

FROLESWORTH

I.—The Church

BY

ALBERT HERBERT, A.R.I.B.A.

II.—Notes on the Descent of the Manor

BY

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I.—THE CHURCH

By Albert Herbert, A.R.I.B.A.

Frolesworth, in the hundred of Guthlaxton, is a small village pleasantly situated on high ground from which extensive views of the surrounding country are obtained. It is five miles north west from Lutterworth and six miles south from Hinckley. The area is 1515 acres and the population was 243 in 1911.

Even a cursory glance at the church (dedicated to St. Nicholas) either internally or externally, would show that, in common with the majority of English churches, this edifice has been added to, altered, and developed in the course of centuries; albeit this particular building is still of modest proportions. Entering the north aisle door (that nearest the village street) one is immediately impressed with the pleasant and tranquil light which suffuses all parts, resulting largely from the preponderance of clear glass, and from the diminutive proportions of the arcades—the piers on the north side being only some seven feet high. No part of the building is lofty or spacious, but it is a complete and typical village church, consisting of nave, chancel, north and south aisles and tower. Of recent date, has been added a compartment on the south side of the chancel serving the dual purpose of vestry and organ chamber. The external dimensions of the church are 85 feet 2 inches long and the width 50 feet 9 inches. Careful measurement of the angles of the walls shows that the original plan was set out with little accuracy or skill. The earliest traces are evidently those of a late Norman church, although the cap and base details in the north arcade abutments indicate almost a transitional date. Possibly the original tower was of similar early date. It was probably superseded by a new tower in the fifteenth century, for embedded in the west walls of both aisles are buttresses which seem to support this contention. This later tower was destroyed in a notable storm and rebuilt in the year 1762. The chancel arch and abutments are of early thirteenth century date, as evinced by the nail head ornaments in the caps. The chancel walls and windows are mid-perpendicular.

With respect to the divergence in design between the east window and that of those north and south, it might be reasonably

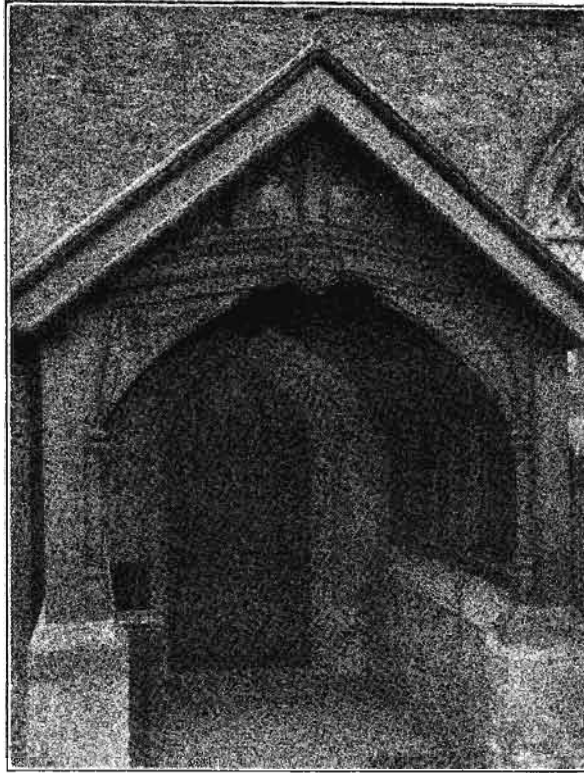


Photo by A. E. Baker.

FROLESWORTH CHURCH—NORTH PORCH

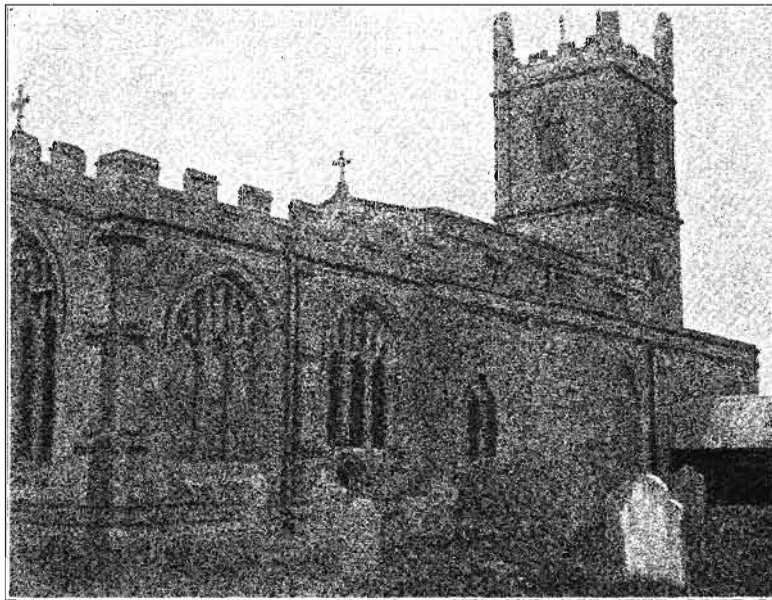


Photo by A. E. Baker.

FROLESWORTH CHURCH FROM THE NORTH-EAST

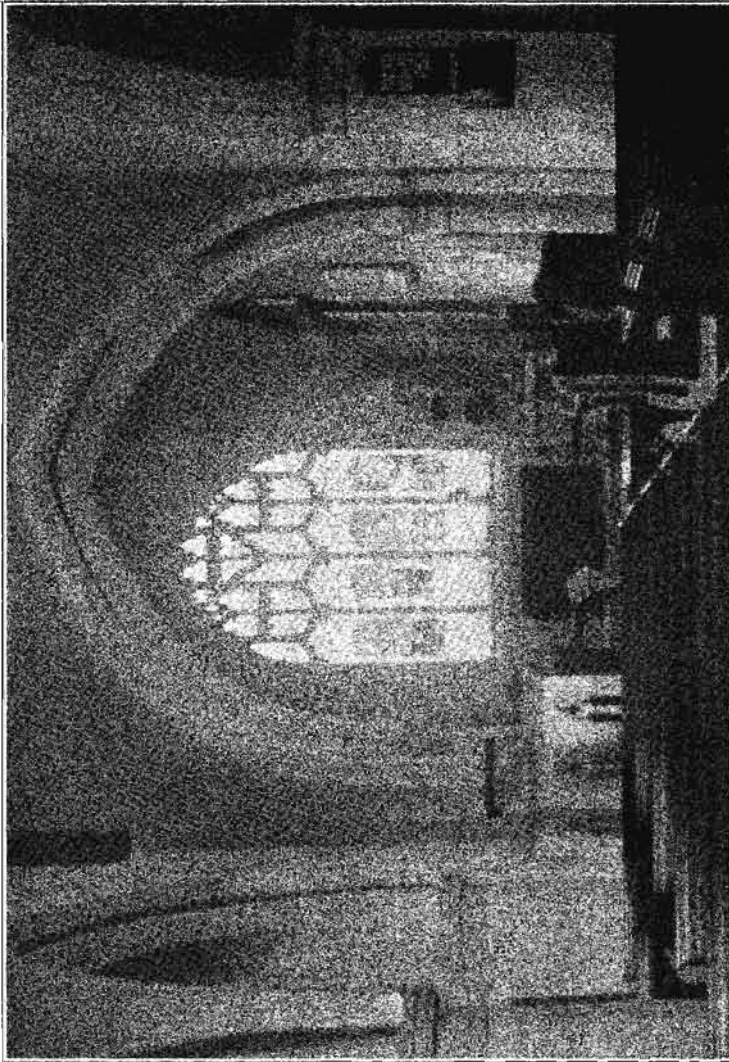


Photo by A. E. Baker.

FROLISWORTH CHURCH—LOOKING EAST

suggested that the former was of a somewhat later date ; but a close examination and a comparison of the stonework in each case do not afford the necessary evidence. It is more probable that the introduction of the three characteristic transomes in the large window was adopted as a newly invented treatment then being evolved by church builders. It is fortunate that the cutting of access from the chancel to the new vestry did not disturb the low-side window which may be seen behind the choir seats.

There are indications on either side of the east window internally, that there were formerly corbels and niches with canopied heads.

The present north and south aisle walls and buttresses were taken down and rebuilt on the old foundations in the year 1887. Happily, the buttress stones are replaced, and the only objection to be raised is that the external re-facing of the south aisle is of small squared syenite blocks.

It is feared that restorations—"undertakings," to use Ruskin's phrase—subsequent to Nichols' day have been responsible for the destruction of much that would have been of interest to-day, had it been preserved. There is now no woodwork, except the fifteenth century tie-beams in the roof of the nave, and portions of the fifteenth century woodwork in the north porch which is not modern. It is probable that there was formerly some ancient stained glass in the chancel windows of considerable artistic value, as is shown by some small irregular shaped panels, whose beautiful colour and drawing occasion a lament that so little is left. The work of the "restorers" is not, however, to be wholly condemned, if it be recalled what was the state of ecclesiastical taste in the early part of last century. It was, for instance, no act of vandalism to clear away the communion table which, according to the visitation of Archdeacon Bonney, in 1842, was of strong oak, but the top was painted to look like marble. The same treatment was, according to the report of the same visitation, meted out to the font, which, says the Archdeacon, apparently with approval, was a handsome modern font of stone, painted like marble.

The works carried out about thirty-five years ago under the general purpose of "restoration" included the taking down and

clearing away of a gallery under the tower with organ and seats for the choir, having access from an outer doorway in the west wall, now built up. A panelled oak front crossed the nave from pillar to pillar and the sides were fenced from the aisles by iron railings. The old brick floor was taken up, the general level of the nave raised some nine inches—the chancel higher—and the whole was covered with encaustic tiles in colours, somewhat disturbing in effect. The ancient oak family and other pews were, of course, entirely cleared away to be replaced by the modern stained and varnished seating, no use having been made of the old material. The glazing of the eastern window of the chancel was replaced by a memorial to the son of the present rector (Canon Boucher), but some pieces of the ancient glass have been preserved, as already noted, both in this window and in those north and south. A piscina remains in the southern wall of chancel, but at a height which suggests a floor level in the fifteenth century much below the present one. There is also another piscina in the south aisle.

The most remarkable features of the chancel consist of two massive alabaster table, or altar tombs, with recumbent figures lying with feet to the east, near each of the side walls. That which lies by the southern wall marked A on plan, plate B1, has a sculptured entablature in the eastern wall enclosing the armorial bearings of the family, surmounted by skull and hour-glass. On one side of the tomb are the kneeling figures of two boys and one girl; and on the other side are those of three boys, three girls and two babies in cradles. The names of all these children are given in an inscription beginning "These bee the issue, to wit."

There are two inscriptions on this tomb. The first is as follows:—

"Here lyeth the body of Francis Staesmore, Esquire, and lord of this towne and justice of the peace and deputie leueftenant for this Countie of Leicester who at the time of his death served in Parliament being elected Knight for this shire. Hee was the son of Sabin Staesmore Esquire likewise lord of this manor by Elizabeth Stanley daughter of Walter Stanley of West Bromwich in the countie of Stafford Esquire. Hee died the eighth of May Anno Domini 1626 being aged 47."

The second inscription on this tomb is the following:—

"Frances Staesmore widow to Francis Staesmore, and one of the daughters and heires of William Brocas of Theddingworth

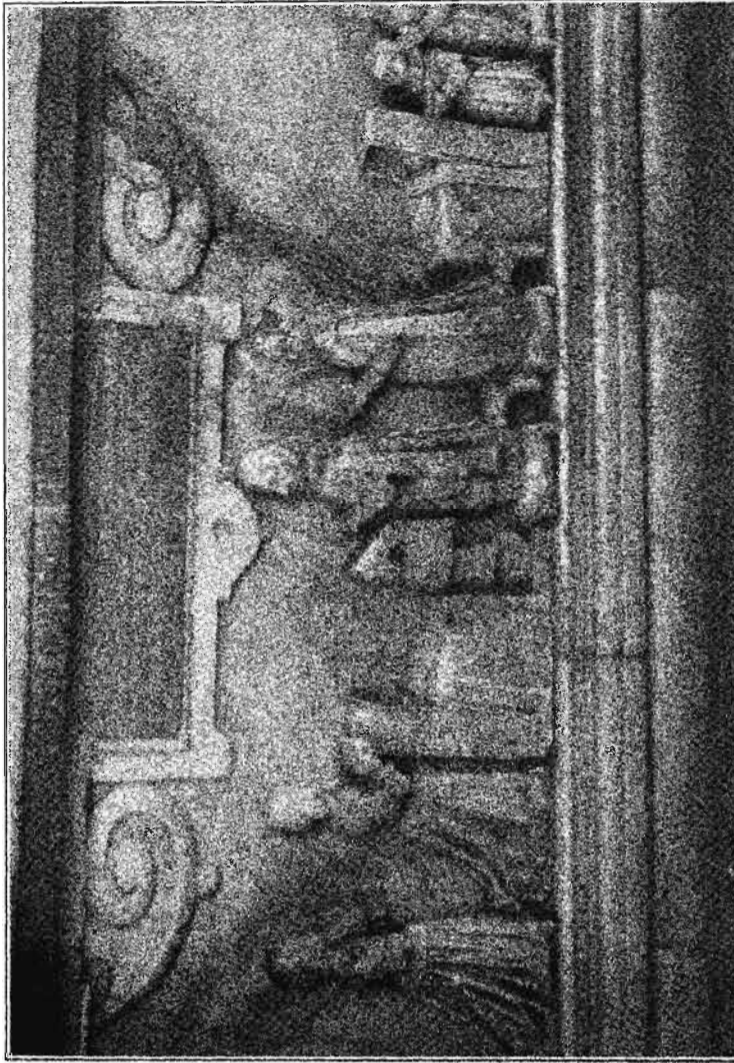


Photo by A. E. Baker.

PROLESWORTH CHURCH—MONUMENT TO FRANCIS STARESMORE ERECTED IN 1631

Esquire, to the memory of her beloved husband erected this monument in the year of our Lord 1631."

The monument of the devoted widow and mother of the large family recorded stands parallel to that of her husband, and is marked B on plan, plate 1. It is also in coloured alabaster and has four coats of arms duly emblazoned. The inscription is:—

"Sacred to the pretious memory of Mrs. Frances Staesmore (wife of Francis Staesmore Esquire Lord of this Manor of Frolesworth) one of ye daughters and coheirs of William Brocas of Theddingworth in ye County of Leicester Esquire who departed this life the second day of June in the year of our Lord God 1657, was this monument erected in 1658."

A tombstone is inserted in the floor of the chancel, next the east wall, marked C on plan, plate 1. It bore a female figure in outline with the arms of William Brocas, of Theddingworth, in the left top corner, and at the foot, left corner, were the outlined figures of two girls in Elizabethan ruffs. There was also an inscription on all four sides of the slab, read outwards. The whole is now much worn, and is almost indecipherable. It covers the remains of Elizabeth, who died in 1621, wife of William Brocas, of Theddingworth, and mother of Mrs. Frances Staesmore, who lies under one of the monuments above described.

The moulded plinths, buttress weatherings and other details of chancel have strong, vigorous outlines.

The remains of the stone coffin found in position marked G on plan, plate 1, are reminiscent of those of the coffin of the founder at Church Langton church (see Arch. Trans., Vol. iii, p. 94.) As in the latter case, the coffin was wrought out of a solid block of stone.

Succeeding in date and interest to the Staesmore family, was that of Smith, of whom were living here in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries two brothers, Roger and John, the latter becoming wealthy and distinguished, left by his benevolence a lasting memorial in his native place by founding homes for poor widows. Of the elder brother, Roger, little is known except that he lived a long and probably tranquil life in the midst of the village with his wife, also named Frances, of whom there is a memorial in the church, consisting of a plain slate tablet in the west wall of the south aisle, marked E on plan,

plate 1, recording the fact that she and her husband lived together for the remarkable period of fifty-seven years, dying in 1729, aged 74 years; also that they had many children, of whom Roger, Mary, Oliver, Grace and Frances survived her. The son, Roger, became rector of Husband's Bosworth.

To the memory of her charitable brother-in-law, John, there is a marble tablet in the south wall of the church, near the chancel, marked D on plan, plate 1, with the following inscription:—

"Here lieth the Body of the Honourable John Smith Esquire, Lord Chief Baron of Scotland, and one of the Barons of the Exchequer in England. He was third son of Roger Smith of this place Esquire by Anna his wife Daughter of Thomas Cotton of Loughton in this County Esquire. Amongst many other acts of charity and beneficence, He Founded and Endowed the Hospital in this Village, for the Support and Maintenance of Fourteen poor widows, of the Church of England. He was born the sixth of January 1656, and departed this Life on the 24th of June, 1726. Aged 70 years."

From traces of ancient domestic buildings that still exist, it would appear that some of the old families, including that of the Smiths, lived in the village, neighbours of the poorer, labouring folk. This close contact with the lives of less fortunate people may have inspired the charitable design of the Honourable John Smith, when highly placed, and far away, to remember the privation and suffering of the poor widows of toiling men in his native place, whose hard lot had little possibility of provision for the future. His home was identified a hundred years ago, but no record of it is preserved except that it was then in its original state and was "not remarkable," and had "always been the residence of farmers." Roger Smith's house was, however, the family mansion, and was said to bear marks of great antiquity. Traditions in the village points to a farmhouse not far from the hospital. It has been much altered and modernised, but retains in its southern boundary wall the piers of a wide gateway, and in the house an oak staircase, encased doors, and a few oak panels stacked in a corner.

THE HOSPITAL, situated at the corner of two roads in the village, is retired from its traffic, and enclosed by a substantial buttressed and ornamented brick wall, within which enclosure the life of past centuries seem to linger in unbroken quietude and repose. The site is a large quadrangle surrounded chiefly by

two-roomed cottages, in the midst of which is a large garden, profuse with old-fashioned flowers, with narrow beds of the same under the cottage windows. It is approached by a gateway with an arched roof, on the enriched carved stone front of which are displayed the arms of the founder, with the motto "Virtuti non verbis." Wide pathways lead to the cottages, paved with chequered blue paving bricks, the selection of which material, with its non-slipping surface, shows careful thought for the safety of the aged inmates. In the middle of the main walk from the entrance is a chapel for the inmates, who being, according to the terms of the Trust, avowed members of the church of England, would therein have ministration strictly canonical. It is entered by a handsome stone doorway, arched, with carved spandrils, lighted by quarried windows with stone mullions and transoms, on the latter of which are carved the words "Blessed is he that considereth the poor." Above is a stone-built turret with clock. The interior is simple, plain and decorous, with rows of spacious backed benches. There are twenty-four plain, brick-built, two-roomed cottages all of which appear to be not only comfortably furnished, but very neat and tidy. At a lower angle of the square is a modern recreation room with a small library and a stage with curtains.

RECTORS OF FROLESWORTH.

Before 1218-19. G. de Sancto Albano, clerk, to the church of Frellesworth, vacant. Patrons—The prior and convent of Chaucombe. Instituted before the 10th year of bishop Hugh of Wells [1218-19] saving to Eustace the chaplain his vicarage which he has in the same, and he shall hold the said vicarage as long as he shall live, rendering to the same G [Gualterus] as parson four marks yearly from the same church in the name of a pension, etc. [Rot. Hug. Wells I, p. iii.]

The church of Frellesworth of the patronage of the prior of Chaucombe. Walter de Sancto Albano was instituted parson by Hugh now bishop of Lincoln [1209-1235].

From the matriculus of Hugh Wells of the archdeaconry of Leicester. [Ibid. p. 241].

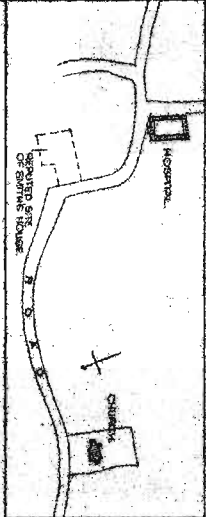
Walter of Braunston resigned 1275.

1275. Henry de Anvers, sub-deacon, ordained by the bishop of Salisbury by letters dimissory from the bishop of Lincoln, presented to the vicarage of Frollisworth on the resignation of master Henry de Branston. Patron, Ralph de Anvers. Instituted at Tinwell, 10 Kal. Aug. [23 July] 17th year of bishop Gravesend. [Bishop Gravesend's Leicester roll.]
1296. John Danvers, clerk, in minor orders, on the death of Henry de Anvers. Patron—Thomas of Leicester [probably in right of his wife Alice the relict of Ralph de Anvers.] He was ordained deacon 7 ides Mar. [9 March] 1296 at Brampton, and instituted the same date and place. [Reg. i, f. 289.]
1343. Oliver of Shulton, priest, on the death of sir John Danvers. Patron—Thomas of Shulton. Instituted 10 Kal. Feb. [23 Jan.] 1343, at Buckden. [Reg. vi, fo. 37.]
1349. Richard Meaux, clerk, on the death of Oliver of Shulton. Patron—The earl of Lancaster, seneschal of England. Instituted 8 Kal. Jul. [24 June] 1349, at Thornton. [Reg. ix, f. 342.]
1349. Hugh Meen, clerk, to the church of Frollesworth, vacant. Patron—Henry, earl of Lancaster, seneschal of England. Instituted 7 ides Aug. [7 Aug.] 1349, at Lydington. [Reg. ix, f. 344.]
1361. Richard of Folkeshull, priest, on the death of Hugh Mene. Patron—Alianora wife of sir John Amory, kt. Instituted Kal. Nov. [1 November] 1361, at Lidyngton. [Reg. ix, f. 377.]
- Sir Richard Bulkyngton.
- 1400-1. Edmund Wolf, chaplain, on the death of sir Richard Bulkyngton. Patron—Katherine Wolf. Instituted 26 Jan. 1400-1 at the Old Temple, London. [Reg. xiii, f. 192 d.]

Sir William Abre alias Smith.

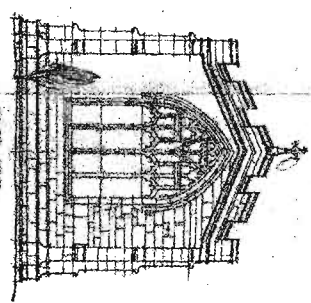
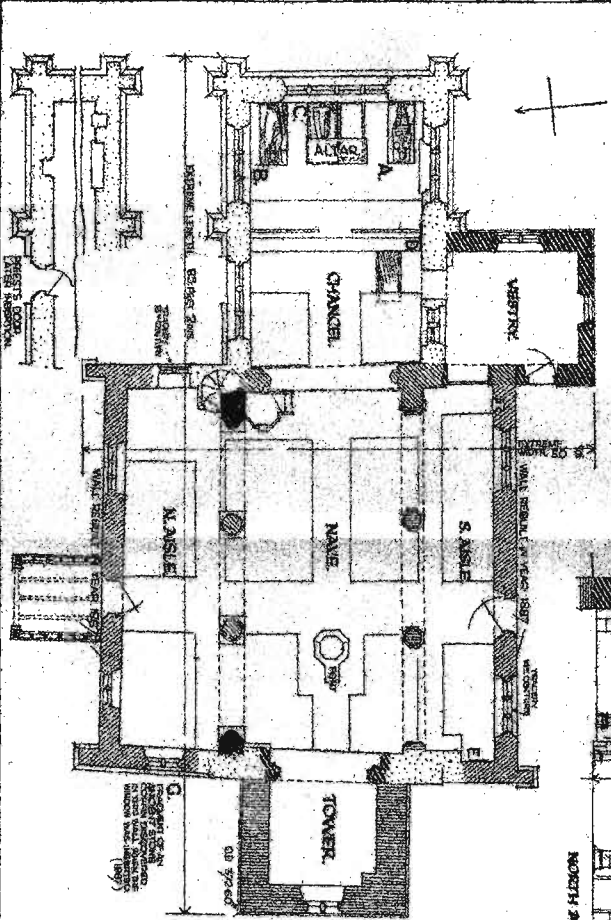
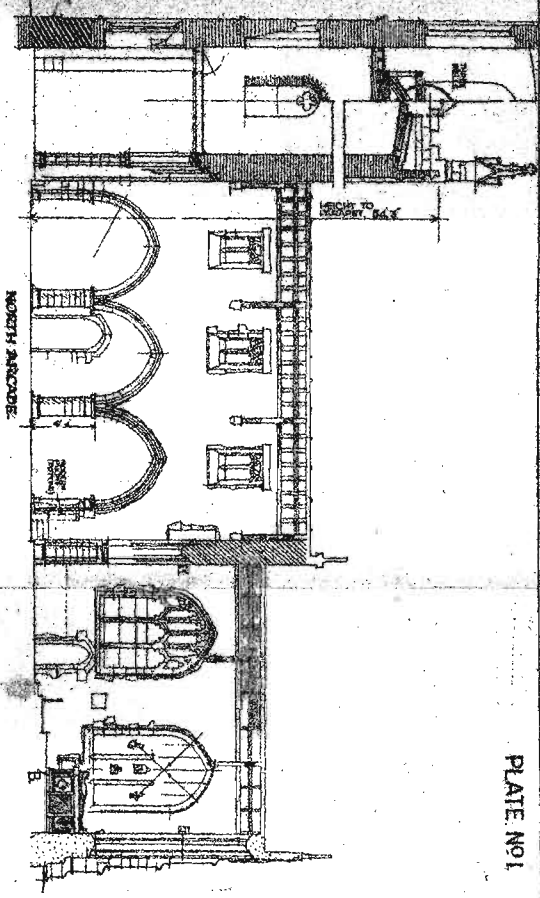
1471. Sir Robert Claybrooke, priest, on the resignation of sir William Abre otherwise called Smith made before master William Gybson, notary public. Patron—Richard Dryland, esq., for this turn, in the right of Katherine his wife, formerly the wife of William Walsale, deceased, lord of the demesne of Frollesworth with the advowson of the church there. Instituted at Bedford, 1 Aug. 1471. [Reg. xx, f. 224 d.]
- 1495-6. Richard Claybroke, clerk, on the death of Robert Claybrooke. Patron—Robert Walsall, gent. Instituted 28 Jan. 1495-6, personally. [Reg. xxiii, f. 9 d.] He was buried at Frolesworth 31 March, 1551. [Register.]
1551. Sir John Okeley, clerk, on the death of Richard Cleybroke. Patron—Michael Purefey, esq., Thomas Greye and Thomas Staesmore, gentlemen, by reason of a certain advowson to them for this term made by [blank]. Instituted at Nettlehamme 26 June, 1551, personally. [Reg. xxvii, f. 287.] Buried at Frolesworth 19 April, 1567. [Register.]
- 1566-7. William Stasmore, clerk. Patron—Francis Stasemore, gent. Instituted 9 Elizabeth [1566-7.] [Reg. xxviii, f. 59.] Buried at Frolesworth 24 Oct. 1636 [Register.]
1636. William Maydewell, junior, of East Farndon, M.A., presented at East Farndon 22 Oct. 12 Charles I [1636] to the rectory of Frolesworth on the death of William Staesmore. Patron—William Maydewell, senior, of East Farndon, co. Northants, gent, patron for this turn. Instituted at Buckden 23 Oct., 1636. Presentation deed 1636, no. 26.
1662. William Cooke, B.A., clerk, to the rectory of Frolesworth vacant by deprivation. Patron—Elizabeth Bennett, widow, in full right. Instituted 10 Oct., 1662. [Reg. xxxii, f. 21 d.]
1679. Henry Noble, M.A., on the death of William Cooke. Patron—St. John Bennett, esquire, in full right. Instituted 10 Dec., 1679. [Reg. xxxiv, f. 41 d.]

1723. Anthony Noble, B.A., on the death of Henry Noble. Patron—George Noble, gent., in full right. Instituted 10 July, 1723. [Reg. xxxviii, p. 7.]
1739. Tobias Matthews, B.A., on the death of Anthony Noble. Patron—George Noble, of Waltham, co. Leic., in trust for and on the nomination of Henry Lovell Noble, the true patron. Instituted 19 June, 1739. [Reg. xxxviii, p. 366.]
1764. Henry Lovell Noble, clerk, B.A., on the death of Toby Matthews, clerk. Patron—George Noble, gent. Instituted 12 May, 1764. [Reg. xxxix, p. 31.]
1789. Aulay Macaulay, clerk, on the death of Henry Lovell Noble, clerk. Patron—William Babington, clerk. Instituted 24 April, 1789. [Reg. xxxix, p. 493.]
1790. Samuel George Noble, clerk, B.A., on the resignation of Aulay Macaulay, clerk. Patron—the said Samuel George Noble, in full right, on his own petition. Instituted 19 Dec., 1790. [Reg. xxxix, p. 522.]
1822. Samuel Lambert Noble, clerk, B.A., on the death of Samuel G. Noble. Patron—Margaret Noble, widow, Robert Marriott, clerk, George Mettam, clerk, and Richard Watson, gent., as devisees in trust under the will of Samuel George Noble, in full right. Instituted 6 July, 1822. [Reg. xl, p. 326.]



CHURCH OF ST. NICHOLAS, FROLESWORTH.

| PERIODS | MONUMENTS |
|---------------|-------------------------|
| NORMAN (LATE) | FRANCIS STANESKOPPE. A. |
| 13TH CENTURY | FRANCES STANESKOPPE. B. |
| 15TH CENTURY | ELISABETHA BROOKS. C. |
| 18TH CENTURY | JOHN SMITH. D. |
| 19TH CENTURY | FRANCIS SMITH. E. |



ALBERT HARRIS. 1922

II.—THE DESCENT OF THE MANOR

By George Farnham, F.S.A.

The descent of the manor of Frolesworth in medieval times is rendered of genealogical interest by the numerous female heirs through whom the manor passed.

At the time of the compilation of the Domesday Survey about the year 1086, the countess Judith [niece of William the Conqueror] held 6 carucates [some 720 acres] of land in Frellesworde [Frolesworth]. 6 ploughs were there. Now 14 sochmen have there 5 ploughs and 8 acres of meadow. It is worth 40 shillings.¹ In the same survey Hugh de Grentemaisnil is stated to hold 1 carucate of land in Frelesworde [Frolesworth]. There is land for half a plough. There are 3 bordars. It is worth 3 shillings.² Nichols says that an inquisition taken in 1296 states that the manor of Frolesworth, less one carucate of land, is held of the honor of Leicester; it is obvious therefore that the earls of Leicester must have very largely increased their holding from the successors in title of the countess Judith. It is, however, with the resident lords of the manor, technically known as the "tenants in demesne" rather than with the chief lords of the fee under whom the manor was held, that our interest lies. Of these sub-tenants the earliest one known to us is a certain Thomas Saukevill who lived in the latter half of the 12th century, and whose daughter and heir Felicia married one Hugh de Anvers or Danvers, a member of a Brabant family who had settled in England and derived their surname from their place of origin. Hugh and Felicia had issue a son Bertram Danvers. Both father and son were dead in 1213, in which year Hawise the relict of Bertram sued Felicia, her mother-in-law, for dower in Frolesworth. The details of the suit need not be reproduced here; but Felicia, in her defence, makes one statement of interest, namely that the property in Frolesworth to which she had succeeded on her father's death had been in the possession of her

¹V.C.H. Leicestershire i, p. 332.

²Ibid. p. 314.

ancestors from "the conquest of England."¹ Supposing this hereditary descent to have been in the male line the family of Saukevill must be reckoned amongst the earliest sub-tenants in the county of Leicester whose names have come down to us.

Nichols, in his history of Leicestershire [iv, p. 180] says that Hugh Danvers possessed Frolesworth in the right of Felicia Saukevill, his wife, in the reign of king Henry I. This is impossible, but Hugh and Felicia were probably married in the reign of king Henry II, *i.e.*, before the year 1189.

The manor of Frolesworth remained in the family of Danvers until the year 1324, when Nicholas Danvers, lord of Frolesworth, died, leaving an only daughter and heir named Joan who was the wife of John Amory, of Little Maldon, co. Essex. John Amory and Joan had issue two sons, Edmund born c 1325 and John born in 1331, [both of whom succeeded in turn to Frolesworth and died without leaving issue] and one daughter Katherine the wife of John Wolf, of Easton Mauduit, co. Northants. John Wolf thus become lord of Frolesworth in right of his wife on the death of her brother John Amory about the year 1361.

John Wolf and Katherine had issue a son John, who at his death left an only daughter and heir Elizabeth married to Robert Walshale, to whom she brought the manor of Frolesworth. Two generations of Walshale followed, but on the death of Robert, the grandson of the former Robert Walshale, on 25 March, 1509, without male issue, the manor of Frolesworth was divided among his three daughters and co-heirs; of whom the third daughter Mary married John, son of William Staesmore, of Rowley, co. Stafford, and carried her share of the manor into her husband's family. John Staesmore seems to have purchased the eldest sister's third share from her daughter and heir Barbara and her husband Richard Lawley by a fine levied in Trinity term 1544. John Staesmore died 14 Oct., 1549, and was succeeded by his eldest son Francis, aged 34 at his father's death.

Francis Staesmore died 21 June, 1582, and in the inquisition taken after his death, he is stated to have died seised of the manor of Frolesworth and 20 messuages, 8 cottages, a windmill, 28 gardens, 20 orchards, 2000 acres of land, 400 of meadow, 400 of pasture and £4 rent in Frolesworth, Sapcote and Leire, held of

¹Curia regis roll 58, Trin. 15 John m. 3.

the queen as of her manor of Earl Shilton within the honor of Leicester, parcel of the duchy of Lancaster, by a third part of one knight's fee, a rent of 6s. yearly and suit of court at the manor of Earl Shilton. Sabin Staesmore was his son and next heir and aged 40 years. [According to the Frolesworth parish register he was baptised 19 Feb., 1639-40.] Sabin Staesmore was buried at Frolesworth 19 Sept., 1621, aged 82 years, and was succeeded by his eldest son Francis, who was baptised at Frolesworth 9 Nov., 1578, and died 8 May, 1626, aged 47. The large alabaster monument erected to his memory on the south side of the altar in Frolesworth church by his widow is said to have been the work of Nicholas Stone. The inscription on the monument informs us that Francis was a justice of the peace and deputy lieutenant for the county of Leicester and that at the time of his death he was serving as one of the two members of parliament for Leicestershire. The inscription also tells us that he was "lord of the town of Frolesworth," which can only mean that Francis was lord of the manor, and it is somewhat singular that in the inquisition taken at Leicester after his death there is no mention of his possessing the manorial rights of Frolesworth. Francis Staesmore had married twice. His first wife was Christian daughter of John Chippingdale, LL.D., of Leicester, by whom he had issue, two sons, Francis and Henry, and one daughter. His second wife was Frances, third daughter and co-heir of William Brocas, of Theddingworth, and relict of Edward Hazlerigg of Arthingworth, co. Northants, by whom he had (amongst other children) a son William Staesmore. Francis, son of Francis Staesmore, [by Christian, his first wife,] was his next heir and aged 28 years and more. This inquisition recites also the will of Francis Staesmore by which he seems to have disinherited his eldest son Francis, leaving him an annuity of £30 for 4 years and £50 yearly afterwards for term of his life. He bequeaths the capital messuage and a large portion of his lands to Henry Staesmore, his second son, in tail male subject to the jointure of Frances, his relict; and the rest of his lands he gives to William Staesmore, his eldest son by his second marriage in tail male. This division of the Staesmore inheritance probably led directly or indirectly to the break up of the family and its total disappearance from the village. Some members of the family lingered on to the close of the 17th century, attracted

to a spot replete with the family associations of six hundred years, but sales of the family property commenced not long after Francis Staesmore's death, for in the chancery proceedings Series ii, 394/42, between the years 1626 and 1639, George Bennett, then or later of Welby and Cotesbach, a wealthy London merchant, had bought in Frolesworth the close called Broadwongefield with a meadow attached, a close called the great meadow and another close of pasture, as also the close of pasture called Holmfield, (all part of the Staesmore estate,) while William Staesmore, by borrowing money from 1641 onwards from Bridget Faunt and her sister Frances, the wife of Francis Wortley, daughters of sir William Faunt, of Foston, kt., became entangled in a lawsuit which lasted well into the reign of king Charles II. According to his own story William Staesmore was hardly used; for having paid the bulk of his debt to the Wortleys to the parliamentary commissioners for sequestrating delinquent's estates on a promise of settlement, sir Francis Wortley seems to have refused a settlement on the ground that he had not been paid; which was in one sense true, because the commissioners had had the money, which otherwise sir Francis as a royalist, would have had to find himself. Weary of law William Staesmore seems to have transferred the suit to his son Edward. These proceedings are far too long to reproduce here, but they throw some light on the disorganised state into which the affairs of the once prosperous family of Staesmore had fallen.

At the present time I am told the name would be quite forgotten in Frolesworth but for the survival of the two large alabaster tombs in the chancel of the church which are all that are left to call to memory the long forgotten lords of Frolesworth. All the alabaster incised slabs mentioned by Burton—to the memory of Edmund Wolf, formerly rector; to John Wolf, lord of this town who died in 1390; to lady Katherine Wolf, wife of John Wolf, who died in 1401, (with their punning heraldry of wolves salient;) to Robert Walshall, esquire, and Elizabeth his wife, which Robert died in 1508; to William Staesmore, esquire, and Elizabeth his wife, which William died in 1509; to John Staesmore who died in 1549; to Francis Staesmore, esquire, who died in 1582—have disappeared from the church; and no one seems to know where the manor house was situated.

APPENDIX.

Notes referring to the Manor of Frolesworth.

Inquisition after the death of John Amory. [File 64, no. 13.]
Taken at Great Petlyng, 14 Sept., 15 Edward III, 1341.

The jury say that John Amory died seised of the manor of Frolesworth, held of the inheritance of Joan [Danvers] his wife, of Henry, earl of Lancaster, by service of 2s., a pound of cummin and by making two appearances yearly at the court of the said earl at Leicester.

He also held a messuage and half virgate of land, of the same inheritance, in Kirby and a toft and virgate in Cosseby, of the said earl, as parcel of the aforesaid manor of Frolesworth.

In Essex, John Amory died seised of the manor of Little Maldon, held of the king, as of the honor of Peverel, by service of a moiety of a knight's fee.

Edmund Amory, his son, aged 16 years and more, is his next heir.

Inquisition after the death of Edmund Amory. [Exchequer enrolments no. 72.]

There is no inquisition extant for co. Leicester. In Essex, Edmund Amory held the manor of Little Maldon. He died 30 May, 23 Edward III, [1349.]

Inquisition proof of age of John Amory, brother and heir of Edmund Amory [File 125 no. 7.]

Taken at Frolesworth 19 June, 27 Edward III, 1353.

Robert, son of Alan, aged 60 years and more, says that John Amory was 21 years of age on 6 November last because he was born at Frolesworth, co. Leicester, and baptised in the church of St. Nicholas there on 6 November, 5 Edward III [1331]; and this he knows because on the day of the Purification [2 Feb.] following the birth of the said John, John Amory, the said John's father, started on his way to Santiago.

John Gere, aged 60 years, and William le Palmere, aged 53 years, agree and say that on the day the said John was baptised they saw him carried to the church of St. Nicholas, Frolesworth, and when he was baptised, carried back with solemnity and the joy of the neighbourhood.

John le Fleshewere, aged 50 years, agrees and says that on the day the said John was born he was in the service of John, father of the said John, and by his order took a message to William Clement, chaplain, for love of him to come and lift the said John from the sacred font and be his godfather with John of Craft, which the said William did.

An enrolled deed of John Wolf, "lord of Frolesworth." [de banco roll 435, Trin. 43 Edward III, 1369.]

Katherine who was the wife of John Wolf v. John Kent and Richard de Skefyngton in a plea of a messuage, a carucate of land and 12 acres of meadow in Kerby which she demands against them and against Matilda the wife of John Kent and Margaret wife of Richard de Skefyngton. Thomas de Hemnyngforde had given the aforesaid premises to John Amory and Joan, his wife, and her issue [Fine Easter 1325.] After the deaths of John Amory and Joan the premises descended to Edmund Amory as son and heir, which Edmund died without issue; and the right came to John Amory, brother and heir of Edmund, which John died without issue; and the right came to Katherine, who now demands, as sister and next heir of John. [de banco roll 539, Mich., 19 Richard II, 1395, m. 431.]

John Wolf and Elizabeth his wife demand the custody of the lands and heir of Thomas Boyvill, Chivaler, [of Stockerston] which belongs to them because Thomas held his lands in Slauston of John and Elizabeth by homage, fealty and 20s. to the scutage of 40s. when it happens [de banco roll 603, Mich., 13 Henry IV, 1411, m. 554.]

Elizabeth who was the wife of John Wolf demands against Robert Walsale and Elizabeth, his wife, a third part of the manor of Frolesworth and a third part of a messuage in Cosby as dower, of the gift of John Wolf, formerly her husband. The defendants say that long before the marriage of the said John Wolf and Elizabeth, a certain Alan de Kerby, parson of the church of Kirkby Malory, Richard Bulkyngton, parson of the church of Frolesworth, and others, were seised in their demesne as of fee of the manor and advowson of the church of Frolesworth and granted them to the said John Wolf and a certain Alice, then his wife, and to the issue of John and Alice.

John Wolf and Alice had issue the defendant Elizabeth, now the wife of Robert Walsale. Afterwards the said Alice died and John Wolf took to wife the said Elizabeth. After the death of John Wolf the manor, advowson, etc., descended to Elizabeth the wife of Robert Walsale as daughter and heir of John and Alice. [de banco rolls 613 m. 349, Easter, 1414, and 618 m. 133, Trin., 1415]

Inquisition after the death of William Walshale [File 7] taken at Frolesworth on Monday after St. Valentine, 2 Edward IV, 1463.

The jury say that William Walshale was seised in his demesne as of fee of the manor of Frolesworth. The site of the manor is worth 3s. 4d. yearly. There are in the said manor 9 messuages each of which is yearly worth 6d.; 2 cottages worth yearly 4d. each; eleven virgates of land containing 231 acres, of which each acre is yearly worth 2d.; 20 acres of meadow of which each acre is worth 4d. yearly; and rents of 34s. 3d. and one pound of pepper yearly at Easter and Michælmass.

The manor is held of the king, as of the honor of Leicester, parcel of the duchy of Lancaster, by a third part of one knight's fee.

William Walshale also died seised of 8 messuages, 8 virgates of land, 40 acres of meadow and 3s. rent in Cosby, held of the king in chief by a fourth part of a knight's fee.

Also a messuage and virgate in Leire and a toft and virgate in Sharnford, etc.

William Walshale died 1 June, 1 Edward IV, 1461.

Robert Walshale is his son and next heir and aged 12 years.

Inquisition after the death of Robert Walshale [File 26, no. 116] taken 23 Oct, 3 Henry VIII, 1511.

The jury say that Robert Walshale died seised of the manor of Frolesworth, and 6 messuages, 4 cottages, 3 tofts and 8 virgates of land in Frolesworth; 4 messuages and 12 virgates of land in Cosby; a messuage and virgate in Sharnford and 19s. rent in Leire; worth £16 9s. 0d. The manor of Frolesworth, etc., is held of the king, of the honor of Leicester, parcel of the duchy of Lancaster, by a third part of one knight's fee. Robert Walshale died 25 March, 1509. Barbara, aged 9 years, daughter of Edmund Ryngeley and Elizabeth his [late] wife, eldest daughter of the said Robert Walshale; Katherine, aged 26, the wife of George Wylkes, second daughter of Robert Walshale; and Mary, aged 24, the wife of John Staesmore, third daughter of Robert Walshale, are the next heirs of Robert Walshale.

Fine, Trinity, 36 Henry VIII, 1544.

Between John Staesmore, esq., plaintiff, and Richard Lawley, esq., and Barbara, his wife, defendants, of a third part of the manor of Frolesworth and the advowson of the church of Frolesworth and 24 messuages, 600 acres of land, 200 of meadow, 40 of pasture, 10 of wood, 10 of furze and heath, 24s. 1½d. rent, and one pound of pepper and two pounds of cummin in Frolesworth, Cosby, Leire, Sharnford, Ullesthorp and Littlethorp. The third part is declared to be the right of John Staesmore with a clause of warranty against the heirs of Barbara.

Chancery inquisitions post mortem. Series II. 429/141.

In the inquisition taken after the death of Francis Staesmore on 24 August, 1626, the will of Francis is recited. He leaves his capital messuage and the closes called the Hall close, Irelandes close, Longhill field, Hovell close, Smalbrooke meadow, and Fosse-close and a small close called Pycroft's yard, all in Frolesworth, to his wife Frances for life, reversion after her death to his second son Henry Staesmore, subject to payment of certain debts: Broadwongfield, Broadwongfield meadow, the Homefield, the great meadow and the Hills end meadow (the first named charged with an annuity of £30 for 4 years, later with £50 yearly to his eldest son Francis) are left to certain trustees to pay debts and charges and then to Henry Staesmore, his second son. Other lands (not specified by field names) are left to William Staesmore, his eldest son by his second marriage, subject to portions for his younger sons George Staesmore and Robert Staesmore and his daughters.