

HANTS FIELD CLUB, 1893.



J. A. BARTON, DELT., 1840.

BARTON MANOR HOUSE, I.W.

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## THE ORATORY OF BARTON.

BY THE REV. R. G. DAVIS.



BARTON MANOR—SOUTH FRONT, 1840.

At the commencement of the reign of Henry the III., 1216, the manor of Whippingham was the property of the family of Fitz Stur, the descendants of William Fitz Stur, one of the soldiers of William the Conqueror. Several manors in the Island, Gatcombe, Westover, Westcourt, Wootton, were possessed by the different branches of the large and powerful family of *De Insula* or De l'Isle. The Fitz Stur family of Whippingham came to an end about this time, an heiress was the sole remnant. She married Walter de Insula the senior, the representative of the branch of that family located at Wootton. Amongst the children of that marriage was John de Insula, who became a priest, and in 1275 was rector of the church of Shalfleet.

At the same date Thomas de Winton was rector of the church of Godshill. His name indicates that he came from



the city of Winchester. At that time there was a practice common among priests, which in some cases has survived even to the present day, of setting aside the family name, and adopting the name of the place of birth.<sup>1</sup> There must have existed, probably for some years, a close friendship between these two rectors. We have no indications of the reasons that led them to that determination, but their friendship eventuated in their jointly founding at Barton, a college of secular priests. From the fact that the name of Thomas de Winton is mentioned first in the deed of foundation, and that his curate, John de Marisco, was the first superior, or as he was designated, "arch-priest" of this house, it would appear that the first idea of the foundation originated with Thomas de Winton.

Mr. Shore, in his History of Hampshire, tells us that there were several colleges of secular priests in the county. There were four in Winchester, two at least in the Isle of Wight (one here at Barton, and another at Lymmerston,) one at Southampton, the Guild of the Holy Ghost at Basingstoke, and others throughout the county. Colleges of this kind held an intermediate position between the regular religious orders, and the secular clergy inhabiting their presbyteries and serving their respective churches.

At the present day we have an example of such colleges of secular priests, in the well known Oratorians of London and Birmingham, and other places on the continent. The two friends, Thomas de Winton and John de Insula, determined, as they tell us in the deed of foundation, having asked the especial aid of God's grace, to found at Barton in the Isle of Wight, within the limits of the parish of Whippingham, an Oratory for six chaplains and a clerk, that they may there live according to the rule of St. Augustine, and offer the Divine Sacrifice for the living and the dead. Barton, or Burton, as it is sometimes called, was presumably chosen as the site of the Oratory, because it was the property of John de Insula, and there would be

<sup>1</sup> The practice of assuming second names from the place of the person's birth or residence is of very high antiquity. We have examples in Herodotus and in Diodorus Siculus. The practice prevailed to some extent among our Anglo-Saxon ancestors, and was common among all classes in the middle ages.—EDITOR.

a house convenient for the purpose immediately available. To this site came on November 2nd, 1275, John de Marisco with his five fellow chaplains, and their clerk, purposing to commence a life in which they are directed to be assiduous in study and in prayer, and to endeavour to stand above others in piety, as they do in position.

In attempting to give the history of this Oratory of Barton, it may be well to describe the daily life of the brothers of the Oratory, and then enumerate what historical documents we have left of them, recapitulating the few historical events connected with them, and finally giving a description of the house in which they lived.

The description of the daily life of the members of the Oratory, whom for convenience I will call the Oratorians, is derived from the constitutions laid down by the founder of the Oratory.

The members of the Oratory were to consist of six chaplains and a clerk. The chaplains were to choose amongst themselves one to be their Archpriest. Their choice was to be ratified by the Bishop of Winchester, and each member of the Oratory was to take a vow of obedience to the Archpriest. The Archpriest was in all matters to be subject, as the deed of foundation expresses it, to the correction of the bishop. When any priest desires to join the Oratory, he must undergo a year of probation, and then he will make his profession, and take his oath to be obedient to the observances and statutes of the house. No one is to have any private property, but their possessions are to be common to all. Unless with the permission of the Archpriest, no one is to go beyond the precincts of the house, and then not by himself, but with a companion. The dress of the Oratorians is carefully specified, and it offers one point of great interest. In-doors all were to be clothed with a surplice over the cassock. On the feast of All Saints, the Archpriest and his *confraters* were each to receive a robe lined with lambs wool. When new clothing was distributed to the members the disused clothing was to be given to the poor. Linen of all kind, shoes and such like were to be distributed from a common stock. Then there comes this regulation "*Item quilibet eorum utatur pallio hibernensi de nigro Burneto cum pileo.*"

"Let each of them use Irish stuff of black Burnet with the wool on." The interest in this regulation is around the words, "*pallio hibernensi cum pileo*," and the words "*de nigro Burneto*." I have rendered the "*pallio hibernensi*," "Irish stuff." It might also be rendered the Irish *pallium*, or cloak. The question then is, do these words refer to the shape of the garment, or to the material? Irish cloths and stuffs were in great repute at this time, and were to be found in all the markets of Europe. The Countess of Artois, the grand niece of St. Louis, of France, in 1307 at Easter buys at St. Omer a quantity of "soie d'Irlande" or "Irish poplin," to make a summer gown. Amongst the imports at Rouen at the close of the 14th century are mentioned friezes and cloths of Ireland. So that the words "*pallio hibernensi cum pileo*," I think must be understood to mean the Irish cloth with a wool or pile, now known as Irish frieze.<sup>1</sup> Then this Irish frieze is not to be a simple black, but black Burnet, "*de nigro burneto*." Ducange states that the black Burnet was a stuff considered too fine for the use of Monks and Canons, and was forbidden them.

<sup>1</sup> The directions as to dress given in the Charter of foundation are as follows:—"Item quilibet eorum utatur pallio hibernensi de nigro Burneto cum pileo., et sit habitus eorum in mensa ut ipsi ab aliis cognoscantur. Habeant etiam Archipresbyter unam capam ejusdem coloris et duas alias communes ad opus capellanorum exeuntium cum fuerit opportunum."—The passage seems to mean that each is to wear a winter cloak of black burnet with a cap; that their dress at table is to be such that they may be distinguished from others. The Archpresbyter is to have a cape of the same colour, and two others for use in common among the chaplains when they go out as occasion may require. The ordinary meaning of *pallium* is "a cloak." At a time when, in writing Latin, rules of etymology and orthography were little regarded *hibernensis* may well stand for "adj. winter," *Pileus* is used for any head gear, "a cap." *Burnetus* originally a brownish colour. ("Burnet colowre *burnetus*" *Promptorium Parvulorum*) is also applied to cloth colour dyed. ("*Pannus non nativi coloris lana confectus sed quavis tinctura imbutus*." Ducange glossarium). The *capa* would be the short cape with a hood worn by Augustinian and other canons. The directions given in the Statutes of the White Canons (Præmonstratensians) are very similar, "*canonici exeuntes sine PALLIO, caputium gerant, ac etiam galerio sive PILEIS albis in itinere ac labore uti. . . . CAPPIS laneis temporibus in Ordinario præfixis utantur.* (Holstenius *codex Regularum Monasticarum*). "Frieze," or "frysyd cloth" was rendered *pannus villatus*. Some transcribers, Mr. Barton, Mr. Percy Stone, and others, following Worsley have unwarrantably put a capital H to the word *hibernensi* thus favouring the Irish idea; but a simpler and more obvious meaning seems to be that suggested above.—EDITOR.

The regulation with reference to the meals offers many points of interest. In a literal translation from the Latin it reads, "Also we ordain that to the extent of the resources of the said house, they shall be becomingly served both for victuals and drink; so that they may be satisfied with one *ferculum*,<sup>1</sup> at least with a *pittance*; and on the greater festivals they may be served with a third *ferculum* if the resources of the house allow." No mention is made of the number of meals; they would no doubt follow the then universal custom of having two meals a day; dinner at about ten and supper in the afternoon. Each of these meals is to consist of one *ferculum* at least and of a *pittance*.<sup>2</sup>

After regulating the meals the Constitutions of Barton continue "We also order and ordain in the said House of Barton, that each day thirteen poor are to be fed and refreshed, in such way that each poor person may have in victuals, maintenance sufficient for one day, namely:—Bread, beer, soup, and pittance of flesh or fish, as the season demands. To carry out this almsgiving the manor of Crod-

<sup>1</sup> The word *ferculum* in monastic meals had at different times and in different places various significations, but we approach very nearly to a general meaning if we translate it by the modern word "course." Its meaning is not to be restricted to one dish, but it was a main dish, and whatever accessories taste or custom associated with it. This meaning is well expressed by the homely term of "boiled leg of mutton and trimmings." That is an exact *ferculum*.

<sup>2</sup> The *pittance* corresponded more or less to our modern dessert. There was generally added to the meal something in the shape of fruit, cake, or pudding. Amongst the Archives of the Abbey of St. Edmondsbury there is a long list of *pittances* in use at the table of the abbey. On Sundays in Lent the *pittance* was to be eels, except on Palm Sunday, when it was to be figs or almonds. There was to be a special *pittance* for the vigil of St. Edmond. This was a "purpeys,"<sup>a</sup> which had first of all to be cooked, then chopped into fine pieces which were sprinkled on a dish of cold peas, and so served. On the feast of St. Nicholas and other days was to be served the "*pitanciam optimam*," the most excellent *pittance*. This consisted of seven lbs. of rice, and fourteen lbs. of almonds made into a pottage or porridge, but in what way I cannot tell. The whole question of mediæval cookery is as yet almost untouched, and might form a most interesting study for the lady members of our Field Club.

<sup>a</sup> The Promptorium gives "Purpeys fyché," *Foca, vitula marina, suillus*. It is improbable that the monks of Bury had the power of obtaining the marine seal, so we must conclude that it was some preparation of *suillus* pork.—EDITOR.



demore<sup>1</sup> has been purchased." The question naturally arises, why should the number of poor be thirteen? This number was often chosen, as the number of persons to whom alms were to be given, as it represented in number our Divine Lord and His Apostles. This distribution of the Alms to the poor was to be presided over by one of the Chaplains especially appointed for that purpose. The meals of the community were always to be taken in the common refectory. The Archpriest was always to sit at the head of the table, the others according to the dignity of the office they had that day held in the Church, thus: he who had celebrated High Mass sat next to the Archpriest; after him the priest who had said the Mass of the Blessed Virgin, then the priest who had said the Mass of the Holy Trinity, then the priest who had said the Mass for the Dead and finally the other priests. Every day, at least at the beginning and end of the meals, there is to be edifying reading.

Unless prevented by sickness, all except the Archpriest are to sleep in the common dormitory. In winter they are to rise a little before the commencement of the day. In summer they are to rise with the sun, and that the Community may know when this time has arrived, the constitution lays down that a *pulsatio* or ringing of a bell is to be made for the space "*unius leuce*." *Leuce* is the word for the French mile, or league, but it is difficult to say what it means as a space of time, unless it is the time occupied in walking a league.<sup>2</sup> On reaching the church they are first to recite the Matins of the Office of the Blessed Virgin in a low voice, and after that the Matins of the Day are to be intoned. It will tend, perhaps, to make these regulations clearer, if I state the various divisions of the Divine Office. The first part is called Matins, after which come Lauds, the two are nearly always associated together. Then there are Prime, or first hour, Tierce, or third hour, Sext, or sixth hour, and None, or ninth hour. In the evening there are Vespers and Compline.

When Matins, Lauds, and Prime have been completed,

<sup>1</sup> Crudmoor a farm of 112 acres in Carisbrooke parish.

<sup>2</sup> *Leuce* durée d'une heure, Lexicon Manuale Maigne d'Arnis.

then is to be celebrated the Mass of the Blessed Virgin. At its conclusion the other three hours, Tierce, Sext, and None are to be recited. When these were completed, the Oratorians had then to recite the hours of the Office of the Blessed Virgin, the Matins of which had been said when they first came to the Church. At their conclusion was to be celebrated the Mass of the Holy Trinity, and then the Mass for the Dead. Finally was to be sung the High Mass, with such music as the solemnity of the day demanded. At the end of this Mass, certain prayers were to be added, one the collect of the Trinity, another a collect for the Bishop of Winchester, another for the souls of the founders of the House, their relations and benefactors, a collect for the deceased Bishops of Winchester, and a collect for all deceased benefactors. The Constitutions make no mention of the way in which the rest of the day was to be spent, save the injunction of the founders that the members are to be assiduous in study. As no one could enter the Oratory till he was a priest, and therefore over twenty-five years of age, and as all the members would, probably, be well beyond that age, they would doubtless, each of them have already his own favourite pursuits and studies, and these studies would be continued when they became members of the Oratory.

When the hour of Vespers had arrived, at three in the afternoon, the Oratorians had to meet again in the Oratory, to say the Office for the Dead, the "*Placebo*" and "*Dirige*." Then the Vespers of the Blessed Virgin, the Vespers and Compline of the day, and finally the Compline of the Blessed Virgin. To ensure every regularity in the Offices and Masses, the Archpriest is to appoint a Precentor whose duty it is to arrange all details of the various offices, and he is to hang up each day the *tabula* or list, in which is stated which Mass each one is to say, and which "lections" are to be read.

All transactions connected with the Oratory are, with all matters affecting the house, to be directed by the Archpriest, who is to have the assistance of one of the other members, who at the end of the year is to give an account to his fellows both of the receipts and of the expenses. If the Archpriest is negligent, or is found to be a despoiler of the goods, then the case is to be presented to the Bishop at his next



visitation, or earlier if necessary. But this is not to be done by the will of one member, but by the consent of all the brothers, or at least of the greater portion.

I come now to some account of the documents of Barton, which are still preserved. The original charter of foundation does not exist. There are, however, four copies preserved at Winchester College. One of these was made five years after the establishment of the Oratory, it is to be presumed at the Visitation, for the use of John de Pontissara, Bishop of Winchester, 1280—1304. His successor, Bishop Henry Woodlock, made another copy in 1310. Of the two other copies one is contemporaneous, and the other was made when Barton was transferred to Winchester College.

Among the witnesses to the deed (1310) is William de Godyton. Godyton is a Manor in the parish of Chale, and in 1323, that is twenty years later, Walter de Godyton built a Chapel on Chale Down, and enclosed a chantry for a priest to say Mass there, and to burn lights for the guidance of mariners. Presumably this Walter was the son of William, the witness aforesaid.

As the Oratory was founded in 1275, and the first copy of the Charter of Foundation was made in 1280, five years after, and another copy made in 1310, twenty years or four periods of five years after, these periods would appear to indicate that the Bishop of Winchester made a quinquennial visitation at Barton.

Both the founders endowed the Oratory with land. Thomas de Winton gave land at Arreton, bought of William Tholomer, who inherited it from his brother Walter who died Rector of Arreton. A "selda" or stall, probably a shop, near the "sea" at Newport, probably in "Sea-street" there. Lands in Whippingham, bought of Dame Maude Escures, John de Bosco, John Michel and Richard Saneter. Land in Spanne, now Span Farm, bought of Robert Pypers. Land in Appleford, bought of Sir William Tracey. Land in Curne, (Kerne Farm in Brading parish), bought of Sir Thomas de Haull. Land in Rookley, bought of Richard de Rokele. Land bought of William Dolcoppe. Land in La Snape bought of Simon Everard and Geoffrey Pycot. Land and feeding rights at Walpan in Chale, and at St. Catherine's Down,

bought of Adam de Barneule and Henry Meret. A water corn mill and croft at Hunny Hill, outside the town of Newport, bought of Hugo de Waltham, and now known as Hune Mill. Another corn mill at Newport, bought of William Delamore, and now known as Westminster Mill. Land in Botremere bought of Henry Gage. Land called "Heremere" abutting on Wynslade, a culture extending westwards to the ditch of Hemere; a wood called "Okestubbe," and a pasture called "Quelles," bought of John de l'Isle, all in Whippingham parish. Also a long building on the shore at Southampton.

John de Insula gave as his share of the foundation, as he states in his deed of grant, "all my messuage of Barton with the gardens, and all the land in Barton belonging to the said messuage which I have bought from Sir William Clamorgan." He also gives various lands bought from different persons in Whippingham and elsewhere.

Amongst the names occurs one of singular interest when we bear in mind that this deed of John de Insula was executed in 1275. He states that he has received a messuage and land with pasturage at Byllingham the gift of *Americus de Veynes*. So that 218 years before Christopher Columbus set out to discover America, or Americus Vesputius had given his name to that Continent, a man bearing the name of Americus is living in the Isle of Wight.

There is a charter of Isabella de Fortibus, lady paramount of the Island, confirming the endowments of John de Insula. Besides these deeds there are many evidences of title, also leases executed from time to time, preserved in the muniment room of Winchester College.

Two examples of the seal of the Oratory are preserved. Its form is oval,  $1\frac{1}{8}$ -inch long. Our Lady and Child are seated with the scroll "AVE MARIA," and kneeling before them is a figure of the Archpriest. The legend is "M[ATER] VIRGO DEI TU MISERERE MEI." An impression is also preserved of the common seal. It is an oval  $2\frac{1}{4}$ -inches in length, with the seated figure of the Divine Majesty, bearing in the left hand the orb and cross, the right hand raised in benediction. The legend runs S[IGILLUM] D[OM]US SANCTE TRINITATIS DE BARTONE.

In 1392 the buildings were out of repair, and a deed was executed between the Archpriest and a mason, Richard Lathbury, to do the necessary repairs. The deed recites that Lathbury is to do all the necessary repairs, and to keep the buildings in good order. The Archpriest is to find all materials and a labourer, to give to Richard Lathbury yearly his food and all necessaries, with a suit of clothes (uno epitogio), ten shillings (decem solidis stilingorum) and pasture for one horse. If at any time the Archpriest has no work for Richard, then he is to be at liberty to take a job elsewhere.

Finally there is the petition to Cardinal Beaufort from the Warden, Chaplain, and Scholars of Winchester College, setting forth the great poverty they are in, and praying that the effects of the Oratory of Barton may be handed over to them. This involved the execution of a number of documents by the King, Humphrey Duke of Gloucester, Trengof, the last Archpriest, Cardinal Beaufort, and others. All these are carefully preserved at Winchester.

These deeds are full of interesting matter, but I must pass on to the history of the Oratory of Barton. The Charter of Foundation was signed on the morrow of All Saints, (November 2nd), in the year of Our Lord, 1275, the 4th of Edward the I, and the 5th year of the Popedom of Gregory, the X., the year in which the first of the Mortmain Acts was passed. The Oratory existed only 165 years. The first Archpriest was Jordan de Marisco, who had been Vicar of Godshill under Thomas de Winton. He was succeeded by nine Archpriests. In 1392 the buildings were evidently out of repair, and then it was that the Archpriest, William Lowe, executed the agreement already described. Forty-eight years after, when Walter Trengof was Archpriest, in 1440, the Oratory came to an end, and its properties went to the newly established College of St. Mary, Winchester.

Two causes I think operated to bring about the end of the Oratory of Barton. Its members were restricted to six in number, and these secular Priests, so that the possibility of obtaining recruits was very limited. When we consider the demands made by old age and sickness, there must have been many occasions when there were not sufficient members



capable of carrying out the duties of the house, and that too even if the number of six were maintained. But in 1348, sixty three years after its foundation, and nearly midway in the length of its existence, there came down upon England, and it must have had its effect on the Barton Oratory, the fearful scourge known as the Black Death. More than half the priests of Yorkshire are known to have perished, and in the Diocese of Norwich two thirds of the parishes were left without incumbents. I am not in possession of any statistics showing the effect this scourge had on Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, but it must certainly have been felt very severely by the small community of Barton. Even if the number of members were not diminished by the plague, yet for many years the community would be unable to obtain recruits. As the plague made its way and carried off more and more of the members of the clergy, the bishops would most justly and most strongly oppose any of the clergy leaving their livings and joining this or any other College of secular priests. When the properties of the Oratory of Barton were handed over to Winchester College special provision was made, that a pension of £20 per annum for 24 years, should be paid to Walter Trengof, the last Archpriest. No provision is however made for any other members of the Oratory, and as by the Constitutions they had all their property in common, I think this indicates that at that time there were no other members.

Two accounts of the Oratory of Barton have been written within the last 50 years. The first of these was by an Isle of Wight antiquarian, Mr. John Adkins Barton, of Newport, and read by him at the congress of the British Archæological Association held at Winchester, August, 1845. The other is an account communicated to the Society of Antiquaries in 1890, by Mr. T. W. Kirby, F.S.A.,<sup>1</sup> the Bursar of Winchester College. The excellent work of Mr. Percy Stone, on the Architectural Antiquities of the Island also contains a notice and illustrations of the house.

With regard to the buildings which now stand on the site of the old Oratory, it is very doubtful whether any portion of the original remains. The Oratory came into existence at

<sup>1</sup> Archæologia, Vol. LII.

the end of the thirteenth century, at the time when the Early English style of Architecture was developing into the Decorated. It is therefore just possible that three blocked up lancet windows to be seen in the side wall of the south wing, on the left hand of the entrance, are remnants of the house that stood there when Thomas de Winton and John de Insula founded the Oratory.



BARTON MANOR—EAST FRONT, 1840.

As to the position of the chapel, the refectory, or the dormitory, nothing is known. The house that stood on this site when in 1845, the Barton Estate, was purchased from Winchester College by Her Majesty the Queen, was a splendid specimen of the Jacobean houses, of which we have many examples in the Isle of Wight. When the possessions of the Barton Oratory were given to Winchester College, the duty was imposed on the College of maintaining a chaplain at Barton. This indicates that the chapel was still in use. In the 1st of Edward VI, the maintenance of the chaplain was discontinued, and it is most probable that the old buildings were allowed to fall into complete decay.

When in the time of James the I, the College of Winchester erected the Jacobean house it is probable that the remains

of the Oratory were largely cleared away, though doubtless the builders availed themselves of the materials. Hassell in his "Tour of the Isle of Wight," published in 1790, says of the house, which had lately been the residence of Lord Clanricarde, "all the sides of the rooms are of wainscot, formed into small panels, in which are fixed a number of representations of the cross. Here was likewise a chapel, but the building is now appropriated to less sacred purposes, being converted into a warehouse for wool. A great sameness runs through the whole house, both in its internal and external parts. The mode of its construction, with so many gable ends towards the front gives a great formality to its appearance, so do the tall chimnies, both of which appear disgusting in a picture." Of this author's taste and criticism we may judge from the accompanying illustrations.

Mr. J. Adkins Barton made some excellent pen and ink sketches of the buildings as they stood in 1840, which, by the kindness of the present owners, are here reproduced.

There always was a room which traditionally was known as the chapel, and a gentleman now well advanced in years, writes me that he remembers as a boy, between 60 and 70 years ago, visiting at Barton, and that "the chapel" was on the right hand on entering the front door. It is possible that the present room in that position stands on the traditional site of the old chapel.

In 1845, after the purchase of the property by Her Majesty the Queen, great alterations were made in the house, an ancient wall of very solid construction, perhaps the sole remaining portion of the original building was brought to light. This wall was entirely demolished, and with it perished the last remnant of the Oratory of Barton.

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