

New Series
Second edition

ANCIENT RYE

An illustrated Historical Handbook

By J. L. Deacon, F.R.Hist.S



RYE
THE LIBRARY PRINTING WORKS
High Street and Market Road
1911

INTRODUCTION

Jessie Lewis (sometimes recorded as Louis) Deacon (1860-1932) was a prominent local figure in Rye in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. He was a bookseller, printer, publisher, historian and civic leader and a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society. He was mayor from 1919 to 1922, leading the town through the immediate post-war period. He was also an Alderman, Justice of the Peace and County Councillor. Deacon owned and operated "The Library" (also called the Library Printing Works or Printing and Publishing House) on the High Street/Market Road in Rye. According to Deacon, The Library was originally founded in 1777 and published an almanac in the early nineteenth century. I have yet to find a surviving copy.

His best known publication is Deacon's Illustrated Guide to Rye and Winchelsea, a rich source of names and dates and a standard reference for local historians. The titles of these guides are not consistent and publication dates are often omitted. The only fully digitised edition I have found is on HathiTrust, derived from a copy in the New York Public Library. It is undated in the text but is described as the fifth edition, and 1895 is pencilled on the inside cover. There were definitely editions in 1906, 1908, 1911 and 1914 and there is evidence that further post-war editions were issued. Ancient Rye appears to be distilled from the historical sections of these guides.

This volume is based on the second edition of Ancient Rye, published in 1911. The copy used for transcription is from my own collection and originally belonged to West Sussex County Library. It has been reset in modern type to improve readability while preserving the original text. The illustrations have been omitted (illustrated no more!), as they add little to the historical text and superior modern photographs of most locations are readily available online. Original page numbers are retained in square brackets to facilitate comparison with the printed book.

S.W. Cooper
July 2026
editor@ryelocalhistory.org

ANCIENT RYE

“Then came the Rother decked all with woods
Like a wood-god and flowing fast to Rhy.”
— Faerie Queene.

THE Ancient Towns of Rye and Winchelsea are rich in historic associations and present to the archaeologist, the artist, or the tourist, many features of interest. Dating back to the early periods of English history, and having played their part in company with the Cinque Ports in the past life of the nation, their history is unique. Rye of to-day is a picturesque place. The whole aspect and position of the place, one has said, is a link with a far-off past, and at every street corner some fragment at least raises suggestions of other days. It is healthy and possesses an abundant supply—on the authority of the public analyst, Dr. Dupré—of the purest water and which is absolutely free from any organic matter. Whilst its hotels cater well for the visitor, good accommodation can also be obtained of those letting private apartments. Not only has the visitor much to look over in the town, but a short tram ride will take him to the Camber golf links and [1] the seashore where he can stroll along the finest sands in England; or, if so disposed, he can take a drive and explore some of the surrounding villages, which are situated amidst the most lovely scenery in Sussex.

“The town of Rye,” says Holloway, “may seem at first sight little deserving of being recorded in history, but when we recollect that the Cinque Ports were called into existence at a very early period, perhaps even while the Romans yet remained in England—that these ports were the first parents of our Navy—that it was from them all our earliest monarchs down to the accession of the Tudors drew the whole of their naval force, and their successors partially so late as the reign of Charles I.—and added to this, that Rye became one of the Ports under the title of an Ancient Town as early as the reign of

Edward the Confessor, then we see that this little town is no longer the insignificant spot which at the first glance it appears to be.”

Rye stands on the borders of Romney Marsh, the bed of a recent ocean, on the east side, and being built on a steep rock, the site an uneven one, presents a peculiar yet attractive appearance.

In Gibbon’s “Questions and Disputations upon Genesis,” published in 1601, is the following wording upon the situation of Rye:—“Sicilia is said to have been divided from Italia, Cyprus from Syria, England from Fraunce, by the violence of the sea, whereas before they were joined, as Peloponnesus is to the rest of Grecia, or as the town of Rye at an high water seemeth to be the rest of England.” It is added, in a note, “where there is left scarce the highway to come in, the water flowing up on both sides.” Rye was given, together with Winchelsea, by Edward the Confessor to the Abbot and Monks of Fischamp in Normandy and they continued to draw revenues from these towns until 1246 when Henry III. Took them over “for the better protection of his realm.” But it must have existed long before the period of Edward the Confessor, and although known at one time to have been an island, there is no information as to when it ceased to be one.

Jeake states that the sea washed away a part of the town including some streets, together with the Baddings gate and the wall leading therefrom to Landgate. About the 14th century the sea commenced to recede and now the town is nearly 2 miles from the coast. There are three rivers uniting their waters at the south-east corner of the town and these form at the outlet the Rye Harbour. The principal one is the Rother rising at Rotherfield, [2] in Sussex, and is navigable as far as Bodiam for river barges and boats. A most enjoyable and inexpensive summer trip can be taken up the Rother as far as Bodiam Castle. The Brede rises in Battle and is navigable as far as Brede. The shortest of these streams is the Tillingham which has its source at the village of Beckley. According to ancient Records, as far back as the 13th century (Henry III.), Rye and Winchelsea provided ships of war.

Some of the King's galleys were kept at Rye and others at Winchelsea in those early days, and from the references made in some of the ancient documents it is certain that the two Ancient Towns were no small factors in controlling the coast from the incursions of invaders. The Danes were in very early times, merciless pirates along the coast, and with 250 ships came up the Rother in 893. They pillaged the town and then went and seized Appledore Castle.

In 1822, according to Taylor's Almanac for 1823, an ancient Danish vessel was discovered 10 feet under the surface, in a field on the bank of the river Rother, near Maytham wharf, Newenden. It was in the neighbourhood of the site where is supposed by some to have been the ancient Roman city, Anderida, and the great forest. Ella, with his three sons, landed here, and after driving the Britons into the wood, Sigbert, king of West Sex, was put to death. This craft is believed to have been one of these 250 Danish ships. It was 63 feet 8 inches in length and 15 feet in breadth. After being taken to London and there exhibited for some time, it was broken up, and tea caddies, boxes, etc., made with some of the wood.

The following is a list of the principal articles found in it: An earthenware pint pot, rudely fashioned and similar to those depicted by Teniers; a hollow ball of yellow metal, to which part of a blade of a sword about an inch wide and much corroded is attached; a crescent and a hollow tube, each of a similar metal, these from their perforations and apparent conjunctions, formed the handle and hilt of the sword; there are some dots and strokes marked on each side of the crescent, but too imperfect to be deciphered; a large steel, sufficient to embrace the hand, and a piece of flint lying beside it, black and much worn with use, but still retaining the property of emitting sparks; two rusty locks, one with an iron ring as if it had belonged to a chest or locker; the other with an iron handle in the wood as if for a latch; an hour-glass about five inches in height, on the one half of which was delicately delineated the figure of a ship in full sail. [4]

There was also a human skull, that of a man, with several sound teeth, and some bones of an adult; another skull, a child's, with

several small bones of a child; the skull of a dog; the skull and horns of a goat or sheep; the lower jaw of a boar, with its teeth and tusk.

Rye and Winchelsea have both suffered much from the invasion of foreign foes. Previous to the year 1378, the French did much damage on several occasions to the town by their attacks upon it. In the “burnings and sackings” of the town in 1378 and 1448, it is recorded that “the only edifices that escaped the conflagrations were the Ypres Tower, part of the Church (to this Stowe refers and says, ‘the French brought the town into ashes with the Church that then was there, of a wonderful beauty;’ this would have been the Early English style of architecture which prevailed from 1200 to 1300), Landgate and Strandgate, and an old building on the south side of the Churchyard” which is supposed to have been the Chapel of the Carmelite Friars.

Yet war and piratical plunders were not the only enemies Ancient Rye had to contend against. She was on several occasions visited by plague. In the years 1349, 1544, 1563, 1579, 1590 and 1596, hundreds of persons were victims to this awful disease. In 1563, during August, September and October, the burials numbered 562. The fluctuations of the sea also added to the troubles the town has had to encounter.

The Cinque Ports are Sandwich, Dover, Hythe, Romney and Hastings, and to these in the 12th century were added Rye and Winchelsea, with the designation of “two Ancient Towns,” and by this distinction they have been recognised in all Public Acts. It was for the purpose of guarding the coast from the incursions of the enemy that they were granted special privileges, and they had to keep up a navy of fifty-seven ships. The Baron of each town paid no king’s taxes and possessed certain rights which were in those days fully recognised. It was his privilege to attend at the coronation and support the canopy over the king, and the duty of these towns to raise bands of men who were trained to arms in the defence of the country. Rye’s military glories, however, came to an end with the final war with France in 1815, and in 1818 the barracks (situated near Leasam Lane for infantry, and where the Rye Union house now stands for cavalry) were destroyed. A year or so later the Gungarden was by the order of Lord Sidmouth stripped of its guns. The Lord

Warden, as chief of the Ports and Ancient Towns, is still appointed at a [5] “Brotherhood and Guestling” with much dignity, but it is, after 800 years, shorn of its ancient glory. Lord Brassey was appointed Warden in 1907, in succession to King George when he was Prince of Wales.

Rye appears for centuries to have been a place of some importance. When Rye and Winchelsea were first recognised as the two “Ancient Towns” is unknown, but such was their designation when added to the Cinque Ports which at once shows that they were acknowledged as important in the kingdom. As we have already stated, the fluctuations of the sea have much affected the Ancient Town. The tempest which swept away Old Winchelsea and so much of the coastline from Pett to Romney occasioned also a very considerable change in the situation of Rye and completely altered the course of the river Rother which before that event discharged itself into the sea at Old Romney.

The harbour, in former times, was the main cause of Rye’s prosperity. It was considered, at one time, the best harbour between Portsmouth and Dover, and was much used in bad weather. It then became choked with sand so that small craft could not enter it. Several Acts of Parliament failed to render Rye Harbour more commodious. We read that in the 16th century, after having been in “a decayed state” for many years, it was restored in consequence of a very extraordinary tempest. It again silted up, but in 1761 the harbour was once more opened, the success of the work being attributed to a clergyman named Daniel Pope, LL.B., to whom the Society of Arts granted a gold medal. The “New Harbour,” as it was called, was in the neighbourhood of Pett Levels; Grimm’s famous picture of it we reproduce. Further reference will be found elsewhere in this book.

In the year 1673 King Charles II. Reviewed the English and French Fleets lying in Rye Bay, and King George I., on his return from Hanover in 1725, found shelter here from the tempest. Likewise his successor had to put into the harbour in 1736 during a violent storm.

Having thus briefly touched upon the history of Rye we will now proceed to the various places of interest. Starting from the Railway Station the visitor passes up the road toward Cattle Market Road, and he is then at once in the main thoroughfare—the High Street, and turning to the left he will see [6]

DEACON'S LIBRARY.

Whatever information of the Town may be required that is not recorded in this Guide Book, will be readily given at Deacon's Library, even to hotel accommodation and private apartments. All the best Postcards and View Goods can be had, and it is the only depot for the famous Sussex RUSTIC WARE or RYE ART POTTERY which is made in the neighbourhood. Local Arms China, Artists' materials, and every kind of article of local interest is stocked at DEACON'S LIBRARY. This Library was established in 1777, and more than a century ago a Rye Almanac was being printed here, in one of which we read "Mail arrives at 9 in the morning and leaves at 4 in the afternoon," which meant one delivery of letters daily by one man only, whereas to-day there are several deliveries by a staff of postmen. No less than twenty-seven proprietors of coaches and other conveyances plied between Rye, London and other places in those days, as well as packet boats between Rye and Boulogne and canal boats to Hythe. The Post Office of to-day is in every respect up-to-date, being a new building erected for the purpose, situate in the High Street. It is also a Head Office. [7]

Leaving Deacon's Library we cross to the right and turn up the bouldered street known as

WEST STREET

the entrance to which is situated between Lloyds Bank and the London County and Westminster Bank. Coventry Patmore, in his account of Rye, alluded to the singularly old world character of the streets. He says further that "there is nothing to be seen in the place, except the people's costumes, which is not ancient. The precipitous streets are paved with round flints, scarcely any of the houses are less than 100 years old and many of them 400, as the mouldings of

cornices, barge boards, door posts and window frames testify. The beautiful remains of ancient domestic architecture in Mermaid and West Streets look as if they silently apologised for surviving in the presence of Georgian taverns and doctors' lawyers' mansions in the High Street." This allusion holds good to-day, more particularly to Mermaid Street, as one ancient block has been destroyed at the lower portion of West Street which is shown in the picture above. In this street, on the right hand side, is the oldest house in the town and known as "Thomas House." It is believed to be fully 450 years old, but only a portion of a much larger residence, and is still inhabited. The front of it is composed of upright timbers with [8] plaster fillings. There are several small windows and two larger ones longitudinally divided with five compartments in each division, while between are seen three rude diamonds of wood-work with the centre of plaster. On the opposite side, a little higher up, is a finely carved porch (Georgian age); whilst at the top corner of this street is the historical "Lamb House," now occupied by Mr. Henry James, the celebrated author. For a period of 135 years the name of Lamb figures in the list of mayors of the town, and at this house Royalty was entertained on several occasions. James Lamb, the first of the family, settled here in 1756. Thomas Lamb, who succeeded his father in this house, seems to have re-fronted it, or to have made some alterations as the following inscription in stone appears in the east front. T.L. 1789 70

Notwithstanding the long period in which this family practically held sway over the affairs of the Ancient Town, [9] not one of their descendants now resides in the place. It was after spending the evening at this house that the unfortunate Allen Grebell, who had held the mayoral office on ten occasions, and was a very popular resident, was stabbed to death by a butcher named Breeds. The skull of this murderer, hanging in irons, as he was gibbeted, can be seen at the Town Hall. There are several antiquated houses, one being the remains of the old Customs House, at the end of the street as it leads into the churchyard. On turning back, the visitor will come on the left hand side to the famous old bouldered thoroughfare known as

MERMAID STREET

nearly every house in which is more or less ancient. Holloway states that "Mermaid Street was the principal one in the town, and the Mermaid Inn stands half way down on the north side. The front of this ancient hostelry is modern, but the back portion remains in its primitive state. On entering, one finds such a labyrinth of rooms as to need a guide, and all of them are interesting on account of their antiquated appearance. It is believed to have been built about the middle of the 15th century, and its grounds extended at the back as far as the Mint and covered the whole of that part now known as Mermaid Passage and Hylands Yard. Some portion of this extensive courtyard was used for stabling the many pack-horses that came into the town, as this Inn was the principal hostelry. In later times, when the coaches ran between London and Rye, the Mermaid was of great service to the travelling public. It was also the famous resort of highwaymen and [12] smugglers in those days, and no doubt not only the cellars and recesses about it, but more particularly places in the roof of the house, could unfold a history of an exceedingly interesting nature. Many a tale of strange and thrilling adventure with highwaymen or of some smugglers' daring encounters, has, doubtless, been related in those memorable times. It is even said to have been the headquarters of the notorious Hawkhurst gang of highwaymen, who, after having successfully run a cargo of goods on the seashore, would spend some of the time carousing and smoking their pipes with their loaded pistols lying on the table before them, the local authorities being afraid to interfere with them. It shows many signs of the Tudor age and there is still to be seen a date in Roman numerals of the 16th century. It is known to have been an Inn as far back as 1636, as part of the income of the Grammar Schoolmaster was, at that date, derived from an annuity secured upon the Mermaid.

A Mermaid Mug, which we have in our possession, was dug up near to the Inn a few years ago. The antiquarian gem of the place is an old room ornamented with a well-carved wainscot of the folded linen pattern, and having a chimney piece of Caen stone with a number of

roses engraven thereon, indicative of the Tudor age. There is also a fine oak door and a Jacobean cupboard. It is now used as the public sitting room. The room known as the club room has an original fireplace measuring 16 feet in length. An oak beam of considerable thickness stretches across to support the chimney. On the bed of the fireplace is a huge block of iron ore, the size of it being 6 feet 6 inches by 2 feet, and it is 7 inches in thickness. When this block was placed there is unknown as it was found when the fireplace was again opened some years back. There is also, in this room, the old timbers and leadlights and a peculiarly constructed winding oak staircase which leads to the rooms above. As one sits in the old chimney corner he can picture to himself much of what might have transpired here in the days of long ago. To the dining room has been added a smaller one and both these give much evidence of antiquity, especially the walls, windows and stone fireplaces. It will be noticed that the roses cut on these fireplaces are of an older pattern than those in the sitting room. The arched window in the front hall, with its Tudor roses, is said to have been at one time the bar entrance. [14] Doubtless some of the walls of the Mermaid were fresco-covered as, during alterations, there has recently been discovered the distinct remains of a fresco in one of the rooms.

Local coins or tokens were issued at the Mermaid by an innkeeper named Michael Cadman. He was Mayor in 1654 and in 1656 was landlord of "Ye Maremaid." He issued brass farthing tokens inscribed "Michaell Cadman, at the Mearemade in Rye." These bore the figure of a Mermaid. There were others in the town who issued their own coins, among them being a brewer and trustee of the Grammar School, named Thomas Boys, in addition to whose inscription was a coat of arms. William Key, a shipowner, and contractor for supplying the Government with shot, anchors, cables, etc., from the Sussex iron works, and landlord of the "Sheepe Inn," had coins ornamented with a ship and dated 1652. In 1668 another coin issued bore a three-mast ship in full sail and the words "For ye Corporation" on one side, and the Church with the words "Of Rye, 1668" on the other, and as late as 1796 a tradesman's token was

issued. It bore on the obverse an open tea-chest between sugar loaves and a pair of scales above, and the legend "G. Bennett, grocer, Rye, Sussex, 1796." On the reverse—an ornamental cipher "G.B." Leg. "For the use of trade." These coins are believed to have been struck at the Mint, which is supposed to have stood on the spot now occupied by Messrs. Gasson's stores, facing the Mermaid Lane, and was afterwards, until recent years, used as a forge. The local company who now own the Mermaid have expended much in trying to preserve the building from decay, and its walls, ceilings, floors and windows, as well as its furniture, all give one the impression of medieval times. On leaving the Mermaid we come to

JEAKE'S HOUSE,

better known as the Old Hospital, it having been used as such in the "brave days of old." It was formerly the dwelling house of Samuel Jeake the younger, who received it as his wife's dower. In the 17th century, when the notable family of Jeake resided here, it was one of the best houses in Rye, as this street was then the principal one in the town and extended right through to Market Street. We will pause to notice this interesting family. Holloway says, in his biography, that "Samuel Jeake, the elder, born quite at the close of the reign of James I., lived through the disastrous times of the first Charles, basked in the sunshine of the palmy days of Puritanism under the protectorate of Oliver Cromwell ; suffered persecution from Charles II., experienced some alleviation of that suffering during the short reign of James II. And happily lived to see the accession of William III. And Mary. Jeake was a lawyer by profession, in religion a Puritan, and in politics a Roundhead."

He is also said to have been an eloquent Nonconformist preacher, and was a scholar of no mean order. In 1651 he was elected Town Clerk of Rye. He wrote "The Charter of the Cinque Ports, two ancient towns and their Members," and completed it in 1678, but he died soon after, and the manuscript having come to the knowledge of Lord Chief Baron Gilbert, it was printed in 1728. Samuel Jeake, the younger, among other things, studied astrology, evidence of

which is given in a building now known as Jeake's House nearly opposite the Old Hospital. He built the place as a storehouse, and on June 13th, 1689, exactly at noon, he laid the first stone. A stone in the wall on which is engraved a horoscope showing the aspect of the heavens at the time, bears also a Latin inscription, the translation of which is as follows :—"The foundation of this storehouse was laid at noon, on June 13th, 1689, the position of the heavens being as here described." This building which has been used as the Baptist School-room, was in 1909 converted into a private residence.

Adjoining this, stands the old Baptist Chapel, formerly the Quakers' Meeting House, and in which that celebrated philanthropic lady, Mrs. Fry, once held a meeting. The Chapel was purchased in 1753 by the Baptists who, having built a new one in Cinque Ports Street in 1909, disposed of the old building. It is now used by St. Mary's Men's Club. There is no date as to when it was erected, but, according to a Church register, the Quakers had a burying ground as far back as 1705, supposed to be the now disused one at the back of this building. On descending the hill and looking back, the peculiar formation of the houses and their roofs is worth noticing. Below the Baptist Chapel and Minister's house is a very old residence. In recent years the outside has been altered for trade purposes, but on proceeding to renovate some of the many rooms, [16] massive timbers with carved oak fireplaces, and on the walls, after removing the plaster, remains of coloured fresco work were discovered. Leaving this street by way of Trader Passage we pass the

JUBILEE ALMSHOUSES.

These small dwellings are situated at what is known as the Green, and near to the old Inn, called the "Hope and Anchor." At the back of them lies the disused Baptist burying ground. On the occasion of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897, they were purchased, partly through the generosity of the late Mrs. Brocket and partly by public subscription, and converted into a commodious place for two aged couples, and then handed over to the Corporation to control.

WATCHBELL STREET AND CHURCH SQUARE.

From the West end we get a very extensive view of Brede Levels and Udimore cliffs, where, when the sea washed the rocks, Edward III., with the Prince of Wales, rejoined Queen Philippa, after his victorious naval engagement with the Spaniards off Winchelsea and they repaired to the Manor House at Udimore (in Domesday book called Dodimere, afterwards known as Udymer, and then corrupted into Udimore), the residence of John Elrington, Treasurer of the King's household ; the Queen and her attendants had anxiously watched the battle from the cliffs. We can also see the Ancient Town of Winchelsea, the coastline of the English Channel, and some of the remaining Martello Towers. These were erected early in the last century, to assist in coast defence, but have never been [18] required. They are said to have cost, in some instances, as much as £20,000 to build, the walls being over six feet thick. There were, at one time, 74 of them between Seaford and Folkestone. The Military Canal running by the side of Winchelsea road formed part of the plan of defence, and extends from Pett to Hythe, a distance of 23 miles, being intersected at Rye by the river. The bank at the side of the Canal was raised to protect the military. In the marshes are the ruins of

CAMBER CASTLE.

This old ruin was built by Henry VIII. And is one-and-a-half miles from Rye. The Castle consisted of one central tower or keep, surrounded by smaller ones, each having loopholes in the walls for firing. Much is now below the surface of the ground. It was intended for the defence of the towns ; and at the time of erection, the spot was a peninsula of beach which projected in an easterly direction, the castle guarding the entrance to the estuary leading to Winchelsea, with the sea almost washing its base. The only communication between the two Ancient Towns in those days was by boat, or passing over the sands at low water. In time the beach collected to the south of the Castle and in the commission of Lord Tufton, an Act was passed, dated November 15th, 1626, to destroy Camber Castle, as being useless for defence, through the sea receding. A Burrell MSS. Has the following : "Camber Castle, near Rye. Captain's fee per day

2/- ; Porter's 6 ; Soldier's 9, le peece 6 ; Gunners 17, le piece 6.—
Thomas Welford, Captain, 1580, (MS. Knight)."

The old castle, in the more recent days of smuggling, became of service to the men when landing their contraband on the coast, and in the vicinity was a hut known as "The Smugglers' Hut." They conveyed the cargo to the old ruins and there deposited the goods until an opportunity occurred for their disposal. The Customs' authorities had officers known as "Preventive" men, who did duty along the coast. The last two to perform this work were a Mr. John Vidler, and an ancestor of Mr. Wm. Waters, chemist, of High Street. On one occasion a great quantity of brandy was landed by a very large band of smugglers at this part, and as the officer had only a few men at his command, he wisely arranged with these offenders against the law to divide their contraband into three parts—one part for the Customs' authority, another for themselves, and the third for himself—and acquitted them.

Watchbell Street and Church Square contain many old houses. In this street is the newly built [20] Roman Catholic Mission Church dedicated to St. Walburga. Much money has been expended on its internal embellishment. It was opened by Archbishop Bourne in 1900.

Immediately opposite to it is the disused "Independent" Chapel (now the property of Mr. Henry James). This Chapel was built as the result of a split among the Baptists in the town in 1817, and was used by the Congregational Church on Conduit Hill, in 1882. "Store House," as it is called, stands on the south side of the street near the Churchyard.

THE CARMELITE CHAPEL.

This edifice was originally occupied by the Carmelite Friars and being of stone, escaped the fires of 1378 and 1448, when the town was burnt down by the French. The Chapel is 28 feet long and 19 feet wide, and in the gable end, facing north, is still visible the arch of a handsome gothic window. The Carmelites took their name from Mount Carmel where they were first established, and some of the

fraternity, about the middle of the 13th century, emigrated to England, and established a Monastery at Newenden, in Kent, about ten miles from Rye. It is [21] very probable that this Chapel in Church Square was built in connection with that Monastery about the same time. Thomas Sackville gave the sum of six shillings and eight pence to the Augustines, and a similar amount to the Carmelites at Rye. He married the daughter of Sir Edward Dalyngrudge, of Bodiam Castle, a few miles from where the Carmelite Monastery at Newenden stood. The Chapel can be inspected by the visitor. The houses in this part of the street are all very ancient as the timbers within them indicate. The more modern fronts of some, although erected very many years ago, are worthy of notice.

There are near here several old houses known as Huckstep's Row, and we give a picture of the back part of one, from a painting by Miss F. A. Deacon, which shows that some of them date back to the Tudor period if not earlier.

At the south-east corner of Church Square are the modern-built Wesleyan Sunday Schools and a short distance from them [22] stands the Wesleyan Chapel. John Wesley paid fourteen visits to the Ancient Town and was much interested in it. The first was in 1758, when, so charmed with its natural appearance, he alluded to it as "a picturesque town seated on the top of a round fruitful hill." He spent some days at Rye on that occasion and preached in the open-air. He alluded to his congregations in one of his visits as "unawakened"; but in course of time, as "coming in crowds to hear the Word, not only the poor people but also some of the gentry." In 1773 he wrote in his journal: "Monday, November 22nd, I set out for Sussex and found abundance of people to hear the good word, at Rye in particular, and they do many things gladly, but they will not part with the accursed thing—smuggling; so I fear with regard to these our labour will be in vain."

He once preached in the Restorationists' Chapel which stood above the Hospital in Mermaid Street. On Wednesday, January 28th, 1789, he opened the "new preaching house," which he described as "a noble building, much loftier than most of our meeting houses and finely situated at the head of the town." The congregation was the largest

he had ever had at Rye. This place was built, with a Minister's house adjoining, through the liberality of Mr. John Haddock, who was a young Churchman of great charity and piety. The site was a garden, situate in what was known as Baddyng's Ward and "adjoining a former disused Churchyard." Two days after opening the Rye Chapel he went and preached in a new Chapel at Winchelsea, which building is still standing and is used as a Sunday school. Owing to the Rye Chapel being too small for the increased congregations, the present one, on the same site, was built and opened in 1814. The Minister's house adjoining it was sold in 1900 when the new schools were erected, and has since, with the old Schools, been converted into commodious dwelling houses. Wesley's final visit to Rye was in 1790 and he afterwards proceeded to Winchelsea, where he preached his last outdoor sermon under the ash tree by the Churchyard wall.

Watchbell Street takes its name from the "Watchbell" which was hung at the East end of the street, in what is known as the Gungarden. We are able to give the exact position of the Watchbell, from the Plan which is still in existence, attached to an Indenture, in which the Mayor and Corporation "assynde" a piece of land at Baddyng's lane, as it was [23] called, to Wm. Davis and his successors for a period of 999 years, dating from "the feast day of St. Michael the Archangel" 1770, at 2/6 yearly. In days of yore guns were also placed at this part to protect the town. Queen Elizabeth, it is said, sent to Rye a number of brass cannon, trophies of the Spanish Armada, in recognition of the valuable assistance given by the men of Rye in that great and memorable engagement.

THE YPRES CASTLE.

This stone building was erected in 1135 to protect the town from foreign foes, and stands on the south-eastern corner at the head of a flight of stone steps leading down to the level ground, where formerly the sea flowed. On such a prominence it afforded extensive observation of the [24] coastline, and owing to the piratical inroads of the French from the opposite side of the Channel, we see at once not only the propriety, but the actual necessity in those times, of some such place of defence. As Rye was one of the principal

outposts of the nation, there was no more eligible spot than the top of the tower from which the Warder could survey the wide expanse of water from Fairlight on the west, to Dover cliffs on the east, and even to the heights of Boulogne. On seeing the enemy he would warn his brother Warder in charge of the Watchbell near by, and on his sounding the tocsin, the inhabitants would rush to arms and hasten to repel the invasion of the enemy.

It is stated to have been built by William de Ypres, Earl of Kent and a sheriff of Sussex, who was a cousin of King Stephen, and is a quadrangle building with a round tower at each corner ; the walls are four feet thick and each tower is 40 feet high. There are several studded doors with iron grilles and massive bolts, and also narrow lancet windows through which the garrison could discharge their arrows at the besiegers. There is no written nor traditional report that it was ever captured.

For the first 300 years it was used for military purposes. It then became the property of the Rye Corporation and in 1430 it was sold by them to John de Iprys and Elizabeth his wife, with a reserve to enter it in time of war. Thomas Stoughton purchased it in 1451, and afterwards conveyed it to James Hyde, about 1473. In 1478 Lord Stanley became the owner. According to a record in the Town Hall, Lord Stanley exchanged it with John Newburgh, in April, 1491. Once again, in 1494, it became the property of the Corporation by purchase, and has remained in their hands ever since. Up to 1654 it was used as the Courthouse and afterwards became the town gaol until the County Council came into existence, when that body taking over control of the police force, built the Police Station in Church Square. Holloway says of this old castle, "through the long period of 700 years in spite of all vicissitudes of time, there stands our Tower in all the venerability of antiquity, mossed and brown with age." [25]

"A noble relic of times long gone by
Casting its halo o'er the past of Rye."

The keys of the Castle are kept at the house adjoining and visitors can be shown over. Near to the Castle was Baddyng's Gate and the

east wall of the town extended from there to the Landgate. The wall and also a great portion of the cliff, which Richard I., in answer to the petition of the Barons of Rye, granted them permission, by charter, to build in 1194, was afterwards washed away by the sea. This charter, although over 700 years old, is still preserved among the records of the town.

Immediately below the Castle is the Old Gungarden in which, as early as the reign of Queen Elizabeth were placed guns, whence its name. This place was, at one time, used for the annual artillery prize firing, but it was some years ago dismantled and although still retained by Government in case of emergency, is let to the Corporation, who, on account of its pleasant situation and extensive views, have thrown it open for the use of the inhabitants and visitors. In 1906 a huge anchor was dragged up in the Channel off Rye Harbour. This was given to the town and placed in the grounds. There are many conjectures, some thinking that owing to the shape and size, and apparent great age (being covered with barnacles, oyster shells, etc.), it belonged to one of the Spanish warships. As anchors and other large pieces of iron work were made at both Beckley and Brede furnaces, where ore was dug, brought to Rye and from thence shipped to different parts, it may have been of local manufacture. The visitor is at liberty to form his own opinion. Through the efforts of Mr. T. Bushby, postmaster, the two field guns now in the grounds were placed there in 1906, having been purchased by subscription.

Leaving the Gungarden we go through the Churchyard under the flying buttresses at the east end of the Church, and pass the old Reservoir on the right, the highest point in the [27] old Town, from whence at one time the town was supplied with water, which had been pumped to this summit. Jeake speaks of a new conduit in 1678, at the foot of Conduit Hill, which was re-built in 1718, and worked by horses until more recent years, when modern machinery and other pumping stations in Military Road and at Cadborough Cliff took their place and this reservoir was no longer required. The brickwork is considered very good. At the North door of the Parish Church the height of the town is 77 feet 8 inches above mean sea level.

We enter the Church at the North door. It has been styled “the Cathedral of East Sussex,” and the visitor will, on inspection, at once see that it is a grand edifice.

Internally it has undergone very many changes. In some periods it apparently suffered much and has been considerably mutilated, which are now being more carefully protected from ruthless hands. We give a picture, from an old print, of a part of the interior showing its appearance as late as 1860.

The sacred building has well withstood the ravages of time, for it was built in the 12th century. It is believed that there originally existed a Church on the same spot as the present one, although Jeake and Holloway seem to favour the idea that the original Saxon Church, built during the [29] reign of Edward the Confessor, 1042-1066, “and destroyed before the end of the 12th century,” stood in the Gungarden. The latter supports his opinion from the fact that many bones of human skeletons have been dug up in the Gungarden and near to the Ypres Tower. Reference is also made to a former Churchyard in some old deeds of property, one of which we have already referred to. Also that it was built of wood as all the houses of that period were, owing to the abundance of trees in the great forest of Andereda which existed in the neighbourhood, and is said to have extended 120 miles in length and 30 miles in breadth.

There are several styles of architecture observable : Norman of a period anterior to 1189 ; Early English or Lancet, 1189 to 1272 ; Decorated from 1272 to 1377, and Perpendicular of the period 1377 to 1546. The Church is dedicated to the Virgin Mary and was sometimes called “the Church of our Lady.” The Common Seal of the Town of Rye bears on its reverse an outline of the Church, as it is now seen, with certain architectural embellishments differing somewhat from the present. At the north entrance, which was ornamented with tracery work, according to the Seal, stood a figure of the Virgin with the infant Jesus on her left arm and in her right a trefoil cross or palm branch, and there were pointed arches rising over her head to the top of the tower. There are also other features which differ from some of the present structural adornment, but

these may have been introduced emblematical of the Virgin, etc. The Church is represented as in a boat and the Seal bears in Latin the words, "Hail Mary ! full of grace, the Lord is with thee, blessed art thou among women." The earliest impression of this Seal on record is dated 1430.

The length of the Church from west to east is 159 feet ; that is, from the west wall to the centre of the easternmost arch of the nave, 74 feet ; from the latter to the centre of the chancel arch, 23 feet ; and thence to the east window, 62 feet. The length of the transept from north to south, is 77 feet ; and the width from east to west, 22 feet. An elegant window ornaments the east end of the choir, while the north and south transepts are each lighted by one of large dimensions. Two very handsome Anglo-Norman arches separate the north and south aisles of the nave from the transept. The present chancel, which is the body of the original choir, was at one time separated from its wings by lath and plaster. From its appearance, no doubt part of the Rood Screen, [31] which is said to have been taken down from the west end of the chancel at the Reformation, is that which now stretches across St. Clare's Chapel, separating it from the North Transept. The South Chapel was dedicated to St. Nicholas, and the north owns St. Clare as its patroness. The Chancel and the side Chapels have recently been carefully restored. The whitewash which covered the columns and walls has been removed, and in consequence, pilgrim and mason's marks, and other old signs scratched upon them brought to light. These are visible, more particularly in the columns and arches which divide the south Chapel from the Chancel ; but they are also to be found in other parts. An entirely new floor has been laid in the south Chapel, whilst a beautiful carved oak screen with glass panels separates St. Clare's from the Chancel.

ST. CLARE'S CHAPEL

was at one time made the depository of all the old lumber of the Church and parish, and the fire engine, builders' ladders, etc., were even stored in it. In 1585, by order of the Mayor and Jurats, for fortification purposes, St. Clare's Chapel was to be used as a "powder

house.” In 1863, the lath and plaster was removed from the arches on the north side of the Chancel, throwing open St. Clare’s Chapel ; a handsome window erected at the eastern end, and the lancet windows on north side opened, while the beautiful screen at the west end has been cleaned and restored. During the work of renovating part of the Church in 1900, a very handsome arch was here discovered and restored to its former beauty ; and in several holes, about five feet from the floor, many bones were found which were carefully enclosed in their former resting place. In the north-east of the Chancel, adjoining the stone screen, during the re-building of the pillar which had become unsafe, the foundations of what was probably the outside of the original chancel were discovered ; they measure five feet in thickness. Two 13th century tiles were also found under the pillar. There was also a vault, eight feet by five feet, which contained several coffins. Services are now held in St. Clare’s Chapel on week-days.

In this Chapel are the remains of brasses representing a man, his wife, and seven children said by some to belong either to the latter end of the 14th or the beginning of the 15th century. [33]

GREBELL’S epitaph, in St. Clare’s Chapel, reads as follows : “Here lyeth the body of ALLEN GREBELL, Esq., who, after having served the office of Mayor of this town for ten years with the greatest honour and integrity, fell by the cruel stab of a sanguinary butcher, on March 17th, 1742. Aged 50 years.”

Resting beneath a stone in St. Clare’s Chapel, near the communion table, on the north side, are the mortal remains of Rye’s greatest Historian—one to whose work every writer at any length on the History of the Ancient Town has had occasion to go for information. He was a devoted student of the antiquity and archaeology of the place, and there are some still living who remember WILLIAM HOLLOWAY, and know that it was no vain sentiment of his in quoting those words of the old Customal when, in completing his famous History of Rye he says, “I shall close this little work exclaiming, as I began, with heart and voice, “God save Englonde and the Towne of Rye.” A small brass plate is all that

marks the spot of one who has done the town such invaluable service. It simply states after relating the death of his only son, Meryon, who was unfortunately drowned while at Charterhouse School, in 1828, and his wife's decease in 1868, at the age of 89 ;—"and to WILLIAM HOLLOWAY, Historian of Rye, who died 23rd May, 1870, aged 84." Whilst it has never been considered needful to erect a marble monument to his memory, his name will be for ever green in the pages he has written of ancient Rye. He was the last one to be buried within the walls of that Church he loved and about which he wrote so much.

The massive mahogany Communion Table standing under the east window is a most beautiful example of Rococo cabinet work. It is said to have been taken from a Spanish vessel from America, which was captured by a Rye privateer and brought to Rye, when it was purchased by one of the Lamb family and presented to the Church. It has emblems of corn and fruit, artistically worked, and may at one time have been used for other purposes, as its origin is a mystery.

THE CHANCEL.

In 1895, a carved oak Reredos was erected to the memory of the Rev. D. T. Gladstone, a former Vicar. It is a beautiful work of art, by Mr. Harry Hems, of Exeter, and represents the Ascension. The Christ—a figure of Divine Majesty and manly dignity—is in the act of ascending into Heaven. [35] The hands and feet show signs of the wounds of Good Friday; but a nimbus of Glory is about His head, to show that He has conquered now. The right hand is raised in Benediction. The oval back-ground expresses in the conventional way, as is artistically understood, the clouds of glory. The outer rim is composed in every direction upon the surrounding clouds. The Angels kneeling below in attitudes of wonder and rapt devotion, remind us of the heavenly worship which the Ascended Lord is now receiving in Heaven from the Angels, who are models of all who worship Him here on earth.

Within the rail is a flat stone bearing a brass representing a male figure in flowing robes, designating his office of Mayor which he

often filled. His hands are clasped in prayer. Around the verge of the stone was formerly a narrow strip of brass, bearing an inscription which is now in an imperfect state; the following words still remain—"Here lieth the body of Thomas Hamon, who departed on the 20th day of July, 1607." The following lines are on a brass below the figure.

Loe ! Thomas Hamon here interr'd doth lie, Thrice Burgess for the Parliament elected; Six times by Freeman's choice made Mayor of Rye, And Captain long time of the Band selected ; Whose prudence, courage, justice, gravitie, Deserve a monument of memory.

Captain of the band, means the militia of the town in former times.

Up to the time of the restoration, St. Mary's had no stained glass windows. Gifts were at various times made to the Church by Mrs. Gutch, who presented the beautiful stained east window, which bears the following inscription at the foot : "To the honour and glory of the Most High God." This window is dedicated as a thank-offering for His many mercies by MARY GUTCH, 1883." This window is a splendid specimen of Perpendicular Gothic architecture ; its height is 30 feet and width 18 feet. The window is divided into twelve compartments, 8 feet by 2 feet ; above these, and within the arch, are about 40 panels formed by the intersections of the stone tracery. The whole of these are filled with stained glass. In the twelve principal lights are depicted some [37] of the most important events in the life of our Lord. The subjects on the upper tier are the Annunciation, Presentation, Adoration of the Magi, Visit to the Jewish Doctors in the Temple, Baptism ; on the lower tier, the Triumphal entry into Jerusalem, Agony in Gethsemane, Bearing the Cross, Crucifixion, Visit of the Women to the Tomb, Ascension. These twelve groups have been executed in coloured glass upon back-grounds of blue, surrounded by elaborate canopies, projecting upon back-grounds at the top are four figures of the Archangels Raphael, Michael, Gabriel and Uriel, and on either side St. Matthew, St. Luke and St. John. The figures of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel, and the Virgin Mary

appear in nearly every group. The work was designed and executed by Messrs. Wailes and Strang, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

ST. NICHOLAS' CHAPEL.

Like St. Clare's, the south Chapel, known as St. Nicholas', has been put to various secular uses. When the Workhouse was situated in the Gungarden and the French Huguenots had taught the inhabitants various arts, we are told that it was used by the Workhouse inmates as a spinning room. For some time, as recently as forty years ago, it was used as a school. On the south wall are placed the handsome Coat of Arms of Queen Anne which at one time hung at the end of the nave facing the west window ; this was presented by Mr. Southwell, one of the Members of Parliament for Rye. It was removed when the Church was restored in 1883. The Tables of the Commandments and the Creed which once stood within the Communion rails and afterwards in the south transept, are now relegated to this part of the Church. Here is hung a fine old chandelier of twenty-four lights, four feet high and four feet in width, which at the restoration of the Church some years ago, came into the hands of a lady residing at Hampton-on-Thames, who presented it to the Church. The chandelier is inscribed : "Ex dono Thomas Lamb armigeri—1759."

SOUTH TRANSEPT.

In the south transept, on the west side of it, are remains of sedilia with arches, and on the opposite side there are portions remaining which suggest that some ornamental work at one time existed here, and at this part also stood the Font. This has been removed and now [39] stands at the west end of the Church. It is carved with a dragon, indicative of the evil spirit—and the design has been borrowed from an original one in the Church at Newenden, Kent.

In 1901, a fine organ, by Messrs. Norman & Beard, of Norwich, was placed in the south transept; but it has recently been removed to St. Nicholas Chapel. It cost about £900, and is a three-manual instrument of 25 stops with accessories, having a total of 1,762

pipes. The organist's screen is in memory of the late Dean Hole, of Rochester. The old organ is now in use at Playden Church.

THE VESTRY.

The present vestry was formerly the vault of Thomas Lamb, Esq., the coffins have been deposited underground, and its original beauties restored, exhibiting a very handsome groined arch; while the south porch, which had been used as a vestry, was again opened for the admission of the congregation. [40]

In the Vestry is an ancient leaden Flagon of foreign workmanship, 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches high and 14 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches in circumference. The following inscription has been placed on it: "This flagon used at the celebration of the Lord's Supper by the Minister of the Protestant Refugees who found an asylum in Rye after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, 22nd October, 1685, was presented for the use of the Church to the Vicar and Churchwardens of Rye by William Holloway and Sarah, his wife, formerly Sarah Meryon, a descendant of one of the Refugees. 5th May, 1860."

THE STAINED GLASS WINDOWS.

The stained glass window in the south aisle, to the memory of H. Burra, Esq., and his wife Frances, was erected in 1889. The work was executed by Mr. C. E. Kempe, of London. An angel appears in the centre tracery, and on either side is the word "Alleluia." In the top lights are the figures of St. Andrew and St. Peter, while below are illustrations of the miraculous draught of fishes and Christ's charge to Peter. It bears the following inscription:—"In the midst of life we are in death; of whom may we seek for succour but of Thee, O Lord? These words are here written in memory of Henry Burra and Frances, his wife; who entered into rest, the one February 28th, 1886, the other June 18th, 1871."

On the south wall, near the Vestry door, are two marble tablets, with Arms. They bear the following inscriptions:—"To the Glory of God and in loving memory of ROBERT STEWART, second son of the Rev. Charles Stewart, B.A., who entered into rest 19th June, 1927, aged 59. This tablet is dedicated by his son Charles Stewart, 21st Cavalry F.

F. As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.”

“To the Glory of God and in loving memory of CHARLES EDWARD STEWART, eldest son of the late Rev Charles Stewart, who entered into rest on the 8th April, 1909, aged 62 years. This tablet is dedicated by his Nephew, Captain Charles Stewart, 21st Cavalry F.F. With Christ which is far better.”

The south porch contains some small stained glass windows, which were erected by the Sunday School children and teachers. Here also is a Holy Water Stoup and another one remains in the north wall of the Church. [41]

The next window in the south aisle is erected to the memory of Mary Symonds, and to Robert Coker Nash Davies, of Rye, a member of the Town Council, who is buried in Winchelsea Churchyard. The representations are the Holy Child in the arms of Simeon, while close by are the Virgin Mary and Anna the prophetess. The upper light is a representation of Nathaniel being brought to Christ by St. Phillip. In the lower lights are angels bearing scrolls. It bears the following inscriptions : “In humble thankfulness for the Redemption of the world I dedicate this window in memory of my Mother, Mary Symonds, who died December 17th, 1881, aged 91. J.D. 1894.” In the blessed hope of everlasting life, I dedicate this window to the memory of my Husband, ROBERT COKER NASH DAVIES, who died May 9th, 1891, aged 61. J.D. 1894.” Messrs. Powel were responsible for the work of this window.

In the same aisle at the west end is a window to the memory of Dr. John Adamson and Jane his wife. The figures in the upper part of the window are those of Elijah and John the Baptist (pointing to a lamb) holding the inscription : “Ecce Agnus Dei qui tollit peccata mundi.” (“Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world.”) The lower light contains a representation of Christ giving sight to the blind man. This window was the work of Messrs. Kemp, and it bears this inscription : “To the glory of God and in

affectionate remembrance of JOHN ADAMSON, who died January 21st, 1870, aged 72 years; also of JANE, His Wife, who died October 9th, 1881, aged 81 years; "Their family dedicate this window."

At the west end of the north aisle is a stained glass window in memory of Mrs. Pomfret. It represents the Saviour as the Shepherd tending his flock, with the following under each picture : "The Lord is my Shepherd;" "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures;" "He restoreth my soul;" "He leadeth me beside the still waters." The inscription at the foot reads: "In loving memory of Margaret Haddock Pomfret, born 2nd November, 1791, died 1st April, 1885." This was placed here by the Lardner-Dennys family.

A stained glass window in the north aisle, is in memory of Mary Tiltman. It is an elegant piece of workmanship by Messrs. Morris & Co., and is from the design of Sir Edward Burne-Jones. It represents "The Manifestation of our Lord to the Gentiles." An inscription at the base reads thus : "To the honour and glory of Almighty God, and in loving remembrance of [42] Mary Tiltman, who died December 30th, 1881. This window is erected by her eldest son, Alfred Hessel Tiltman, F.R.I.B.A., 1897. A brass tablet beneath the window has the following:— To the tender memory of ALFRED HESSELL TILTMAN, F.R.I.B.A., who died at Hampstead, on July 17th, 1910.

A CASE OF CURIOSITIES

is situated in the north-west corner of the Church. In this case are several objects well worth inspection, including two "Geneva" or "Breeches" Bibles (one black letter, the other bound with the Prayer Book of 1552, the 2nd Book of Edward VI); a very fine "Vinegar" Bible, in two folio volumes; a French book of engravings of sacred subjects, by Gregory Huret, published in 1661; a Prayer Book, dated 1758, given by Mr. Norris, M.P., for use in the Mayor's pew; a pamphlet descriptive of the ancient Danish vessel found in the River Rother in 1823; eight stone cannon balls, about four pounds in weight, found in the walls, said to have been fired at the Church by the French in 1448; an original drawing and specification of the Rye

Bells, dated 29th July, 1775; and an excellent Model, by Mr. Sullivan, of Hastings, of the original Sanctuary Knocker, which was once attached to the west door of Rye Church, and is now on view at the Hastings Museum. [44]

It was in 1540 that Miles Coverdale completed his English version of the Bible, and a copy of it was introduced into different churches of the kingdom, in conformity with which custom Rye was furnished with two Bibles, the cost of which was £1 6s. 8d. These were chained up so that any person might go into the Church and read them, but was not allowed to take them away. "1549—June 6th: Paid for two chains, one for the Bible, the other for the Paraphrase, 10d." (Churchwardens' Accounts).

A remarkable feature about the Nave of the Church is the peculiar formation of the arches, all of which are different in height, those on the south side appearing to be the highest. The capitals of the columns are also varied in style of carving.

On the north wall at the west end of the nave is the following inscription to Thomas Lamb: "Sacred to the memory of THOMAS LAMB, Esquire, (the eldest son of James and Martha Lamb), who died on the 29th day of March, 1804, at the advanced age of 84 years and 9 months, and whose remains are deposited in a vault on the south side of Church. The leisure afforded by an independent fortune, he employed in the zealous discharge of the duties of a magistrate, acting for the Counties of Kent and Sussex, and also for the Town of Rye. In his disposition he was benevolent and humane, in his manners cheerful and social: in the discharge of every relative duty faithful: and in his religious tenets firmly attached to the Established Church. By his marriage with Dorothy, sixth daughter of the Rev. Charles Eyles, M.A., Vicar of Turk Dean in Gloucestershire, he left one son, T. P. Lamb, by whom this monument (the tribute of duty and esteem) is erected."

Immediately beside the above is another monument with this inscription: "To the Memory of JAMES LAMB, Esq., a man of uncommon virtue, who, with the integrity of a merchant, and the

courtesy of a gentlemen, united the undissembled piety of a true Christian. His distinguished abilities raised him no less than 13 times to the Mayoralty of this Corporation, which office he always executed with a dignity that showed him born for precedence. He had twice the honour of entertaining a Royal Guest at his house: once in the person of His Majesty King George the First, and afterwards in that of his grandson, the Duke of Cumberland. He had also the honour (as one of the Barons of this town) to support the canopy over her late Majesty Queen Caroline, [45] at her coronation. Beloved in his private connections, in his public ones admired and honoured, he died on the 21st day of November, 1756, at the age of 63 years. His remains were deposited in the new burying ground belonging to the parish of S. Andrew, Holborn, in the same grave with those of Dorothy Lamb (wife to his eldest son, Thomas) who died in a few hours after him, aged 39 years. She filled with equal lustre her station of life, having heightened every amiable quality of her sex, with a manly sense and elegance of taste.”

There are several Tablets on the north wall, some of them being to the Haddock family. It was with members of this family that John Wesley sometimes stayed on visiting Rye.

At this part there is also a tablet with the wording : “In Memory of HENRY LAURENCE, Esq., of the Kingdom of Ireland, Lieut. In his Majesty’s 52 Regt., who departed this life 4th Aug, 1781, aged 20 years.

In the Chancel are stones to the memory of the Butler family, a name dating back in the Rye Registers to 1538. The late Mr. George Slade Butler, F.S.A., was Clerk of the Peace and a very popular townsman. He died in 1882, and was buried in Rye Cemetery. His son, Mr. Slade Butler, was appointed Recorder for Rye in 1911.

There are several Brass Tablets, among them being one to the memory of Henry Burra, Esq., J.P., a former Mayor of Rye and a generous benefactor to the town ; one to the memory of Alderman Bellingham, who was also a Mayor of Rye ; another to the late W. G. Rubie, Organist for some years ; and a fourth to F. Lewns, a member

of the choir, who died on board ship, when returning home from the Boer war.

A small arcade of very fine Norman work is to be seen near to the north door. It is of an unusual pattern, having both the Greek key and the billet mould. It is regarded as early 12th century work.

The choir at one time occupied a gallery at the west end of the Church ; the choirmaster in 1790, being Nathaniel Proctor, who led the singers with a violin. A barrel organ was in use in 1811 and the gallery was improved two years later to accommodate the children. It was also raised to allow of piers being put in and the west door to be re-opened. This doorway was, [47] however, again blocked up at the Gladstone restoration of 1883-4, when the three existing galleries, north, south and west, were all taken down and also the whole of the pews removed. The writer has a copy of "Select Psalms, Hymns, and Anthems, for the use of the Congregation of Rye Church, printed, published, and sold by D. Taylor, at the Circulating Library, High Street;" it is dated 1829. In contrasting it with the hymnbook of to-day, it shows what development in hymnology has taken place since that period.

An Ambulatory runs along the north side of St. Clare's Chapel. It is about 18 feet from the ground and passes by the lancet windows we have referred to (the outside of these is shown in view of the north side). This in its complete state extended to the western end and ascended to the north of the transept and across to the gallery on the west side, forming a passage to the belfry. It then ran into the clerestory over the arches of the nave on the north side and along the whole length to the north-west end. Here it terminated in a staircase. On the south side there was also an Ambulatory, commencing in St. Nicholas Chapel, running along the side of the south Transept. As to the use of these and the period when they were in use is wrapped in obscurity, although it is suggested that they were for the purpose of enabling the superior priest to walk round and watch the conduct of his subordinates—as though such a proceeding would ever be necessary!

The west end appears to have undergone several changes. At one time there was a large window as at the present time; then several smaller lights took its place; after which the present large window was put in.

There have been at different periods, other entrances to the Church, the doorways being distinctly visible in the filling in of the walls. Part of a very beautiful Norman doorway may be seen under the south Transept window in the Churchyard.

The panels of the fine old pulpit are of the folded linen pattern, of early 16th century date.

The Church register dates from 1538.

THE CHURCH CLOCK.

The Church clock is supposed to be the oldest going in England; the pendulum is 18 feet in length, and swings within the Church, across the north arch under the tower. It was [49] purchased by the churchwardens in 1560, and cost about £170 of our present money. On the outside are “Quarter boys,” 4 feet 8½ inches in height, made of oak, which strike the quarters upon two bells. According to the Church accounts it is believed to have been made at Winchelsea.

THE BELFRY.

The belfry contains eight bells. Six were re-cast in 1775, and two new ones added, and the total weight of them is over four tons; they were repaired and re-hung in May, 1897. Around the lips of the bells may be found the following:

1st.—If you have a judicious ear you'll own my voice is sweet and clear.

2nd.—If you have a judicious ear you'll own my voice is sweet and clear.

3rd.—While thus we join in cheerful sound may love and loyalty abound.

4th.—Such wondrous power to music's given, it elevates the soul to heaven.

5th.—Ye people all who hear me ring be faithful to your God and King.

6th.—Peace and good neighbour-hood.

7th.—Ye ringers all, who prize your health and happiness, be sober, merry, wise, and you'll the same possess.

8th.—In wed-locks bands all ye who join with hands your hearts unite, So shall our tuneful tongues combine to laud the nuptial rite.

The courteous Verger is in attendance to conduct persons round the Church. His residence is Battery House. [50]

THE SUNDIAL.

Facing the north side of the Church and at the back of the Town Hall is an old stone sundial. This was presented to the town by Col. De Lacy Evans, when representing Rye in Parliament as a Liberal Member. It was removed from the Old Grammar School to its present position in 1887.

It has the motto:-

“That solar shadow, as it measures life It life resembles too.”

THE TOWN HALL

is situate in Market Street, and was built in 1742. It is mainly composed of brick with stone facings. In the front of the building, over the centre window, and cut in stone, is the coat of arms of the Borough, and a cupola surmounts the top of the building within which hung the bell formerly used to summon the Jurors to the Quarter Sessions. The ground floor is 54 feet long and 24 feet wide. Five stone arches support the first floor and the openings are protected by iron failings. The ground floor was originally the Market for the sale of meat and other produce. It is now partitioned off, the eastern portion being used as the Magistrates' room and also for Committees of the Council. Within the iron safes in this room are kept the

MASSIVE SILVER-GILT MACES,

said to be the best pair in existence. They are most elegant in appearance and dated 1767. [51]

Holloway states that “they were the joint gift of Thomas Owens, Esq., then Mayor, of John Norris, Esq., then one of the Members of the town, and of Rose Fuller, Esq., who was not then a Representative of the Borough, but became one in the following year, and continued in that high office till 1776, when he died.”

They weigh 986 ounces and are insured for Here are also preserved the pair of ELIZABETHAN MACES. The Mayor’s beautifully EMBOSSSED HANDBELL is 5 1/2 inches high, and in addition to the grotesque figures, representing Orpheus playing on the violin and the harts listening to him, bears the inscription: “O Mater Dei, memento mei.” “Petrus Gheinvs me fecit, 1565.” What have been regarded as the most valuable of the Town Records, are kept in a safe in this room.

A few years ago, the late Mr. William Dawes (Clerk of the Peace), presented a handsome Silver Loving Cup to the Town, [52] and this is brought into use at the Mayoral Dinners. The late Mrs. Brocket also bequeathed to the Town a large Silver Vase, which was presented to Mr. John Woollett, by townspeople and others, in 1819, “for services rendered,” which is being carefully preserved by the authorities. A Portrait of King Edward VII. (this one is from the painting by the celebrated artist, Roe, who, when staying in the town, presented the picture to the Council), and also two of the freemen—the late Mr. F. A. Inderwick, K.C., and Col. Brookfield, adorn the walls; the former was the last representative of the Borough in Parliament, and the latter the first elected for the Rye Division of Sussex, and both of them identifying themselves closely with the welfare of the Ancient Town, were honoured by being made Freemen. The late Mr. William Dawes also left to the town his collection of fifty-one of the Sussex Archæological Society’s Annual Volumes, and these are kept in this room in an oak glazed case. Within the centre part on this floor, the Fire Engine is kept, and the western end—which is the main entrance—contains an [53]

OLD HAND FIRE ENGINE,

bearing date 1745, together with the leathern buckets then in use. It ran on low wooden wheels. Here stands also the Fire Escape, which was purchased by public subscription during the Mayoralty of Alderman Waters, 1887, but up to the present time there has been no occasion to use it. The Court Hall is approached through an ante-room. It is 38 feet long and 18 feet wide, and here are held the Borough and County Magisterial Sessions and the Quarter Sessions. The general meetings of the Council and other business is also transacted in the Hall. The list of Mayors of the Town and Town Clerks, dating from 1298, adorn the panels behind the Magistrates' Bench and the Jurors' seats, the cost of this having been defrayed jointly by the late Mr. J. A. Woodhams and Alderman Bellingham. Each succeeding Mayor's name is annually added to the list. Portraits of some who have filled the Mayoral chair adorn the walls; also the portrait of the late Queen Victoria, and the Rev. Henry Cooper, B.D. (a former Vicar), and pictures of the Brotherhood and Guestling. The original copy of

THE ENGAGEMENT (1649-50),

of the principal inhabitants of Rye to serve the Commonwealth, under Cromwell, and "to be true and faithful to the Government" as then established, without a King or a House of Lords, hangs on the wall, enclosed within an oaken case. It is signed by 168 persons, including the Mayor and Town Clerk, and no less than 77 signed by mark, each one having its distinctive feature, thus enabling the writer to recognise his own signature. The late Mr. Inderwick said, he had traced in the list no less than 27 sellers of beer, being 16 per cent. Of the whole number. This document, which is believed to be the only one now in existence was purchased at a sale at Northiam, by the late Alderman James Coleman Vidler and despite an offer from the British Museum authorities to purchase it, he presented it to the Town. Upon this wall also hangs the portrait of a recent benefactor to the town-MR. GEORGE HILDER, who was a native of Rye. He left the residue of his property, which realised £4,969 9s. 3d. And is now in Consols at 24 per cent. To the Town Council in trust; the

interest to be used for the benefit of the indigent [55] poor of the Ancient Town. From this source the Rye Borough Nursing Association receives substantial help.

On the second floor are various objects of interest, including

THE PILLORY

which at one time stood outside the Ypres Castle. This form of punishment existed before the Conquest, and it was at one time known as the “stretch neck.” was compelled by law to own a pillory, or it forfeited its privileges. Swindlers, thieves, those Every market town who gave false evidence in court, and other offenders, were condemned to stand in the pillory to condone their offences, when they were mercilessly pelted with stones, town garbage, etc., and they occasionally suffered severely and some have died whilst undergoing sentence. This pillory is said to have been last used in the early part of the nineteenth century, when an innkeeper was put in it, for assisting and conniving at the escape of a Frenchman who, during the war, had been taken prisoner and brought to Rye. Here is to be seen also the skull of Breeds, the murderer, and portions of the irons in which he was hanged. It was on the night of March 17th, 1742, that he stabbed Mr. Grebbell, in the Churchyard, in mistake for Mr. Thomas Lamb, against whom he had a violent animosity. The execution took place in a field known as Gibbet Marsh, on the western side of the town, where the gibbet was erected.

AN ACT TO CHANGE THE MARKET DAY.

As Holloway states, “the Court Hall of Rye is a store-house abounding in rich antiquarian treasures,” and in this part of the building is also kept a great number of Ancient Records One of these is the Act of Henry V., 1418, whereby a grant was made to change the Market day from Friday to Sunday. It reads as follows: “Henry, by the Grace of [56] God King of England and France, and Lord of Ireland, to the archbishops, bishops, abbots, priors, dukes, earls, barons, justices, sheriffs, mayors, and all bailiffs, and his faithful subjects, health. Know ye that whereas our beloved lieges, the mayor and commonalty of our town of Rye, by the concession of our

progenitors, formerly kings of England, and by our own confirmation, have held, as we have heard, two markets in every week, on Wednesday and Friday, at the same town. We, of our special grace, and on the prayer of the said mayor and commonalty, have granted, and by this our present charter have confirmed, for ourselves and our heirs, to the said mayor and commonalty, and they and their heirs and successors the market which at present is held every week on Friday at the same town, as aforesaid, may be held every week on the day of the Sabbath, at the same town for ever with all the liberties and free customs to the same market appertaining, provided that such market be not injurious to any neighbouring market as aforesaid,

Witness: The venerable priors of the Church of Canterbury, Primate of all England, Richard of York, Primate of all England, archbishops; Henry of Lincoln, our Chancellor, John of Gloucester, and E of Oxford, bishops; Edward, Duke of York, John of Cumberland and Henry of Northumberland, earls; William Roos de Hamleak, our treasurer; Thomas Bardolph, William de Wylughby, Thomas Erpingham, seneschall of our palace; Thomas Longle, clerk, keeper of our great seal, and others.

Given by our hand at our manner of Cherlesmore, the tenth day of November, in the sixth year of our reign. By the King himself.”
BILLINGFORD.

Other of the Ancient Records are quoted in another part of this book.

The Hall keeper resides next door and will readily show visitors over the Hall and explain more fully the contents.

THE FLUSHING INN.

This building, standing in the centre of Market Street, is known to be of great age. All historians have referred to it. Notwithstanding the alterations made in the exterior of that portion used as a residence, the other part still largely retains its ancient character; [58] n fact, at the end of the building in Church Square is still to be seen the original Tudor door, slightly arched with the roses carved at the

upper corners of the doorway. Holloway is unable to give any correct date as to origin, but says it had ceased to be an inn in 1758. Up to that time it was always a recognised resort of smugglers. Owing to a remarkable discovery in 1905, when certain work was being done to the front room of the dwelling house, another history of the place has come to light. Probably this house was used as a Royal residence previous to 1636 and that it was an Inn from that date until 1758 has been established. The discovery of a very ANCIENT WALL PAINTING with a frieze of the Jacobean style of carving, created curiosity. As the panelling, etc., that covered it was care- fully removed, a designed fresco in well preserved colours came to view. It is difficult to understand what the picture is really intended to represent; birds, beasts and cherubs form a part of it, and the Tudor rose is clearly defined as the badge of Edward VI Magnificat” in old black lettering (1547-1553). Portions of the “ are given on it. There is also the Royal Arms, and what is said to be a part of the coat of arms of the mother of King Edward VI.-Lady Jane Seymour, Queen of Henry VIII. The design is a good specimen of colour decoration. As since its discovery another wall painting has been found elsewhere in Rye, it may be that it was the fashion in those early times, and before the general introduction of wall papers, thus to decorate the houses of the wealthier people. Be this as it may, the design, which extends across the whole side of what is believed to have been the great hall of the house, is a well preserved specimen of Ancient Mural Painting. In some of the rooms the plaster and other covering on the walls and ceilings has been removed, and the fine oak timbers lend a charm to the interior of this ancient building. [59]

On proceeding down East Street we come to CONDUIT HILL. About half way down this steep, bouldered hill, on the right hand side, stands

THE OLD MONASTERY.

It was the Chapel of Friars Heremites of St. Augustine, so called after the Saint, who was the first Archbishop of Canterbury. They were originally Hermits (hence the name Heremites) and were first congregated into one body by Pope Alexander IV., in 1265. The

building is supposed to have been erected early in the 15th century, but there is a document which shows that they were resident here before that period. It reads as follows:- “Gift and Confirmation by the Mayor and Barons of Rye to the Prior and Brethren of the Order of Friars Heremites of St. Austin of the Convent of Rye, of all that place called ‘Le Haltone,’ saving to us a competent space near to the foss for building the wall of our town and a way to go to such wall. In case the Prior and Convent shall leave the said place, or be unwilling to inhabit it, it shall be lawful for the Mayor and Barons to resume the same. In witness whereof we have caused our common seal to be set. Given at Rye, on Thursday, the Feast of the Translation of St. Thomas the Martyr, in the second year of the reign of Richard, after the conquest of England, the Second.” Witnesses-William Batisforde, William Hoorne, Robert Ore, Robert Echinghame, William Geldeforde, John Edwarde, and others.

The seal is that of the Friars, viz. :-St. Augustine, with crozier and an anchor, and people standing below, and is nearly perfect. Date 2 Richard II., 1379.

“Thomas Sackville, Knight, gave by his Will to the House of Friars’ Augustine, of Rye, the sum of six shillings and eight pence, while John Bewley, of Rye, in 1517, left them eight shillings.” The house of Austin Friars is mentioned in the reign of Edward III., A.D. 1364, and some are of opinion that this place was then in existence, as the architecture of the south windows is of that period. This was a fine building in its day, being 68 feet long and 26 feet wide within the walls, and 31 feet high. At either end there was a large handsome window surmounted by a gothic arch, the lower part of each being ornamented and supported by a corbel, representing some grotesque human head. These windows are 11 feet wide and 18 feet high. On the south side are four gothic arched windows with rich tracery, forming the mullions: these are 7 feet wide and [61] 11 feet high. As there were then no houses on the south side to obscure them, the windows were visible from this part of High Street, and showed to advantage. On the north side considerable alteration was made in the windows at the recent restoration. There are also traces of the

foundations of a building on this side, which was probably the refectory and dormitories of the Friars, so that this Chapel would have been set apart for strict religious use. It was dissolved in 1535 by Henry VIII. In consequence of its revenues being under £200 per annum, but some of the Order still remained, and their final expulsion might not have taken place until the reign of Edward VI. Who enforced, as a strong Protestant, the Acts of Henry VIII. The remains of many of the Friars were buried beneath the building, and in the excavations and alterations made, their bones have been discovered.

In 1762 several skeletons were exhumed, the bodies having been buried in an upright position. In 1826, others were discovered under the floor, wrapped The French Huguenots, after the massacre on St. around in material made of wool. Bartholomew's Day, 1572, found refuge in this building. There were 641 refugees in Rye three days after the massacre. Ten years after that date there were no less than 1560 settled in the town and they were well cared for by the people. They proved to be of great assistance to the inhabitants, teaching them various arts, as such lace making, weaving, etc. Some of the names are, even at the present day, testimony to the French extraction of those who bear them. A conference of French Churches was held at Rye in 1587 and the French Church at Rye was represented in conference till 1660. Dedicated in its pristine state to religious use, the Monastery has been used for various purposes since then. It became a theatre, a malthouse, a salt and provision store, a wool warehouse, etc., while a few years back the lower part was used as a Salvation Army barracks, and the upper as an artists' studio.

In 1894 a small syndicate of Churchmen purchased it, and it was re-roofed. On the expiration of the Salvation Army lease in 1905, the interior was reconstructed, the building being re-opened by the late Lord Bishop of Chichester (Wilberforce), on May 30th, 1906. It is now used for a Sunday school and other parochial purposes, and is also let for meetings and social functions. The old stone steps on the outside were erected at a time when the building was used for commercial purposes, and within, at [63] the top of these steps can

be seen a fine 15th century doorway, which formerly stood in West Street and was presented to the Monastery by the Directors of Lloyds Bank Ltd., in 1907. Hanging upon the walls are the portraits of the late Bishops Durnford and Wilberforce, of Chichester, and also the late Bishop Nathaniel Dawes, of Rockhampton, a native of Rye, and brother of the Town Clerk and the late Clerk of the Peace.

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

Immediately below the Monastery is the CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH. This was erected in 1882, during the ministry of the Rev. A. T. Saville, who was the pastor for over a quarter of a century, and it is a handsome building. The schoolrooms and lecture hall adjoining were built in 1894. Reference has already been made to the Chapel formerly occupied by Congregationalists in Watchbell Street. There was also another Congregational or "Independent" Chapel, in Bridge Place, where the Rev. David Jenkyns was pastor. After his death it was used by General and Mrs. Booth as a Christian Mission Chapel, they and others coming over from Hastings to officiate. The building has now been converted into two houses.

The old Pumping Station at the foot of Conduit Hill, we have alluded to. It is now used as a Poor Relief Station and in the severe winter months as a Soup Kitchen.

A few steps further is the old Rope Walk, in which stands the Salvation Army Barracks. The part over the railway is known as "the Grove." In this direction is situated the NEW GRAMMAR SCHOOL, and this road leads to the Hilly field and Rye Hill; also, on turning to the left, past the Grammar School is Love Lane. The steps at the end of this lane on the right lead to the Cemetery. One can also, by turning to the left at this point and crossing the field, [65] pass through the lovely avenue of trees by the side of the Tillingham river, and return to the old town. The continuation of the road from the gate at Love Lane will lead to the footpath up Leasam Hill and thence to Peasmarsh or to the top of Rye Hill; or by taking the path at the foot of Leasam Hill through the marshes there is a pleasant walk to Marley, Clayton's Farm and Peasmarsh Church.

THE OLD TOWN WALLS AND GATES.

Near to the foot of Conduit Hill and along Cinque Ports Street, can be seen remains of the OLD TOWN WALL, which was built during the reign of Edward III. Who, with his Queen Philippa, crossed the Channel and landed at Rye, after concluding peace with France in 1360. It was in his reign that the town was fortified on the north and west sides. The sea having considerably receded from the north side, although not altogether from the western part, and some of the marshes having been embanked, the old rock on which the town stands was no longer insulated but connected with the mainland. The natural defences being done away in a great measure, it became necessary to erect artificial ones, hence these walls and gates were built. Along the south side to the south-west, the cliffs were still considered sufficiently precipitous to resist the attack of an enemy, but elsewhere it was more or less exposed. The walls were 28 feet high and 5 feet thick. There was a fosse or ditch extending part of the way at their base, which was 50 feet in width. At the beginning of the 18th century, when the town's defences were reckoned to be altogether obsolete, the town ditch between Landgate and the Postern gate at the foot of Conduit Hill was filled up, it being in a neglected state. Part of it had been let in 1698 and the rest was leased in 1736 to the respective owners of adjoining property for 1000 years. The lessees were to drain the ditch, and fence and hedge it, and to leave a road on the outside of 12 feet in width, this road being part of the present Tower Street. Up to this period there does not appear to have been any houses in this part outside the wall of the town. In 1907, when digging for the foundations of Messrs. Wright & Pankhurst's new Fireproof Furniture Repository, in Tower Street, the excavators came across what was evidently a part of this ditch and some of the piles which supported the banks.

There were three Gates in the walls and one BASTION or Tower. (Another gate of a different period, 1698, also stood at the top of the Gungarden steps by the Ypres Castle, and was known [67] as the Tower-gate; this was removed in 1734). Two of these— the LANDGATE and the STRANDGATE— were sufficiently large to

admit of vehicular traffic, whilst the Postern Gate at the bottom of Conduit Hill was only intended for the use of foot passengers.

This one was pulled down in 1736, and in 1767 the wall was also removed to widen the entrance sufficiently for carriages to pass up and down Conduit Hill and the stones were used to repair the Churchyard wall.

On passing up TOWER STREET we come to

THE LANDGATE.

This fine old Gate, the only one remaining, is in an excellent state of preservation, owing to the work of the Ancient Buildings Preservation Committee, and the late Mr. Hessell Tiltman, F.R.I.B.A., who personally supervised the work of renovating this and the old Ypres Castle, thus helping to arrest it from decay. Through this gate the old coaches formerly passed on their journey to London, and although dating back to the 14th century is one of the two best gates in the South of England, the other being at Canterbury. The width of the gateway is 12 feet. It had formerly a portcullis (which was pulled down and sold in 1734), and a drawbridge across the ditch; the holes through which the chains ran to lift it are shown in the wall above the external arch. The old wooden gates, studded with nails, [69] were removed in 1760. There are two massive round towers rising to a height of over 40 feet, and these are 25 feet in diameter on the outside and 15 feet within. In the western tower were stairs leading to the top, on which was a small watch tower built above the main one.

Each tower had two apartments. The room over the gateway was used for the machinery of the portcullis and drawbridge. It had two windows on the north and two on the south side, and a door at the end communicated with the upper apartment of each tower. Over this room was another, 20 feet long and 9 feet wide, with a fireplace. There were two arched windows (the faces of the clock now obscure these from sight), the one on the north side enabled the guard to observe the approach of an enemy from the land side and the south window on the sea side.

To gain any idea of the original grandeur of this old gateway, our minds must be carried back to the period of its erection, when no other building existed on the outside of it, and it rose in massive stateliness out of the level and open lands by which it was surrounded; then we at once see that it is a fine example of engineering skill.

In 1460, according to the Records, it needed repairs, probably owing to the damage done by the French, who had again ramsacked the town, destroying by fire nearly everything that would burn. The entry of charges is for the repairs of the “Royal Gate, called Landgate Tower.”

In 1593, great care was taken with regard to keeping the town free from the plague, and as this was then the principal entrance, an order was made “that from henceforth two persons, every day throughout the town, do ward at the Landgate, from the departing of the Watch till the Watch be set, to see that none be suffered to enter the town who may be suspected to bring infection into the town.”

On the death of Prince Consort, 1861, the inhabitants of Landgate, anxious to show their respect for his many virtues, erected a Memorial Clock, having one face on the north and one on the south front, each being protected by an arched string course, supported by corbels. The two on the north side represent the heads of Edward III. And his Queen Philippa, whose visit to Rye in 1360, we have mentioned; while on the south the heads represent those of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert. This clock serves its useful purpose, although it cannot be regarded as an embellishment from the Antiquarian point of view. [70]

RYE HILL AND MILITARY ROAD.

If the visitor has plenty of time to extend his ramble, and instead of passing through, takes the road leading from Landgate known as King Street, and thence over the railway bridge he will come to Rye Hill and also the Military Road. Rye Hill has existed as the King's highway in all probability ever since the middle of the 11th century, although it was very different from its present condition, being in

those early days nothing more than a deep ravine, furrowed out by the waters, which, in wet seasons, ran down to the sea. It is mentioned in the records of the time of Edward III., 1366, as the King's highway leading from Playden to Rye. Up this hill the "rippiers" of Rye (who were men of some importance, as the dealers in and carriers of fish for centuries), wended their way to London, carrying on horses' backs their panniers well stored with fish for the King's table. It was their right to supply the Royal Court, a fact referred to in the old documents. In the reign of Henry VIII. 300 pack horses were kept at Rye for this purpose, and as the sea then flowed to the town it was not difficult to land the fish, thus providing a regular supply. Practically the whole of the road from Rye to London was little more than a narrow pathway over which the horses travelled in single file, there being wider spaces at certain spots to allow of passing. The leading horse of the train carried a bell in order to warn those [71] approaching from the opposite direction to remain at the opening until the others had gone by. These were, to all intents and purposes, the only carriers by road, there being no stage coach or other vehicle, nor any suitable road for one to travel over. The journey was a long one being 64 miles, but by changing horses twice on the way, the Rippiers were able to cover the distance in about 24 hours. No doubt the return journey was made profitable by the conveyance of small goods, letters, etc. The sum of seven pounds annually "for evermore," the value of which to-day would be about £50, was left under the will of one James Wilford, Alderman of the City of London, in the reign of Henry VIII. (1514), for the maintenance of "where I have caused to be made the highway between River Hill in Kent to Northiam Church in Sussex." The said amount was to be paid by the Merchant Tailors' Company, of London, to the Parson and Church-wardens of Rye, and his will to be read publicly in the Churches of Cranbrook, Newenden, Northiam and Rye. When it ceased to be paid to them we cannot say. This sum was known as "The Fisherman's Money." In 1594, Sir Francis Knollys complained that there were evil and indirect dealings on the part of the fishermen. He ordered that no buyer of fish for London or other places, should be allowed to buy until after William Angell,

the yeoman was needful for purveyor to Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth, had bought so much as Her Majesty's service and none to be suffered to buy in any shops secretly.

On the left hand side, near the foot of the hill, is Mountsfield. The extensive grounds in which Mountsfield House stands, owe the name to the existence of a mound or mounds therein, formerly called Monts or Mounts. The rents of the "Mounts" from 1513 to 1553, appear to have gone to support the Augustine Friary; from 1533 to 1570 to the Church. In 1596 the property passed into the hands of the Corporation. It was conveyed to them by Edmund Coppinger, who had certain rents and revenues in the town granted to him by Queen Elizabeth in 1585. In this grant was also a rent of four shillings to the Crown and of six shillings and eight pence annually towards maintaining the paved pathway leading up Rye Hill. The Corporation in August of the same year, granted it to one Richard French, reserving to themselves "a free passage by a footpath to "the Brickwell," free use and liberty also to shoot with a long bow; and to muster and train men" in this field. When [73] this reservation was withdrawn does not appear; but in 1776 it became the property of Mr. Thomas Phillips Lamb, through his marriage with Miss Davis, and afterwards of Mr. Herbert Barrett Curteis, who purchased it, it is said, for political reasons, in 1832. The present white brick front was added at the beginning of the last century.

In 1850, when the railway to Rye was opened, Mr. Curteis compelled the Company to buy the whole of this estate in order that they might run their line through the lower portion of it, and for very many years, in consequence, the house and fences went to ruin; even the famous old rookery being wantonly devastated by some of the inhabitants. On the late Mr. J. F. Plomley purchasing the property, the house and grounds were restored. He and his successor, the late Mrs. John A. Vidler and also her son, Mr. J. Symonds Vidler, J.P., for very many years found pleasure in allowing the use of the grounds to the townspeople for festivals, flower shows, and the like, and hundreds of pounds were taken at the gates for philanthropic purposes in those times. Above Mountsfield is the Grove lane formerly known as

Deadman's lane, and which forms part of a favourite walk of the inhabitants; near to it is QUEEN ELIZABETH'S WELL, previously alluded [74] to as "the Brickwell," now enclosed in private grounds. Queen Elizabeth is said to have rested at this old well on her visit to Rye, and having drunk from it, proceeded to the town through the Postern gate and up Conduit Hill. On two stones at the head of the well is the following:

1588 E R. M. GAYMER, MAIOR.

E.R. signifies "Elizabeth Regina," and M. Gaymer—"Michael Gaymer," who was Mayor when the stones were put up. It was on the occasion of this visit, in August, 1573, when Mr. John Donnyng held office of Mayor, that she named the town "Rye Royal," "on account," as Jeake says, "of the noble entertainment, accompanied with the testimonies of love and loyalty, duty and reverence she received from the people." Although she accepted the present of 100 angels (an angel was a coin worth ten shillings) in a purse, from the townspeople, we do not read that she bestowed any favours as an acknowledgment. She had just previously knighted Mr. John Guildford, her host, at Rolvenden, and left a pair of shoes at Brickwall, Northiam, where they still remain.

On the right hand side of Rye Hill, facing the lane, is the Gallows Bank, where criminals were openly executed. The sea then flowed to the foot of this cliff.

On the left hand side, about half way up the hill, is the entrance to Kingfield and also known as the Hilly field, upon which now stand, within their private grounds, several well built houses. In the field immediately above this entrance, some hundreds of years ago, probably as far back as the reign of Edward the Confessor, was St. Bartholomew's Hospital, to which occasional reference is made in historical books on Rye. This was not an institution of quite the same order as those of today, but partook of a religious character.

A short distance further up Rye Hill on the right hand side is a fashionable suburb of modern built residences, with a range of sea

and land views, known as “Point Hill,” and a footpath also leads from here past “Saltcote Place” to the lower part of New England. [75]

BEGGAR’S BUSH FAIR.

Near the summit of the hill, on the left hand side, is Fairfield. Here, within its own grounds and overlooking the town and the English Channel, is the picturesque residence of the much respected Town Clerk (Mr. Walter Dawes). It was here that the annual Fair, called “Beggar’s Bush Fair,” was held on St. Bartholomew’s day. Among the sports of our ancestors was that of bull-baiting, and the post and ring to which the animal was fastened are still to be seen. Custom also prevailed in those days to bait every bull before it was killed for food. More than a century has passed since the last bull was baited here. From this field and the one below it, we get a lovely picture of the old town, and in the distance, Rye Harbour on the one side and Camber Castle and Winchelsea on the other, the coastline adding much to the effect of this wide expanse of scenery.

On the opposite side of the road along the high footpath, portions of a stone wall remain. The Free Chapel of Playden is believed to have stood on this spot, the Advowson of which was given by Henry VII., in 1503, to the Abbot of Westminster, while his son and successor gave the site of it to Lord Wyndesore, at the same time that he gave that nobleman the site of St. Bartholomew.

The RYE UNION, which was erected in 1844, is at the top of the hill, on one of the grandest sites in the neighbourhood. The former Poor House stood in the Gungarden from 1790 to that date. The RYE CEMETERY, which is situated at a most picturesque spot, is not far from the main road. LEASAM HOUSE, the residence of Sir George Warrender, Bart., which was visited by His late Majesty King Edward VII., in 1904, lies a short distance from Rye Hill, being approached through Leasam lane.’ Barrack Field, where troops were at one time quartered, is at the entrance to Leasam lane, and owing to its prominence has been chosen for Beacon fires on the occasion of Coronation and other festivities. The scenery both of Kent and Sussex is very extensive from this part.

PLAYDEN CHURCH,

known as St. Michael's will be seen on the right hand side of the road. The tall spire was, formerly, a conspicuous landmark, when the marsh was covered by the sea. A stone [77] to the memory of a Flemish brewer is in the north aisle of the Church. It represents two brewer's mash tubs, fork and stick, with the words "Hier is begavid Cornelis Zoetmans bidt vorde Zide." A beautiful old oak screen is in the chancel. Part of the rood screen is under the tower. The steps leading to the bells bear the following: R.K.G.F., 1086. In the south aisle is a stained glass window to the memory of Elizabeth Margaret (Burra), wife of Herbert Neve, who died 15th March, 1897, aged 30. A brass plate on the north wall has the following: "To the memory of Private Fred Luck, 1st Vol. Co. 1st Batt. Royal Sussex Regiment, who died at Winburg, South Africa, August 22nd, 1900. Erected by his comrades." The proverb—"Sauket church, crooked steeple, drunken parson, wicked people," is said in Notes and Queries, vol. X., p. 401, to refer to Playden, "known as Sauket or Saltcote Street, from the salted cod spread on its banks to dry." Happily the quotation does not by any means apply to either parson or people to-day and we should think a more exemplary parish cannot be found in England.

NEW ENGLAND.

It will form a pleasant walk to return by Iway of New England, formerly known as "Saltcoate Street." Down this narrow road the inhabitants of Playden journeyed to their fishing boats at the foot of the stone steps, and in later days there was a Ferry from this part to East Guldeford, commonly called Saltcoate Ferry and which was the property of Sir Robert Guildford, who owned This property was The Guldeford parish, the small Church of which can be seen on the marshes.

Held by him by virtue of the several grants made to his ancestors by Charles II., in 1661. word "Saltcoate" literally means "salt shore," as the sea flowed to the bottom of the steep cliffs. In the evening We proceed from the foot of these steps back to Rye along the Military Road.

Of the spring and early summer, the trees and bushes on this charming cliff are alive with birds, and the trilling notes of the nightingales arrest the ear. On nearing the town we come to

THE OLD ALMSHOUSES.

These were erected by the South Eastern Railway Company in 1849, in place of the two pulled Alexander Welles, a jurat, in 1550 gave down for the erection of the Landgate railway bridge.

A piece of ground at Landgate to the Town, upon which an Almshouse was to be erected for the use of poor, sick, aged and infirm persons of the parish.

How long this trust was carried out by the Corporation is unknown, but in 1571, there was a certificate by the Mayor and Jurats of Rye, that “about ten years.past, one Mother Margery,” who then dwelt in the Almshouse of Rye, was for certain notorious offences, “such as any Christian harte wold abhore to here spoken of much less to be used,” driven out of the town. She being suspected of witchcraft, the Mayor caused the said almshouse to be searched, and there was found amongst other things “a good quantity of rawe beff “ to the intent that as that beef decayed so the bodies of divers persons against whom she bore malice should also decay. Which things were proved, for one among her victims “being by her wythcraft most cruelly tormented in his body, at last hanged himself.” In 1784 the old place being much dilapidated, was pulled down and two cottages erected. The three new cottages, erected by the Railway Company in 1849, are built in the Elizabethan style, and there is on a small stone shield, in the centre, a facsimile of the seal of the original grant. There are also inscriptions in stone relating to the Founder and the action of the Railway Company in perpetuating these Almshouses which are still held in Trust by the Corporation of Rye. [80] Passing by the picturesque “Briar cottage,” the Military Road Water Works, and the Calvinist place of worship, known as Bethel Chapel, we again return to the town.

DORMY HOUSE.

Proceeding through the Landgate we come, on the right hand side, to “Dormy House,” formerly known as “Tower House.”

There is a legend relating to the flirtations of a Monk named Cantator from the Monastery with the daughter of a resident where Dormy House is situated. This girl’s name was Amanda. One day the couple were missing and a bloodhound overtook them. On being brought back to the Monastery the Monk was sentenced to be buried alive outside the walls of the town and the sentence was carried out in the lane adjoining Dormy House. The young lady shortly after died of a broken heart and was buried near her lover, and on moonlight nights the legend states that the two spirits met and Cantator, who had a good voice, used to sing to her as in the olden times; but, as a punishment, his voice changed into the gobbling of a turkey cock—hence the name given to this passage, until recent times, was “Turkey Cock Lane.” Whether it was this legend which gave rise to the weird tales of ghosts in Tower House we know not, but up to the time when it became the Dormy House, it was said to be “haunted.” The change of residents seems to have driven all visionary objects away.

Dormy House was built in the early part of the 18th century and has been the abode of several of the leading inhabitants. Almost the first to occupy it was Thomas Owens (whose monument is in the parish church). He lived here during the 18th century. A Mr. George Thompson, who used the Augustine Monastery as a wool warehouse, resided here, and it was he who added another storey to the Monastery, thus completely changing both the interior and exterior appearance of that building. Mr. Jeremiah Smith, who figures prominently in the Parliamentary history of Rye, was the next owner of Dormy House, his successor being Mr. C. H. Frewen. Among the more recent residents were Mr. A. B. Vidler (a Mayor [82] of Rye); Rev. D. T. Gladstone (Vicar of Rye); Mr. Theodore J. Smith (Solicitor and Clerk to the Guardians); and Mr. Cuthbert Hayles (the present Clerk of the Peace and Registrar of County Court). It was for many years known as Tower House, and passed from a private residence in 1896 (when it was purchased by a Company) into a private residential Club for gentlemen. Extensive additions and improvements were

made, but the main character of the house, inclosed as it is within iron railings, was retained. It is well appointed and is largely used by private and professional gentlemen and many of the leading golfers of the country. There is a spacious dining room, also reading, writing, and silence rooms and 17 bedrooms. The construction of the billiard room is of an ancient character, having original oak beams and an open fireplace with settles in the chimney corners, which carries the mind back to another age. In the Drawing room is a most elegant marble mantel-piece, the centre of which is a beautifully sculptured design, and represents various kinds of fruit, hops, corn and flowers, with the bee and the caterpillar feeding on them. This mantel-piece has been valued at £150. In No. 4 bedroom is also a fine old oil painting, let into the oak panelling. From the turret tower, good views on the east, south and west sides are obtained.

THE EAST CLIFF.

The East Cliff, sometime known as Guy's Cliff, and now as "Hilder's" Cliff, overlooking Romney Marsh (which has been called "The fifth quarter of the Globe") is protected by an iron [83] railing, put up in 1845. The wall and a considerable portion of the land including the roadway from Baddyng's Gate to Ludgate along this cliff was washed away by the sea. This part forms a pleasant promenade for the townspeople, more especially those interested in shipping, as the whole course of the river from Rye to the sea, and also the English Channel, is visible, thus enabling them to trace the fishing craft, coasting vessels and barges belonging to the Port. From this spot also the Dover heights, Dungeness and Cape Grisnez lights, and other distant places can be seen. The Tram Station from which the Camber tram travels to and from the Sands and Golf Links is only a short distance. At the foot of the Cliff lies

THE TOWN SALTS.

This field was embanked in 1834 and the Corporation in that year appropriated it for ever for the free use of the inhabitants as a recreation ground. The extensive playground is the scene of active youth engaged in seasonable sports, whilst for occasional great

events, as the King's Coronation, calling for celebrations on a large scale, the Town Salts is a convenient place for the purpose. The next field, known as the Middle Salts, is held by the Town Cricket Club for practice and matches.

Beyond the embankment alluded to is the river Rother and THE FISHMARKE'T, and many of the fishing smacks lie here when weather prevents them from fishing. The Ferry, which in bygone days rendered such valuable service to the banks on the east and west sides of the river is not now of much use, as the new road from the town over the "Monk-Bretton" or Rother Bridge into the Marsh serves the purpose on the east side. A little further along the river's bank, but not visible from this point, is the ROCK CHANNEL SHIPYARD, where are built many of the craft engaged in the North Sea fishery. These vessels have long been recognised for their seaworthy qualities.

HIGH STREET.

On leaving East Cliff we enter the HIGH STREET. Its houses and shops at once give evidence that they are not of recent erection. There are scarcely two alike in the whole street, and whilst for business purposes most of the front parts have been more or less modernized, only with a few [84] exceptions is there any attempt to bring them up to the period in appearance. This is something for the lover of old world attractions to appreciate. If the windows present any approach to the last century style, he may rest satisfied that behind the plaster and brickwork, and hidden within, there are huge timbers and oaken beams which have been standing for a great number of years in some of the houses. The late Mr. Holloway, the historian, on referring to his own house in this street, now known as "Holloway House," states that it has many features of antiquity, there being no less than three chimney pieces of Caen stone with Tudor roses sculptured upon them and also the portcullis which was borne in the arms of his family. The whole of the dining room is oak panelled. In the rudely finished timbers, and the wainscoting, the chimneys and fireplaces, and the frequent use of the Tudor rose, are

to be seen the work of the 16th century, and this is not confined to the High Street.

THE OLD GRAMMAR SCHOOL.

This handsome brick-fronted building stands in the centre part of the High Street and faces the George Hotel and Lion Street. It was built in 1636 by Thomas Peacock, Esq., who was a jurat of the Corporation. Here is one of the earliest specimens of an edifice with a brick front. It has slightly projecting pilasters from base to parapet, with square windows, excepting the top centre light which is oval in shape, and was so made when the Sundial (an addition which for many years had disfigured it) was removed, and so is not part of the original work. The square windows are surmounted with curiously cut brick arches, having originally stone mullions ; but when needing repair in the 18th century, wood was substituted for stone. The summit of the front is decorated with three windows under as many brick arches. The doorways at each end also maintain the true character of the building. The back part of the School is of stone, in which may be seen a portion of a chimney, Mr. Peacock having intended to erect on that part a Master's residence, but was frustrated by the breaking out of the Civil war.

By his Will, he gave these premises in trust to the Town and with them an annuity or yearly rent-charge of £32 from certain land and property at Rye and Udimore, and likewise an annuity of £4 derived from a mortgage on "The Mermaid Inn." This was to be a Free School for Rye Boys. [85]

Thackeray has helped to immortalize it in his unfinished novel, "Denis Duval," who he represents as a boy resident at Winchelsea, but a scholar at this school. For many years, owing to agricultural depression affecting the income, it was a source of anxiety to the Governors, but some measure of relief came through the sale of the building to the late Mrs. Brocket who, up to her death in 1906, charged no rent. The school was re-organized in 1884, but the Town Council afterwards sought the aid of the Charity Commissioners and it has been carried on under their scheme by local governors. It has

had a good reputation for education, and in competition with endowed schools of the United Kingdom, has won a number of entrance scholarships of £60 each per annum, to Christ's Hospital, as well as London University, University Locals, and Civil Service appointments. The late Mrs. Brocket's executors put the old School up for sale by auction, when it was purchased by the Mayor, Kingsnorth Reeve, Esq., for a local syndicate, in order to preserve this antiquarian relic to the town. Owing to the erection of the new County Secondary Education School, the foundation stone of which was laid in 1907 by the Hon. T. A. Brand, in a field approached from Cinque Ports Street, through the Rope Walk, this old building was no longer required for scholastic purposes.

It is interesting to note the importance of the change which has been made. Owing mainly to agricultural depression, which caused the income to diminish and changes in the control to be brought about, the County Council at last endorsed a scheme for making it a centre of secondary education for both boys and girls, to the number of 120, and it became the first "Mixed" Secondary School in Sussex. The new building has been erected expressly for the purpose upon the most modern principles, with chemical and physical laboratories, etc. This charity having thus been so reduced that the original intention of the founder could not any longer of itself be carried out in maintaining the School, it is now raised to a higher basis of administration for those scholastic purposes which the education of to-day demands. [87]

THE GEORGE HOTEL.

This famous old Hostelry, situated in the very centre of the High Street, has always been the resort of persons visiting the town. The George Hotel dates back a long way and although altered in some particulars, there still remains external proof that it is to be classed as one of the old houses of the town. Still stronger evidence is to be found in some of the rooms which retain their oak timbers.

The Banqueting Hall has witnessed many great functions connected with the past and present history of the town, and the old music gallery still remains.

Continuing through the High Street, we come to that part known as

THE MINT.

Down this narrow street we pass by the quaint old passage leading into Cinque Ports Street, known as “The Needles,” and some very old houses, as is shown by the projections and other characteristics. The rooms of some of these houses are known to contain, underneath the paper and plaster, beautifully carved oak beams and timbers. The last house on the right hand side, bears the following inscription: “1727, N.P.I.” It has two very pretty gable fronts and is believed to be much older than the date given above. This house was partly built upon the Town Wall at a spot called “The Nook,” and an arrangement and payment had to be made with the town authorities in consequence. There is an entrance through the wall, which is over six feet in thickness, at the back of the house, in the street known as Wish Ward, the approach being up a steep flight of steps. A cellar covers nearly the whole of the ground space. The sea appears to have washed up to this part on the lower side, and Spanish coins have been found here. At one time it was a public house, used largely by foreigners coming to the port.

The new Customs House stands facing this street at the bottom of Mermaid Street. This is part of what was formerly the old London Trader Inn, a renowned house for smugglers and members of the sea-faring fraternity, when contraband goods found such ready sale in the town, and conflicts between Government officers and those engaged in this illicit trade were frequent. It is singular that the Customs authorities should finally have settled upon this historic spot.

THE STRANDGATE,

a picture of part of which we reproduce, led out of the town at the bottom of the Mint and Strand Hill to the south-west. The towers will be seen on the old map by Smeaton (on page 92) to have [89] been somewhat similar in appearance to Landgate. It communicated, as its name implies, with the Strand, and in this neighbourhood was the Strand Ferry, over which all persons passed who wished to go to

Winchelsea, Udimore, or other places to the west of the town, the opposite landing being at the Cadborough cliff. This gateway which was in a state of ruin for many years was pulled down about 1815. It bore in the centre of the arch on a stone, the Cinque Ports Arms, being three sterns of vessels joined to three demi-lions. This stone, when taken down, was placed in the wall of what is now the Customs House near by, where it still remains. In the neighbourhood of Strandgate was discovered, about ten feet below the surface, a solid strand with sea beach; and several pens, a small bell and some Elizabethan coins were picked up. As late as the year 1866, while some workmen were excavating for a drain on the north-west side of the town, they came upon the deck of a ship, built of English oak, in a capital state of preservation. This shows that the water flowed to the walls of the town.

THE STRAND.

We are now on the Strand and outside the original boundaries of the town. A short distance further, past the Ship Inn, is another antiquarian gem, nestled at the foot of the town rock, and known as "Strand House." This residence was left to the present occupier and his wife for life, by Miss Holmes, a local artist (daughter of the late Alderman John Holmes), and at their deaths the property, with other houses, passes to the Corporation. It is then to be used as a [91] Club for the benefit of the townspeople, and the rents of the other houses are to be for its maintenance. The exact date of the house cannot be fixed, but it gives internal proof that it is very old, and possesses among other peculiarities a round cupboard. An old-fashioned chimney has also one of those convenient cupboards where much smuggled goods could be stored. For many years it was the abode of Alderman John Holmes who, up to his death a few years ago, for 50 years was a member of the Council. Here, in 1850, when ship-building was at the height of its prosperity and vessels were built for foreign as well as English ports, Dom Miguel, a pretender to the Portuguese throne, with a number of his adherents, lunched with the late Alderman Holmes, after launching a schooner, "The Maderia Pet," which was to trade between London and Portugal. Boats for the

Crimean war were built at one of the shipyards.

Nearly opposite to this residence, at what was known as “Edward’s dock,” King George II. Landed in 1736 on his visit to Rye, and mounting a horse he was conducted by the Mayor to Lamb House where George I. (who, in 1725, through stress of weather, was compelled to put into Rye), had also been entertained. The oak wainscotted room where he slept is still called George the Second’s Chamber.

Close to this part is the old Strand Quay. Formerly there was a shipbuilding yard on either bank of the river and an extensive trade carried on, but now the only one is the Rock Channel yard. The old Windmill on the edge of the Tillingham river, which has been the subject of many sketches, stands out in its significance. Near to the mill—on the opposite side of the stream, is the field known as Gibbet Marsh, where the penalty of death and hanging in [93] chains of the criminals was, at one time, carried out. Butt Marsh, on the north side of the mill, is a field where, in early days, the Butts were erected for the practice of the bow and arrow. It had to be carried out very generally by all classes, and for servants, in the reign of Richard II., Sundays were the days chosen for practice. On leaving this part of the town we pass into Cinque Ports Street, which at one time consisted of the ditch extending from the Landgate to Strandgate, alongside the ancient wall, parts of which are still visible. By way of Cinque Ports Street we return to the Railway Station.

Not far from the Railway gates stands the newly erected Baptist Church, which was opened in 1910, and is a good looking edifice of Norman style. The front portion is of stone and its appearance is in keeping with the character of the old town. The School and classrooms occupy the lower part of the building, and the Chapel has a fire-proof floor.

THE DAYS OF SMUGGLING.

Already we have touched upon the days of smuggling which continued until quite recent years. There is a small book entitled “Sussex Smugglers,” which relates blood-curdling tales of the dastardly doings of some of these men. But there were many of a less barbarous disposition than the Hawkhurst gang of highwaymen and others along the south coast. There was in the days of Jeake, an extensive export trade in wool and the duty was heavy. In the reign of Henry III., wool was sixpence a pound, or about one shilling and sixpence of our money, but the duty per bag was equal to £3 of our money and this increased to £6 in [94] 1296. Edward III. Offered great facilities to the Flemings to establish woollen manufactures in this country, and then the Mayors of the Ancient Towns and other ports were directed not to allow the export till duty was paid, and in 1337 he prohibited the wearing of any cloth made beyond the seas. Wool then was being smuggled in great quantities and foreign cloths were finding their way into England. Although the punishment was as severe as death, smuggling continued to grow. For centuries it prevailed. Illicit trade in wool ended in 1793 when the war commenced, but contraband in silks, tobacco and spirits continued. Silks and Valenciennes lace were smuggled into Romney Marsh, Rye and Winchelsea in large quantities, and in 1696 a man named Hunt ran cargoes of these materials “sufficient to load 30 pack horses,” and under cover of these proceedings kept a house of resort for men of high consideration among the Jacobites—of “Earls and barons, knights and doctors of divinity,” and established a clandestine post to London and frequent communications, by means of privateers, with the court of St. Germain. But Rye, in particular, was a favourite spot. John Wesley refers in his journal to the death of a brother of his friend at Rye, Mr. John Haddock This young officer had command of a small vessel in the service of the Customs, who fell in with a smuggler or privateer along the coast, in August, 1783, and was fired upon, Lieut. Haddock being shot. It was afterwards overtaken by a Captain Bray, in one of the King’s cutters and boarded. The captain of the craft offering resistance with a pistol, was cut to pieces with that officer’s cutlass.

In April, 1827, twenty smugglers met the blockade men at Fairlight and some were killed. One wounded man was carried to his home at Udimore, a distance of six miles, on the back of his comrade. In 1838, Thomas Monk, a poor fiddler of Winchelsea, was shot by the Coastguard in an affray at Camber Castle. The writer has been told by one man of his having frequently purchased large quantities of smuggled tea at Brede, at eight shillings a pound and sold it at sixteen; whilst another one, who lived to be 98, has related some of his exploits with a miller's cart, in which were false sides and floor, where contraband silks and lace were stowed. There is also a story told respecting East Guldeford Church, which was used on one occasion for the purpose of securing smuggled brandy from the vigilance of the Government officials. [95]

In a booklet known as "A Foursome at Rye," by John Somerville, and published at Deacon's Library, the alleged act is related poetically, as follows:—

"The smugglers pursued in the dark
Very nearly were left in the lurch
Had they not found a friend in the clerk
Who concealed all their casks in the Church.
—A tap at the minister's gate
— A talk in the night, which was chill
— That Sunday most strange to relate
The parson sent word he was ill.
No service was held—but next day
Rye rejoiced in some very cheap liquor
And the clerk got two tubs for his pay
And two casks of the best for the Vicar."

Cupboards and cellars, secret holes in chimneys and out of the way places, double-walls, etc., and even rooms which have only come to light through alterations to the house, all support the traditional stories of the smuggling propensities which so largely pervaded the life of the Ancient Town and neighbourhood.

LOCAL CHARITIES.

We have already referred to some of them—Alexander Welles' Almshouses, the Victoria Jubilee Almshouses, and the Hilder Bequest.

In 1644, Thomas Peacock left 56 acres of land called Uplands, Clifflands, Rye Marshes, Gateborough, Cadborough, situate in Rye and Udimore, vested in the Mayor and Corporation, for the maintenance of the Rye Grammar School, which was instituted by him for "the gratuitous instruction of the children of the inhabitants of Rye in grammar and other good Latin and Greek authors."

In 1708, James Saunders by his Will, founded a Free School in the town of Rye, for the support of which a freehold farm and lands, called School Farm, containing 50 acres, [97] 1 rood, 14 perches, within the parish of Udimore and "Drowned rent" of £6 10s. 0d., payable by the Commissioners of the Upper Levels, vested in the Mayor and Town Council of Rye. The object of this school was to "teach poor children of the town and parish of Rye, reading, writing, accounts, and navigation." The above two charities were some years ago associated and the Grammar School in High Street was carried on under one Master, the school being styled "Peacock and Saunders' School." We have already alluded to a further change in the management on page 87.

Lady Gower, at her decease, left £100 in 3 per cent. Consolidated Annuities, to the trust of the Rector of Winchelsea and the Vicar of Rye, and Mr. Curteis, the interest to be expended in the education of poor children in the parish of Rye.

John Bradley, a jurat of Rye, left to the Corporation, in 1721, for the poor of the parish, the sum of £5, the interest of which, 5s., is annually distributed in bread by the Churchwardens, on Good Friday.

The Rev. Edward Wilson, Vicar of Rye, in 1730, gave a similar sum to be applied in the same way.

Margaret Horsfield, in 1769, left £100 to the Corporation, on condition that they pay annually at Christmas, to 16 poor widows, the

sum of five shillings each, preference being given to such as were not in receipt of parish relief.

Mr. Charles Thomas (who for many years was the postman of Rye and much respected by the inhabitants, his residence being Thomas House, in West Street), died in 1879 and left £200, the income from which was to be distributed annually, in sums of five shillings each, among poor widows and single women residing in Rye.

The late Mr. Trollope, M.D., of St. Leonards (for many years an eminent physician at the Hastings Hospital, and who died in 1907), left the sum of £500 for the Rye Grammar School, and this has been added to the school endowments and devoted to help defray the cost of the New School in the Grove, a moiety of the expense being borne by the County Council and the site presented by the Rye Corporation. [98]

THE RYE MARKET.

This is situated close to the S. E. and C. Railway station, the cattle, sheep, etc., coming from the outlying villages and Romney Marsh, and is held every alternate Wednesday. The Corn Exchange building is in the centre of the Cattle Market and the business of the corn merchants is conducted on the same day. The annual Cattle Show, in December, is held in the Agricultural Hall, situated in the Ropewalk. This building is used during the other part of the year by the local members of the Territorial force.

THE POST & TELEGRAPH OFFICE

is in the central part of the High Street and is a Head Office. There are frequent dispatches of Mails during the day and three deliveries of letters. The night box closes for London and the Provinces at 9.15. There is also Telephonic communication during office hours.

OLD TOLL GATES.

Not very many years ago it was impossible to get away from Rye without passing through a Tollgate. Now only the two Military Road Toll-gates, on the east and west approaches to the town, [99] remain; the one at Playden Post Office and the other on the Udimore Road

having been removed. One also stood at the foot of Rye Hill. Free vehicular communication between Winchelsea and Rye, and also Winchelsea and Udimore is still barred by these old-time methods of exacting money for the maintenance of the public roads.

CAMBER-ON-SEA.

This resort, unlike the majority of seaside places, is not the spot for the rowdy trippers, but where one can find enjoyment away from “the madding crowd.” Its extensive sands, said to be the finest in England, with huge sand hills to climb at will, with opportunities for sea-bathing or watching the wild waves and the “ocean-going craft” or the slipping at the Rye Harbour, make it an ideal spot for the visitor. There is plenty of room for picnics and young people can disport themselves to their hearts content. Being only a short distance from the town of Rye, the journey on foot does not take long, whilst the steam tram conveys passengers to the sands in a few minutes.

RYE GOLF CLUB.

The Rye Golf Club was formed in 1894. The links have an 18 hole course and the greens are well kept. There is a membership of 620 including 60 ladies. Lord Brassey is President, the late F. A. Inderwick, K.C., was the first, and Lord Collins of Kensington the second president. Mr. Ernest Baggallay is the Captain, and Captain R. Dacre Vincent is the excellent Secretary. [100] Professional, J. Cuthbert. At the Easter, Whitsuntide and Autumn meetings there is generally a large field. Among the competitions are the Monthly, the Club Gold Medal (scratch) played for at Easter, the Colt Medal Challenge with Memento presented by Mr. H. S. Colt (under handicap) and played for at the Whitsuntide and Autumn meetings; Rye Challenge Plate with silver Memento (under handicap) returned at Easter, Whitsuntide, Autumn and Christmas meetings; Silver Challenge Cleek and Memento presented by Mr. T. H. Oyler and others and played for quarterly under handicap against bogey; the Scot Gold Medal for best Scratch score at Autumn meeting. Monthly Medal, played for on first Saturday in each month, under handicap. Dormy House Cup, presented by the Dormy House Club; Single

Tournament Competition, under handicap played for at Whitsuntide and Christmas. There is a Bogey competition for the Mermaid Club prizes at Christmas. The whole length of the course is 6,440 yards. Telephone—No. 41. Telegrams—Rye Harbour.

Mr. R. H. de Montmorency, in the Golf Annual for 1911, speaks of the Rye greens as follows: "This course has been described by several golfers as the best along the South Coast, and there can be no doubt that it is one of the best in Europe. A good many tee shots are extremely difficult, and not a few seconds must be really well played if one expects to have a putt for a three. The greens are mostly keen and more or less undulating. Although a bit shorter than some championship courses the accuracy required in placing one's drives so as to land near the hole in the second shot is such that really low scores are almost an impossibility. The turf is close and admits of a long run on the ball, and the character of the fairway among the sandhills reminds one of St. Andrews. The town itself is old, and so are most of the houses, some, in fact, in splendid preservation dating back to the 14th century. A journey in a three-carriaged train of two miles takes one along a sea of pebbles, and a comfortable and well-appointed club house makes a stay at Rye most enjoyable."

FISHING INDUSTRY.

Rye Bay is well known for trawl fishing, and at various parts of the coast between Pett and Dungeness, the Keddle Net fishing is an important industry, when shoals of mackerel and other [102] Here is the transcription for the next page, matching the formatting and spelling of the original text.

Fish are often caught. The visitor at Camber or Rye Harbour, may have an opportunity, on visiting the Keddle Nets, of seeing "the catch." Camber is a favourable ground for Keddle Net fishing. The plan consists of placing poles, eight feet in height, in the sand with net attached, the poles being about four yards apart in a straight line. At the extreme end is a circular line of nets and poles about sixty yards in diameter (called a bythe or pound), an opening being left

through which the fish enter. Generally four of these ranges and pounds are erected, joining each other and extending a long way into the sea. The fish in passing along the shore on the ebb tide are intercepted by the straight line of poles and nets and passing down them enter the openings. When the water has receded to a depth of three or four feet in the first pound, the men employed in the fishing enter with a draw-net, and taking a wide circuit surround the fish and draw them together; a horse and cart is then brought into position and the fish thrown into the cart. The load is taken across the sands to the shore where they are washed and packed for market. The fishing commences in May and lasts several months and at times great quantities are caught, requiring waggons and other large vehicles to convey them to Rye station and thence by special trains they are conveyed to London and other places.

RYE HARBOUR.

From very early days in the history of Rye, the harbour has been a source of anxiety; and like most harbours, much money has been expended upon it. The water receding along this part of the coast for a long time past, it has often taxed the brains of the Commissioners as to the best methods to cope with the trouble.

We find in the reign of King Charles I. (1628), it was resolved by him and his Court to raise money “to help the Ancient Port town of Rye,” as it was called. He caused a lengthy Act to be passed, calling upon the people everywhere throughout the country to assist by collections on a given Sunday, in all the places of worship. The document, after the usual greeting, states: “That the said Towne being an Ancient Port-Towne within the Cinque Ports and the most convenient passage between England and France, and the cheapest Sea-Towne for provision of fish for our House, and heretofore flourished in wealth and prosperity by their great trade and trafficke [104] by sea, their Harbour being then able to receive two hundred good ships, which bred up great store of Mariners for our Service is now very much impoverished * * * * whereby the inhabitants are become unable either to repaire the fair haven or amend the decayed breaches of the said walls.” Three thousand pounds was asked for.

The King, therefore, authorised a collection to be taken to help meet the expenses in every Church and Chapel throughout the land.

In more recent times much has been done to maintain the Harbour, but, as in the days of Charles, there is always an insufficient revenue. The mouth is to-day a considerable distance from the village.

A harbour, known as the “New Harbour,” was opened in 1761, along the coast at Pett Level, nearly opposite to the town of Winchelsea, the channel from which connected with the Brede river near to what is still called Harbour farm, south-west of Camber Castle, and thence to Rye. This harbour did not last for many years. The remains of the eastern stonework at the entrance and the bed of the channel are still visible; whilst Holfords Inn, which was largely used by the mariners entering this harbour, still exists, being the present farmhouse known by that name.

The village of “Rye Harbour” is composed largely of seafarers. It is in the parish of Icklesham; but in 1905, Rye Harbour, Camber and Broomhill, were formed into one Ecclesiastical Parish, they all being sparsely populated and needing better Clerical supervision. There is a Church, which was built in 1852. A neat Wesleyan Chapel has also been erected, and through the kindness of Mrs. Lucas-Shadwell, who has for many years done much for Rye Harbour, there is also a comfortable Reading Room. At Camber an iron Church has been put up. Messrs. Forbes, Abbott & Lennard’s Chemical Works, are at Rye Harbour, and many hands are at times employed by them.

THE LIFEBOAT

which has done good service at many a wreck is stationed near Rye Harbour. It is named the “John William Dudley,” and belongs to the National Lifeboat Institution. [106]

HISTORICAL ODDS AND ENDS.

1194.—When Richard I. Was returning from his captivity in Germany, he was attended by a great many ships from England; and

setting out from Antwerp in a little galley of Allen Frenchner, he sailed in that a-days, as being of an easier passage among the islands, but every night the King quitted the galley and lodged in a fine large ship that had come from Rye.

1290.—Edward I. Granted a charter for a fair to be held at Rye. It became known as “Beggars’ Bush Fair.”

1369.—The first two Members of Parliament were returned for Rye, they being Wills Taylor and Ricus Padding.

1378.—In the previous year, the French having done great damage to town of Rye, the men of this town and of Winchelsea gathered a great number of people together and embarked themselves towards Normandy with the intent to make up for last year’s damages done them by the French. Having landed in the night they entered St. Peter’s Port and put all the inhabitants they met to sword, except such of them as could pay for their ransom, and them they carried off, bound to their ships. They pillaged every house and church, as the French had before served them at Rye, and found abundance of plunder which had been brought hither from Rye, particularly the bells, and such like, which had been taken from the Church, and the lead of which roof had been stripped. Their last work was to set all on fire, and passing thence to another town called Wilet, and playing over the same game, they returned home with a very rich booty.

1422-61.—If any person has a cow, ox, horse, beast of burden, or other irrational animal going about the Churchyard, he shall pay towards the fabric of the Church, 3s. 4d. All persons having dung standing before their house are to remove it before the Feast of All Saints, under a penalty of 3s. 4d.

1448.—The town of Rye was burnt by the French for the fourth time.

1517.—Dr. John Young, who was Master of the Rolls, by his Will gave £100 towards making a new conduit in the Town of Rye, being equivalent to nearly £700 of the present day. [108]

1567.—Every householder is ordered to go to church on the usual days of service in the week, or pay 6d. The bell to toll for morning service between seven and eight o'clock, and at four in the afternoon.

1569.—John Pilfort, Frenchman, ordered to be punished by standing in the pillory and to have one of his ears nailed thereto, because he presumed to come into the town since his banishment.

1569.—Certain persons ordered to leave the town with their wives and children “for theyre mysbeleyves contrarie to Christian relegian.”

1574.—It was decreed by the Mayor and Corporation, that no butcher within Rye or its liberties, shall kill any ewes to sell between the feast of All Saints and the feast of Pentecost, on pain of forfeiting the said mutton. The time here specified is from November 1st to Whitsuntide.

1574.—Mr. Lame, a French physician, fined for allowing his chimney to fire, and Fraunces Maquery fined for going on board the freebooters without license.

1574-5.—Order by the Mayor and Jurats that the Chancel on the south side of the Church shall be closed up and planked for laying in of the town's ordnance and munition, and that a hole shall be made through the stone wall of the church out of the chancel into churchyard, at the charge of the Town.

1575.—No freeman was to buy any wine or other merchandize coming to the harbour by sea, before acquainting the Mayor of the said arrival, when the buyer was to have one quarter, the mayor to have three freemen's shares, every jurat two freemen's shares, and every freeman or freeman's widow, if she please, to have one freeman's share.

1575.—Upon every festival, both morning and evening, every member of the Common Council to attend the Mayor, walking two and two in order, to the church, and from the church to his own house. [110]

1575.—The bakers of Rye complained to Lord Cobham that their trade had been swallowed up by the brewers, so that they had not sufficient to maintain their wives and children “which are not few in number, a thing in conscience to be lamented, and we for remisesnes in dutie to be greatly blamid and sith the overthrow of these poor men is happened by reason of the brewers (who oughte by the lawes of this realme not to be bakers also) have by one sufferance used bothe to bake and to brewe of long tyme, whereby Robert Jacson (God be thankid) is grown to good wealthe and the whole company of the bakers thereby utterly impoverished.”

1576.—The constables are ordered to go nightly through their several wards to see that candles and lanthorns be hung out in the streets by such as are able to do the same; and that the mayor and jurats, at times, should go round their wards to see that their orders are obeyed.

1577.—Petition of the Company and Fellowship of Drapers and Tailors within the town of Rye that whereas under the Common Seal there were granted to the said Company divers articles and orders by them to be executed and especially that none should occupy the mystery or occupation either of woollen draper or tailor within the said town other than such as had either been apprenticed with one of the said Company or being freeborn should first make agreement upon certain pain for every day occupied. That divers persons do occupy the said trades contrary to the said grant for which the Company beg redress. Answer.—To have redress.

1579.—John Fletcher, the dramatist, was born at Rye; his father, Richard Fletcher, being at the time Vicar of the Parish. The Rev. Dr.

Fletcher afterwards became Dean of Peterborough and Bishop of Bristol. While Dean, he was appointed to pray with and for Mary Queen of Scots, who was condemned to be beheaded at Fotheringay.

1580.—No person who shall die within the port of Rye under the degree of mayor, jurat, or common councilman, or of their wives, except such persons as the mayor shall give licence for, and being paid to the mayor for the use of the poor, shall be chested or coffined to their burial, and if any carpenter or joiner make any chest or coffin for any person to be [111] buried in (other than for the persons aforesaid excepted) he shall be fined 10s. For every coffin so made by him.

1581.—It is decreed that service in the church on working days shall begin at six in the morning for morning prayer, and at five in the afternoon for evening prayer; and the sexton to toll to service half an hour before prayer; and also from All Saints' next, the great bell to be rung at four in the morning half an hour, and so to continue till the Annunciation next, from November 1st to March 25th.

1583.—Presentments before the Mayor and Jurats of Rye of various offences. Common absenters from the church, occupiers of sciences and occupations contrary to the laws of the realm, victuallers for keeping idle and poor people in their houses to drink and play unlawful games, pots and other measures not lawful, persons fined for selling sack at 8d. Quart, 'Gasken wine' at 6d. Quart, forestallers, regrators, and ingrossers common annoyances, wearing hats (a large number of persons presented for wearing hats instead of English caps in going to church), butchers for killing of sheep called barren ewes, quarrellings and frays, fines for having wooden chimneys and chimneys that had been on fire.

1583.—It was ordered that no beer carts shall travel on Sunday from sun rise to sun set, without some special occasion.

1585.—Orders by the Mayor and Jurats of Rye that the town be viewed to find out the most meet places for fortifications. That the chancel on the south side of the Church called St. Clere's chancel or chapel shall be used for the powder house. That one thousand weight of corn powder be bought for the great ordnance.

1587-8.—Order by the Mayor and Jurats of Rye that the fourth bell, which is cracked and broken, shall be taken down and sent to London to be sold to the greatest advantage and the money thereof coming to be employed for the buying the powder, match and other provision (in defence of the enemy) for the town of Rye. "And so conveniently as the [112] Town shall be able, there shall be another bell bought at the general charge of the Town and to be hanged up in her room."

1588.—No person in the town was allowed to keep any dog except a greyhound; and it was lawful for any person to kill any such dog found in the streets by night or day.

1592.—The Mayor and Jurats of Rye to Lord Buckhurst. By law and the custom of the parish of Rye the tithe of all kind of corn and grain belongs to the parson, and the tithes of all fruits to the vicar. One of the inhabitants of Rye grows beans, to whom does the tithe thereof belong? "Draft."

1594.—The Mayor and Jurats of Rye to Lord Cobham. "Of late at the suit of Mr. John Prescott, the Vycare of Rye, we reteined Mr. Edward Danner to be preacher within this our townshipp to whom at his request also graunted a reasonable yerely pencyon. So it is right honourable, that on Sunday being the 7th day of this present April the said Mr. Danner being ascended the pulpytt at evenynge prayer to preach, the said Mr. Prescott publicuely and before the hole congregation requyred Mr. Mayor of Rye to assyste him to expell Mr. Danner out of the pulpytt, for that he was a mutynous fellowe, a sower of sedycion, an enemye to the State and one that contempned

her Majesty's proceedings; whereupon Mr. Mayor thought it not convenient to dysturbe the preacher during his sermon, but the same being ended we have taken bonde with good suretyes of the said Mr. Danner to be forthcoming to aunswere to those things whereof he is by Mr. Prescottt accused."

1610-11.—Depositions concerning William Wale of Plymouth "sworne to the othe of Alleagance." Thomas Pretty of Rye deposes that he heard Wale say that "an Irishe man was always as good as a Scottishman." Pretty replied "that may not be, for we have one Scotishe-man [that] is better than any Irisheman," to which Wale answered "You make so much of your King." Pretty said again "Our King is supreme head [the words "of the church" are struck through] what say you to that?" Wale said "there was never an Irishe man but was as goode as the Kinge." Pretty said "there may be Kinges in Irelande" to which Wale did not answer. Other depositions to a similar effect. Wale replies that if he used such speeches "he was in drink" when he did so. "Memorandum."—The Mayor and his brethren ordered Wale to be whipped for his "bad and lewde speeches." [113]

1630.—The Mayor and Jurats of Rye to the Lord Warden. "On Satterday last there came to the hands of me, the Mayor of Rye, certeine lettres wrytten by Mrs. Smyth, our vycar's wyffe, or rather by Mr. Smyth, our vycar, in his wyffe's name and dyrected to their father-in-lawe in London, and in those letters was enclosed a crucyfix of silver which herein I sende to your honor. Whereupon I sent for Mr. Smyth and enquired of him where he had that crucyfix, who aunswered that his wyffe had had the same a long time, as of the gyfte of her mother and that now shee sent the same for a token to a child of hers in London, to weare about the neck of it. Which aunswers I the said Maior, at that tyme receaved "de bene esse" untill I might furthur understand of the truth of the cause. And afterwards he was convented before me, the said Maior, and others the Jurats of Rye, and againe demanded how he came by that crucyfix. He made such aunswer as before. And because we would not enterprise to

charge or dyscharge him concernyng this matter until your Honor's dyrected were had therein, he was offered to use his lybertye upon bond to be forthcomyng yf your Honor shold call for him, which he consented then unto. Now this day, being our Court day, we sent for him to enter into the said bonde, he refused so to do and in most unreverent and savadge manner reviled me, the said Maior, willing me to do what I durst, and affyrmed that I dyd njustice to offer to take such bonde of him with farre more reproachfull words then is meete to be repeated. For which his said abuse and to have him forthcoming until your Honor's pleasure be known we have comytted him to prison, most humbly desireing your Honor's will and dyrection herein." "Copy."

1645.—Ordered by the Mayor and Others, for Martha, the wife of Stephan Bruff, and Ann Horsell, widow, being suspected to be witches, to be tried by putting them into the water.

1655.—Order by the Mayor and Jurats to the Constables of Rye, to levy a distress 26s. 8d., on Alice, wife of Robert Batten, of Rye, seaman, for profanely swearing four oathes and in default of finding goods to value of the fine to set the same Alice in the Stocks for 24 hours. [114]

1683—Sunday, March 18th.--The Mayor and others broke into the house of Mr. Miller, at the top of West Street, Rye, and having taken the names of those present in the house, Mr. Miller and a Presbyterian preacher, named Markwick, were each prosecuted and fined £20, the former for having a conventicle in his house and the latter for preaching there.

The following Document is evidence of the strict attention to religious observance which had to be paid by the Mayors of the ancient Town in the beginning of the 18th century :—

1701.—"We, Edward Wilson, Clerk, Minister of the parish and parish Church of Rye, in the County of Sussex, and William Piggons, churchwarden of the said parish Church, do hereby certify that

Francis Young, Esq., Mayor of Rye, aforesaid, upon the Lord's Day, commonly called Sunday, the sixth and twentieth day of October last past, immediately after Divine Service and Sermon, did in the parish Church aforesaid, receive the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, according to the custom of the Church of England. In witness whereof we have hereunto subscribed our hands, the first day of December, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and one.

Edward Wilson, Minister of the parish and parish Church aforesaid.
William Piggons, Churchwarden.”

Robert Swaine, of Rye, Taylor, and Thos. Crouth, also a Taylor, on oath declared and attested that they saw the said Francis Young, named in the above written certificate, receive the Sacrament, and also saw the certificate subscribed to by the Minister and Churchwarden verifying the same and which was delivered to the Court.

1744.—Newspapers were few and copies were placed in the Town Hall by the Mayor's Sergeant, where Freemen might go and read them. One, John Haffenden, was reprimanded for going to the Post Office before the Sergeant and taking the papers. He was threatened with exclusion if he repeated the offence.

It was a custom in the town for many years to compel every stranger who set up in business therein, without having been apprenticed there, to pay half a guinea a year to the Corporation for the privilege.

1760.—In the “Universal Magazine” for the month of June, in this year, it is said that there was a charity school at Rye for teaching 30 poor children, part boys and part girls, which was [115] maintained, with an addition of their own work, by the money collected at the sacrament and by private charities.

1778—The first stage coach called the “Diligence” ran from Rye to London, occupying 15 or 16 hours in the journey, going one day and returning the next.

1781-2.—The notorious highwaymen, Joseph and George Weston, sons of a Staffordshire farmer, resided at the Friars, Winchelsea, under the assumed names of William Johnson and Samuel Watson. They made a great display here, but other parts of the country had their presence as well. The Annual Register calls them “two most notorious villains, who, for some years, have defrauded the country by various artful contrivances.” They were captured in Wardour Street, London, and committed for robbing the Bath and Bristol Mail, but with others effected their escape from Newgate. On being re-captured by a porter, Joseph fired a pistol and wounded the man in the cheek. They were tried for forgery, and, ultimately executed at Tyburn, on September 3rd, 1782.

1809.—James Russell, in his peculiarly outspoken account of the history of the Ancient Towns and Cinque Ports, says: The Corporation of Rye “ought to consist of a mayor and 12 jurats, at present there are only a mayor and five jurats. The office of mayor is constantly filled up by the Lambs, father and son.” We find that, from 1723 to 1832, members of this family were mayors and, from 1769 to 1832 with few exceptions, the Lambs held the office, but we do not read that it was to any great advantage to the town.

THE BARONS OF THE CINQUE PORTS.

These possessed, among other privileges, the right of attending the kings and queens at their coronations, when they carried two canopies of silk and gold, under which the royal sovereigns walked from Westminster Hall to Westminster Abbey. [116]

The following is extracted from the Customal of the town and port of Rye.

“Burgesses to the Coronation. The Barons of the Cinque Ports are to be summoned to the King and Queen’s Coronation by certain 40

days before the Coronation, by writing, and of all the Ports together there must be thirty-two barons, in one clothing and they shall bear the cloth over the King and Queen with four spears covered with silver and four little bells gilt hanging above the cloth which is called the pall and shall come from the King's treasury ; and at each of these four spears shall be attending four barons of the said Cinque Ports, and the said barons on the said day, shall sit in the King's hall at dinner, next to the King and Queen, on the right hand."

On the death of Queen Victoria, a committee consisting of the Mayors of Hastings and Romney, the late Sir Wollaston Knocker (solicitor to the Ports), the late F. A. Inderwick, K.C., and the Town Clerk of Rye (Walter Dawes, Esq.), was appointed to assert the ancient rights of the Barons to take part in the Coronation of King Edward VII. The petition was signed by the late Marquis of Salisbury (the Lord Warden). The Earl Marshal (the Duke of Norfolk) in reply notified that canopies would not be carried in the procession, but "in view of the fact that had this duty to be performed it would have been carried out by the Barons of the Cinque Ports, the Earl Marshal has received the King's command to retain 18 places in the Abbey to which he is to invite 18 of their number." The dress worn by them on the occasion, which took place August 9th, 1902, consisted of a black silk velvet coat lined with white silk, black silk velvet breeches, white silk waistcoat embroidered with flowers, all of the early Victorian period, with gilt buttons and buckles and gilt-mounted sword, lace jabot, and black velvet cap ; a cloak of scarlet cloth lined with white silk, with blue velvet facings, edged with gilt lace and having the Arms of the Cinque Ports and two bars denoting the rank of Baron on the right shoulder. At the Coronation of King George V. and Queen Mary, on June 22nd, 1911, Rye was represented by The Mayor (Councillor Joseph Adams, J.P.) and Mr. Walter Dawes, Senior Solicitor to the Cinque Ports. Mr. G. M. Freeman, K.C. represented Winchelsea.

[117]

Burials were discontinued by order of Privy Council from June 1st, 1854, in the Parish Churchyard, and Baptist Burial ground, and within St. Mary's Church, but special permission was obtained by relatives to bury in certain cases after that date. The remains of the last person to be deposited within the Parish Church was, we believe, the late Wm. Holloway, the historian, in 1870.

The epitaphs on Tombstones are sometimes interesting reading, hence we quote a few at Rye.

In the nave of the Church is the following of three virtuous sons:

“GEORGE SLADE, died 7th December, 1777, aged 19 years.

WILLIAM SLADE, died 5th March, 1783, aged 26, sons of Chiswell and Jane Slade. Ye tender readers who this shrine draw near, Drop on these youths a sympathetic tear. In virtues' peaceful paths they daily trod, Obeyed their parents and adored their God. With every wish of every friend complied; Gave pain to none until the hour they died.

Also near this place are deposited the remains of SAMUEL SLADE, brother to the said George and William, he was endued with the same virtues, and died equally regretted by his surviving friends on 1st January, 1789, aged 25 years.”

In the north aisle: “Here lyeth the body of THOMAS PROCTOR, who died November 27th, 1775, aged 73 years. Just to his word, a friend sincere, From every vicious folly clear, In all his dealings, what he gained, Was truly honestly obtained. He ne'er through life the poor did grind; Nor any owing him confined. Peace he maintained with all his neighbours, And well paid all men for their labours. Do as he did, God will you save, And cause you happy from the grave.”

In the Churchyard: At the foot of a stone to the memory of WILLIAM BARNES (many years Sergeant in the army and late Superintendent of Rye Gas Works), who died August 29th, 1853, “Billeted by death I here remain, Till the last trumpet sounds. I shall rise to march again.”

Sacred to the memory of MARIA BAKER FRYMAN, who died October 25th, 1821, aged 16 years and 6 months. "My life was short, my rest be long, I thank my God He took me young." [118]

Sacred to the memory of ANN MARIA STONHAM, who died September 20th, 1846, aged 63. "Ye that would learn her worth who sleeps below, Read virtues pages through from end to end ; Leave not a word unmarked and thou wilt know The virtues that adorned a valued friend."

In memory of Mary, second daughter of JOHN PILCHER, who departed this life July 9th, 1798, aged 53 years. "Farewell, vain world, I have seen enough of thee, And now am careless what thou sayst of me. Thy smiles I court not, nor thy powers I fear, My cares are past, my head lies easy here," Leaving issue 8 sons and 3 daughters.

In the Baptist Burying Ground is a stone to the memory of REBECCA, daughter of the REV. THOMAS WALL, who died November 1st, 1852. It bears the following verse: "Why was I made to hear Thy voice and enter while there's room, When thousands make a wretched choice and rather starve than come. 'Twas the same love that spread the feast, That sweetly forced me in, Else I had still refused to taste and perished in my sin.

At the south-east corner of the Churchyard, near the Gungarden entrance, there once stood (whether still there we cannot say, owing to some of the inscriptions being quite obliterated) an old tombstone, on which was cut a rude coffin with a figure sitting upright in it. The only words then legible were "Mary, the wife of — — with the date, 177-." This was to the memory of a woman who resided in part of the old Flushing Inn at the time when smugglers of Rye carried on a free trade with Flushing in the pure Schiedam. When living in that part where the mural painting was recently discovered, she had bad attacks of syncope, in one of which her vital

faculties were so long suspended, that her friends concluded she was dead. The nurse laid her forth, she was wrapped in her shroud and placed in the coffin, and there laid until the very morning of the day appointed for her funeral. The oven was being heated for the baking of cakes, etc., for the friends who would attend, when she awoke from her long sleep and slipped out of her coffin, walked downstairs, and standing before the oven, complained, with her hands uplifted, to the astonished person, who afterwards related the tale to the original writer of it, of feeling cold. She lived some years after this remarkable incident. It appears to have created a great sensation on the public mind for some years after, and General Hay, a tablet to whose memory is affixed to the north wall of the parish church, made instructions in his [119] Will that his executors were not to bury his body until mortification had set in, his widow giving similar instructions and also added that none but females should be in the room where it lay until the day of interment.

“God Save Englonde and ye Towne of Rye.” Old Customal.