

## NOTES FROM RUCKINGE WILLS

AFFECTING

### RUCKINGE CHURCH.

BY EDMUND WARD OLIVER.

THE Registers of the Consistory Court, at Canterbury, commence in 1396; those of the Archdeaconry Court, in 1449. The will of John Notebem (1401) is the only will, of a testator resident in Ruckinge, proved before 1463. From 1463, until 1541, 78 years, sixty-two of such wills were proved; seven in the Consistory, and fifty-five in the Archdeaconry court. Of these wills, fifty-eight contain gifts to the high altar, "for tithes and oblations forgotten;" the gift of John Notebem (1401) was a cow, but each other gift was in money; the amount varying from 2d. to 3s. 4d. Six wills direct burial in the church; forty-six, in the churchyard; and ten contain no directions as to burial; thirty-six contain devises of land. Every will commences with a bequest of the testator's soul to God, the Virgin, and saints; and thirty-nine contain directions for masses, or other religious services, for the testator's soul.

The wills shew the existence of eleven lights in the church; one before the rood; two dedicated to our Lady, one on the north and the other on the south side of the church; others, to the Trinity, St. Mary Magdalen (the patron saint of the church), St. Michael the Archangel, St. Christopher, St. Katherine; and two, called the Torch-light, and the Herse light. Two of these lights are mentioned in connection with guilds, fraternities, or brotherhoods, but others were probably maintained by similar societies.

Most of the wills contain bequests to one or more of the lights; the gift to each is small in amount, varying from 3s. 4d. to 2d.; and in one instance it consists of three

pounds of wax. The most popular were the rood light, our Lady light, the Trinity light, the herse light, and the torch light, which received, respectively, twenty-seven, twenty-six, twenty-four, twenty-four, and nineteen bequests. St. Mary Magdalen's light had eleven; our Lady light on the south side four; St. Michael three (between 1465 and 1534); and St. Christopher five (between 1515 and 1538); St. Margaret's light is named only once, in 1538. Five wills contain bequests "to each light, or devotion taper, in the church."

The roodlight is variously named, roodlight, crosslight, light of the cross, *lumen sancte crucis*, *lumen alte crucis*, and *lumen coram cruce*. Thos. Dyvers (1480) gave 3s. 4d. to the use of the roodloft; and Robert Warle (1479) a like sum to make "*sarcofac*" of the holy cross. John Shalford (1526) gave 4d. "to the bying of a newe cros."

Our Lady light, the light of our blessed Lady the virgin, *lumen beatæ Mariæ*, *lumen beatæ Mariæ virginis*, "the light of our Lady upon the north side of the church," probably stood before, or upon, the altar in the Lady chapel. It is mentioned from 1463 until 1536. John Heywarde (1523) bequeathed "a taper to brenne before our Lady, the price 2d." It was maintained by a fraternity, or brotherhood; for John Ovingham (1528) gave 8d. to "our Ladye brotherhed." Harvey Watts (1507) directs his "body to be buryed within the church, byfore the ymage of our Lady." John Trendley (1507) desires to be buried "in our Lady chauncell, uppon the north side of the cherche," and bequeaths 5s. "to the church, for my sepultur."

The Holy Trinity, or Trinity light, was probably in the south chancel, which was perhaps dedicated to the Trinity. It is mentioned from 1463 until 1536, and was maintained by a guild; for John Ovyngham (1528) gave 8d. "to the Trinite brotherhed." Wm. Langham (1464) directs that his executors shall be charged with the pavement of the church, from the south door to John Symon's stall. Edward Folett (1515) gave 23s. 4d., "to make small setts, between the south dore and the Trynite." In the south aisle, was an image of St Thomas of Canterbury, before which Robert

Folett (1513) desired to be buried; bequeathing 5s. to the church "that I may be buried ther."

The second light, dedicated to the Virgin, was on the south side of the church, beside the Trinity. It is first mentioned by John Knoldan (1477), as the light of the blessed Mary, on the south part of the church; and last mentioned by John Trendley (1507), who gave 4d. "to the light of our blessed Lady beside the Trynyte."

The light of Mary Magdalen, the patron saint, was probably burned before an image, or picture, of that saint. The light is referred to, from 1473 until 1533. William Langham (1464) directs the application of the proceeds of sale of four parcels of land, in newly painting the image (et cum parte pecuniæ inde percipiend' facient ymaginem beatæ Mariæ Magdalænæ, in ecclesia de Rokynge, de novo pictari), and in the celebration, at Canterbury, of two hundred masses for his soul. Alan Gayler (1473) bequeathed 8d. to the image of the blessed Mary Magdalen.

William Hunt (1473) directs that "John my sone shall kepe a taper of waxe before Seynte Katheryns, and a taper of iiij lbs. waxe before the sepulchre brenyng yerely, so long as he shall lyve." The torch light is named, also, lumen tortu', lumen de la torches, lumen voc' lez torchez, the torches light, and the tapyr. The herse light, lumen calaficerij, lumen de la herse, and lumen voc' le herse; John Adrian (1525) directs his executor to "renewe and stryke all the herse tapres, at his proper charge and cost."

As to burials in the church, John Notebem (1401) directs that his body shall be buried in the church, next his wife. Agnes Preyset (1513) desires to be buried "in the belfary," and bequeaths 5s. "to the church, that I may be buried there." Vincent Benett (1518) directs burial in the church, but omits the bequest. Christopher Hawkyns (1533), and John a ffryeth (1534), desire to be buried on the south side of the churchyard; Robert Whyte (1536), in the churchyard without the west door; William Streete (1538), on the east parte of the churchyard.

Other bequests to the church are as follows:—

John Notebem (1401) gives two cows "to the fabric;"

John Colyn (1465) gives 26s. 8d., John Knoldan (1477) 12d., Stephen Crochman of Shadokherst (1476) 20s., and Thomas Mighell (1541) 8d., to the use of the church. William Symon (1472) gives five marks, and Robert White (1536) 6s. 8d., to the reparation of the church; and Thomas Nethersole (1502) gives 1s., to the reparation of the tower. Mychaell Drawe (1489) gives the proceeds of sale of a quarter of an acre of land, called Frostways, "to make one glass window, in the church." Clement Harlakyn den (1517) bequeathed 8d. "to the bells of Rokinge." Roger Haukyns (1521) 2s. "to the reparacion of the bells in the steple." John Sharpe (1529) gives the proceeds of sale of two houses, at Halton, on death of his son without issue, as to 10s. for masses, and "the residue my feofees shall cause the mony to go to the byeng of a trebull bell, for the churche of Rokinge." Agnes Sprott (1511) gave, to the high altar, two ells (ulnas) "de le drapure." Agnes White (1511) bequeaths 3s. 4d. "to the makyng of a wyndow at the south side of the churche, or to any other reparacion to be done uppon the same churche; also I bequeth, to the same churche, a towill, a tablecloth, and a shete." Agnes Preysett (1513) bequeathed to the church "a coverlet of yelow, and my best towell." John Notebem (1401) gives his toga of silk, to making a vestment. James Whyte of Shaddokkysherst (1472) gave a vestment, worth four marks. Thomas Dyvers (1480) gave six marks, to the buying of a new vestment, like the best cope. John Colyn (1465) gave 33s. 4d. (in two sums of 6s. 8d. and 26s. 8d.) to buy a newe chalice (calix), and 5d. to the parish clerk.

Gifts, for repairing the roads or "the noxious ways," and for marrying poor maidens, are common. Jno. Colyn, (1465) gives the residue of the proceeds of sale of a messuage, called Colynys, and six acres of land, after paying 26s. 8d. towards the new chalice, noticed above, to the use of the church, and to repairing the ways, "ad vias nocinas emendendum." Laurence Hamo (1474) directs 20 marks to be disposed, in masses, and upon the foul ways (turpibus viis), between Hamme and Bromlegh (now part of the Turnpike Road, from Romney through Hamstreet and Bromley Green, to Ashford)

and in marrying poor maidens, where the greatest need shall be. Wm. Symon (1472) gives 6s. 8d. to repair the way between the church and Le Halton, the residue to be bestowed in masses, ac viis nocinis emend', et aliis operibus caritatis. Wm. Adryan (1491) gave 3s. 4d. for amending the way between the church and Halton. Geo. Sharpe (1489) directed residue to be applied in celebrating masses, repairing the church, and amending the ways (vias nocinas). Roger Haukyns (1521) directs as follows:—"Also I wull that my executors shall repayre the fote wayes goying to the church of Rokyng, to the value of 13s. 4d.; first to amend the fotewaye goyng crosse the strete, at the stone stile at Mylfeld, and that wit grete stones, sufficiently as the comen people and the parishioners may passe, without any greffe. Also I wull that myn executors shall amend the fote waye goynt crosse the strete, with grete stones, in likewise, betwene Xpofer Hawkyns hous, and Folett's lands, goyng to the parishe church of Rokyng, and that it be don well and sufficiently, and theis two plac's well and sufficiently mendid; then the residue of the money, of 13s. 4d., to be bestowid in other plac's nedefull to be amendid, betwene that and the church of Rokyng." John Adryan (1525) gave 20d. to the mendyng of the high wayes betwene Halton grene, and Rokyng church, ther where most nede is. John Ovingham (1528) directed that, on failure of issue of his daughter, the proceeds of sale of his lands should "be bestowed yn the parishes of Rokyng, Bylsyngton, and Orleston," in masses, and the residue "yn amendyng of the high wayes, part of it ther as it is most nedefull, and all thother parte to remayne to the said three churches; to bye suche orname'ts as is nedefull, or els to go to the reparations . . the church of Rokyng . . to have more money to be bestowed theryn by 40s. than yn any of thother two churches."

With reference to the "lights," alluded to in these Ruckinge wills, it may be noted that, by Cromwell's Injunctions, in A.D. 1538, the clergy were forbidden to allow any candles to be set before images. The only "lights" to be permitted were those (i.) on the rood loft, (ii.) before the sacrament of the altar, and (iii.) about the Easter Sepulchre, vide *Archæo-*

*logia*, xlii. 275, and Collier's *Church History*, ii. 150. The Herse light is described by Canon Rock in *Church of Our Fathers*, ii. 496-516. The Easter Sepulchre has been well illustrated by Mr. Alfred Heales in *Archæologia*, xlii. 263.

The following list of Ruckinge wills gives the names of testators, the dates of probate, and references to the registers of the Archdeacon's, or of the Consistory, Court at Canterbury:—

Adryan, Wm. . . . .	1491, A. v. 14.	Nethersole, Thomas . . . . .	1502, A. viii. 14.
Adrian, John . . . . .	1525, A. xvi. 11.	Notebem, John . . . . .	1402, C. i. 12.
A'fryeth, see Fryeth.		Ovyngham, John . . . . .	1528, A. xvii. 14.
Benett, Vincent . . . . .	1518, A. xiii. 1.	Pondeherst, Richard. 1489, A. v. 5.	
Blakke, James . . . . .	1533, A. xix. 13.	Punderst, Robert . . . . .	1509, A. xi. 3.
Blankett, Thos. . . . .	1484, C. iii. 2.	Pownd, John . . . . .	1509, A. xi. 3.
Brice, David . . . . .	1509, A. xi. 9.	Pratte, Richard . . . . .	1508, A. ix. 11.
Colyn, William . . . . .	1485, C. iii. 56.	Preysett, Agnes . . . . .	1513, A. xii. 15.
Colyn, John . . . . .	1465, A. i. 7.	Shalferd, William . . . . .	1505, A. ix. 4.
Colyn, Peter . . . . .	1532, A. xix. 11.	Shalford, John . . . . .	1526, A. xvii. 4.
Crekyng, John . . . . .	1464, A. i. 6.	Shalford, Stephen . . . . .	1527, A. xvii. 9.
Drawe, Michael . . . . .	1489, A. v. 5.	Sharpe, George . . . . .	1490, A. v. 7.
Dyvers, Thos. . . . .	1480, A. iii. 16.	Sharpe, John . . . . .	1530, A. xix. 1.
Folett, Robert . . . . .	1513, A. xii. 8.	Sprott, Agnes . . . . .	1511, A. xii. 2.
Folett, Edward . . . . .	1515, A. xii. 17.	Strete, William . . . . .	1539, A. xxii. 1.
ffryeth, John à . . . . .	1534, C. xvi. 54.	Symon, Alan . . . . .	1474, A. ii. 17.
Gayler, Alan . . . . .	1474, A. ii. 10.	Symon, William . . . . .	1475, A. ii. 13.
Godard, Richard . . . . .	1495, A. vi. 2.	Symond, John . . . . .	1485, C. iii. 57.
Hale, John . . . . .	1499, A. vii. 5.	Symon, Thomas . . . . .	1512, A. xii. 9.
Hall, John . . . . .	1480, A. iii. 16.	Symon, John . . . . .	1517, C. iii. 57.
Hamo, Laurance. . . . .	1474, A. ii. 15.	Trendley, John . . . . .	1507, A. x. 6.
Harlakynden, Joan. . . . .	1517, A. xii. 20.	Warle, Robert . . . . .	1479, A. iii. 14.
Harlakynden, Clemens 1517, A. xii. 20.		Watte, John . . . . .	1479, C. ii. 418.
Hawkins, Christopher. 1534, C. xvi. 4.		Watts, Harry . . . . .	1508, A. ix. 9.
Hawkyne, Roger . . . . .	1521, A. xiv. 7.	Watts, Thomas . . . . .	1510, A. xi. 5.
Heywarde, John . . . . .	1523, A. xv. 11.	Wildaysshe, William . 1463, A. i. 19.	
Hunt, William . . . . .	1533, A. xix. 15.	White, John . . . . .	1493, A. v. 16.
Knoldan, John . . . . .	1477, A. iii. 4.	White, Stephen. . . . .	1501, A. viii. 5.
Langham, William . . . . .	1464, A. i. 104.	White, Agnes . . . . .	1514, A. xii. 14.
Langham, Simon . . . . .	1493, A. v. 16.	White, Thomas . . . . .	1517, A. xii. 20.
Mighell, Thomas . . . . .	1541, A. xxii. 2.	Whyte, Robert . . . . .	1537, A. xxi. 4.
Moise, Thomas . . . . .	1497, A. vi. 7.	William, Robert . . . . .	1514, A. xii. 5.