

EXCURSION TO HOUGHTON-ON-THE-HILL,  
INGARSBY, AND QUENBY.

BY THE REV. S. T. WINCKLEY.

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ON July 25th, 1910, the Society had a half-day Excursion to Houghton-on-the-Hill, Ingarsby, and Quenby. Leaving the County Rooms by brakes, a party of 50 drove along the Uppingham Road to Houghton. Alighting at the Rectory they were shown a picture by John Glover (born at Houghton 1767, President of the Water Colour Society 1815, and one of the founders of the Society of British Artists; died in Tasmania 1849), also a grandfather's clock presented by Queen Charlotte to the Duke of Kent, with some letters authenticating its origin. Proceeding to the Church, the Rector pointed out various items of interest. The windows in the aisles and over the chancel arch,—all of which have been filled with stained glass between the years 1897 and 1907—are very effective and much admired, not only for their colouring and design, but chiefly on account of their uniformity of style and harmony of subjects—a rare possibility in an ancient building.

The Church itself is in the Early English, Decorated, and Perpendicular styles which are much intermingled. The northern arcade which is late 13th century, has had an insertion of rougher workmanship to raise it to the height of the south arcade which is late 15th century. Also many of the windows are Perpendicular, and in the north wall have been cut into the Early English sedilia of which remains have recently been uncovered.

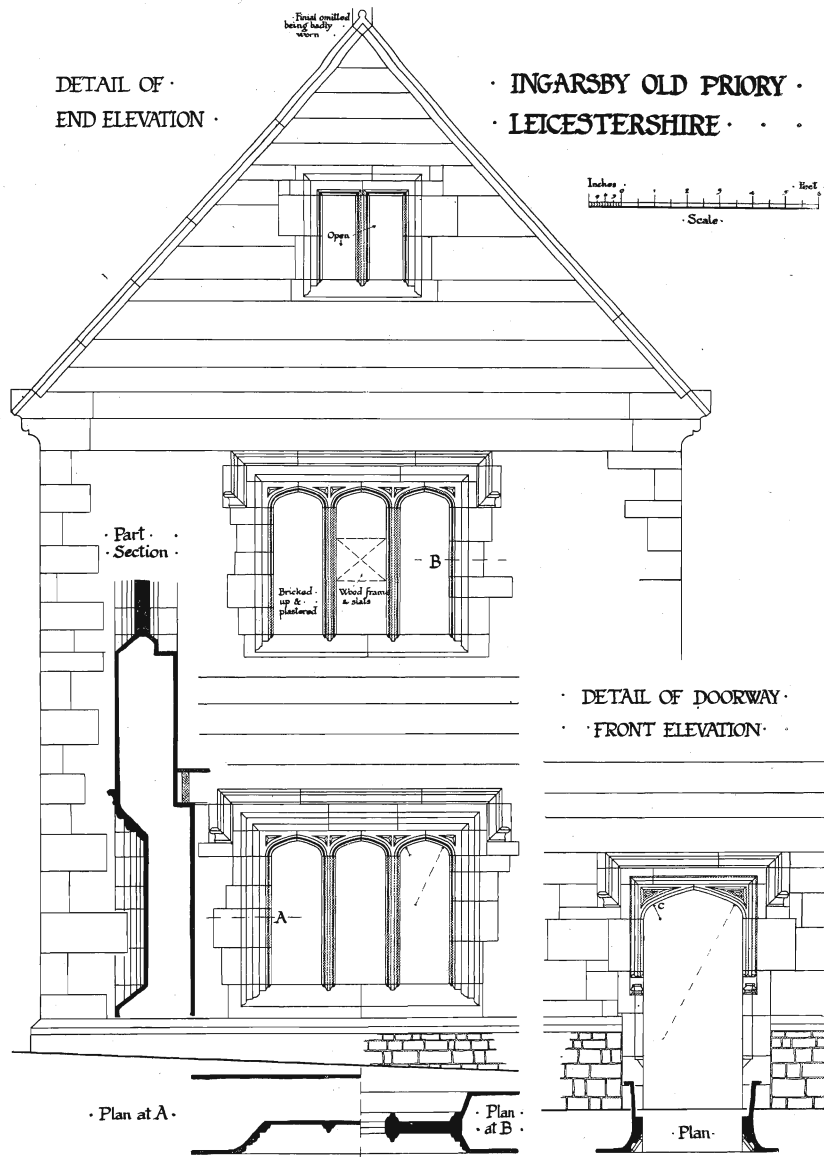
The fact of the 13th century columns being raised at the same time the 15th century work was done is curiously demonstrated by the fact of the mason having put his mark—a triangle with a triangle at each angle—on both window jambs and columns. This was only recently revealed on the whitewash being removed. In the centre of the south wall one late 13th century window remains, and one of the splays of the original windows on either side of it remain as splays to each of the Perpendicular windows taking their places. This was seen when the plaster was recently renewed. The font is of special interest as still retaining one of the iron hasps inserted in its rim at the time when the fonts were kept constantly filled with water, which was only hallowed occasionally, and not as now at each baptism; hence the necessity to have the cover locked. This practice was first enjoined in England by St. Edmund, Archbishop of Canterbury in 1236.





DETAIL OF  
END ELEVATION

· INGARSBY OLD PRIORY ·  
· LEICESTERSHIRE · · ·



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The restraint exercised in the restoration of the Church, both inside and out, was appreciated, and its present "cared for" appearance commented on. The Archdeacon who ordered the "indecent table in the north aisle which, they say is the communion table," to be replaced, and the Parish Plough in the south aisle to be removed—would hardly recognise the place. A particularly fine example of the carved slate head-stones prevalent in this county was pointed out. It has a medallion with a beautiful figure symbolising "Grief."

The journey was resumed along the road to Ingarsby—not a good road—but interesting from the fact that in the latest history of Leicestershire,\* it is alluded to as being one of the two highways in the bronze age between the Continent and Ireland. Oddly enough both these highways would appear to have passed through Houghton-on-the-Hill.

The Old Hall at Ingarsby, which is being offered for sale as we write, is a stone building of the Tudor period, situated in the midst of a Roman camp—part of the vallum of which has been utilised as a moat and still contains water. The Manor of Ingarsby formerly belonged to Leicester Abbey, and the building still called by local tradition "the Chapel," of which drawings by Mr. F. Roland Cooper appear herewith, is evidently much as it was at the time of its original construction, though it is a three-storied building of which the first floor was evidently a "*Guest-room*." No sign of any Chapel remains. At the dissolution, the Manor of Ingarsby was granted to Brian Cave, whose armorial bearings, with those of Whalley, are carved in alabaster over the fireplace in the sitting-room.

The chief object of the Excursion was a visit to Quenby Hall, by the kind invitation of its present owner, Mrs. Edward Greaves.

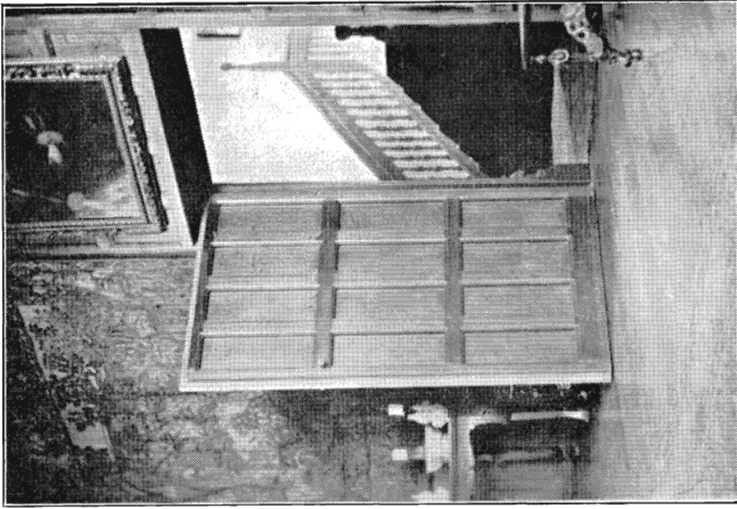
This beautiful mansion—built about the year 1621, though the stone buildings round the court-yard are much older—has fortunately come into the possession of a lady of considerable taste and skill. The restoration of Quenby from being internally a somewhat disfigured mansion, into an almost perfect specimen of its style, might well be a model for all restorers. Happy in being able to get the late Mr. Bodley to Quenby for a few hours shortly before his death—and though she freely allows to his genius the immediate discovery that "the Goths had taken away the floor of the Guest-chamber," making one ill-proportioned room out of two and dropping the finely carved mantle-piece down to the ground-floor—yet it must be conceded that to the owner herself belongs

\* Miss Dryden's "Memorials of Ancient Leicestershire."

the main credit of an unusually effective and conservative piece of restoration. No one would be more ready to acknowledge this than Mr. Alfred Gotch, of Kettering, who was also responsible for some of the work.

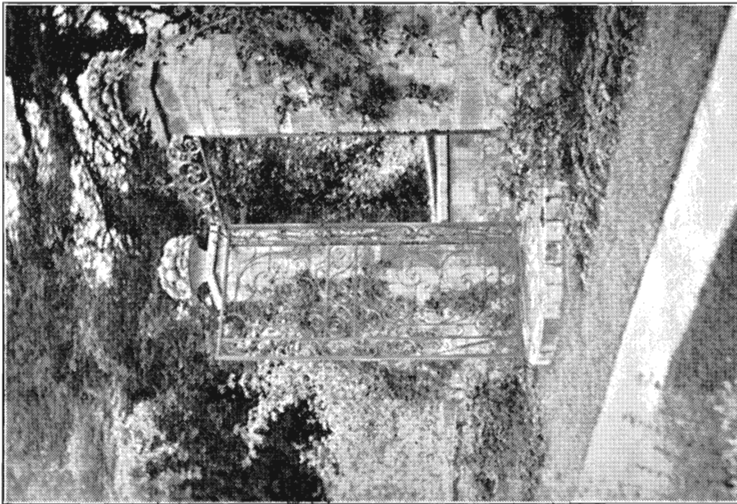
Quenby Hall, with its mellow brick exterior, its delightful old-world gardens on one side, and fine park views from the terraces on the others; with its original oak panellings, mostly in excellent preservation, its really fine ceilings, some of them original; and above all its beautiful drawing-room, all harmonious, without a wrong colour or piece of furniture to strike a jarring note anywhere—Quenby is something to remember. Mrs. Greaves entertained the party to tea, and after giving her a vote of thanks and sincere congratulations on her work of restoration, the brakes returned to Leicester.

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QUENBY HALL.

Photos by Miss B. M. SPENCER.



QUENBY HALL: IN THE GARDENS.

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