone alterations which were completed with covering with lead a large flat space in front of a gable that is seen lying back about a dozen feet from the overhanging part of the front. A roadway (which now forms the site of the residence with back buildings and garden at the south side) once ran through along the south side of Clarence House into the Oldbury Fields, and the lights (blocked up) which opened into it, are visible in the side wall. Features for particular remark in the front are the window formation—the centre portion of the lights of the first floor being constructed for use as opening doors; the quaint lights of the top story; and the curious head to the spouting at the north corner. A beautiful ornament of the interior is a Queen Anne ceiling in the first floor front room, which is said to be one of the best of the kind in England. The reader will find an entertaining reference to Clarence House in the Rev. W.S.Symonds historical romance Hanley Castle. The place is said to have been occupied by the Duke of Clarence after the battle of Tewkesbury. Mr. Symonds writes of it as the abode in Cromwell’s days of two Roundhead brothers, “ Help-on-High “ and “ Zion-Build “ Fox, and amusing stories of their Puritan prejudices are told.

The Old Coach Office.

This is the name by which the picturesque ancient premises next below the Swan have been known ever since the days when it formed the booking office for a large number of coaches whose route lay through the town. By architects and antiquarians the design of the front has been highly praised as in some respects quite

unique, and in its original form it was as interesting in its interior construction and arrangement, as it was on the outside. Decay, however, made thorough repair imperative, and about 1858, shortly after it had narrowly escaped being the victim of a fire which destroyed a grocery and provisions store on the south side, it underwent the first important change in its structure, and it was used (as it ever since has been) as an ironmongery store, being (in 1899) again considerably altered and modernized inside to fit it as a shop. With the exception of the insertion of a new shop front there has not been any change in what is seen from the street, and thus its rich value as an ornament of the thoroughfare has been preserved. The oblique gables are remarkable and of rare occurrence, and, on the formation of the windows of the upper story pleasing and effective taste was bestowed. The interior is now curious chiefly by passages leading off on the right hand or the left to rooms now crowded with ironmongery stock. The first-floor front room was evidently at some former time enriched with an elaborately decorated ceiling similar to that seen in so perfect a state at Clarence House. This premises is still extensive, and has much of archeological interest.

A Mart in the Olden Style.

The Cross is now reached, and, on the east side, High Street finds an appropriate ending in a portion of a very ancient premises which underwent alteration in 1894., and was then made to form on the ground floor) a fish, game, and poultry mart, of the olden style. It was but a small property—actually, as the front shows, half of what was at some distant time it once was. Many similar instances of the division of ancient houses can be seen in the walk round the streets. In altering this place at the Cross (in 1894), no cost was spared to give it the look of an old-time shop, and whilst the labour was , as is seen, most successful to that end, it also has brought into view again, in a central position of the town, a bit of architecture which is pleasingly in touch with much other that engages the eye in the immediate vicinity.

At the Cross.

Sowden's beautiful painting of The Cross.

This engraving from Mr. Sowden's view of the Cross, shows the charming picture a talented artist has provided by tasteful composition. To make his painting at once more beautiful as well as more comprehensive, it will be noticed that he replaced the modern fronted house that stands next above the Coffee Tavern with the " Old Hat Shop " that is a few doors below. Here the real artist's eye is evidenced, and an additional charm has been imparted to a picture full of realism in a very pleasing form.

Masterpiece in House Restoration.

The Cross has what may be regarded as a *chef d'oeuvre* of restoration work in the old-day Mansion or Town House which was for long the residence of the late Mr. Thomas Collins, to whose good feeling and skill tribute has been paid on pages 18 and 19.

It was in 1860, that Mr. Collins entered upon the work of restoring the whole building, up to which time the outside face (both the street and the lane) was covered with a thick coating of rough-cast. It was a curiously-interesting front, and its appearance prior to the stripping off of the plaster is very accurately shown in Rowe's views of Tewkesbury. Several plaster casts of medallion form were fixed here and there about the front and side; one of these on the one side, being lettered—" Guest Lane, 1693," which was the former name of the roadway now called "Tolzey Lane " . A fascia board was found during the progress of the work inside having upon it, in Lombardic characters, the inscription

" LOVE PASSETH KNOWLEDGE—THOU—LISTEN! "

This lettering was incised and filled in with pitch, its appearance suggesting that it may have been removed from the outside front when the plastering was done

This great house at the Cross has been divided off and part of it for long occupied as a second residence, and by this alteration the hall and window are shut off from the great staircase. By the plan of restoration adopted, the exterior has a very imposing appearance, and is a grand feature for the centre of the town. Inside, the house is replete with interest in its form and contents. On the first floor of the part adjoining Tolzey Lane is a fine old panelled room of the days of Elizabeth. The raised dais is found here, and also in the adjoining room on the same floor. On removing the paper and whitewash from the walls of the upper front a portion of some very fine plaster work was found,—oak leaves and branches, and the fleurs-de-lis; with fresco painting, on the right hand side of which was a shield with the following arms: Argent, a lion, rampant, sable, collared or, for *Denton or Wyrral* (of the Forest of Dean), impaling paly of six, argent and sable on a bend or, three pheons sable, for *Hatheway*. On the left hand there would have been further decoration, and probably another shield of arms, which was destroyed when a modern doorway was made in the corner of the room during alterations at the beginning of the 18th century.

To what special purpose this fine old residence was devoted in the days of yore has occupied the conjectural capabilities of many minds. Its size and the exceptional character of the interior construction are suggestive of an importance far above that of any other dwelling house in the town of which there are any existing remains. It is necessary to remember that this house was situate very near to the ancient Tolzey, where the public business was transacted, and this may perhaps be accepted as strengthening the suggestion of its having been the Town House of the Lords of Tewkesbury. The reader may here call to mind that it was on a high scaffold put up in front of the Tolzey that lord Somerset and other Lancstrian chiefs were executed after the battle fought here on May 14th, 1471, and to which brief reference will be found on page 12. This Town House (if such it were) was a detached block of building, with outbuildings, yards, and garden on the Church Street side, and at the back, running through to the river Avon.

The " Victoria Coffee Tavern."

This is an ancient house with an appearance that helps much in giving the centre of the town a characteristic old-time look. It has undergone much change by modern alteration, and in one or two instances this has been the means of bringing into better prominence several interesting details of the structure. This was chiefly carried out in 1888, after the place was occupied for the purposes it is now used. In

the bar room may be seen some old panelling and a small door with curiously wrought fastenings and hinges, which was turned up in the course of alterations. A fine old oak staircase connects the bar with the Reading Room and other upstairs apartments.

Disappeared Cross and Market Place.

Tewkesbury Cross presents a very different appearance now to what it must have done in the days when it was the scene of the tragical doings associated with the defeat of Queen Margaret's army. The old Tolzey—probably a structure after the style of that still seen at Ledbury—with market accommodation below and a meeting room above, occupied, with some dwellings attached to it, so much of the space at the junction of the three principal streets, that it is recorded to have proved so great an obstruction to traffic that the demolition of the whole of these erections (about 1785) gave general satisfaction. What in early writings on the town is called a “ Greate Hight Crosse of Stone “ also stood here, and is mentioned in the ancient MS. Records to have been taken down by the Bayliffs, in 1650 and the material of which it was constructed used for the repair of the Long Bridge towards the Mythe. A new Town Hall was given to the borough by Sir William Codrington, Bart., one of its parliamentary representatives, in 1788, and this building still continues, with the Corn Exchange (built in 1858) in front of it. A commodious Market House also was erected about the same time by a company of twenty subscribers to whom the Corporation had granted a lease of the tolls for a term of ninety-nine years. This Market fell into disuse, and after continuing for a long while in deserted state, the whole property was (about 1876) secured as a site for the Wesleyan Chapel and Schools at the Cross.

Church Street.

A few steps from the Cross, towards the Abbey (down Church Street), place those on a tour of inspection of the Old Houses in the midst of a group of time-honoured habitations—some on one side of the street and some on the other—in which to a certain extent engaging local tradition combines with other memories of the romantic past to make attractive.

A House with Tragic Association.

The first to call for remark is situate three doors below the Coffee Tavern. It will be seen shown in Rowe's Views as a large private residence, but about 1850 it was transformed into business place and has so continued since. Whatever there may be in its fabric to class it as a relic of antiquity is, so far as the street view goes, quite wiped out; however, as already remarked, many of these modern style houses have sheltering behind them buildings the first erection of which date back a very long period. But this apparent want of age does much towards preventing implicit credence being given to the story of one of its upper rooms having been the scene nearly four and a half centuries ago of the murder of the youthful Prince of Wales after the Battle. The tradition of its being the place where the heir of Henry VI. was slain comes down from time immemorial, and as early as 1787, it is found printed in a footnote in the first edition of Dyde's “*History and Antiquities of Tewkesbury.*” as follows.

The Prince of Wales is said to have been murdered in the house belonging to and in the possession of Mrs. Webb, ironmonger.

Referring to the story, Mr. Bennett in his *History of Tewkesbury* (published in 1830) says:

Tradition has uniformly pointed out a house in the Church Street, standing opposite the Market Place, now the property and in the occupation of Mr. John Moore, auctioneer, as the scene of this inhuman tragedy.

Historians have in later times interested themselves in an endeavour to clear up the doubt that exists in regard to the Prince's end, and whilst no evidence sufficient for acceptance as conclusive is forthcoming, there seems good reason for believing that he fell on the battlefield. Without any consideration of the pros and cons of the question of the accuracy of the story—whether it was an invention of the Lancastrians to blacken the character of Edward IV., or a relation of fact—the house in Church Street, here referred to, will in all probability continue to be pointed out as the scene of a tragic event which the poet Shakespeare so vividly pictures in "*Henry VI*"

A Ghostly Royal Funeral Procession.

Such a tragic event as that of the murder should not have been without its periodical ghostly visitation to the spot, nor was this seemingly so in time past, for a legend once associated with the house related " That on the night of the 7th of May in every year a funeral procession passed out of the door at the midnight hour, with the murdered Prince; the Abbey bell tolling at the time." This was the tale told by an old inhabitant named Charlwood, who represented himself as having been an actual witness of the occurrence yearly for some time.

The " Olde Hatte Shoppe."

The next property for mention is a very old business premises only a few yards distant from that just described as " Prince Edward House " It is known (as its ancient style sign signifies) as the " Old Hat Shop " and whilst it cannot be treated of as " untouched by Time's rude hand " neither has it been a subject beyond what has been found absolutely necessary for the restorer's hand. So that, whilst it has twice in recent times been found desirable for business purposes to modernize the lower story front, nothing beyond needful repair has been done to the parts of the front above the shop. Thus it wants the antiquated look which much increases its value in the archeologist's eye. At the side is a passage called Bank Alley, over the street entrance to which is some curious carving, and the inscription " RBR 1664 " The date probably on this, as on the several other places here where dates appear, are taken to refer to a time when some important alterations were made. The repair work of recent years is easily identified.

A Very Old Block of Houses.

Facing the “ Old Hat Shop “ from the opposite side of the street, is the quaint block of dwellings to which the reader’s attention has already been drawn on pages 20 and 21. These buildings still continue so far in their original state that—taken with the “ Old Black Bear “—they will readily bring before the mind’s eye what may be accepted as a fairly accurate picture of the homes of the bulk of the old burghers who lived in front street houses. The Tewkesburian who has reached his three score and ten years can remember a time when the town abounded in this kind of dwelling, the only particular difference to what they now appear being that, like those of a later style, they had received their thick coat of rough-cast plastering. The one building—the “ Berkeley Arms Inn “—should receive careful examination by those who wish to understand the putting together of this ancient class of houses, which are considered to date from the of the first three King Edwards, who occupied the throne from 1272 to 1377.

Interesting Carving on a House Front.

The ‘ modernizing ‘ of the ancient premises next door to the Inn has effectively removed on the ground story all the marks of antiquity, but as the eye peers upwards over the shop signboard it lights on a delightful stretch of early carving, which is in the style of arcade work runs across the whole width of the front and forms the lights of the first floor rooms. It was about 1890 that the property on which this interesting bit of old handiwork is seen was perfected by the late Mr. Thomas Collins, previously to which it had for long been two small dwellings with shops. As already mentioned, the removal of the rough-cast coating from the front revealed the arcade work, and it was carefully restored by the owner. The tall-gabled front is curious ; and the whole of this quaint group of houses bear stamps of antiquity which justify the presumption that they may have been standing at the time that re-echoed the jubilation with which the old town rang when (in 1343) it received the glad news of the Black Prince’s signal victory over the French in the battle of Crecy.

The Earliest Restored of the Old Houses.

Several other places of early date occur only a few steps futher down Church Street. The first of these is a commodious private residence known as “ Warwick House,”—so named may-be as a further perpetuation of the King-Maker’s erstwhile close relationship with the town. This was the place where the forward movement for the restoration of the ancient houses first took practical form by which such splendid results have since been achieved. It was carried out as a specimen of the greatly improved appearance a careful well-studied restoration brings about. This was done in 1865, and, as desired, it encouraged other owners as time progressed to follow suit.

Next come two small dwellings immediately opposite the Hop-Pole Royal Hotel, the old-time features of which having been brought into view have been given prominence to and made interesting.

Associations of the Hop-Pole Royal Hotel.

There is nothing but the very opposite of what is regarded as ‘ antique ‘ in the exterior appearance of the Hop-Pole Royal Hotel, but at least two associations

which having assisted it somewhat on the way to fame such as well-found hostelries like to cherish, may here find brief mention. In 1891 it was honoured as the stopping place (for luncheon) of the Princess of Wales, who when Princess May, whilst staying at Malvern, paid a short visit to Tewkesbury and Deerhurst, accompanied by her parents, the Duke and Duchess of Teck; her two brothers, the Princes Adolph and Alexander George of Teck; and the Hon. Sidney Greville. In recognition of the satisfactory entertainment accorded the party, the proprietor at the time was graciously permitted to add the term “ Royal “ to its title. Charles Dickens, in the *Pickwick Papers*, also accorded the place amusing mention as follows;

“ At the Hop-Pole at Tewkesbury they stopped to dine; upon which occasion there was more bottled ale, with some more Madeira, and some Port besides; and here the case bottle was replenished for the fourth time. Under the influence of these combined stimulants, Mr. Pickwick and Mr. Ben Allen fell fast asleep for thirty miles , while Bob and Mr. Weller sang duets in the Dickey.”

The Old House by the Lane.

At the corner of St. Mary's Lane towards the Hop-Pole, are two old houses the interest of which is the greater by reason of their having been but little altered, except on the ground floor, from their original state. In viewing the place from the opposite side of the street, it looks as though at some far back time there had been either a subsidence of the foundation on the Lane side, or the removal of some support, that had twisted the whole framework much out of the perpendicular.

St. Mary's Lane—as it is and as it was.

Looking down the Lane from this point, blocks of old properties in use as cottage dwellings, workshops, etc., are seen, and formerly they faced another similar lot, but these were (about 1864) demolished for widening of the Lane roadway.

Local tradition points to the entrance to this thoroughfare as having once been the site of a parish church dedicated to St. Mary, but which was ultimately superseded by the knave of the Abbey Church being devoted to the use of the parishioners for religious services. There is no evidence documentary or otherwise to bear out this tradition beyond the brief mention in an early record of a ‘ parish church of St. Mary,’ and probably this had reference to the present Abbey Church which, with the whole of the appendages having been rebuilt, was in 1123 dedicated to St. Mary. In a walk through the Lane a small cottage residence will be passed (on the left hand side) of which the famous artist J. M. W. Turner was once the owner, and as it had previously belonged to his father, and both his and his father's names appear on the voters' lists of the 18th century as owners of a burgage in Tewkesbury, this may have once been a home of the Turner family. A short distance farther along the Lane, at the angle where there is a turn down to the Avon bank, is a small closed burial ground of an old local Quaker's congregation that had a meeting place in the vicinity. Hereabouts there also seems to have been a settlement of Jews, as is evident by the oft-told story of one of them having fallen into a cesspool on the Saturday, and refusing to get out because it was the Jewish sabbath, the occurrence was reported to Richard de Clare, who then (1259) held the Lordship of Tewkesbury, and he, in

order that equal respect should be paid to the Christian day of rest as to the Jewish, directed that the ceremonious Jew should be left where he was over the Sunday, and by Monday he had perished in the filth. St. Mary's Lane once the abode of unwholesomeness, is now a tidy-kept roadway.

Curious Vaulted Cellar in Church Street.

The two small front dwelling houses at the left-hand corner of the Church Street opening to St. Mary's Lane, have a cellar or basement of remarkable construction to be found in such a place, and the question of its original purpose has presented a problem which has engaged a great deal of attention, but without any satisfactory solution. It is a small vaulted chamber, with groining and ribs of crypt-like design and construction. The thick walls and whole execution of the place suggests an embodiment of weight-bearing stability, and from this it is assumed it once carried a superstructure of importance, but what this may have been it not likely ever to be known. With the old Tewkesbury folk it was always a "mystery"—a dark subterranean passage leading from the demolished castle which once stood on Holme Hill to King John's Castle at the Mythe, and filled with the spectre of those whom the early owners of these strongholds had done to death. So ran the myth, and deprived of its tragic appendages, general belief was given to the idea of the vaulted cellar being part and parcel of a hidden way leading to and fro nobody knew where.

Some 15th-Century Tracery Work.

Between St. Mary's Lane and the Bell Hotel, which forms so handsome and appropriate finish to a street with such a wealth of ancient architecture, many more half-timbered houses are passed—mostly of the smaller class. Two of these, situate nearly opposite the open space known as "The Crecent," have on the street front some interesting 15th-Century tracery, whilst lower down, on the opposite side of the thoroughfare, along row of dwellings called the Feoffee Cottages, with the "Mason's Arms" and the Abbey Infants' School, having been carefully retored, from a quaintly picturesque block.

"Old Baptist Chapel Yard."

In this passage, situate opposite the Abbey Infants' School, is a building that was originally the chapel of the local Baptist congregation, and attached to it a graveyard in which many internments have been made.

The Bell Hotel and Bowling Green.

This fine old hostelrie and the delightful pleasuring ground attached to it—both alike with engaging antecedents—are treated of at some length on page 25 to 29. Writing of it as an ancient structure, it may justly be mentioned as of one of the best ornaments of the town, the prominent position it occupies and the care bestowed on its preservation so constituting it. The "restorer's" hand has happily been restrained from too free play, and apart from such reconstructive changes in the interior arrangements that have been found needful to adapt hostelrie accommodation to the altered requirements of the times, little has been effected. The Hotel and Green having become popular resorts at holiday times, the owners of the property have

made extensive additions in the form of club and dining rooms, and other buildings. Formerly there was no highway road between the house and the Abbey and, as already stated, both the house and bowling green, and the whole area on which now stand the schools and other buildings, was within the Abbey precincts. Until the year 1786 this road for traffic ran down what is now known as Mill Street, along the part of the bank of Mill Pit and Mill Avon (now transformed into a public pleasure garden), from thence continuing near the Mill Avon over the area which now forms the site of the Abbey Terrace properties, and crossing the brook at a point close by where the present road does. The Act of Parliament (passed in 1786) authorising the alterations in the roadway, also amongst other provisions sanctioned the demolition of “ five houses then standing in the churchyard and lying between the common *gaol and the church gates.” By this it would appear as though the row of half-timbered buildings that are still higher up the same street, once had a continuation for some distance below.

*The building here referred to as the “ common gaol “ was the ancient campanille or bell tower of the Abbey, which stood on what is now the site of the Abbey Boys’ School. It was in 1582 put in order and arranged as a House of Correction for half of the shire and so continued till about 1816, when it had become too insecure for habitation and was pulled down

Mill Street and Mill Bank.

Several Buildings of antiquarian interest are noticeable in this neighbourhood, one group of cottage dwellings at the corner of the street facing towards the Avon being much patronised by artists as a prominent feature in paintings of their views of Mill Street which, taken from near the Avon-side in the Ham, include a picturesque bit of the river and Old Mill in the foreground and the north transept and tower of the Abbey in the distance. It forms the composition of an exceedingly pleasing picture either as a painting or as a photograph.

The Abbey Mill.

Such of the details of construction of the old Abbey Mill as were of archeological interest have disappeared in the several processes of repair and reconstruction to which it is often subject. A mill under the control of the Abbey authorities existed here in the old days, but little, if any, visible portion of the existing building dates back farther than about 1790.

The Ancient Malthouse.

Divided from the Mill by the entrance to the Victoria Memorial Plasure Ground are the remains of one of the ancient Tith Barns and Malthouses which were appendages of the Monastery, and included amongst the buildings scheduled in the returns of the king’s commissioners as to remain undefaced when, on the suppression of the establishment (in 1539) greater portion of the Monastic buildings were destroyed. In the return it was called “ the great barn next to thr Avon, the malting house with the garner in the same “.As is seen, it was a commodious place, and has needed much patching and repair to ensure its survival. The 15th-century buttresses supporting the old barn on the western side are exceedingly interesting portions of the

remains. To preserve the place from alterations such as may have destroyed its interest as an antique relic, when (in 1899) it was offered for sale, the corporation purchased it as public property.

Abbey Cottages.

Several cottages and the remains of a smaller tithe-barn, which were detached parts of the Monastery, are standing on the right-hand side of the Abbey Avenue, close to Abbey House and grounds, close by the ancient Gateway, which forms the *private* entrance to Abbey House and grounds. At the north end are remains of a 14th-century window, and against (inside) is built a large Tudor chimney piece. Some buttresses of similar construction to those seen at the ancient building near the Mill, strengthen the west side of the barn.

Ancient Dwellings in the Courts and Alleys.

In retracing his steps up Church Street, the observant visitor will notice in some of the narrow passages that run off here and there between the houses, curious examples of half-timbered dwellings. These occur principally in Mayall's Court and Wall's Court, in High Street; and in Lilley's Alley, Bull Alley, and Ancill's Alley, in Church Street.

Ancient Architecture in Barton Street

While Barton Street bears no comparison with the two other principal thoroughfares in the possession of noteworthy half-timbered architecture, there are for the enjoyment of those interested, several well preserved ancient buildings and others with engaging antecedents.

The Plough Hotel.

On the south side of the street , only a few yards distant from the Cross, the eye is attracted by the carefully-restored front of the " Plough." Until about 1870 the hotel had a much larger frontage; it then underwent alterations by which quite one-third of the ground floor front accommodation was cut off and added to the clothing establishment premises next door. In 1894, the front was stripped of a plaster overcoat that had for long given it a quite a common-place look, and the old timbers where necessary being faced up, were given the suitable appearance they now wear. On close inspection the place will be found to retain many quaint features of the old builders' handicraft. The " Plough " was one of several licensed houses in Tewkesbury that changed hands at the time (about 1897) when there was great competition amongst the large Brewery Companies for the ownership of Inns. The property passed to a Birmingham firm at over 3,000 pounds, and by them a costly reconstruction of the whole of the hinder part of the premises was carried out.

Some Hotels that had their day vanished.

The " Plough " is the last remainig of a trio of commodious inns that once stood in very near proximity to the Market Place, on the site of which now stands the Wesleyan Chapel. The two other inns—which many years ago disappeared—were the

“ Quart Pot Hotel,” the premises of which, after being for a while utilized as an ironmongery establishment were transformed into a minister’s house as an appendage of the adjoining Wesleyan Chapel; and the “ Star and Garter Hotel,” which filled the area now occupied by the Baptist Chapel, with its schools and graveyard, the houses facing the street and other property on either side of the courtyard leading down to the Chapel.

An Old House with Interesting Antecedents.

A little distance above the Baptist Chapel courtyard, but on the opposite side of the street, is a half-timbered house of proportions which suggest its having at some time been a place of conspicuous importance, probably the headquarters of a large business concern. By frequent alteration to adapt the house for varying requirements of successive occupiers, the place has been much changed and there remains but little left about the interior to engage the eye of the antiquarian. Referring to special purposes outside trading uses which the house has filled, it is mentioned as having for awhile been the meeting place of the Corporation whilst the transition of the old order of things to a more modern in the provision of a Town Hall was in progress. From 1880 to 1887 a Subscription Reading Room and Working Men’s Club was maintained here, and some of the members having interested themselves in an enquiry as to the reason of the room next the roof having a thickly-plastered floor it was elicited that on such floors the seeds of the mustard plant (cultivated extensively around Tewkesbury in the Shakespearian days) was spread for fully ripening and drying before being sent to the grinding mills. Thus the old house retains an interesting relic of the time when the town found fame in the mustard pots of the nation, and to which reference will be found on pages 7 and 8.

Nelson Street Neighbourhood.

From the year about 1852 may be dated a great lessening of the number of public houses in the town, and a significant fact worth putting on record as probably instigated thereby is that concurrently with the decrease of temptation to thriftlessness and insobriety a marked improvement in the state of the more needy of the labouring class part of the population was noticeable. Within about 100 yds. above and below Nelson Street, three licensed houses—known as the “ Lamb,” the “ King William,” and the “ Cooper’s Arms ,”—were discontinued as such within a very brief period, and there was a wholesale clearing away of squalid old cottage dwellings that stood in the immediate neighbourhood. Soon thereafter went an old “pawn shop“ that had for long been carried on at the corner premises of Nelson Street.

More Tudor Time Vestiges.

A well-preserved front house attracts the attention two doors above Nelson Street. The features of old-time construction have been repaired and brought into view with a care that retains its interesting look although it has several times undergone changes in the style of the windows. The front room on the first floor is panelled with framed oak wainscot, and over the fireplace is some ornamental carving of Tudor style.

Barton Street’s Curious Specimen of an Olden-Time Mansion.

Nearly opposite the last mentioned property is the principal concert and entertainment place in the town, known as the “ Philharmonic Hall,” and closely beside the gateway entrance from the street is an ancient residence (now divided into two) which, although the wear and tear of time has compelled repair which has swept away many of its ancient features, still retains sufficient to endow it with much archeological interest.. The oak rail fence, and the old doorway are of a style but rarely met with, and both inside and out there is striking evidence of its having been an important town mansion in early days. [a writer in a local guide book bearing the “ official “ superscription for the accuracy of its contents, strangely describes this residence as formerly a “ Tithe Barn.”]

A Trace of John Wesley’s Visits to Tewkesbury.

On the opposite side of the street is a passage called “ Collins Court “ situate in which are two cottages that (when formerly in one) were the first meeting-place of the Wesleyan Society in Tewkesbury, and there the Rev. John Wesley preached during his early visits to the town.

A Transformed Appendage of the Monastery Barton.

At the upper part of Barton Street are several small house properties of half-timbered work, none of which however, call for special remark till “ Orchard Court,“ on the south side, is reached. At the street corner of this passage, which is directly opposite the “ King;s Head Hotel,“ and leads down to the meadows bordering on the Swilgate brook, is a building now converted into two residences –the tall gabled pair at the angle of the court and the street, and the lower-roofed part beyond ,--which was formerly regarded as a vestige of the out-buildings of the Monastery Barton which is supposed to have occupied a large area of the land at this end of the town. By the alterations (made about 1870) in the barn-like part of the structure in its appearance up to that time was completely changed. Amongst the portions of the Monastic buildings the king’s commissioners ordered should remain were some of those in the barton, and it is quite probable that this was one of them, for to local tradition it appeared from time immemorial to have been known as “ the old barton barn .”

The detailed enumeration of such of the Old Houses of Tewkesbury as still remain in form calculated to make them of special interest is now complete; most of those to which the fuller descriptions relate are supposed to date from the 15th and 16th Centuries, and so by association perpetuate a memory of those now far-off days when under the beneficent sway of the later lords of the Despenser line and the whole of the Beauchamps the fortunes of the Abbey and the town generally secured advantages and improvements which to-day are found acting most favourably for the well-being of Tewkesbury in drawing attention to it as one of the most interesting of Old English Towns.

Places of Special Interest in the Vicinity of Tewkesbury.

Most old Abbey towns have in their near neighbourhood—and increasing much their fascinations for those who find a pleasing enjoyment in their inspection—places endowed with specially interesting associations with the past, or some engaging attributes that constitute them “ beauty spots “ of nature or art, or possibly a combination of both. Tewkesbury is highly favoured in this respect being surrounded by a picturesque district in which English village life is seen in most cases in an exceedingly engaging aspect. In several of the parishes there are also ancient churches with well-preserved examples of the ecclesiastical architecture of the Saxon, Norman, and later periods that had their distinguishing styles, whilst here and there are still met with the old tithe barns, village crosses, and the stocks and whipping-posts, all of which served a useful purpose in bygone days and as links with the past are cared for in the present. Farmhouses of very curious half-timbered building are seen in contrast with others of modern construction, and at intervals the handsome mansions and with residences of those who, having the means of doing so, sensibly show an appreciation of country life. The botanist and student of nature’s wonderful works in its varied forms will find in the meadows and on the near hill-sides an unlimited field for the pursuit of what most interests them, while in the many quarries and other excavations, or where by natural changes the upper stratum of the ground has become deeply exposed, the geologist may find specimens worthy a place in his cabinet.

Interesting Walks in the Neighbourhood.

These are but a few of the winning attractions open for enjoyment by the way in the numerous and pleasant walks and rambles in the near neighbourhood of the town, and which may be lengthened in most directions with the possibility of a return home by train.

Where the places are too distant for the journey to be undertaken in a walk no difficulty will be experienced in reaching the same by a carriage drive along roads that bring under the eye far-reaching views of some of the finest landscape and rural scenery that is to be met with in the West of England. In this way several of the places of which some particulars are given in the following pages must be reached if the visit is to afford the full measure of enjoyment it may do.

Excursions by Water on the Rivers Severn and Avon.

By the development of passenger traffic on the rivers Severn and Avon many places of interest on their banks have in recent years been made easily accessible by a number of steamers that make frequent journeys during the fine weather season. By water trips—most enjoyable in propitious weather—the cathedral cities of Gloucester and Worcester are reached, other resorts journeyed to very regularly on the Severn being Wainlode Cliff (next Gloucester), the interesting town of Upton-on-Severn, and (occasionally) Holy Fleet at Stourport above Worcester. The Avon is a charmingly delightful river, and on it the steamers touch at several resorts popular with the angler and boating man in the journey between Tewkesbury and Pershore, and Pershore and Evesham.

Popular Drives in the District.

Circuit drives in the district are readily undertaken at moderate charges by those who provide horses and vehicles on hire, most of whom will be found able to suggest a short or longer route to be taken through the country it is wished to traverse. The following are simply suggestive as being drives much in favour.

Route 1.—From Tewkesbury by way of Mythe Bridge, Bushley village, Chambers' Court, Longdon, and Queenhill, to Upton-on-Severn. Return by way of Ryall, Stratford Bridge, Ripple, Brockridge Common, Shuthonger, The Mythe, home. [This is a rather long but most interesting drive, that should include a stop at Upton].

Route 2.—From Tewkesbury by way of Twyning village, Strensham, Defford, Eckington Bridge, Bredon's Norton, Bredon, Hardwick and Mitton, home. [Eckington for a halt].

Route 3.—From Tewkesbury by way of Bredon, Kemerton, Overbury, Beckford, Teddington Hands, Aston Cross, Ashchurch, home. [Beckford for a halting place].

Route 4.—From Tewkesbury by way of Southwick and Salter's Hill, to Deerhurst church and village, Apperly, cross the Severn at Haw Bridge to Tirley village and return by way of Chaceley, Corse Lawn, Forthampton village, Lower Lode Ferry, home. [A short halt at Tirley is helpful on what is rather a heavy drive].

Route 5.—From Tewkesbury through Treddington, Stoke Orchard, Cleeve, Elmstone Hardwick, Boddington, Leigh, Coombe Hill [Cleeve village or Piff's Elm (near Boddington) for a midway halt].

Route 6.—From Tewkesbury, by way of Ashchurch Railway Bridge to Teddington Cross, thence past Oxenton, and Woolstone and return by way of Treddington home. [No midway halt needed].

Remarks Worth Bearing in Mind.

A few words of advice and caution may here find insertion. To the visitor who decides on indulging in a carriage drive over either of the defined routes, it is suggested that the respective places shall be passed, otherwise an important part of the anticipated pleasure will be denied them. This is mentioned because most drivers are well versed in the short cuts and easy travelling roads, which they readily use to save their own time and the ease of their steeds unless otherwise agreed. If the mention of " halting places " is thought unusual, it finds its excuse in the hope of its benefitting the animal between the shafts that is doing the hard work, and also may be doing something to avoid the rushing round that has grown so common in viewing places full of interest.

The Ancient Church at Deerhurst.

It is convenient for visitors to Tewkesbury to know that within an hour's easy walk out of Tewkesbury—through pleasant lanes and fields that either partly traverse or border the scene of the memorable Battle of Tewkesbury—are two of what are regarded as amongst the most ancient ecclesiastical edifices in the kingdom. These are the parish church, and a small chapel that stands near it, at Deerhurst, a village by the Severnside about a mile below Tewkesbury. If the weather is propitious it affords a lovely walk for those able to undertake it through a few upland fields commanding exquisite views over a finely-wooded country that was once an open portion of a famous park which embraced a great area of the now enclosed land lying between Tewkesbury and Deerhurst. The church at Deerhurst is only a short distance from the pathway running along the bank of the Severn, and by which the return journey may be made.

Route.—By Gloucester Road to Lower Lode Lane; turn down the Lane (which leads to the ferry over the Severn); pass into the fields by the second gateway on left-hand side, which is only a short distance from the ferry. When once in the fields follow the pathway direct till the quaint tower of Deerhurst Church comes into view. Soon the path opens to the village roadway, and by turning to the right both Church and Chapel are within about 400 yards.

The fields' way to Deerhurst is so direct over the whole of the short distance no one need fear of going wrong, and if the breezy Severnside pathway is traversed on the return journey it will be found equally straight and easy to follow, from the starting point close by the Saxon Chapel to the point where it opens to the Lower Lode Lane, near the ferry.

Deerhurst: a Parish of the Vale of Gloucester.

So runs the title of a volume, from the pen of a former vicar of the parish, (Rev. George Butterworth M.A.), who for thirty-five years held the incumbency, and during his vicariate, by an unstinting bestowal of both time and means did his utmost to draw attention to the deeply-interesting history of his parish generally, and particularly of its ancient parish church, which from time immemorial had been famous as the remains of a Saxon Priory, and a most interesting specimen of the earliest church architecture now existing in a well preserved state in the kingdom.

Deerhurst Church and Priory House, as now seen.

Mr. Butterworth gives most instructive particulars of the conclusions his enquiries led him to form as to the history of the important ecclesiastical establishment that was maintained at Deerhurst from the 8th to the 15th centuries. The clearness with which the account is given makes it exceedingly interesting, and those who are really desirous of authentic knowledge about Deerhurst are urged to acquaint themselves with its fully original contents.

The first glance at the Church at Deerhurst as it appears to-day carries the mind's eye back into the long past times when in the full blaze of its wealth and prosperity the Saxon Priory, of which it was a member, was a busy scene of monastic life. The foundation of the Church at Deerhurst dates from the early part of the 8th century, about the time which tradition and such old records as are now available set down the formation of the small religious house at Tewkesbury which in time grew

to be recognized amongst the most extensive and important ecclesiastical establishments in the kingdom.

The Church described.

In many of the prominent features of the fabric of the church at Deerhurst are most interesting well-preserved examples of architectural work of true Saxon type, and such as give it a distinct appearance from any other church building in these parts. The tower is 70ft. high, the lower portion (about half of the whole) is ancient work, and the rough and irregular form of its construction is very noticeable. The walls are about 2ft. 8in. thick , and in the belfry are 6 good-toned bells, the music of which is occasionally heard in the stillly hours of a winter evening, with pleasing sweetness over a great stretch of the surrounding parts of the Severn valley. The body of the church is of rectangular shape, 60ft. by 21ft. , and although there is no existing solid division there are traces of a wall having at some former time stood in the interior about 20ft. from the east end, and so divided off the area into the Nave and Choir, which most likely opened to each other by a wide and lofty archway in the centre, similar to that seen in the existing eastern wall. The parts eastward of this dividing wall would, according to the custom of the times, have been used by the monks, and in the parts westward (the nave) the parishioners assembled to join in the services of the church. The present chancel occupies the site of the ancient choir, and beyond it was the ancient Presbytery or Sacarium, in which the altar stood. The side ailses have many interesting points, some portions of which show traces of much fine workmanship having been introduced into their construction and also of their having formerly been of much greater dimensions. The Font is of great antiquity, competent judges regarding it as dating from the 8th century. The curiously carved bowl had from time immemorial prior to 1843 stood in the court-yard of a farm at Deerhurst, where it had been used as a washing tub. The farmer who had possession of it at that time, being convinced of its former sacred use, was induced to give it up for erection in Longdon church, and there it remained in use as the baptismal font for 25 years. About that time (1868) it became known that Miss Strickland, of Apperly Court, had found near her own residence, and close to the Severn, a carved stone which, in her opinion, must have been the stem of the Saxon font. This was taken to Deerhurst Church, and the London authorities being willing to surrender the bowl, it was set up again in what was in all probability its former home at Deerhurst.

The Priory remains.

Such domestic buildings as still remain of the ancient Priory adjoin the church, and form the apartments of what is now known as “ Priory Farm .“ It is a large block of building, some 76ft. long by 26ft. deep, and there is a good view of the exterior on the western side from the pathway leading from the road to the church.

The Saxon Chapel at Deerhurst.

It is to the Rev. G. Butterworth the whole credit is due to bringing to light again this most interesting building, which is situate on the opposite side of the road and less than 100 yds distant from the churchyard gate, and did not any other evidence exist of the interest he centred on the preservation of Deerhurst's archeological treasures that in itself would mark the period of his vicariate as one of the most

successful the parish has known. He loved his parish and nothing seemed too much for him to attempt to advance its spiritual or temporal improvement, nor did he leave it till advanced age and feeble health made his retirement a necessity.

Perpetuating the memory of an Earl Odda, a friend of Edward the Confessor, who tradition says built a small church or chapel at Deerhurst, Mr. Butterworth recognized in his priceless find " Odda's Chapel," and so calls in the increasing particulars he gives of its discovery

Discovery of the Chapel.

Odda's chapel stands against the ancient and picturesque homestead of " Abbot's Court Farm," of which it for centuries formed part. It was late in the summer of 1885, whilst some structural alterations were in progress and the property was vacant, that Mr. Butterworth in looking over the place, noticed the great thickness of a part of the premises that had been used as the dairy and cheese room of the farmhouse, and other indications pointed to the buildings belonging to three distinct dates, the centre portion being the oldest. The removing of a thick coating of plaster from the outside of the portion referred to revealed a round-headed window, and further careful examination of the thick walls showed this part of the farmhouse to have once been a Chapel with nave and chancel, separated by a rudely-constructed chancel arch. Afterwards a stone was discovered that bore a much defaced inscription, but sufficient of this was traceable to show that the Latin wording (translated into English) ran " This alter was dedicated in honour of the Holy Trinity," which showed it to have been the dedication slab of an altar.

The chapel is a small building, with an extreme external length 46ft; width of the inside of the nave, 16ft; of the chancel 11ft; height of the side walls of nave, 17ft; thickness of the walls, about 2ft.6ins. The most noteworthy of the interior of the Chapel is the chancel arch, the massive jambs of which are 2ft. 3is. thick, and composed of large blocks laid in irregular courses. There are two entrances to the building, opposite to each other at the west end of the nave.

The discovery of this curious little Saxon Chancel in such close proximity to its ancient parish church, and the careful repair it underwent—principally through the liberal bestowal of his own means by Mr. Butterwoirth—has preserved to the future a valuable link with the past, and secured to the historic parish of Deerhurst another possession which adds much to its fame as one of the most interesting English villages dating from an early Saxon foundation.

Birtsmorton Court.

Should the duration of a sojourn at Tewkesbury allow of a day's drive out in fine weather to Ledbury, we may without any doubt promise those who arrange for it a most enjoyable excursion. The journey must, however, be by the high road, which, besides opening to view some of the grandest scenery in these parts, traverses a district which the genius of the writer of *Malvern Chase*, has endowed with most engaging romantic associations.

A Half-way Call of great interest.

Ledbury is 13 miles from Tewkesbury, and about midway on the drive, and a short distance off the high road is the historic old mansion Birtsmorton Court. But little interest was evinced in this place till the story of its antecedents was engagingly told and it became endowed with so delightful a halo of romance by the magic pen of the Rev. W.S.Symonds in his popular work *Malvern Chase*. Now however, it has become a great resort for antiquarians and lovers of the curious who tour through the West of England or visit in the district of the Malverns. Being within such easy reach of Tewkesbury, and the old borough being so charmingly pictured by Mr. Symonds in many of the leading incidents in the career of his hero, Hildebrande de Brute, the place is regarded as one of the attractive spots about Tewkesbury. The tenant kindly provides for its inspection at specified hours on most days of the week.

Birtsmorton Court described.

The old manor has architectural points which, if they do not add very much to its fame, present features of which few remains are elsewhere to be found. It is a fine specimen of a Moated Grange of the 16th century, with turretted walls, embattled gateway, and courtyard. The wide moat is crossed by a bridge, and this forms the approach to the residence. The exterior has most of the characteristics of a half-timbered mansion of late Tudor times, great ornamented chimneys forming a particularly striking object. The interior apartment of special interest to visitors is a large parlour or dining room, wainscoted with beautifully-carved oak and containing a sculptured chimney piece surmounted with the emblazoned shields of certain great personages who formerly lived at Birtsmorton, and others to whom they were allied. There also are in the panelling around the room the coats of arms of many families who in the past were associated with the place.

Distinguished Owners and Occupants of the Court.

The historical interest attaching to Birtsmorton Court is found to centre very much in the fact of its having anciently been a seat of the Nanfan family which was descended from Sir Richard Nanfan, a Cornishman, and John Nanfan, his grandson who in 24 Henry VI., was a member of Parliament for Worcestershire. This John Nanfan was also an esquire of the body to King Henry, and governor and commander of various islands and castles. Others of the Nanfans acquired considerable prominence in the state and legislature, and a direct male line of the family continued until 1794. Cardinal Wolsey is reputed to have held one of his earliest chaplaincies with the Nanfans at Birtsmorton Court, and the old home also has repute as the birthplace of the Right Honourable William Huskisson, in the year 1769, and his name appears in the register.

Tradition speaks of Owen Glendower, the Welsh leader in the rebellion at the beginning of the 15th century, having found a safe hiding-place at Birtsmorton Court; and Mr. Symonds treats his readers to a story of the Countess of Oxford and her young son having (in 1461) been kept from capture in a secret chamber that is said to have been connected with the panelled room.

“ Felon’s Ring “ on the Church Door.

Birtsmorton Church, which stands near the Court, contains among other interesting memories an old sculptured altar tomb, which is supposed to be that of Sir John Nanfan, and one of much later erection commemorative of Rear Admiral Caldwell, who died at Bertsmorton Court, in 1718. There is also a curious alm's box, and a Norman font of massive construction.

On the church door is fastened a ring to which, if the story of its original use be accepted, the hand of the outlaw, the deer stealer, or the murderer may have clung many a time in the days when the Forest Laws were strictly carried out in Malvern Chase, for if the fugitive could reach the Church and clasp the ring he was safe from the fury of the chief ranger of the forest.

Eastnor Castle.

About 2 and a half miles out of Ledbury (on the Tewkesbury side) the picturesque village of Eastnor is reached, a place famous for its Castle—a modern replica of a 13th-century Norman baronial home, the handsome church, an extensive park, and for many objects of interest which commemorate the Somers family to whom the Castle and estates belong.

A Costly and Splendid Building.

The castle was erected by the first Earl Somers, between 1812 and 1820, at a very great cost, a sum of 12,000 pounds having been at the outset expended in the purchase of the stone in the Forest of Dean, and its transit on the backs of mules to Eastnor. Although as before stated, the style of the Castle is that of an ancient feudal stronghold, its interior arrangements furnish on a splendid scale the requirements of a modern family seat. Round towers or bastions, surmounted by machicolated (or overhanging) battlements flank the corners, and the Keep rises above. The entrance is by a lofty porch, and on ascending a flight of stone steps, the Entrance Hall and then the Great Hall are reached. The latter is a splendid apartment, 30ft. wide, 60ft. long and 65ft. high, in the centre of the building, and contains a rare collection of armour, ancient swords, guns, battle axes, and other weapons. In this and other rooms there is also a very fine collection of ornamental furniture and tapestry.

Occasionally Open to View.

The hall and State Rooms of the Castle, and also the extensive terraces and gardens, are occasionally opened for the inspection of visitors, but the times when this is kindly permitted must be ascertained by those who desire to enjoy the instructive and delightful treat beforehand, as the Castle being occupied as a private mansion the concession is only granted on special occasions with the view of assisting some worthy philanthropic effort.

Eastnor Church.

The parish church is within a short distance of the Castle. It was rebuilt in 1850 (with the exception of the tower) from plans by Sir Gilbert Scott. It is rich in memorials; a manorial chapel, altar tomb with recumbent marble effigy, and

numerous other elegant monuments and mural tablets commemorating successive generations of the Cocks or—as they are now known—the Somers family.

The Obelisk—View from the summit of the Hill.

On the crown of “ Obelisk Hill,” which is within the extensive Eastnor Park, and opposite and not far from Eastnor Castle, is a pyramid 90ft. high, that forms a conspicuous object some distance off. It was erected by the first Earl Somers to the memory of his gallant son, Hon. Major Cocks, who fell before Bridges on 8th October 1812. From the point where the obelisk stands a magnificent panoramic view of the surrounding country is open, and from here visitors who have read *Malvern Chase* may have pointed out to them “ Swynyrd Hill,” separated by the “ Gullet Pass “ from “ Midsummer Hill,” whilst beyond are the Passes of the “ White-Leaved Oak “ and “ Holly Bush,” and also “ Ragged Stone Hill .“

Strensham ; the Birthplace of Samuel Butler.

Amongst the visitors to Tewkesbury it cannot fail to interest many to know that the birthplace of Butler, the famous satirist, and the home of the great family of the Russels that figured prominently during the earliest years after the restoration of Charles II., is within a few miles of Tewkesbury, and easily accessible by good roads through a picturesque village district lying between the high road to Worcester and the river Avon. Butler is renowned chiefly as being the author of *Hudibras*, the first part of which was issued in 1663, and became at once the favourite book of the age. It is a pasquinade ridiculing the Puritans.

Strensham is a pretty Avonside village, with a parish church that has much to interest visitor . The great mansion here is known as Strensham Court, which with the estates, soon after the decease of Sir Francis Russell, the last male heir of that line, passed into the hands of the Taylor family. The old farmhouse which was the place where the parents of Samuel Butler lived, and where the poet was born, was at some long past time converted into and for a long while let as cottages, but these having fallen into a state of decay which made them untenable, the vicar of the parish (to whom the property belonged) had it cleared away.

Tradition speaks of a Castle having once stood here near where is now the residence of the Moat Farm, but if so the last vestiges of it long ago disappeared. It may have been an early home of the Russells, who had a seat at Strensham as early as 1272.

Toddington House.

This is a large and very splendid mansion, standing on a gentle eminence, a little distance off the road leading from Tewkesbury towards Stow-on-the-Wold, and is about 9 miles from Tewkesbury. It was erected by the first Lord Sudeley, and being completed in 1835, for nearly 70 years formed the home of the Sudeleys, but ultimately coming into the market was purchased, with the whole of the estates by Mr. Hugh Andrews. The mansion is of what is called the Domestic Gothic style, the architecture being after the manner of that adopted in the monastic building of medieval times. The mansion is approached through most tastefully laid-out shrubberies and pleasure grounds, which, with an extensive park, and a fruit farm, has

an area of about 400 acres. Being a private residence it can only be viewed by special permission.

Sudeley Castle.

The remarks that which appear recommending a carriage drive by road to Eastnor, apply also with an equal assurance of a most enjoyable excursion to Sudeley Castle, or rather the town of Winchcombe, as that is the place to make for to reach Sudeley. Winchcombe is 10 miles from Tewkesbury, and Sudeley less than a mile out of Winchcombe. Although a brief account of the Castle is here given it must be clearly understood that, as with Toddington House and Eastnor Castle, the place is occupied as a private home, with the family usually in residence, and therefore special permission is necessary for viewing either the Castle or grounds.

Railway connection with Winchcombe.

Wincombe itself is a most interesting little town, rich in its possession of what is of the greatest interest to the antiquarian and archeologist, and with historical associations that invest it with the fame of having been a seat of royalty during the Saxon heptarchy. It has now the advantage of railway connection by the branch line of the G.W.R. from Cheltenham to Honeybourne junction, and by which Broadway, Stow-on-the-Wold, and other places attractive as health resorts or otherwise on the Cotswolds may be reached.

The early Castle plundered and destroyed.

Sudeley Castle, is one of the best-preserved of the Medieval Castles in the West of England. The date of erection according to certain old authorities was 1449, but that a place of considerable importance existed there in early Norman days is evident from the monastic records that tell of a baronial home of John Fitz-Harold of Sudeley having been plundered and destroyed by a vengeful Earl of Worcester about 1139. One part of the existing Castle was formerly known as "Portman Tower," so called after a French admiral who was taken prisoner by Ralph de Boteler and had to pay a heavy sum as ransom money; this the king, Henry I., gave to Boteler, who was a great favourite, and it nearly paid for the building of the Castle.

The 15th Century Castle an abode of Royalty.

In 1547 Thomas, Lord Seymour, who at the time was owner of Sudeley Castle, married Katherine Parr, the widowed queen of Henry VIII. Their wedded life was, however, but short, as she died after giving birth to a child, in the 36th year of her age and only just over 18 months after the death of her first husband, King Henry. She was buried in a vault in the chapel, the famous Miles Coverdale officiating, and Lady Jane Grey being chief mourner. The Princess Elizabeth and Lady Jane Grey spent much of their time with the Queen at the Castle, and Lady Jane was its owner during her brief reign of 13 days, from July 6th to 19th, 1553.

Queen Elizabeth at Sudeley Castle.

The Castle afterwards passed to the Chandos family, and Queen Elizabeth visited there in 1574, 1575, and 1592. In the Civil Wars the 6th Lord Chandos was in possession; he was a staunch Royalist, and after the Castle had withstood several assaults--being taken and retaken by the contending forces—the place was by pillage and destruction reduced to a ruinous condition and so it appears to have continued for 200 years after.

The Castle in Ruins. Property purchased by the Dents.

In 1830 most of the Sudeley property was purchased jointly by Mr. John and Mr. William Dent, and 7 years after they also bought the site and what remains there were of the Castle, a portion of which had been appropriated by a public house, called the “ Castle Arms.” A restoration of the place was soon entered upon, and the north quadrangle being the most perfect part of the old Castle that remained, was at once restored to its original form, and became the seat of the Dent family.

With the completion of the northern quadrangle began the accumulation within its spacious halls and rooms of a valuable and most interesting collection of paintings, statuary, antique furniture and carvings, and other curiosities, nearly all of which have a close association with the former history of the castle, church, or parish, or the immediate vicinity. The whole of the apartments are furnished in a splendid and appropriate manner. A handsome stone embattled entrance gateway has been erected, and the old “ pleasaunce “(which was identified in 1850), with its paths and fountains forms part of the garden. Mrs. Dent was the last survivor of those by whom the Castle was restored, and she was succeeded in the ownership of the property by Mr. Dent Brocklehurst.

Sudeley Church.

The Church which stands to the east of the Castle, was served very badly by the Cromwellians, being with the memorials of the Chandos family and others in it, nearly destroyed. Between 1858 and 1862 it was restored under the direction of Sir Gilbert Scott on a scale of great beauty, the cost of the work being met by Mr. J.C. Dent. It contains an elegant canopied tomb, with a recumbent figure in white marble of Queen Katherine Parr erected above the vault, into which the coffin with the remains were removed in 1817. There is a reredos and font of very beautiful execution, a carved oak screen, oak stalls, and other fittings, and several coloured glass windows. The church is a most interesting building.

Places of Special Interest near Wincombe.

Remains of a Roman Villa Residence.

At Sudeley, about 2 miles from Winchcombe, on a farm that is part of the Sudeley estate, are extensive remains of a Romano-British villa residence, which by consent of the late Mrs.Dent, were , on first discovery, partly uncovered, and afterwards the exploration having from time to time been continued under the well versed guidance of the County Archeological Society, foundations and other fragments have been brought to light which had for many centuries lain hidden

beneath the soil. The whole of these remains are well protected and only to be seen with the necessary permission and on special occasions.

Remains of Hailes Abbey.

At Hailes, which is only about 2 miles from Winchcombe, are interesting remains of a famous Cistercian Abbey that was founded there by Richard Plantagenet, second son of King John. It was built between 1246 and 1251, in pursuance, as is recorded, of a vow made by Earl Richard when in extreme danger at sea. His father had previously founded the Abbey at Beaulieu, in Hampshire. This Hailes Abbey was peopled by a miracle-working fraternity of monks, and strange tales are told of the success of the impositions they practised.

Holme Castle:

The Former Baronial Home of the Lords of Tewkesbury

Mention of the Castle by Early Writers.

The noble families who in early Norman days held the lordship and estates of Tewkesbury had a residence here which is known in local history as “Holme Castle” and as time with its changes has effectually wiped out all traces of the building, much enquiry and research have been bestowed with a view to the elucidation of its actual site and form. No remains and few written records relating to the place being available, much difficulty has been experienced at arriving at a satisfactory conclusion by those who have interested themselves in the research. But enough is found in the old monkish chronicles, and in Leland, the antiquary’s particulars of what he saw and learned of the place on his visit to Tewkesbury, with other references by later writers, to assure us that till the 14th century a home of considerable importance was maintained here by those who had the earldom of Gloucester, which included the honor of Tewkesbury. Thus, much interest has been evinced to know more of this old baronial residence.

The Palace of Oddo and Doddo.

By accepting as authentic this traditionary story which tells of the lordship being in hands of two Mercian dukes Oddo and Doddo, there are grounds for believing these nobles to have had an establishment of magnitude near here in the 8th century, which may have formed the nucleus upon which, four centuries later, the present magnificent Abbey Church, and the great Monastery to which it pertained, were upraised. The record is ignored, even the very existence of the persons named is criticised as “a travesty of actual history,” but as a matter of fact nearly every atom of information we possess relating to local affairs in Saxon days, is subject to like severe disputation. If these Monastic chronicles be set aside as “travesties” we at once find ourselves adrift on a sea of speculation with scarcely a single landmark to guide us, so effectively has Time and Nature worked together in the unceasing lines of change and decay.

What Leland saw of the Site and Remains.

From what the Monastery records say we turn to the pages of *Leland's Itinerary*. The writer, John Leland, being a person devoted to antiquarian study, and of great learning and ability, was in 1553 (which was only 6 years before the surrender and dissolution of the Tewkesbury Monastery) appointed to the posts of chaplain and librarian to Henry VIII. He received the title of King's Antiquary, and therewith a commission to examine all the libraries in the kingdom. For six years he travelled through England and Wales, compiling notices of the towns, castles, and religious houses, catalogues of libraries and extracts from the books they contained, with miscellaneous topographical and historical memoranda. Six more years he spent in the task of arranging the mass of material he had accumulated. Leland visited Tewkesbury, and the following particulars relating to Holme Castle—of which evidently even then but few vestiges remained—are taken from an edition of the *Itinerary* published in the year 1745 :-

Tewkesbury standith in *laeva ripa Avonae* a good flite Shot above the Confluence of Avon and Severne.

There is a greate Bridge of Stone at the Northe Ende of the Towne, and ther a litle above the bridge Avon brekith into 2 Armes. Yet the Bridge is so large that both cum under it. The Right Arme commeth into Severne with yn a flite Shot of the bridge, and at the Pointe of this Arme is the Town Key for Shippes callled Picardes.

The other Arme commeth down by the Side of the Towne and the Abbay, leving it on the Este, and so passing harde ther by Holme Castelle goith into Severne.

Ther is a litle Broke caullid Suliet cumming downe from Cleve, and enterith into Avon at Holme Castelle by the lifte Ripe of it.

Ther was at the South West Ende of the Abbay a Castel caullid Holme. The tyme of the Building of it is oncerteyne. It is certeyne that the Clares Erles of Gloucester, and especially the redde Erle, lay much at Holme.

There hath been yn tyme of mynd sum Partes of the Castel standing. Now sum Ruines of the Botoms of Waulles appere. Now it is caullid Holme Hylle.

There is a Parke bytwixt the old Plotte of Holme Castelle and it, but it longgid to Holme the Erles of Gloucesters House, and not to Derehurst. There is a fair Maner Place of tymbre and stone yn this Theokesbyri Parke, wher the Lord Edward Spensar lay, and late my Lady Mary.

The Maner Place in Theokesbyri Parke with the Parke was lette by Henry the 7, to thabbot of Theokesbyri yn Fee Ferme with the Holme wher the Castel was.

John Leland's records agree with existing evidence.

These mentions of the Castle by Leland are very clear in the information given. He was at Tewkesbury just before the Monastery (which was surrendered on the 9th of January, 1539) came to an end, and therefore had the opportunity of securing a much more definite knowledge of the place than was possible for anyone who followed him to obtain after the Abbot and Monks who were his guides had been dispersed, and the chronicles of local doings and changes which for centuries had been kept by the brotherhood of the Abbey had been lost or destroyed in the pillage

and demolition which ensued on the King's agents getting possession of the belongings of the Monastery.

Local Homes of the Lords of the De Clare and Despenser Families.

In the absence of any evidence to refute the records in Leland's *Itinerary*, they may be received as furnishing reliable grounds on which to form satisfactory conclusions with respect both as to the site of " Holme Castle " and of the " fair Maner Place " which was raised after it had been destroyed or gone to decay, and formed the local residence of some members of the Despenser family to whom the Castle passed, with the lordship, after the death of the last male De Clare, at the battle of Bannockburn. This was in 1314, and there appears to be good reason for believing that the Castle continued without its size and importance being in any way impaired when, in 1321, it passed into the hands of the unfortunate Hugh le Despenser the younger by his marriage with Eleanor De Clare. After holding the exalted position of lord chamberlain and chief favourite of Edward II., for awhile, this lord, together with his aged father, the Earl of Winchester, was accused of seducing the King and oppressing the State, and, without trial, he was drawn on a hurdle through the streets of Hereford, and hanged on a gallows fifty feet high, the remains being afterwards beheaded, quartered and distributed to various towns to be publicly exposed, in accordance with the degrading custom of that day. About 1337, his eldest son, Hugh le Despenser (the third), on the death of his mother, succeeded her in the inheritance of the Tewkesbury and Hanley Castle estates, and some other portions of his father's former possessions, but at this time the dignity and value of the Tewkesbury lordship was much curtailed through being separated from the honor of Gloucester.

What may have led to the Demolition of the Castle.

The history of the period about which Holme Castle is thought to have been dismantled and the eventual razing of it been determined on, suggests its destruction as a possible outcome of a bitterness of feeling on the part of Edward II's queen towards the Despensers and others who had in any way crossed her own wishes or those of Roger Mortimer. So that after getting Hugh Despenser put beyond the power of further interference with their intrigue against the King, she had most of the property which represented the position of power he had done away with, and Holme Castle fell with the rest, as no mention of it as a residence of those who held the lordship of Tewkesbury occurs after 1326.

The Castle may have proved too Costly a Possession.

In considering the exigences that may have led to the ultimate vacation and decay of the Castle the possibility suggests itself that on the separation of the Earldom of Gloucester from the Lordship of Tewkesbury, the maintenance of so large an establishment here was neither necessary nor convenient; the old house was deserted and taken down, and portions of the material of which it was composed used in the erection of a new place of residence suited to the more modest requirements of those members of the Despenser family who continued a home at Tewkesbury. This may have been the " fair Maner Place " mentioned by Leland, as seen by him in Tewkesbury Park, and which possibly stood on the site of the present beautiful mansion of Mr. J. S. Sargeant.

That nearly the whole of the fabric which stood above-ground was removed seems clear by the fact that although the building stood on the area on which in 1471, the decisive struggle took place between the armies of Queen Margaret and Edward IV., no mention of the place is made by either of the early writers who are accepted as authorities on the Battle of Tewkesbury. Had any important part of the old Castle then remained it could not fail to have been taken advantage of for a defensive stand by some of the fugitive Lancastrians who were so mercilessly hewn down. Therefore the assumption seems fully justified that but very little remained of Holme Castle at the expiration of a century-and-a-half after Hugh Despenser met his tragic end.

The “ Magnificent House “ of Earl Robert.

Certain records speak of an earlier Tewkesbury home of the Lords of Tewkesbury than Holme Castle, which one chronicler (whose reference to it is given below) describes as “ the magnificent house of Robert, earl of Gloucester.“ This may have been a place erected by Fitz-Hamon, and formed the local residence of himself and family, as the noble Abbey he founded here testifies to their deep attachment to the town. By the marriage of Robert, earl of Gloucester (natural son of Henry I.) with Mabel, eldest daughter and heiress of Fitz-Hamon, the possessions came into his hands, and the family house in Tewkesbury became his home. He is credited amongst other generous acts of kindness with having entertained the Abbot and twelve monks of the Tewkesbury Monastery at dinner with him every Sunday.

The “ Magnificent House “ Burnt—Lively doings in Olsden Days.

The death of Henry I. took place on Dec 1st, 1153, and on the 26th of the same month—in defiance of what appeared to many to be the superior claims of Matilda (or Maud, as she is often called), eldest surviving child of Henry I.—the crown was conferred on Stephen. Thereupon ensued a prolonged fierce struggle for supremacy between the adherents of the respective sides. Earl Robert led the cause of his half-sister, Matilda, and from this we may imagine Tewkesbury was much concerned in the issue from the first. That the town shared in the devastation which continued with unabated fury for the next half-dozen years is seen in the following “ Narrative of a monk who was an eye witness “ of the proceedings it details :

The Earl of Worcester and his forces being away at the time, Worcester was attacked by the citizens of Gloucester, pillaged, and partly burnt. The Earl of Worcester, upon his return, seeing how the city and its inhabitants had been served, gave himself up to reprisals. The first object of his vengeance was John Fitz-Harold, of Sudeley who had deserted the King and gone over to Earl Robert. Having appropriated everything of value amongst Fitz-Harold’s belongings, and destroyed Sudeley, he shortly afterwards came to Tewkesbury. What happened here is thus stated in the monk’s story: “ The earl, mindful of the injuries his citizens had received, with a great multitude of armed men set upon Tewkesbury, and burnt the magnificent house of Robert, earl of Gloucester, and all things round about, with the houses of others and their goods within a mile of that city; he spared only the goods of the church of Tewkesbury, being overcome with the importunity of the abbot and friars. The spoils taken were great, as well of men as of goods and beasts; but after awhile such as were led captive were unbound, and had liberty to go

home. The earl, next day, when he returned to Worcester, proclaimed to all men that he, neither in Normandy nor England, had burnt more palaces and houses at one time.”

Condition of England at the time Earl Robert’s House was Destroyed.

The visit to Tewkesbury of Worcester’s vengeful Earl occurred shortly after Christmas, 1139, and the absence of Earl Robert and his chieftains from the defence of their own strongholds, may be accounted for by the fact that just previously the Empress Matilda had landed in England with Earl Robert and a small retinue of knights; open war had broken out between the two parties, and a terrible state of anarchy prevailed for awhile all over the kingdom. On all sides the castles of the nobility had become receptacles of licensed robbers, who, sallying forth day and night, committed spoil on the open country, on the villages, and even on the cities; put the captives to torture in order to make them reveal their treasures; sold their persons into slavery; and set fire to the houses after they had pillaged them of everything valuable. The land was left untilled; the implements of husbandry were destroyed or abandoned; and a grievous famine, the natural result of those disorders, affected equally both parties, and reduced the spoilers as well as the defenceless people, to the most extreme want and indigence. This terrible state of affairs had lasted about two years, when Stephen was captured by Earl Robert and thrown into prison at Gloucester. Matilda’s claim to the throne was recognized, but her unfitness for a ruler in such turbulent times soon became apparent. In the same year, Earl Robert fell into the hands of the enemy, and then came an exchange of prisoners, by which both he and Stephen regained their liberty. The civil war was again kindled with greater fury than ever, and continued several years. On October 31st, 1147, Earl Robert died, his wife surviving him only four years.

Probable time of erection of Holme Castle.

The circumstances here detailed make it the reverse of probable that Earl Robert attempted the reconstruction of his Tewkesbury home, nor do we find any mention whatever to lead to the conclusion that the next lord, William Fitz-Count, either lived here or in any way intimately connected himself with the town. But Prince John, who followed, appears to have been frequently here after he became king, and by erecting a substantial bridge across the two arms of the river Avon (which he is accredited with by Leland and others as having done) conferred what must at the time have been a favour of inestimable value on the town and neighbourhood. This suggests that John became familiar with Tewkesbury and its urgent needs during the ten years he held the lordship, and although there is no evidence to certify the point, to Prince John may be accredited the erection of Holme Castle. This idea is strongly supported by the record that in the course of the year in which he ascended the throne he resided some time at the castle at Tewkesbury, which, soon after he became king he turned over with his wife Isabella or (Hawissa) whom he had divorced , and the honor and estates of the lordship, to Geoffrey Mandeville, earl of Essex, whom—on condition of his relieving him of all respnsibility in regard thereto—King John created fourth earl of Gloucester.

The Castle at its best.

Holme Castle, in its accommodation and arrangements, had probably assumed quite palatial proportions again at this time. Indeed so much local tradition associates itself with the days and doings of King John as to lead to the belief that the building was re-erected in a manner suited to the requirements of a princely home in his day there.

From the Chronicles of Jocelind de Brakelond, Monk of Si. Edmundsbury, it would appear that King John must have kept his court at Tewkesbury for a considerable time in the year 1200, for certain knights of Bury Saint Edmunds were there summoned to attend and be sworn before the king at Tewkesbury, in a suit between Sampson, abbot of Edmundsbury, and Thomas de Burgh, the brother of the king's chamberlain, who had obtained (by payment of five hundred marks to the archbishop of Canterbury), the wardship of the only daughter of Adam de Cokefield, a wealthy knight, the possession of whose estates was the subject of dispute between the guardian of his heiress and the abbot.

The Castle in the hands of the De Clares.

With the succession of the De Clares (in 1221) the Tewkesbury Castle again became a favourite residence of its lords during life, and the Abbey—which enjoyed their munificent patronage for within about ten years of a century—the final resting-place of themselves and their families after death. The frequent mention of this family in local history of the period between 1221, when the first De Clares succeeded, and 1314, when the career of the last male De Clare connected with the lordship was cut short at the battle of Bannockburn, proves them to have been very intimately mixed up with local affairs.

Christmas-time Entertainment at the Castle.

Richard de Clare—the second lord of the De Clare line—succeeded when he was only eight years old. In accordance with requirements that prevailed at the time, the estates passed into the king's hands during the minority of the new earl, who thus became a ward of the sovereign, and Holme Castle a centre of interest to the Royal family. The maintenance of the Castle on a scale of great splendour would thus have been encouraged and it is noted in the *Abbey Register* that during Christmas of the year 1230, the brotherhood from its Monastery were sumptuously entertained at the Castle, and with the guests present on the occasion were sixty knights.

King Henry III. And Queen Eleanor visit the De Clares.

In May, 1233, the Castle received no less distinguished a visitor than King Henry III. In 1236, his consort, Queen Eleanor, also came hither, and from the chronicle it seems that the call was chiefly purposed to allow him an opportunity of assisting in an endeavour to secure the wealthy young earl as husband for Maud de Lacy, daughter of the Earl of Lincoln, who had agreed to contribute 7000 marks—equal to about 70,000 pounds of today—to the king's coffers if the match was satisfactorily concluded. The desired result was soon arrived at after the queen's visit to Holme Castle, and the union of Richard de Clare with the Earl of Lincoln's daughter was consummated early in the year 1237. Shortly after his marriage the Earl

left Tewkesbury for the Crusades; and was absent several years, but when he returned Holme Castle again became his home, and there, in 1250, he made knights of William de Wilton and Peter Boteler.

Last of the De-Clares.

Gilbert de Clare, who was a man of note and is known in history as the Red Earl, was associated with Simon de Montfort. He appears to have been one of those medieval nobles, as Mr. Blunt writes “ could not get on without much fighting, and who made occasions for their favourite pastime when they were not ready to hand.” With so turbulent a disposition he may not have spent much of his time at Tewkesbury but the Castle was continued as the family home, and here the eldest son , Gilbert , was born in 1290. The Red Earl died at Monmouth Castle on December 7th, 1295, when his son and heir was but five years old. The career of this last earl was only short, as he fell at Bannockburn, when only 23 years of age, but during its brief course he acquired great distinction, having, in 1311, been made Keeper of England, and two years afterwards, appointed Regent during the absence of Edward II. In France. He had married Maud, daughter of the Earl of Ulster, and to them a son was born, who died young. There being no male heir the honor and estates were divided among his three sisters, and to Eleanor (the eldest) passed the portion which included the Tewkesbury inheritance. This was in 1315, and at the time Holme Castle was probably in the greatest state of splendour it ever attained. Six years afterwards (in 1321) Eleanor De Clare became the wife of Hugh le Despenser, whose untimely end , at Hereford (in 1325), has previously been mentioned, and most likely the demolition of his family’s home at Tewkesbury followed at the instigation of the vengeful Queen Eleanor.

Where the Castle stood.

It is easy to understand that as all traces of Holme Castle have disappeared, much curiosity should exist among those interested in local archeology as to the site of a place so intimately associated with Tewkesbury’s early history. Leland’s records of what he saw of the “ bottoms of some walls “ of the building on the Holme Hill, clearly point to the place having occupied the rising ground running from where the Union House stands to the upland meadows that still bear the name of the “ First and Second Vineyards.“ The area is opposite the “ South-West Ende of the Abbay,” and so exactly agrees not only with Leland’s but with other early references to the Castle, that it may be accepted as accurately determining the question of the situation of the building. Until quite recent times but little interest was shown in regard to the place—at least there is no existing evidence of its having done—and it was not till a time contemporary with the beginning and progress of the earliest stages of the restoration on the Abbey Church that local archeology, and the former existence of a Norman Castle here, engaged any particular attention. The restoration movement dates from 1864, and in the course of the interval between that year and September, 1879, when the re-beautified church was formally re-opened and re-dedicated, the Society of Antiquaries and other principal organizations devoted to the study of architectural and old-time associations, paid Tewkesbury and the district a visit; these visits encouraged local concern in the town’s past history and were the means of effecting much that was of interest.

A Different Opinion on the Site.

Prominent amongst many whose latent interest in local antecedents was about the time mentioned stirred-up was a Mr. Henry Spurrier who, as a native of the town had for a long period evinced much concern in its affairs. With good literary capabilities he discussed in a paper the question of the situation of Holme Castle, advancing and ably supporting his contention that it stood on a meadow about a quarter of a mile eastward of Holme Hill, and known as “ The Moats,” or “ The Wynyard Moats.” He appears to have been induced to this conclusion by the existence in the field of an apparently ridged off portion enclosing an area sufficient to have formed the site of a large erection, and this a well taught mind and vivid imagination cleverly and interestingly pictured as the remains of a moat that surrounded the Castle, and was connected with the Swilgate Brook. But this piece of the meadow land, judging by the state of it now at flood times and after periods of prolonged rain, must formerly have been for several months in each year covered with water, the subsoil being a damp clay very retentive of moisture. This fact in itself is enough to negative any supposition of its having formed the position selected for a lordly home. Drainage pipes were also laid over the spot in 1889 without a trace in any direction of the soil having been before disturbed.

What were “ The Wynyard Moats ?”

It does not appear as though the oft inundated piece of meadow land, “ The Wynyard Moats ,“ had engaged any particular public attention—except having notoriety amongst the young folk of the town as an early skating field in winter time—till Mr. Spurrier’s endeavour to give it historic fame. This, however, raised curiosity to have the mounded off portions accounted for. It was till the dissolution a part of the Monastery within near touch of the monk’s larders, and being easily kept fully supplied with river water, enquiry soon found support for the suggestion of its having once been the fish ponds which formed the storage places for the fish kept on hand to make up any deficiency in what was supplied from the rivers. For in those days as now there were times when the yield of fish from the Severn and Avon was very small of the finer kinds required.

The Fish Ponds of the Monastery.

The late Mr. Allard, surgeon, of Tewkesbury (who died in 1891), during a residence of half-a-century in the town, gave much attention to local associations of the past, and it is to be regretted that he left so little written record behind of the result of many enquiries in which he became deeply interested. If, however, happily chanced that he did give us the benefit of his opinion on the question of Holme Castle, in letter addressed *The Tewkesbury Register*, in 1888. He wrote in reply to an article that had appeared in a county paper :

“ The Charter of 17th of Elizabeth, in defining the boundaries of the Borough says ‘ And further by the Kings’s highway to a place called the Hermitage at the end of a bridge called Holme Bridge’. Are not Holme Hill and Holmr Bridge very near to where Swilgate enters into Avon ? How much greater were the opportunities of Leland, who saw the ruined walls—of Dyde, who may have seen the vestiges thereof, and of Bennett, who was writing his *History of Tewkesbury* when the excavations were made

in 1820, of arriving at the truth as to the site than we can possibly have now...

...There may be authority for the elaborate details of the Castle and its surroundings which are given in the new site. The meadow which has been selected as such was called the of the 'formerly Monastic lands of the Benedictine Abbey.' In trying to arrive at a conclusion of what these 'moats' may have been, extensive reservoirs for storing fish which the Abbey had independently of the supply of our luxurious streams, as proved by the items in the Kitchener's account in the 14th century, which appear under the costs of the Wear (the dam or head of the Fishponds, and consist of iron-work, carpenter's work, labour in mending the walls, wages and gratuities to servants of the Wear, purchase of fish for stocking, 'Coat given to Walter there' &c. &c.)"

References by the Local Historians Dyde and Bennett.

The evidence of Leland, referred to by Mr. Allard, has already been given: that of Mr. Dyde, and Mr. Bennett—both local historians—to which he refers, is as follows: Dyde writing in 1798 says:

“There are no remains of Holme Castle now extant. The period of its destruction labours under the same unfortunate predicament with the building. But we may be assured it was an early structure. The name imports it to have been of Saxon origin. It is not improbable that it was devastated with other castles and buildings by the exasperated and rebellious barons before or after the attainder of Hugh le Despenser the younger, who was possessed of the lordship of Tewkesbury.

Bennett, writing between 1826 and 1829, says

“Holme Castle stood near the top of a field now called 'The Vineyard,' where recently a considerable excavation remained, which had evidently been made for the purpose of procuring the stone which had been used in the foundations of the building—probably for repairing the adjoining turnpike road. Upon levelling some of the hillocks, in 1826, a quantity of rubbish and mortar, many painted bricks and stones were discovered; the appearance of the latter clearly demonstrating that the edifice of which they had formed a part had been destroyed by fire. 'The Vineyard' has by some been considered the spot where Queen Margaret entrenched her army in 1471; it was perhaps the scene of some bloodshed towards the close of the battle; but independently of the fact that the Queen's encampment was at Gupshill, the form and extent of the mounds on the two lower sides of the field, which had principally been the means of giving rise to the idea, would rather have led to the conclusion that they were the sites of the boundary walls of the castle. In corroboration of this notion, when one of those shelving banks was cut through in 1821, for the purpose of making a drain, hewn stones of a great size and thickness, strongly cemented with lime, sand, and gravel, were found at the depth of five or six feet from the surface. Before the field was levelled, one might, indeed, in imagination, have traced out in 'The Vineyard' not only the ground plan of Holme Castle, but also the extent of the whole area included within its bounds, as well of the situation of many subordinate members of that once celebrated baronial residence.”

An Old Man's Memory of the Vestiges removed in 1826.

Nearly sixty years had elapsed since the work recorded by Mr. Bennett was carried out, when the writer visited the ' Vineyard ' in company with an aged native of the town who was then one of the occupants of the Gander Lane Almshouses. Being an intelligent man with a clear memory of most of the local doings that had engaged public interest since his boyhood he was able to call to mind the rough state of most parts of the field before the labour of levelling and planting the trees now seen there was undertaken, Whilst he knew nothing of " Holme Castle " by its proper name, he had in his early years been told that a grand building had once stood in the field, and he also well remembered " a lot of stone rubble being dug up and removed," and which he had been told at the time were portions of the great place that once stood on the spot. Asked to point out the part of the field where this ' stone and rubble ' (as he called it)was dug up, he indicated a place on the brow of the rising ground, some 60 yards or so to the right of the field pathway, and about midway between the boudary hedge of the cemetery at the top, and that of the brook-side meadow at the bottom. The interview with the old Tewkesburian occurred in 1884, and shortly afterwards the field and also the one next it, known as the " Second Vineyards, " were opened in various dierections for laying draining pipes and in the higher part of each field it was found that on the slopes towards what is now a Cemetery most of the ground had at some former time been disturbed. The old man's recital, and also the experience of those engaged upon the drainage work, alike go to verify the conclusion that an extensive home of those who held the lordship of Tewkesbury during the period from the days of King John to those of the last of the Despencers covered most portions of the beautiful pasture field. now known as the " First Vineyards."

More Levelling Work on the site of the Castle.

By these " levellings " the historic field is now seen with all the traces removed of the deep indentation its economic owners of days gone by disfigured it with in delving for the foundation stones of the old Castle wherewith to repair the roadways. It was part of the lands once belonging to Tewkesbury Abbey which were sold by auction in 1883 as the " Abbey House Estate." The whole of the property offered at this sale was purchased on behalf of the Abbey Restoration Committee, with a view to the Ancient Gateway, the Abbey House, and the land immediately adjoining thereto again becoming property under the control of the Church. The portions not required to effect this object were resold, and Mr. Thomas collins (whose memory is so honourably associated with all movements for the preservation of local antiquities), purchased the " First Vineyards," and soon afterwards proceeded with the filling up of great depressions that existed in the lower part of the field. the work was well completed and with it may be said to have disappeared the last trace of the boundary walls of Holme Castle.

There is no early record to suggest that any of the nobles who held the lordship of Tewkesbury had a home here before Norman days. The *Cotton MSS.*, make mention of two apocryphal personages, the dukes Odo and Dodo having had a palace at Deerhurst, which, of their piety, they converted into a church. Mr. Spurrier assumes the existence of a castle of its lords at Tewkesbury in Saxon times, but the only grounds on which his conclusion was founded appeared to be the existnce of the shallow banks in the " Wynyard Moats." Though their purpose of old cannot now be determined, these banks have apparently been maintained, possibly with a view of

keeping off the lesser floods from the Swilgate brook, which being the natural drainage channel of a great area of land in the direction of the hilly country towards the Cotswolds, is very subject to overflow the lower lying land adjacent to it after heavy rain.