

**GLASTONBURY ABBEY**  
**SOMERSETSHIRE**



**Mr. N. M. Robinson**

**1843**



## **Glastonbury Abbey before its destruction**



## **A Model of Glastonbury Abbey**

# GLASTONBURY ABBEY

## SOMERSETSHIRE

### INTRODUCTORY PREFACE

**T**HE history of the ancient and venerable Abbey of Glastonbury is in a great measure buried in its ruins; but yet some vestiges of this once celebrated pile are still to be found in many ancient and valuable books, which have been published from time to time respecting its antiquity and former state. This Abbey was, together with those of Reading, Colchester, and several others, never surrendered to king Henry the Eighth's commissioners ; but it was suppressed and seized upon by violence, under an act of parliament for dissolving the rest of the religious houses which remained unsuppressed.

The monks, who were the inhabitants of this Abbey, were a society of men that withdrew themselves from the world, and made a profession of voluntary poverty, (that is to say, to live without property,) of perpetual chastity, and of obedience to their superiors; which that they might be the better able to sustain, they obliged themselves to follow the rule of St. Benedict, and thence they were called Benedictines, all of them wearing the same fashioned clothes, which were black, and of the same sort of stuff. They renounced the world, and all its alluring vanities, and applied themselves in their cells to piety, contemplation, study, and mortification; for whatever time was not spent in the choir of divine service, in the hall for refecton, and in the garden and common room for their recreation,—an hour after dinner and half-an-hour after supper was thus passed, if they were well and not in office ; or else they were employed in the Scriptorium to the benefit of the public. These monks kept a free school, where poor men's sons were bred up as well as the sons of gentlemen, and were there fitted for the universities. There was a place in the Abbey called the Eleemosynarium, where the poor were daily relieved. And they were

such good landlords to their tenantry, that their rent seemed an acknowledgment rather than a rent, and their leases to them were almost as good as the fee simple; such was the charity and goodness of these monks to their neighbours, and their rigour and severity to themselves.

There were one hundred monks, or thereabouts, in this Abbey before its suppression;[1] yet it is said[2] that there were only forty-seven in the house when Whiting was chosen Abbot, which was only sixteen years before the dissolution of the Abbey.[3]

There are many charters and other instruments respecting this venerable Monastery, to be found in the Monasticon, and other books of authority. Mr. Eyston, of East Hundred in Berkshire, who visited Glastonbury in the year 1714, wrote an interesting account of this Monastery, as it then appeared in its ruins, which was printed by Mr. Hearne, of the Bodleian library at Oxford, in his work on Glastonbury; and which the Rev. Mr. Warner added by way of an Appendix to his History of that Abbey.[4]

There are many absurd legendary tales mixed up with the history of the ancient Monastery, no doubt the invention of the monks,—such as the story of the walking staff of Joseph of Arimathea,—the holy thorn,—the walnut tree,—the wonderful spring of water, and the miraculous cures wrought by drinking it,—the temptation of St. Dunstan by the Devil,—&c. &c., which will afford the reader some amusement.

The ruins of this Abbey chiefly consist of the Chapel of St. Joseph of Arimathea, and fragments of the conventual Church, the prevailing character of which is Norman, but the details and enrichments were of the early English style. The remains of the Church were of a less embellished character, but exhibited much of the simplicity of the English style, and some portions of that of a later date.

The Abbot's Kitchen seems to have been a more recent erection than any of the other buildings, the ruins of which are overspread with ivy, and present a striking memorial of departed grandeur. The George Inn, once so celebrated as a place for the entertainment of pilgrims visiting the shrine of St. Dunstan, still retains much of its original character and

decorations ; and the Old Manor House and the Tribune of Justice are interesting relics.

On the Torr hill, at a short distance from the town of Glastonbury, stands the tower of the once splendid Church and Monastery of St. Michael, which was thrown down by an earthquake in the year 1276.

King Edgar, who endowed the Abbey with many estates, and invested the monks with extensive privileges, had a palace within two miles of the town of Glastonbury, called "Edgarley," now a hamlet in the parish of St. John's. Of this palace there are no other vestiges than two wolves' heads and a pelican, now placed in the front of a modern house, the former conveying a direct allusion to a tax imposed by that king on the Welsh princes, for the extirpation of wolves within the realm.

There are two ancient turrets at Glastonbury,[5] the one of the conventual Church, as it was in the year 1200, which is the date assigned to this building. The work of this Church, which was of the transition Norman style, rich in its details and late in its general character, had evidently been carried on in the thirteenth century, though some of the earlier portions might possibly be as early as the above date. It appears that this was the foundation of the hospital, and the commencement of the works; but numerous examples prove that the date of the foundation, and the completion of a building, were often widely distinct. The date of

the consecration is a better guide; but even this cannot always be depended on, as a Church was often consecrated when only a small part was completed. The mouldings were rich and ornamented, of the date of the year 1180. The other turret was a part of the Chapel of St. Nicholas, about the year 1250, in which there appears to have been a bell.

In many towns there are considerable remains of houses built during the fifteenth century, many of which were originally inns, and some of them remain so at this time ; and among the number there was one at Glastonbury, *probably the George Inn*.

There are many authors who have written largely on Glastonbury, such as Leland, in his *Itinerarum and Collectanea*,—Willis's (*Catalogue of the Abbots*),—Saunders, who lived at the time of the dissolution, a fellow of New College, Oxford, in the year 1543,—Reyner, author of the *Church History*, —Cressy,—Wood,—Dugdale and Dodsworth, (the authors of the *Monasticon*),—Broughton, (author of the *Antiquities of Glastonbury*,)—and some others.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "N. M. Robinson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent underline under the name "Robinson".

### Notes

1. According to Saunders and Reyner T. Wood.
2. Willis's *Catalogue of Abbots*.
3. In one vol., 1772, a very scarce book.
4. In one vol. quarto, published by Cutwell at Bath, MG.-- This is not a common book, rather scarce.
5. The turret on Glastonbury Abbey is given in Part 11. of the *Glossary of Architecture*, plate 89, A.D. 1200; and also the bell turret of St. Nicholas's Church, Glastonbury, same part and Date\* A.D. 1250.

GLASTONBURY ABBEY,  
SOMERSETSHIRE.

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**G**LASTONBURY Abbey was a mitred abbey, situated in a peninsular, called by the Britons the Isle of Avalon, formed by the river Bry and a small stream in Somersetshire.[1] Upon the establishment of the Saxons, the town of Glastonbury obtained a new designation, Glasstringbyrng, and Glastn-a-bryg, from which its present name is immediately deduced. That it is a place of remote antiquity is certain, but its origin is involved in so much obscurity, that it is difficult at this time to separate its authentic from its legendary history.

British traditions state, that Elvan, who lived in the time of Lucius, the Silurian chieftain, collected a congregation in the Isle of Avalon or Glastonbury, which was afterwards, when monachism began to prevail among the ancient British chieftains, called Bangor Wydryn. In one of the Triads, the Isle of Avalon is said to be one of the three grand choirs, which contained in each of them 2400 devout persons; but that Triad does not appear to be very ancient. Glastonbury was considered a place of some sanctity before the invasion of the Saxons, by whom, after the violence of Kerdic, the devout persons who resided there were dispersed. The monastery, which had fallen into decay, was rebuilt in great splendour, by INA, king of the West Saxons, and afterwards became much famed, and was extolled by the Anglo-Norman monks as the Mother Church of all Britain. Ina was not only a great warrior and wise legislator, but behaved with great liberality to the Church, and one of his devout actions was the founding and endowing this Monastery in the year 708; and it is said to have been one of the richest and most magnificent in the world. From its great antiquity it has been called "the first ground of God and the saints of Britain, the mother of all saints, and the rise and foundation of religion in England." In the following century it was considered a place of such dignity and importance, that Alfred made his friend and preceptor Asserius the abbot of it. The Abbey stands in the town of Glastonbury on a declivity of considerable eminence, and is nearly isolated by the surrounding marshy flats, called by the Britons, *Ynswytryn* or *Yingswytryn*, the glassy island, and afterwards *Avalon* and *Avalla*, from the number of apple trees, which grew there in great abun-

dance. The foundation of this Abbey, according to the monkish historians, is thus related.]

Philip, the apostle, of Gaul, thirty-one years after the death of Christ, on the dispersion of the Christians, was sent to preach the gospel among the Franks in England, many of whom he converted and baptized, who having arrived in this island, rested with his companions on a small eminence half a mile south-west of the present town, still called Weary-all Hill, and established there the first society of Christian worshippers in Britain. Being desirous of extending the blessings of Christianity as far as possible, he chose eleven of his most zealous followers, over whom he set Joseph of Arimathea, the supposed apostle of the British Isles, and sent them to Britain to preach the Christian faith. Arviragus was then king of that part wherein they landed, who, although not converted, permitted them to settle in his kingdom, and for that purpose[2] granted Glastonbury to them, with lands to the amount of twelve hides, manses, families and ploughs, nearly equal to 1440 acres. Part of this they enclosed with wattles or hurdles, and with the same materials erected a place of worship, which is said to be the first Christian Church in Britain.[3]

The legend states that it was consecrated by Christ himself in person, and by him dedicated to the honour of the Virgin Mary; and that St. David, Bishop of Menevia, some time after intending to consecrate it, was forbidden by Christ, who appeared to him in a vision, and as a token that he had himself performed the ceremony, pierced St. David's hand with his finger, which wound was the next day seen by many. Here these holy men lived a kind of eremitical life, passing their time in acts of penitence and devotion, frequently going out into the adjoining country, where by their preaching they converted many of the pagans to Christianity. Two of the successors of Arviragus, observing the good effects this new doctrine had on the morals of their subjects, encouraged them in their undertaking, and confirmed and added to the lands originally granted to them.

After a series of time, and the death of these holy men, for want of pastors the people returned to their idolatry. When Lucius, the first Christian king, came to the throne, being desirous of knowing the tenets of the



Christian religion, he applied to Pope Eleutherius, and entreated him to send some preachers into the kingdom; upon which he dispatched *Phaganus* and *Diruvianus*, who soon converted and baptized that king and most of his subjects; and in travelling about to instruct the few unconverted, they came to this island, where finding the chapel built by *Joseph of Arimathea* and which had many proofs of having been used as a place of worship by Christians, they obtained it of the king, and appointed twelve of their number to reside there, who lived a kind of monastic life, keeping up their number by choosing a new member on the death of any of the fraternity.

This society was reduced into a more regular form by St. Patrick, the Irish apostle, who instructed them in the monastic discipline, and became their first abbot, in which office he continued thirty-nine years. St. Dunstan afterwards, when he became Abbot, introduced among them the rules of St. Benedict.

This place was famous for the residence of Benignus, Kolumkil, and Gildas the historian ; and after them came St. David. In this place, near a chapel built by St. David, on the east end of the old Church tower, were buried Joseph of Arimathea, St. Patrick, St. Gildas, St. Dunstan, and many other saints and martyrs. Many of the most learned antiquaries doubted whether either Joseph of Arimathea, St. Patrick, or St. David, were ever here;[4] but the popular opinion, founded on tradition, was, that it was the burial place of Joseph of Arimathea; and it appears by an ancient record,[5] that one John Blome of London, in the reign of Edward the 3rd obtained a licence, dated at Westminster, 10th of June, 1345, to go to the monastery of Glastonbury, and there to dig for the corpse of Joseph of Arimathea, according to a divine revelation which he said he had on that subject in the preceding year. Monkish legends ascribe the foundation of a Christian Church on this spot, which is said to be the first in England, to Joseph of Arimathea; and. that a species of thorn which still exists in the neighbourhood, blossoming in the winter, was long believed to have sprung from his walking staff, which he had stuck in the earth.

INA, king of the West Saxons, was so lavish in liberality towards this Abbey, that he caused a chapel (or shrine) to be formed of silver and gold, with ornaments and vases also of gold and silver, and placed it within the great Church of Glastonbury, delivering 2640 pounds of silver for forming the chapel; as the altar was two hundred and sixty-four pounds of gold; the chalice and patten, ten pounds of gold; the censor, eight pounds and twenty manentes of gold; the candlesticks, twelve pounds and a half of silver; the coverings of the books of the gospels, twenty pounds and sixty manentes of gold; the water vessels and other vases of the altar, seventeen pounds of gold. There was also an image of our Lord, and of the Virgin Mary, and images of the Twelve Apostles, of a hundred and seventy-five pounds of silver, and thirty-eight pounds of gold; the Apostles being in silver, but our Lord and the Virgin in gold. The pall for the altar, and the ornaments for the priests, being artfully woven on both sides with gold and precious stones.[6]

The Abbey of Glastonbury is of considerable antiquity. It was under the government of sixty-one Abbots for nearly 600 years; and enjoyed such power by a grant from King Canute the Dane, that no person whatever, not even the King himself, durst set his foot in the Island of Avalonia, on which it stood, without first obtaining permission of the Abbot.

The Saxon kings, and probably the British before them, loaded it with revenues; and the Abbot lived in almost as much state as the royal donors themselves. His income was very considerable, being valued in the King's books at £700. per annum more than the Archbishop of Canterbury, and £2000. a year more than the Bishopric of Durham; and he sat as a lord in parliament. Until the middle of the ninth century the clergy of this Abbey lived, as well in the cloisters as other places, with their wives and families; but about the year 955, Dunstan, the great champion for papal encroachments, being at that time Abbot of this monastery, introduced some Benedictine monks, whom he had sent for from Italy; and from that time Celibacy among the clergy began to gain ground, although not established by law in England till above 300 years after.

When Henry the Eighth renounced subjection to the see of Rome, and seized on the revenues of religious houses, the commissioners exercised a more than ordinary severity to discover what they imagined to be hidden by the monks. The Abbot at the time was one Richard Whiting, who, when the commissioners proceeded to plunder the church of its ornaments, lost all patience, and broke out into bitter invectives against those who had advised the King to such a measure: these expressions were construed into treason, for which he was tried, and with two of his monks was executed on Torr.[7]

The abbey was greatly benefitted by the liberality of Edward the Elder, Edred, Edgar, and other Saxon kings and nobles ; but at the conquest, King William stripped it of several of its possessions, which he bestowed upon his followers, and in the year 1082 made one Tustin, a Norman, abbot of this monastery ; but he afterwards restored to it some of the lands, which he confirmed by his grant.

Herlewinue, who succeeded Tustin, in the year 1116 or 1120 rebuilt the church ; and in the year 1184 the whole monastery, except part of the abbot's lodgings and the steeple, was consumed by fire ; upon which, there then being no abbot, King Henry II. sent one of his chamberlains, Ralph Fitz Stephen, to take charge of the revenues of the abbey, who began and partly finished a new church and the offices of the house ; these were perfected by the abbot Henry de Saliano (or Swaney;) in whose time the tomb of the fabulous King Arthur, the British chieftan, was discovered.

King Henry II. when in Wales, having heard of the tradition of the Welch bards[8] from the mouth of one of them, as to the exact spot where King Arthur was interred at Glastonbury, ordered proper search to be made. The place mentioned as containing the remains of that celebrated prince, was between two obelisks of stone. The men employed for the purpose had to dig to the depth of seven feet before they made any discovery, and then they found only a flat stone which had closed the grave. Upon the lower part of the stone, and inserted in a cavity within it, was a leaden cross, inscribed with large rude but legible characters[9] —

**HIC JACET SEPULTUS  
INCLYTUS REX ARTHURUS  
IN INSULAR AVALONIA**

The letters were large capitals, filling up the whole space of the cross in that promiscuous manner usual in ancient inscriptions. Upon descending nine feet lower the coffin was found, containing the bones of a man of an extraordinary size. These were shown by Henry de Sully, the abbot to Geraldus Cambrensis; the leg bone of the king was applied to that of a very tall man, and rose three fingers above the knee. No less than ten wounds were discovered upon his head alone, nine of which appeared to have been slighter ones, and had been healed, and the other was a mortal gash, and remained all unclosed and gaping.

The Abbot, who was a relation and the friend of King Henry, gave Giraldus the particulars of so interesting a discovery. The King commanded the remains to be immediately removed into the greater church, and deposited in a magnificent shrine, which was afterwards placed, by order of King Edward I, before the high altar. There they continued till the reign of Henry VIII., who overturned the monasteries, and with them destroyed many of our antiquities.

Leland, in his visit to Glastonbury, saw the cross with its inscription, and no doubt viewed and handled it with great satisfaction: *Quam et ego curiosissimis contemplatus sum oculis, et sollicitis contrectavi articulis, motus et antiquitate rei et dignitate.*

The heads both of Arthur and his queen were taken out of the tomb by the order of Edward I., and even down to the Reformation, shown with the leaden cross, as a kind of holy relics to the pilgrims that repaired to the monastery.[10] The obelisks that once marked out the spot where the great Arthur lay, were removed from the church yard and applied to some ordinary purpose. The cross was in the possession of the late Mr. Chancellor Hughes, at Wells.[11]

The conflict in which Arthur fell was generally thought to have been in the West of England, because the monarch was interred at Glastonbury :

but wherever he fell, although his remains might in the first instance have been deposited near the spot, they might subsequently have been removed to the sacred and venerable Glastonbury.

The *Torr*, before mentioned, is so called from the tower which stands on it ; it is a hill that rises like a pyramid to a great height, and is a land mark to seamen, being higher ground than any within ten miles of the place; but the ascent to it is so difficult, that one would think it did not cost so much to erect the church there, as to raise the stone to it. Although this church, which belonged to the abbot, is in ruins, yet there is still to be seen the figure of the archangel with a balance in his hand, having a bible in one scale and a devil in the other, to which another devil hangs, but they are both too light for the bible.[12]

About the year 1313, Geoffry Fromond, being abbot, began the great hall, and made the chapter house to the middle ; his successors Walter De Tanton who died before confirmation ; made the front of the choir with the curious stone images where the crucifix stood. Adam De Solbury the next abbot gave the seven great bells belonging to the Church.

Walter Monnington, the 53rd abbot, was a considerable benefactor; he built the vault of the choir of the presbytery, which he lengthened by two arches : he died in the year 1374.

John Chinnock succeeded Monnington, and finished what he had begun ; he also built the cloister, the dormitory, and the fraternity, and perfected the great hall and chapter house which was begun by the abbot Fromond. He died in the year 1420, having been abbot nearly fifty years.

Richard Beere, who was installed abbot about the year 1495, built the new lodgings by the great chamber, called the Kings Lodgings in the gallery, as well as the new lodgings for the secular priests and clerks of our Lady; he also built the greatest part of Edgar's chapel at the east end of the church, arched the east part of the church on both sides, and strengthened the steeple in the middle by a vault of two arches, which would otherwise have fallen : he also made a rich altar of silver, gilt, and set it before the high altar, and previously to his going into Italy, where he had been sent ambassador, and on his return, built the chapel of our

Lady of Loretto, adjoining the north side of the body of the church ; he also erected the chapel of the sepulchre

at the south end of the body of the church, and an almshouse, with a chapel on the north side of the abbey, and likewise the manor-place at Sharpham, in the park.

In the year 1806, there was a carving over a door-way at the back of a very ancient building, then called the Red Lion Inn, leading to the area or garden of the almshouses for women founded by the benevolent abbot; and in all probability they were the arms of that abbot, or of King Hen. VII.—they consist of a full blown rose surmounted by an elegant close or covered crown, the sinister supporter, which was quite perfect, had the appearance of a winged dog, and from what appeared of the mutilated remains of the dexter supporter, it seems to have been originally the same as the sinister. The whole was about two feet and a half broad, all cut in high relief. The date 1512 on a scroll, was nearly as perfect as when first set up.[13] It was much bedaubed with yellow ochre, and the dexter supporter was almost destroyed, but the other parts of the carving were in good preservation.[14]

There is another carving on free stone over the north door of St. Benedict's church at Glastonbury, having on a shield the initial letters R. B. in a cypher surmounted by a mitre. There is another stone with similar letters placed over the upper part of the front of a modern brick house, on the south side of the high street, just below the middle conduit. Their are also the initials of the name of Richard Beere, the 58<sup>th</sup>[15] and last abbot but one of the monastery of Glastonbury, he was installed abbot the 20<sup>th</sup> of January, 1493, and was a great benefactor to the Church and monastery: he died the 20<sup>th</sup> of January 1524, and was buried on the south side of the body of the Abbey Church, under a plain marble slab:[16]

Richard Whiting, the last abbot, who succeeded Beere, finished Edgar's chapel; he was a man of irreproachable life and fervent piety;[17] but, refusing to surrender up the abbey to Henry the VIII<sup>th</sup>, was sent for to London, and charged with high treason and robbery, and in his absence persons were deputed to search his study, who pretended to find there, in

a cabinet, a little book written against the King's divorce; upon which he was found guilty of high treason, and sentenced to be dragged on a hurdle to the top of Tor Hill, called The Tor, which overlooked the monastery, upon which stood the church of St. Michael, there he was hanged in his monk's habit, and was afterwards quartered ; his head was set upon the abbey gate and his quarters were sent to Bath, Wells, Ilchester, and Bridgewater.

The King soon after took possession of the lands and revenues of the abbey, which were valued at £3508. 13s. 4¾ d.[18] and by Dugdale at £3331. 7s. 4d. The value must have been in reality upwards of £1200, a most enormous sum in those days, equivalent at least to £100,000 at the present time.

"Whiting, who was abbot of this monastery,[19] a man both venerable for his age and really wonderful for the moderation of his religious life, which he preserved amidst the greatest plenty of temporal blessings: For this, England had still retained—that although the monasteries were extraordinary wealthy, they should not be governed by any but monks. All the religious men also lived in community, were most assiduous in the choir, and very rarely if ever went abroad without the enclosures of their monasteries. Whiting therefore being abbot, had an entire and enclosed monastery of about one hundred religious men ; bat according to the custom of abbots, he maintained three hundred domestics in separate houses and places adjoining, and among them many gentlemen's sons: besides, he kept many at their studies at the universities. He practised hospitality to all travellers passing by upon any account whatsoever, insomuch that he sometimes entertained five hundred horsemen. On Wednesdays and Fridays he distributed bountifully, and fixed alms on the poor resorting from all the villages round about."

The income of the Abbot of Glastonbury was £40,000. a year, and a delightful prospect he had from the neighbouring hill of a vast tract of land in his own possession, exclusive of seven parks, well stocked with deer, belonging to the monastery[20]

"The King's officers who went about to the monasteries having acquainted Hen. VIII. that Whiting could not be prevailed upon to sign the

instrument proposed by his majesty, they were directed to bring him immediately to London, without hindering him from providing a decent retinue suitable to his dignity, but to take care that he should dispose of nothing that belonged to the monastery ; and lastly, that a certain knight, who was the chief of his family, and whom the King's officers had already corrupted, should come with him, as it were to assist him on his journey, but in reality, as a keeper and spy.

"When he was come to London, the King's counsellors did not think fit to say much to him, when they understood from his steward, that he was positively resolved never to subscribe that instrument; but the King would not seem to exact it from any man by force.

"Having searched Whiting's cabinet, the manuscript book pretended to be found there, which probably had been brought in without Whiting's knowledge by those that searched, was thought to be a sufficient pretence to put him to death. Having received a slight check, and being stript of part of his retinue (for he came with a hundred and fifty horse) he was dismissed from London to receive the King's pleasure at home. But when he arrived at the city of Wells, which is five miles from Glastonbury, he was informed that there was an assembly of the gentry, and he, being summoned to it, went immediately, and entering the court was going to take his place among the prime of them, when the crier called him to the bar, and bid him answer to the crimes of high treason laid to his charge. The old man wondered, and looked about him, and asked his steward what the meaning of it might be ? He, as he had been instructed, bid him to be of good heart, whispering that this was all done to fright him.

"Soon after, Whiting was condemned, and sent away to Glastonbury, yet never imagining his end was so near. When he came to the walls of the monastery, a priest was presented to him to hear his confession in the horse litter that carried him ; for they assured him that he must die that very hour.

"The old man with tears, begged that he might have a day or two allowed him to prepare for death, or at least, that going into the monastery, he might recommend himself to his monks, and take his leave: but neither was granted; for, being turned out of the horse-litter, he was dragged



upon a hurdle with two of his monks to the top of Tor Hill which overlooks the monastery, where he was hanged in his monk's habit, and quartered, on the top of *St. Michael's Tower*, on the day before mentioned, thereby fulfilling a prophecy *that a Whiting should swim over Glastonbury Torr.'* "

Part of the walls of the choir, which was a beautiful structure, were standing in the year 1784: two of the great pillars that supported the middle tower, yet remain, but they are most overgrown with ivy ; and part of the high altar in the choir, where the West Saxon kings were buried, is still to be seen, but in the same ruinous condition as the church. It is however matter of regret, that while havoc has been made by the devouring hand of time, that for the sake of trifling gain, the Chapel of St. Mary on the north side of the Church has been lately converted into stabling.

Close to the above Chapel there was another built by King Edgar, of which nothing but the foundations are left, except some small turrets. The floor, which was of stone, had a vault underneath, in which many of the Saxon nobility were buried in leaden coffins : these were taken away by the people and melted.

The only thing that now remains of this once splendid abbey, and which seems to bid defiance to the ravages of time, is the Abbot's Kitchen, which is a building of stone : probably it is of more modern construction, for there is a tradition which says, that King Henry VIII. having some dispute with one of the abbots, threatened to burn his kitchen, thereby insinuating a reproach for his gluttony and luxurious manner of living, to which the abbot haughtily replied, that he would build such a one that all the wood in the royal forests should not be sufficient to accomplish the threat ; and he forthwith erected the present edifice. Perhaps this might be true of some former king, but the building appears to be rather older than the time of Henry the Eighth.

The site of Glastonbury abbey and land was granted 1st of Edw. VI. (1546-1547) to Edward Duke of Somerset, and then in the 1st of Eliz. (1558) to Sir Peter Carew; and it was afterwards to the family of the Duke of *Devon*. The site of *Avalon*, on which the monastery stood, gives title of Viscount to the Earl of *Peterborough*.

The Manor of Glastonbury was given by Richard III. to Blackenbury, Lieutenant of the Tower, for his concurrence in the murder of the two young princes, his prisoners.

In the reign of Edward VI. a church of foreign Protestants was planted here, who being for the most part worsted weavers, the Duke of Somerset, to whom the abbey was granted, settled them here by an indenture, with a promise to lend them money to buy wood and other materials for their manufacture, and allowed them lodgings ; but Queen Mary was no sooner seated on the throne, than she ordered them to depart.

The Chapel of Joseph of Arimathea stands at the west end of the conventual church of the abbey, to which it communicated by an arch, and a spacious portal. This chapel has been thus described:[21] The present work is about the third building upon the same spot ; it is forty-four paces long and thirty-six wide, without the walls. The roof is chiefly wanting ; two little turrets are at the corners of the west end, and two more at the interval of four windows from thence, which appears to indicate the space of ground the first chapel was built on; the rest, between it and the church, was a sort of ante-chapel, being broken down into it and it was wrought with many great stones. Here was a capacious receptacle of the dead; many leaden coffins having been taken up, and melted into cisterns :—hence it is supposed there was a subterraneous arched passage to the Tor." The roof of this chapel was finely arched with rib-work of stone ; the sides of the wall are full of small pictures of Sussex marble, as is the whole of the church, which was the method of ornamenting in those days; but they are mostly broken away. Between them and the walls there are several paintings of Saints still to be seen. In the first story, there are interesting semicircular arches, of which the pointed form is visible. On the shaft of the columns, half way between the base and the capital, is a band moulding : this band is a peculiarity, used frequently in this order of architecture, and also adapted to the first distinct manifestation of the pure pointed order, in which it became a constant decoration, until set aside in the second degree of pointed architecture that immediately followed. All the walls are overgrown with ivy, which is the only thing in a flourishing condition; and every thing else presents a most melancholy though venerable aspect.

There is a tradition, that a walnut-tree, which grew in the church yard on the hill, which never budded till the anniversary of the feast of Si. Barnabas, when it shot out leaves in abundance. This tree was of the species of walnut-trees called "*Nux sancti Johannis*," from its shooting about the nativity of St. John the Baptist, which is twelve days before the feast of St. Barnabas: and in the abbey church yard there was also a hawthorn-tree which blossomed in the winter;—that it was cut down in the civil wars, is certain; but that it always blossomed on Christmas-days, is a mere tale of the Monks.

The town of Glastonbury was under the protection of the abbots until the death of Whiting in the year 1539.

Under the abbacy of Dunstan, and the munificence of the Anglo-Saxon kings, Edmund I. and Edgar, it regained its former prosperity, and was conformed to the rule of the Benedictines.

At the conquest, the abbot of this monastery was a personage of very considerable importance in the Anglo-Saxon State; but the jealousy of Will:ism, who deposed the abbot and substituted a Norman in his place, led him to strip the abbey of its lands, and to depress the establishment for a while; but it was restored by the carefulness and influence of subsequent abbots. The buildings were in a great part rebuilt in the reigns of Stephen and Hen. II, and they were subsequently repaired and enlarged. Soon after this time it became a mitred abbey, and for a short time was annexed to the Bishopric of Wells, which during this interval was called the Bishopric of Glastonbury.

In consequence of an account of a wonderful, not to say miraculous cure, wrought by drinking the water of a spring near the town, which was discovered about the middle of the last century, certain invalids from Bath, Bristol, and other parts of the country, to the number of 10,000, and more, flocked to Glastonbury in the course of one month (May, 1751,) and, such was the repute of the medicinal qualities of it, that a great quantity was sent to London in bottles. It is uncertain how many received benefit from their libations, and how long the delusion lasted.

The town at the present time consists of several streets, four of which enclose a quadrangular space, in which the rains of the abbey are compre-

hended, and from the corners of the quadrangle other streets extend. The houses are generally low, and many of them have been built with the stones taken from the ruins of the abbey.

The remains of this splendid structure consist of some fragments of the Church, the Chapel of St. Joseph of Arimathea, and the building which is called the Abbot's Kit, chen. The ruins of the Church, which was of the cruciform, comprehended two of the pillars which supported the central tower, some portions of the choir, and a fragment of the wall of the nave.

The architecture belongs to the period of transition from the Norman to the early English, with some portions of the later date. The whole length of the church was -380 feet. the breadth of the choir and its aisles, 70 feet. St. Joseph's chapel is in better preservation than the church, at the west end of which it is placed, and with which it communicates by an ante-chapel of somewhat later date; both belong to the same transition period as the church, but are of more enriched character ; the length of the chapel and ante-chapel together, is 110 feet ; the breadth, 2.5 feet. The abbot's kitchen is a small building, square externally, but octangular within ; it is in a very perfect state, and belongs to the late perpendicular period. The roof is ornamented by a double lantern. In the town there are several buildings which were formerly dependencies of the abbey; the George Inn offers a good specimen of the late perpendicular. On a hill near the town is what is called the "Tarr," a tower, which is the only remains of a chapel dedicated to St. Benedict : it is of the decorated English architectural character, of beautiful though simple composition, and very perfect in its details.

On the summit of this hill, at a short distance from the town, is the tower of St. Michael, the only part remaining of a splendid church and monastery, erected on the site of a former one, which was destroyed by an earthquake in the year 1276.

Weary-all-hill, the spot where Joseph of Arimathea and his disciples are said to have rested after their pilgrimage, is connected with a legendary account of the origin of a species of thorn called the Glastonbury thorn : on this hill, the legend relates, that Joseph struck his staff into the ground with his own hand on Christmas-day, which immediately took root, and

grew up into a flourishing tree, and immediately put forth its leaves, and the next day it was covered with milk-white blossoms ; and it is said that this thorn continued to bloom on every Christmas-day for a long series of years, from which circumstance, it was in succeeding ages called the *holy* thorn. There certainly was in the abbey church yard a hawthorn tree[22] which blossomed in winter, which was cut down at the time of the civil wars; but that it blossomed on Christmas-day, was a mere tale of the monks, calculated to inspire the vulgar with notions of the sanctity of the place.

There are a variety of other legendary tales, which are equally absurd, and have been interwoven with the history of this place. St. Dunstan, after his banishment from court, retired to Glastonbury abbey, where he built for himself a miserable cell, in which he had a forge, and occupied himself in making gold and silver trinkets: this place was the scene of the most notorious miracle[23] in monastic history, for it is said, that while he was at work the Devil having assumed the appearance of a beautiful female appeared at the window of the cell, and by wanton conversation tempted him to carnality. St. Dunstan however, having recognised his visitor, waited till his tongs were sufficiently heated, then took him by the nose with the red hot instrument, and there held him for some time, to the great dismay of the malignant spirit.[24]

St. Dunstan, who succeeded Otho Severus, was Archbishop of Canterbury. The miracles wrought by St. Dunstan are said to be many, and that on his death bed he saw many strange visions of heavenly joys, which were revealed to him for his great comfort. The following is an extract from an old legend:

"Upon Holy Thursday he sente for alle his brethren, and asked forgiu- nesse, and alsoo forgaue them all trespasses, assoyled them of all theyr synnes, and the thyrd day after he passyd out of this world to God, full of vertues, the yere of our Lord ix honderd lxxxviii, and hys soule was borne up to Heven with merry songs of aungels, all the peple hering that were all at his deth: and his body lieth at Caunterbury in a worschiphful shryne, wher as our Lord sheweth for his seruant S. Dunston many faire and great myracles; wherfor our Lord be preysed world with-outen End. Amen." [25]

His relics[26] were removed to Glastonbury about twenty-four years after his departure ; and so it is probable, for there he was first a brother of the house and afterwards abbot : there the Devil came to him dancing, by which the Devil's merriment, Dunstan knew the instant time of the death of Edmund, the brother of Athelstane, slain at Puckle church, of which the old rhymer, Rob. of Gloucester—

" Seynt Dunston was atte Glastonbury tho' the King phuite was,  
" And put in the same stoundll be west of this cas.  
" For the Deui[27] befor him came dawncing an lowgh,  
" And as bit wer pleyng made game enough ;  
" This hely[28] man wiste anon why his joy was,  
" And that for the Kyng's harms he made such solas.  
" Dunstone toward Pruckle cherch dight hymselfe bliue,  
" So that men tolde hym by the way the Kyng was out of liue."

At another time, this merry Devil (or some other) came

to him in another mood in likeness of a bear, and would have handled him with rough mittens, as the proverb is, . vet Dunstan had the better in the conflict, being never abashed with such hellish encounter.

" Dunstan, as the rest arose through many Sees,  
" To this Archtype at last ascending by degrees,  
" There by his power confirmed, and strongly credit wonne.  
" To many wondrous things which he before had done,  
" To whom when (as they say) the Deuill once appeared,  
" This man so full of faith not once at all affeared,  
" Strong conflicts with him had, in myracles most great." [29]

A great variety of organic remains, consisting chiefly of nautili, cornua ammonia, bivalves, &c. have been found embedded in the quarries near Torr Hill.

The town of Glastonbury at this time consists of one spacious street, forming the principal thoroughfare, intersected nearly at right angles by another street of smaller extent; the houses are in general low, but there are several of more recent erection and of a respectable appearance, many

of which in different parts of the town have been built entirely of the stone taken from the ruins of the abbey.[30]

The famous abbot's inn at Glastonbury, vulgarly called the George Inn, was anciently appropriated by the abbots as a place of entertainment for pilgrims visiting the shrine of St. Dunstan, where they were furnished with all the necessaries of life, is now standing, and retains much of its original character and decorations; the arms of the Saxon kings are fixed over the gate, and almost every house in the town presents some parts of the ruins of the abbey: in one place is to be seen part of a pillar fixed to a window, in others there are pieces of tombs jumbled together in the most irregular manner. The old manor house, and the tribunal of justice, are interesting relics; and a beautiful modern building, (which is now called the Abbey ) harmonizing in its style of architecture with the venerable remains by which it is surrounded, has been erected by the present proprietor of the abbey land, Thomas Porch Porch, Esq.

The town is well paved, and lighted under the provisions of an Act of Parliament, and plentifully supplied with water from a fine spring issuing from the ridge of a hill three quarters of a mile distant, and collected in an ancient stone reservoir, whence it is conveyed by pipes into the town. The principal branches of manufacture are those of stockings and a coarse sort of gloves, which have superseded the manufacture formerly carried on, and at present afford employment to several hundred persons in the town and neighbourhood. The market days were formerly Tuesday and Saturday; the former has been discontinued, and the latter is now only for butchers' meat. The fairs are on the Wednesday in Easter week, September 19th (called the Torr fair, which is principally for horses), October 10th, and the Monday week after St. Andrews's day.

It is governed, by charter of Queen Anne, by a mayor, recorder, seven superior and sixteen inferior burgesses, assisted by a town clerk ; there are also two coroners and other subordinate officers. The mayor, (who is chosen annually from the superior burgesses), the recorder, (who must be a barrister of three years standing), and the late mayor, are justices of the peace within the borough. The corporation hold quarterly courts of session for the trial of offenders within the borough, and a court leet for the hundred is held in the town.

Glastonbury comprises the parishes of St. Benedict and John the Baptist, and gives name to a peculiar jurisdiction which extends over several parishes. The living of St. Benedict is a donative annexed to the perpetual curacy of St. John's, jointly endowed with £800. private benefactions, £400. royal bounty, and £600. parliamentary grant; and in the peculiar jurisdiction and patronage of the Bishop of Bath and Wells. The churchwardens of St. John's are a body corporate with a common seal, and have estates producing at present about £500. per annum, of which part was granted in the year 1300.

The churches are both interesting structures in the late style of English architecture, with towers of very graceful and highly arched character, of which the former has open turrets and battlements, and more decorative than the latter, which is however a fine composition. The church of St. John is a handsome building with a lofty tower of great elegance and beauty. The church of St. Benedict is remarkable for architectural elegance. At the intersection of the two streets are the remains of the market cross, which was a large and curious building of a peculiar style of architecture, but it is now reduced to a part of the central column that formerly penetrated the roof of the building and terminated in a naked figure. There are places of worship for Baptists, the Society of Friends, Wesleyan Methodists, and Independents, (which has an endowment of £80. per annum,) a Presbyterian Meeting House, and there is also a National School for Boys, in which thirty are instructed. This school is supported partly by subscription, and partly by an appropriation of £20. per annum arising from property bequeathed by James Levinston, in 1666, for charitable purposes ; a rent-charge of £4. left by the Earl of Godolphin, is paid to a schoolmistress for teaching ten children, and £5. per annum, arising from two turnpike deeds assigned by Mrs. Honora Gould, is paid for teaching twelve female children to read and sew.

There are two sets of Almshouses, the Upper and Lower, founded by the abbots of the monastery, and since the dissolution they have been supported by an annual grant from the crown ; the former, which is in a greatly dilapidated state, is inhabited by ten aged men, and the latter, which has been lately rebuilt by a grant from the crown, is inhabited by ten aged women : attached to each is a small chapel, and in the hall of



each one additional tenant is allowed to reside in expectation of the first vacancy.

Among the many illustrious persons who have been interred here, are several Saxon kings, with a numerous train of noblemen, bishops, abbots, and priors.

Glastonbury formerly conferred the title of Baron on the family of Greville, but which became extinct on the death of the late lord without issue.

[Since the foregoing pages have been printed, a more circumstantial and historical account of the Abbey of Glastonbury,[31] compiled from old authors, has come to hand; and from its apparent authenticity, extracts from it are given by way of ADDENDA, in order to correct any errors that may appear in this short account of the venerable monastery.]

## Notes

1. Glastonbury derived its name from Glaustrum, i.e. Dyer's Wood, which grew there in great quantities.

2. Hughes's *Horæ Britanniae*, p. 342, London, 1819.

3. In one of the copies of Caradoc of Llancarvan's History of the Welsh princes, Ivor, the successor of Calivalador, is said to have founded the monastery of Avalon, in the year 683, after the Victory he gained over the Saxons. And see Note p. 342 *Horæ Britannicæ*.

4. Among whom are found the names of Spelman, Stillingfleet, and Collier.

5. Preserved in Rymer's *Fcedera*. Tanner's *Not. Mon.*

6. Whitaker's *Cornwall*, Vol. 11, p.291.

7. See more of this hereafter.
8. It was at an entertainment, given at Kilgerran Castle in Pembrokeshire, that the Bing received the information, which is alluded to in a Poem in the possession of the Rev. C. Morgan, intituled " The Shrine of Arthur."
9. See Whitaker's History of Manchester, part II.
10. See History of Manchester, B. 2, c. 2, a. 4.
11. See the Life of St. Neott, pp. 37 and 38.
12. See Bowen's System of Geography, vol. i, title Somersetshire, p. 29
13. This was twenty-seven years before the dissolution of the monastery.
14. See Gents. Mag. March, 1807, vol. 77, pt. 1, p. 211.
15. According to Willis.
16. See Gents. Mag. vol. 77, pt. 1, p. 211.
17. According to Willis and others.
18. According to Speed.
19. See Stevens's History, and Additions to the Monasticon
20. Bowen's System of Geography, vol. i, p. 29, edn: 1747.
21. See Dr. Stukeley's Itinerarium Curiosum. and also the Beauties of England and Wales for a print of this Chapel.
22. Many plants have been raised from haws brought from Aleppo, all of which proved to be what are called the Glastonbury thorn. This exotic or Eastern thorn differs from our common hawthorn in putting out its leaves very early in the spring, and flowering twice a year ; in mild seasons it often flowers in November and December, and again at the usual time of

the common sort; but the stories that are told of its budding, blossoming, and fading on Christmas-day are ridiculous, and only monkish legends.— Boswell's *Antiquities of England and Wales*.

23. Dunstan may be compared to Roger the famous Friar Bacon, who was born at Ilchester in the reign of Hen. III. He was so learned in that rude unlearned age, that he was deemed a conjuror, for he made such discoveries in Philosophy at Oxford, that the ignorant people magnified his experiments into magic: they reported of him, that he made a brazen head speak; and, for that and other things, he was charged with magic and heresy; and the Franciscan priests, his own brotherhood, complained of him to Pope Nicholas IV. who could no more distinguish between learning and conjuring than the Priest, whereupon the Friar was taken up, and kept a close prisoner for many years.

24. For other particulars, see the *Life of St. Dunstan*.

25. This legend is in the black letter type: See *Weever's Fun. Mon.* edition MDCCLXVII, pages 94--96.

26. According to *Capgrave*.

27. Instant.

28. Holy.

29. *Polyolbion*—Song 24.

30. See *Gents. Mag.* No. clxix, vol. 82, p. 540. 1812.

31. Printed at Wells, in the County of Somerset, by H. W. Ball, 1843.

## ADDENDA

This Addenda runs to a much greater extent than it was first conceived it would; but as it contains a more satisfactory account of that once celebrated Abbey, Glastonbury, it may not be considered as a waste of time occupied in putting it together : at all events, it is a curious document, compiled from ancient authors and scarce books.

### ST. JOSEPH OP ARIMATHEA.

That noble senator, who is so honourably mentioned by the four evangelists, for obtaining of Pilate the body of our Saviour, and afterwards burying it, was for that noble action imprisoned in a close place by the Jews the very night he performed that Christian duty, and was thence miraculously delivered by an angel the night of our Saviour's resurrection, which so enraged the Jews, that they not only turned him, with Lazarus, St. Mary Magdalene, and St. Martha, out of Jerusalem; but, putting them in an open vessel without stern or tackling, they turned them to sea, when they were driven to Marseilles, a city of France, upon the Mediterranean, whence St. Joseph came into Britain, where he died.

The old historians say, that he came into Britain in the year of Christ 63, and that he brought over with him twelve companions, whereof one was his son, who was also called Joseph, and according to an old book,[1] what of one sex, and what of the other, 600 persons, amongst whom were his wife, his nephew Helaius, from whom it is said our renowned king Arthur was descended, and a kinsman, whose name was Peter, from whom one Loth descended, who married king Arthur's sister; that St. Joseph was a king, rex occaniae, and that divers of this his great retinue were persons of the first rank, some of whom were also called reges, kings, &c. ; but this book, it appears, is not to be relied on.

It is said[2] that the first landing of St. Joseph in this island was in Venodocia, now called North Wales, where he and his companions, preaching the faith of Christ, were not only denied all necessary things for relief and sustenance, but their doctrine was rejected, and themselves committed to prison by the king or prince of that province, a pagan infidel

; but he and his associates being freed of their imprisonment, and seeing how fruitless a business it was like to be to make any longer stay amongst that then so obstinate and obdurate a people, he came to that part of the island then called Loegria, now England.

At his first arrival here he assumed the confidence to repair to the then British king, Arviragus, to whom he gave an account of the design of his journey, which was to bring happy news, and the only assured means of eternal happiness to all that would embrace it. This message, gravely and modestly delivered by one filled with the spirit of God, and also of a venerable presence, one that renounced all worldly designs of power or riches, professor of a religion sufficiently recommended in that it deserved the hatred of Nero, a prince then infamous beyond any ever mentioned in former histories, so wrought upon king Arviragus, that he not only gave them leave to convert and save his subjects, but also extended his liberality so far as to afford them a place of retreat, commodious for their quiet and holy devotions, and sufficient for their sustenance, that without distraction and solicitude they might attend to the worship of the true God, and the instruction of all those who were willing to take it.

The place assigned them was an island, rude and uncultivated, called by the Britons, from its colour, Inis-witryn, that is, the Glassy Island, compassed with woods, bushes, and fens, situated in Somersetshire, which in succeeding times being cleared from briars, drained and cultivated, it was by the inhabitants named Avallonia. from the plenty of apples and other fruit growing there. But in after ages, when the Saxons had possessed themselves of those parts, they resumed the former title, and called it in their own language Glaston or Glascon.

## **WEARY-ALL HILL**

It is a continued tradition of the inhabitants of Glastonbury, that when St. Joseph and his companions came into England out of North Wales, they divided themselves into divers companies ; and that three only at first went to has-witryn, whereof one was St. Joseph himself. That he and his companions coming tired and weary to a hill within half a mile of the

south-west of Glastonbury, rested themselves on the ridge thereof, for which reason that hill is called *Weary-all-hill* ; and that in the very place where they rested sprung up the *miraculous Morn* mentioned in p. 20, of *which thorn more hereafter*.

When the rest of the associates of St. Joseph understood where he and his companions had their settlement, they also repaired thither ; and being all assembled together, they set up their rest in the adjoining place, where the late Abbey of Glastonbury stood. A short time after they had been there, they were admonished by the Archangel St. Gabriel, in a vision, to build a church in honour of the holy mother of God and perpetual virgin : upon which they immediately built an oratory of barked alder, or wicker wands, wound and twisted together, with a roof of straw, or rather hay or rushes.

Joseph and his companions converted a great number of pagans to the faith of Christ ; and they behaved themselves as all holy missionaries did in those days, through all places exhorting men to fly from the wrath to come, and made use of their retreat only as a place of repose. After this manner of living they ended their days in the island of Inis-witryn, having been supported by the liberality of king Arviragus, who for their subsistence bestowed upon each of them a hide of land, twelve hides in the whole, which donation of his was confirmed to them after his death by his two successors, Marius and Callus, who, as some report, were converted to the faith of Christ.

Though it is said that this island became after the death of St. Joseph and his companions a den of wild beasts till St. Lucius's days; yet it is certain they left some disciples behind them, or else how could St. Elvanus, called Avallonius, (because he was either bred or born at Glastonbury) and Medwinus Belga, (that is to say, of Wells) be instructed in christianity? It is evident that St. Joseph and his brethren left disciples behind them who continued Christianity in the island, or its neighbourhood, till king Lucius's days, who spread it through all his kingdom.

Two legates, Phaganus and Damianus, travelling through Britain, teaching, preaching, and baptizing, were informed that Joseph and his brethren

ren, about one hundred years before, had in some measure spread the seed of the Christian faith, in the south-western part of the kingdom, and that they at last retired to Inis-waryn, and there died. Finding out this sacred place, these legates, about the year of Christ 183, penetrated into this holy island, where they found an ancient church, and having found this oratory were filled with joy ; and searching diligently the sacred place, they found the holy cross, the figure of our redemption, together with several other signs declaring that, that place had been formerly the habitation of Christians. After this, they found the antiquity of the coming of *Joseph* and his brethren thither; and also the acts and lives of them there, how religiously they lived, and how three pagan kings ministered necessities by a certain portion of land for their maintenance. To this oratory they added another of stone, which they dedicated to the honour of our Lord, and his apostles St. Peter and St. Paul.

After that, Phaganus and Damianus built an oratory in honour of St. Michael the Archangel, and they obtained of Pope Eleutherius indulgences for all such who devoutly visited those three holy places. These holy men lived here nine years ; and in memory of the first twelve in the time of Joseph of Arimathea, they chose twelve of their company to dwell in that island as anchorets, in little cells and caves, who met often together every day, that they might the more devoutly perform their divine offices ; and as the three pagan kings had long before granted the said island, with its appurtenances, to the first twelve disciples of Christ, so did Phaganus and Damianus obtain of king Lucius to have it confirmed for ever to these their twelve companions, and others their successors after them. Thus was established a succession of twelve devout persons, which continued there without interruption till the coming of St. Patrick, the apostle of Ireland, to that place in the 489, where he passed thirty years or more of the later part of his life.

The twelve successors of the disciples of Phaganus and Damianus were all descended of noble families, and men of so great sanctity, that St. Patrick, who was a wonder himself for piety, says he was not worthy to untie the latches of their shoes. They chose St. Patrick for their superior, and informed him of all they knew of the island. Whereupon, after he had reduced them to a coeobitical way, that is to say, brought his religious to live in community and in common under the same roof, (for till then

they lived singly in huts, dens, and caves,) he took one of the twelve, Wellias, with him, and with great difficulty they went up together the Torr, where he found the ancient oratory of St. Michael almost in ruins ; and finding by an old book that the chapel there had been built by revelation, and held in vast veneration by Phaganus and Damianus, he and his companions spent there three months, during which time he had on a certain night a vision of our Saviour Christ himself, who signified to him that he was to honour the same Archangel in the same place ; for a testimony of the certainty of which vision his left arm withered, and was not restored till he had acquainted the rest of the brethren below with what he had seen

St. Patrick's vision being thus by miracle confirmed, his religious below were convinced that the chapel on that hill was likewise chosen by God for the exercise of christian devotion. Whereupon the holy men Arnulphus and Ogmar, two Irish monks whom he brought with him out of Ireland, desired to go up the hill and remain constantly there, attending on the said chapel, where they not only lived but ended their days. St. Patrick afterwards appointed that two brethren should reside on that hill for ever, except succeeding prelates for future ages should for just reason ordain otherwise.

Because the ascent was so difficult, being overgrown with briars, bushes, trees, and other clutter, he granted a hundred days of indulgence to all those, who, out of a pious intention, should, with axes and other instruments, clear the passage of the aforesaid mountain on all sides, that devout Christians might have a freer entrance to visit the church of the blessed Virgin Mary, that of the two apostles, and this oratory of St. Michael.

Husbandmen and labourers not only cleared the hill of the trees, bushes, and other clutter, but likewise planted the neighbouring valley with fruits, particularly apple trees, from whence, being cultivated, the island got the name of the Isle of Avalon, and the British word Avalla, which signifies apples ; and St. Patrick having repaired St. Michael's chapel, on the top of the Torr, which from that time was called the Hill of St. Michael, or St. Michael's Mount, to the time of the Reformation, after which it was called the Torr, from the tower, the only part of the Chapel left standing; and



having rebuilt the worn out wattled chapel of our blessed Lady, St. Patrick's exemplary life, and the holy lives of his companions, together with the sanctity of his predecessors who there lay buried, raised the isle to that reputation, that it became (about the year 480) a noted pilgrimage for pious persons to repair thither out of devotion.

St. Benignus followed the example of St. Patrick, and retired to Avalon, and there, after the death of St. Patrick, succeeded him as Abbot, where he had for his contemporaries, St. Kolum-Killa, and St. Gildas Albanus, who added a new lustre to this abbey :—[It is uncertain whether either of them became abbots.]

About the year 580, St. David took a journey to Avalon, accompanied by several of his suffragan bishops, with an intention to repair the ruins of the monastery, and consecrate the church again, but he was deterred from such a design (as mentioned in page 5); upon which, the preparations for a consecration came to nothing, and the miracle divinely wrought, being known publicly, increased the admiration. St. David, increasing the number of the holy persons there, added a chapel on the east side of this church, and consecrated it to the honour of the blessed virgin, the altar of which he adorned with a sapphire of inestimable value ; and lest the place or quantity of the former church should come to be forgotten, there was a pillar erected in a line drawn through the two eastern corners of the Church to the south, which divided the chapel from it. This story, was engraved upon a plate of brass, and fixed to a pillar in the great Abbey Church of Glastonbury, where it continued till the dissolution of the Abbey in the time of Henry the Eighth, and to it a model of the wattled oratory built by Joseph of Arimathea was annexed.[3]

About twelve years after St. David had been at Avalon, the renowned king Arthur, having been mortally wounded in the rebellion of his nephew Mordred, was carried to the Abbey, that he might after his death be buried among the saints who had reposed there from the beginning of christianity. Before his death he gave to the Monastery Brent Marsh and Pouldon, and other lands, to the value of five hundred marks, a vast benefaction in those days, which the pagan Angli took away, but afterwards, being converted to the faith, restored with advantage.

Among others, the king of Damnonia (Devonshire) upon the petition of Margaret alias Worgery, gave or restored in the year 601, lands containing five families (quinque cessata) to this Abbey. This grant was subscribed by Manverne or Manuto, a bishop then living there, and the said Abbot ; but the king's name was worn out of the writing by age.[4] It is probable his name was recovered by the editors of the Monasticon, who say a king, named Domp restored and confirmed five hides of land in Inis-witrine to the brethren living there.

About the year 605 St. Austin the monk came to the isle of Avalon, and being Archbishop of all England, he changed the institute of the monks, and appointed them the rule of St. Benedict, so it is said by many ancient writers;[5] but it did not gain general credit even among Catholics. Those who disbelieve it say it was impossible St. Benedict's rule should be so soon received in this monastery, for that the monks here must have been Britons.

Bede says, that the Britons opposed St. Austin in every thing, so it cannot be imagined that they would receive any rule prescribed by him, and the kingdom of the West Saxons did not receive Christianity till after the death of St. Austin, and it is well known that Glastonbury was in the kingdom of the West Saxons ; besides, Birthwaldus, as appears by an ancient writer,[6] was the first Saxon abbot many years after, which shows that the British monks still continued at Glastonbury, and for that reason it cannot be supposed that they received St. Benedict's rule.

Some twenty-five years after, St. Paulinus, the first Archbishop of York, in the Saxons' time, with St. Austin, lived in this monastery with the monks there, and made new buildings or reparations there for them, amongst which was the Old Church, which he built with timber, and covered it with lead.[7]

As the buildings and revenues of this Abbey increased, so did the number of the monks; so that at the dissolution of this house in the time of Henry the Eighth, there were a hundred monks, twelve of whom were appointed to keep choir, and constantly to perform all other church duties, in *St.*

*Joseph's Chapel*, so called, not that it was dedicated to him, but because he built it.

There was a church-yard belonging to this chapel sufficiently large to contain 1000 graves, where St. Joseph and his eleven companions were buried, and all the successors of St. Phaganus and Damianus till St. Patrick's time, also St. Patrick himself, and his disciple St. Pincius, and St. Gildas, the British historiographer.

In that church and church yard, and about it, "the pavement, the altars under, above and within, were so heaped with holy relics thronged together, that in all that churchyard, sixteen feet from the top, there is no place that was without the bodies of saints, for which reason the church-yard was called Sanctum Cæmeterium, the holy church-yard," in the middle of which they built another chapel in honour of St. Michael, St. Joseph of Arimathea, and the saints in general that rested there. Under the altar they heaped the bones of the dead, and the relics (though unknown) of the saints, in great multitudes, and appointed an especial mass of the church-yard should be daily celebrated in it. From this Glastonbury obtained the name of Roma Secunda, (a second Rome) ; and it was renowned like Rome itself, for as that became famous for its multitude of martyrs, so did this for its multitude of confessors buried there.

In such reverence was this church and church-yard held where these were interred, " that our forefathers did not dare to use any idle discourse, or to spit therein, without great necessity ; enemies and wicked men were not suffered to be buried therein : neither did any bring any hawk, dog, or horse, upon the ground, for if they did, it was observed that they immediately died. The church was for its antiquity called Eald Church; and the men of those days had nothing more formidable than to swear by this old Church. And for the relief and entertainment of devout pilgrims resorting to this holy place, there was not only an hospital built at Glastonbury, but likewise in other places, where they were entertained gratis. There were two such in the neighbourhood,—one called the Chaple of *Playsters*, near Box, a town in Wiltshire, near the Bath; and the other was a great house, called —, without Lafford's Gate, near Bristol."

## THE BENEFACTIONS OF SEVERAL KINGS TO THIS ABBEY

Kenwach, the second christian king of the West Saxons, but the seventh from its first being erected into a kingdom in the year 675, which was the 29th of his reign, bestowed Ferramore and other possessions upon it.

Kentwyn, the tenth king of that kingdom, who began to reign in 680, gave the manor of West Montaton, &c., freed them from all secular service, gave them liberty of choosing their own superiors, and called their Abbey " the mother of saints."

Cedwella, or, as some write him, Kenewalla, king Kent-wyn's immediate successor, in the year 681 confirmed to this Abbey Bishop Hebba's gift of Lantocay, and bestowed some land himself upon them. And this he did when he was yet a pagan; for it was after he had thus endowed the Monastery of Glastonbury, that he went to Rome, and there received baptism from the hands of St. Sergius the First, (then Pope), where he was christened by the name of Peter, and afterwards was canonized for a saint. King INA, who succeeded Cedwella, went beyond all his predecessors in his munificence to this Abbey ; for in the year 708 he demolished all the old ruinous buildings, and re-built the Abbey. This was the fourth time of its building : the first time being the first planting of christianity by Joseph of Arimathea; the second by St. David, Archbishop of Minevia ; which being again in ruins was raised up again by twelve well-affected men in the north.

The great Abbey of the Church this king re-built, and caused it to be consecrated anew, and dedicated it to God, in honour of the blessed Virgin, and the two Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul. One of the chapels belonging to it, which has been thought to have been St. Joseph's, he garnished over with gold and silver, and gave to it ornaments and vessels of gold and silver plate, (as is before mentioned in p. 7,) of considerable cost. Nor did this munificent prince stop his bountiful hand here; for he bestowed upon the Abbey the manors of Brent, Sowey, Poulton, and other possessions. And by the same charter, which is dated in the year of Christ, 725, whereby he granted to the monks these possessions, he confirmed to

them whatever had been at any time given to them by any of his predecessors, and styled the Abbey of Glastonbury in that charter, *Ecclesia Britanniae prima, et fons et origo totius religionis*: and he also granted them very great privileges, and exemption from the Bishop's authority.

This charter has been by some modern historians[8] considered not to be authentic ; but in Harpfield there is a charter of king Henry the Second, who in the year 1184, or soon after, began to build anew the Abbey of Glastonbury, it having been consumed by fire in the year 1171, confirming to it all the charters and privileges granted to the Monastery by any of his predecessors, among whom he names king Ina's.

In the year 729 Ethelred succeeded Ina, who, together with his queen Fridogida, became a bountiful benefactor to the Abbey.

Cuthred came after Ethelred, who bestowed three hides of land, at a place called Ure, upon Turnbert, the then Abbot ; and confirmed to him and his monastery all the possessions and privileges granted to them by any of his predecessors. Kenwulph, the next Saxon king but one to Cuthred, bestowed five hides of land upon them, called Wudaton, and other possessions at Huneresbury. And many other kings and queens, not only of the West Saxons, but of other kingdoms of the Heptarchy, Archbishops, Bishops, many Dukes, and of the nobility of both sexes, who thought themselves happy in increasing the revenues of Glastonbury Abbey, and to obtain a place of sepulture there.

Although the Abbey suffered much in the ninth and tenth centuries by the incursions of the Danes, yet it was not destroyed; for it was miraculously preserved from their pagan fury, by two of the Danes being stricken blind. King Edmund, the twenty-sixth king of the West Saxons and twenty-seventh monarch of the English, being willing to restore the Abbey to its ancient splendour, made Dunstan Abbot of it, and permitted him to make free use of his treasure to rebuild it; upon which Dunstan, in the year of Christ 942, laid the foundations and designed the offices ; and in a short time finished a noble monastery, into which he brought a congregation of new monks, and from among them were assumed Bishops, Archbishops, and Abbots, to many neighbouring monasteries.[9] From *Dunstan* bring-

ing to this Monastery a new congregation of monks, arises the notion of his introducing *Benedictines* there ; but it appears from the charter of Ina, the monks at *Glastonbury* in the year 725 were of the *Benedictine* order, and the *Benedictine* rule began to be observed there while *St. Austin* was Archbishop of Canterbury. So that by the liberality of *Edmund*, and the diligence of *Dunstan*, such a Monastery was built as England had never seen the like for such regular monks, and such a number of manors belonging to it, and so conveniently situated.

In the year 944, king Edmund granted *St. Dunstan*, and his monks, a charter, not only confirming all the privileges and donations formerly granted to their predecessors ; but discharged them from several burdens, duties, contributions, and subjections; and gave them right and power to receive fines, punish malefactors, and of enjoying their lands as free from all claims as he enjoyed his own, especially the town of *Glastonbury* itself.

*St. Dunstan* having highly offended king *Edwy* for having reproved him on the day of his coronation for incest, and other high crimes he that day committed, *Edwy* removed that prelate from his Abbey, and made one *Elsy* Abbot of *Glastonbury* in his room, (as some authors have it); but others[10] say, he not only sent *St. Dunstan* into banishment, but turned all his monks out of their Monastery, and supplied their places with married priests, by which means the Abbey became a seminary of secular priests. Yet it appears that *Edwy* had some regard for this venerable place; for he bestowed upon it, in the year of Christ 956, some possessions at a place called *Parthenebergue*, and other lands in other places. But these married priests could not have continued in the Abbey more than sixteen years, if they staid there so long, king *Edwy* coming to the crown only in the year 955; and it is agreed by all writers that his brother *Edgar*, by the advice of *St. Dunstan*, *St. Oswald*, and other prelates, in the year 971 removed the then married priests out of the several Cathedrals, Priors, and Abbeys, those priests were possessed of, and replaced the *Benedictine* monks in their former houses, from whence they had been removed by the Danes, or king *Edwy*'s revengeful spite to *St. Dunstan*. But it has been thought that the married clergy continued not more than eleven years at *Glastonbury*; for *Brithelme*, at that time Bishop of *Wells*, (before his election to that see a monk of *Glastonbury*), in the year 961

gave the jurisdiction of all the country round about Glastonbury to that Abbey ; and ordained an Arch-deaconry to govern it, to which one of the monks was to be elected yearly, which he could not have done had not the monks then been restored; and besides which, in the year 963, king Edgar bestowed upon this Abbey the manor of Stoure alias Stoureminster, and twenty hides of land in other places. And he granted several charters to the Abbey; some conveying to the Abbot and his monks more lands, and some enlarging their privileges. That charter which is dated at London, in the year 971, adds to the privileges granted by his father, king Edmund, Socam and Sacam, on Stroud and on Streams, on Wode and on Feld, that is to say,—liberty to determine pleas and correct delinquents on strand and on stream, in wood and in field, above ground and under ground ; Hundredsitena, which was a privilege of sanctuary in the limits of the hundred; Galle Horde, which signifies the appropriating to their own use any hidden treasure found within their territories; Forestall, that is to say, intercepting provisions coming to their market ; and Bufan, Corderan, Beneoderan, Flemeeneforde, Hamsocna, Gbith Bruie, and Fridisbruie, which are terms of franchises, but the interpretation of which are scarcely to be found in books. And besides which, any monk of that Monastery who met a malefactor going to the gallows, in any part of the kingdom, could take him out of the hands of the executioner, and give him his pardon. And also this charter of king Edgar exempts this Monastery, and the parishes of Street, Mireling, Budule, Shaperwick, Sorvy, and the several chapels within the said parishes, to wit, those of Beckery, called Little Ireland. Godeney, IMortimsey, Farramere, Padonberge, and Adredery, from the ordinary jurisdiction of the Bishop, except some things, with a salvo to the Church of Rome, and that of Canterbury.

King Edgar granted another charter[11] to the Abbey of Glastonbury, that the monks should always be the electors of their own Abbot, who was to be chosen out of their own body. The king reserved to himself the power of conferring the crozier or pastoral staff on the person elected. All controversies, as well in secular as ecclesiastical matters, should be determined in the Abbot's court. The Bishop of Wells, the ordinary in Somersetshire, should exercise no jurisdiction over them, to call their priests to his synods, or to suspend any of them from the divine office.

These charters of privileges, with many other immunities, were first confirmed in a synod of bishops and nobles in London, and which were afterwards sent to Rome, where they were also confirmed by a bull of Pope John XIII.

One, if not both these charters, king Edgar carried himself to Glastonbury; and that it might be perpetually valid, he, at the delivery of it, laid his sceptre, which was curiously made of ivory, upon the altar, together with the charter; after which, he caused the sceptre to be cut into two pieces, (lest some succeeding Abbots should sell or give it away), one-half he left with the Abbot, and the other he kept himself : this he did in the year of Christ 974, in the fifteenth year of his reign, at which time Ælfhard or Ælfstanus was Abbot.

King Egelred or .Ethelred, Edgar's second son, bestowed upon Sigegar, then abbot, six hides of land at Anstanclyff, one hide at Sitebeorge, a manor at Pucklechurch, containing thirty hides of land, and a home he bought for forty marks of gold in Wilton.

King Edmund the second, surnamed Ironside, having been mortally wounded by the treacherous Duke Elrick in the year 1016, bequeathed seventeen hides of land to this abbey, and his body to be buried there.

King Canute the Dane, about the year 1030, went to Glastonbury to see the tomb of King Edmund Ironside, whom he used to call his brother, and there gave a very rich pall to lay on Edmund's tomb, embroidered with apples of gold and pearls, and at the same time confirmed all the privileges that his predecessor had granted to that monastery.

There is nothing remarkable of this Abbey from the death of Canute to the Conquest, in the year 1066, when William the Conqueror maimed the Manastery in its possessions, and oppressed the poor monks to the last degree in their liberty and properties : he seized on many of their manors, and bestowed them on his court favourites. Among other places which he by force took from them, was their possessions at Wilton, which he gave to Geoffrey de Magan Villa ; and upon one Harding, the son of Aednoth, a mighty man and great lawyer in those days, he bestowed the manors of



Melhurst and Lyme, which, with other possessions, were recovered by the care and industry of Herlewinus,[12] who

became Abbot about thirty-six years after. He also took from them several manors, such as Tintanhall and Lodaesburgh ; and from the last of which was afterwards built the Priory of Montacute. He quartered soldiers upon them ; and being jealous of his new subjects, he, between Easter and Whitsuntide, after he came to the crown, carried over into Normandy the principal men of the nation, among whom was Egelnoth, then the Abbot of Glastonbury, whom he deposed, placing one Turstine,[13] a Cluniack monk of Caen in Normandy, in his stead.

Turstine being a weak but a busy prodigal person, wasted the revenues of the Abbey, and altered several of the ancient statutes and customs of the house ; and amongst other things, he compelled his monks to lay aside the old Gregorian song, used in that Monastery time out of mind, and imposed upon them a new sort of church song, invented by one William Fiscamp, a Norman. He pinched them in their diet, and was so tyrannical over the poor monks, that they refused to submit to many of his innovations ; upon which he brought in soldiers to subdue them, who suddenly and in a rage breaking into the Chapter House, made the poor monks affrighted religiously to fly into the Church, even to the high altar, where they shot, not sparing to hit the crosses, images, and shrines, and run one of the monks through the body as he embraced the altar, and slew him; and another was slain with an arrow, lying as it were hidden under the altar. The others, constrained of necessity, defended themselves with the forms and candlesticks of the church, so that, although they were sorely wounded, they drove the soldiers behind the choir; but besides the two that were slain, fourteen more of the monks were wounded, and some of the soldiers also. Upon enquiring into this matter, it was found that the Abbot was only to blame, upon which the Conqueror removed him, and sent him back to Caen into banishment; and in order to make the Abbey some amends, he confirmed to them some lands they had at Middleton, Fulbroe, Burwes, Burnington, Lyme, Blake-ford, and Winton, which the monks complained to have been unjustly taken from them. However, this unworthy Abbot got his Abbey again, after the death of the Conqueror, of his son *William Rufus*, buying it of him for 500 pounds of silver.

By reason of this fray, several of the monks withdrew from the Monastery, and were charitably received by some bishops into their palaces, where they continued till Turstine's death, after which they returned; and the Abbey began again to flourish, by the prudent management of Herlewinus, his successor, who was made Abbot about the year 1102. This prelate not only purchased several of the possessions that had been alienated in the time of the Conqueror from the Abbey, but he began to build the church anew, which having been standing at that time nearly four hundred years, was again run into decay.

Henry de Blois, the next successor but one to Herletoinus, nephew to king Henry I, and brother to king Stephen, had great interest at court, which he employed in benefitting the Abbey ; for understanding that the manors of Melles, Uffaculum, Camelarton, Domerham, and some other tenements in the parishes of Siston, Ashcote, and Pedewell, formerly belonged to this Monastery, he recovered them of his uncle, king Henry, in the year 1126, and obtained a confirmation of the manor of Offcolme from his brother, king Stephen, in the year 1136, which had been violently taken from the monks in the time of the Conqueror.

Little occurs respecting this Abbey from this time till the year 1171,[14] when a fire happened which consumed it; but it appears this fire did not happen till thirteen years after, that is to say in the year 1184,[15] at which time the whole monastery, except part of the Abbot's lodgings and the steeple, was consumed.[16] Upon this, king Henry II. sent Ralph Fitz-Stephen, one of his chamberlains, (see p. 8) there, to take care of the revenues ; who began and in a great measure finished a new church, and the offices of the house. And during the time Fitz-Stephen was so employed, king Henry carefully examined and searched into the truth and authority of the ancient charters and privileges granted to the Abbey ; and finding them to be authentic, confirmed whatever had been granted to it by any of his ancestors or predecessors. King Henry did not live to see the buildings of the Abbey finished, which were not perfected till nearly five years after his death, (which happened in the year 1193,) in the reign of his son, .Richard the *First*, whilst *Henry de Saliaco* was Abbot there, in whose time the tombs of *king Arthur*, and his wife, queen *Guinever*, were found.

King Richard the First having been taken prisoner in Germany, on his return from the Holy Land, Henry the Sixth, then the western emperor, enjoined Leopold, duke of Austria, who had taken the king prisoner, that one of the conditions of his release should be, to make Savaricus his kinsman, who was then in England, Archdeacon of Northampton, Bishop of Bath and Wells, and to annex the Abbotship of Glastonbury to that Bishopric. Upon which, Henry de Saluco, then the Abbot of Glastonbury, was promoted to the see of Worcester, then vacant by the death of Robert Fitz-Ralph, bishop of that place, and Savaricus restored the city of Bath to the crown. Savaricus having thus succeeded Henry de Saluco in the Abbey of Glastonbury, annexed it to the see of Wells, styling himself Bishop of Glastonbury. Upon this, a great controversy ensued, and the monks elected in the year 1199 William Pica for their Abbot, which election was warmly contested, even to excommunication ; upon this, Pica repaired to Rome, to the Pope, and died there,—and Savaricus did not long survive, for he died in the year 1205.

Joseline, his successor in the see of Wells, continued his claim to the Abbey, which he kept on foot for twelve years, and then this contention was ended by the monks parting with, to the Bishopric of Wells, the manors of Winchcomb, Puckle Church, and Cranner, and the patronage of the benefices of Winchcomb, Pucklechurch, Ashbury, Christ-Malford, Buckland, and Blackford, which agreement was made at Shaftesbury, the 8th day after the feast of St. John the Evangelist, in the year 1218.

In the year 1276, on the 11th day of September, fifty-eight years after this agreement, there happened a dreadful earthquake, which threw down St. Michael's Church upon the Torr, but was afterwards rebuilt ; though it is said that this Church upon the Torr fell in king Henry the Eighth's time with the Abbey.[17]

But it is uncertain by whom and when it was rebuilt, and it is probable that the Abbey itself, was much damaged by that earthquake ; for it appears that Geoffrey Tremont, who became Abbot in the year 1363, began in his time the great hall, and made the Chapter House in the middle. Walter de Tanton, his successor, made the front of the choir.

Walter Monington, who was the next Abbot but two, made the vault of the choir, and the presbytery, which he also enlarged.

John Chinnock, who succeeded Monington, perfected the great hall and chapter house, which Tremont had begun, and new-built the cloister, dormitory, and frater; all which buildings could scarcely have so run to ruin in less than 190 years, had they not have been shattered by the earthquake.

King Henry the Eighth having cast off the Pope's authority, and declared himself supreme head of the Church of England, by the advice of Cromwell, (his vicar-general of all spiritualities under himself,) either by threats, violence, or tyranny, or else by presents, promises, and persuasions, seized upon all the monasteries of the kingdom, of which a full account is given in several ancient books of authority.[18]

Richard Whiting, Abbot of this Monastery, had sufficient courage to maintain his conscience, and run to the last extremity; and it appears neither bribery, nor terror, nor any other dishonourable motives, could prevail upon him to surrender his Abbey,—for which he suffered death, (p. 13).

He was executed on the 14th of November,[19] 1539 ; and shortly after this the monks were turned out of the Monastery into the wide world to seek their fortunes ; and this rich and goodly Abbey, surpassing all other Abbeyes in England (except Westminster) in value and antiquity, having been the burial-place of kings, nobles, and other illustrious persons, was by sacrilegious hands demolished—insomuch that little remains but the ruins. Nothing of the venerable pile appears from the time it was pulled down to Edward the Sixth's days; and so it is probable it laid waste and desolate nearly a dozen years.

The Abbey was granted by king Edward, on the 4th of June, in the fourth year of his reign, 1550, to Edward Seymour, duke of Somerset; but he enjoyed it only one year, seven months, and twenty days, being beheaded on Tower hill, on the 24th day of January, 1551[20]

Queen Mary, restoring several religious orders to their ancient mansions, gave the monks of Glastonbury some hopes of raising their Abbey again. And it appears, that by her Majesty's and Cardinal Pole's encouragement, John Fecknam, Abbot of Westminster, having procured a warrant from the lord treasurer, began to build and repair at Glastonbury to a considerable expense. The project, however, was stopped; but whether the shortness of the Queen's reign, or the impracticability of the attempt, made it miscarry, does not appear.[21]

The following is a descriptive account of the Ruins of the Abbey, and of the Abbey of Glastonbury[22]:—

The Inclosure of the Abbey was of a triangular figure, shut up with strong high stone walls, it contained about sixty acres in circuit, and it stood upon a little sort of a rise at the foot of the Torr, by which it was bounded on the east ; on the south it was bounded by a marshy ground called Altar Moor, and on the west and north by the town of Glastonbury, the walls of the Abbey making one side of the walls of the town.

The great Entrance into the Abbey was on the west, and led to the Chapel of St. Joseph and the great Church. On the north, and inclining to the west, stood this Church and Chapel ; on the south side of the Church stood the cloister ; and on the north side of the cloister, the hall or great refectory ; south of the great refectory stood the Abbot's apartment; and west of the Abbot's apartment the kitchen. Where the sacristy and treasury, the chapter house, fraterie, and infirmary, the guest-house, library, and scriptorium, the common room, eleemosynarium, and wardrobe, the lavatory, the king's lodgings, the apartment for secular priests and clerks of our Lady, the boys' apartment, and their school—stood—was not exactly known, there being no sign or mark of those buildings remaining, the stones and rubbish being taken away for the benefit of a tenant.

The figure of the Church, as appeared by the remains, was built in the form of a cross. The length of the lower part of it was sixty-two paces to the intersection, the head of the cross was sixteen paces long and twenty-eight paces broad, the choir was fifty paces long, and the breadth of the Church thirty paces. The length of the Church, with St. Joseph's Chapel,

extended 200 paces, or 580 feet, which was a greater length than any Cathedral in England,[23] excepting St. Paul's ; and it was well stored with chapels and altars, though the names of them, except five, are not known. The high altar, St. Joseph's Chapel, and the Chapel in the Holy Church-yard, are said to have been built in honour of St. Michael, St. Joseph of Arimathea, and the saints in general that rested there.

The five Chapels,—first, that of St. Edgar, which stood just behind the choir, which was built shortly before the dissolution of the Abbey, having been begun by Abbot Breere, and finished by Abbot Whiting. In the north alley of the choir stood St. Mary's Chapel; on the south side, St. Andrew's; on the north side of the nave stood the Chapel of our Lady of Loretto; and on the south end of the nave stood the Chapel of the Holy Sepulchre.

This Church was no less famous for approved and authentic relics than it was for its stately and magnificent fabric ; for, besides the bodies of the Saints buried in and about the Church, in the Holy Church Yard, and Chapel belonging to it, there was a number of other noted relics, some of which related to the Old and New Testament. Amongst those which related to the Old Testament, there was a piece of Rachel's sepulchre ; some part or piece of Moses's altar, whereon he poured the oil ; a part of Moses's rod, whereby he led the Children of Israel out of Egypt ; manna, &c. Amongst those things which related to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and the New Testament, there were two small pieces of his cradle; some of the gold which the wise men offered when they came to adore him; some pieces of the bread of those five loaves with which Jesus fed 5000 men ; some of our Lord's hair ; one thorn of the crown of thorns; some pieces of his cross and sepulchre. There were some things that related to the blessed Virgin; as some of her milk, some of her hair, one thread of her garment, &c. There was a bone of St. John the Baptist's fore-finger; a small bone of his head ; a large bone of St. Peter the Apostle, and two of his teeth, &c. ; a tooth of St. Paul, and some of his bones ; and besides these, a multitude of relics of other apostles, martyrs, confessors. and virgins.

In the Monasticon there is an inventory of eight chapters of these relics, which were procured and presented to this Abbey chiefly by these three kings, Ethelstan, Edmund, senior, and St. Edgar; by these three dukes, Elnoth, Alphar and .Ethelstan; by Earl Elston; Poppa, Archbishop of Treves ; Brithwold, Bishop of Winchester; Britwyne, the Bishop of Wells; Seaffric, Bishop of Chichester; Henry Blois, Bishop of Winchester; and by Tictan, Abbot, and Eustachius, prior, of Glastonbury; and by a certain noble matron named Ælswitha; all of whom were great benefactors to this monastery.[24]

The Abbey was well furnished with ancient and curious monuments, that is to say, six kings and a queen, five dukes, four Bishops, sixteen Abbots, with the three following who were buried in the chapter house, viz., Robert, first prior of Winchester,[25] and Abbot of Glastonbury, William Vigor,[26] and John Chimock,[27] and six other persons of note. And besides king Arthur and his queen Guinever, there were buried here Cod the second, father of St. Helen, and grandfather to Constantine the Great, Kentwyn, king of the West Saxons, king Edmund the 1st, St. Elgar, and king Edmund Ironside. The Dukes who were buried here, were Alphar Athelstan, Elwyn, and Humphrey Stafford, Duke of Devonshire. The four Bishops were, Kedda, who was the third Bishop of the see of Winchester; Brithwold, who was the eighth bishop of Wilton; Brithwyne, who was the twelfth Bishop of Wells; and Seffride, who, from being the thirty-sixth Abbot of Glastonbury, was made the twenty-ninth Bishop of Chichester. The other thirteen Abbots which were interred in the Church, were Michael de Ambresbury, Robert Pedderton, John de Tanton[28] John de Kantia,[29] Geoffrey Tremont,[30] Walter Taunton,[31] alias Hec, Adam Sudbury,[32] John Braynton, Walter Monington or de Moynton,[33] Nicholas Frome,[34] Walter More,[35] John Selwood[36] or Selwede, and Richard Breere.[37] The six persons of note were Hugh. Monington, S.T.D., brother to Abbot Monington; Abbot Sadbury's father and mother; John Bickonell, William Semar, and Thomas Stowell, knights.

St. Patrick, who is said to have founded this abbey in the year 425, is reported to have been the first abbot—and to have lived here as an hermit thirty-nine years—and to have converted the Irish in the year 433: he was the first bishop of Armagh[38]

In the Church, there was a curious clock on the north side, made by Peter Lightfoot, a monk of the Abbey, and six goodly windows on the east side of it; and there were seven great bells in the tower, the gift of Adam Sudbury, whilst he was Abbot.

The Sacristy or vestry joined the Church, though it is not known on which side ; it was a large room, in which were kept the chalices which were in daily use, and all the sacred vestments. It was there the priests and their assistants vested,—and so was called the sacristy, from the keeping there the Sacraria. It was full of cupboards and drawers, and other like conveniences, for the keeping and locking up the holy utensils and church stuff. There were also in this place conveniences for keeping wine, bread, candles, incense, &c., and a cistern and towels for the priests to wash before they went to the altar.

The Church Treasury stood within or near the sacristy, in which were kept all the sacred relics which were not daily exposed or placed in or on the several altars, all the jewels and church plate which were not daily in use, the niches, croziers, crusospectorales, and all the pontificalia and richest ornaments belonging to the Church. The relics were for the most part set in silver or crystal, and decently placed on shelves, as were also the plate candlesticks ; and the most valuable church stuff was kept in presses and wardrobes, which were made either of iron or very strong wainscot. Before the relics there was either a rail or a bench, for people to kneel against and say their prayers ; and here generally the priests said their preparation before they went to mass, and their prayers and thanksgivings after mass. In this room, or in the sacristy, stood a confessional, for the benefit of those who desired to go to confession before they went to the altar. The care of the Church, and the custody of the sacristy and the church treasury were committed to the Sacrista or Sacristan, who was one of the Obedientarii.

The Cloister was a square place, with walks or alleys round it, supported with piers or pillars, between which were windows; and within the square there was a flower garden. The chief use of it was for the monks to make their processions, and to bury such of the religious as were not the chief superiors, for they were buried in the Church or in the chapter house. In the



cloister there were doors to the chapter house, refectory, fraternity, &c., and to the several staircases. The dimensions of the cloister are not exactly known, there not being any marks of it remaining, nor any scale to measure the buildings by.

The Chapter House stood in one of the alleys of the cloister, which was a large place where the monks met for the acknowledgment and correction of their faults, spiritual conferences, and the determination of those spiritual and temporal concerns which required the assent of the whole body. At the upper end there was an elbow chair for the Abbot ; and about it, joining the wall, benches for the religious. In the chapter house Abbot Chinnock was buried, several of the priors, and some of the Obedientarii. The Great Hall, or refectory, was a room in which all the professed monks ate daily together, where there were seven long tables near them, joining to the wall, there were benches for the monks. The table at the upper end was for the Abbot, when he dined with his community, the priors, and the other heads of the house. The two next tables were for such as were in orders, but not priests, and such as designed to enter into holy orders. One of the two lower tables, that is to say, the lower table on the right-hand side of the Abbot, was for such as were to take orders, that the other two middle tables could not hold. And the lower table on the left of the Abbot was for the lay brothers.

In some convenient place in the refectory there was a pulpit and desk, where one of the religious, at the election and appointment of the Abbot, or other presiding superior, daily read some part of the Old and New Testament at dinner and supper time. It seems that this pulpit and desk stood on the south side of the cloister[39] Some part of the western wall was standing in September, 1712.

Belonging to the refectory there were three offices, that is to say, a little lavatory, a buttery, and the cellar. The little lavatory was the place where the monks washed their hands before meals, in which there was a cistern of water, ambrys, and presses of thorough carved work, to give air to the towels which were kept there. The buttery or pantry was a place wherein were kept the table linen, salt cellars, and mazers, that is, the drinking cups, which it is probable were of silver; they held about a pint, and each

monk had his mazer placed before him in the refectory, clean washed, and filled either with beer, wine, or ale : these and the like necessaries were kept in cupboards, called in those days ambrys, as mentioned above. The cellar was the place where the wine, beer, and ale, that was to be consumed in the community, were constantly kept. The charge of the great hall, and these three offices, was committed to the *Cellarius*, who was also one of the *Obedientarii*.

It is uncertain in which of all the alleys of the cloister the Fratory[40] stood, but it is certain that it stood in one of them, and it was an apartment for the novices. In it there were several offices, separate and distinct from the main and principal offices of the abbey, amongst others, a refectory, common room, lavatory, and dormitory ; these were the principal offices and apartments in the cloister:—this Fratory was governed by one of the priors, who was also master of the novices; and these were the principal officers and apartments of the cloister. The gallery was one pair of stairs high and directly over the cloister; in it were the library, the lavatory, the wardrobe, the common house, and the common treasury.

The Library was the place where the books of the abbey were kept; it was full of choice and valuable books, many of them the sacred remains of antiquity, and among them a broken piece of history, written by Melchius, an Avalonian, who wrote about the year 560[41]. To this library there belonged a Scriptorium, which joined the library, where there were several monks constantly employed in composing and transcribing books for the use of the library. Though they wrote missals, breviaries, antiphonalia, and other books used in divine service, and the ledger books; yet in general they were employed upon other works—that is to say, the fathers, classics, histories, &c. The monks in general took great care to increase the number of good books.[42]

(It is probable there belonged to the library a cabinet of coins, medals, precious stones, and other valuable curiosities.)

The Lavatory was a place where the monks washed their hands and faces, for which purpose in this room there was a great cistern or conduit, with several cocks, which was always well supplied with water by the Camer-

arius, as he saw occasion, who also provided them with towels, which were kept in the ambrys or presses, and next to the lavatory was the shaving room.

The Wardrobe was the place where the monks' clothing and bedding was kept ; and in this office was the Tailory, where tailors were constantly employed in making and mending of habits. This apartment and lavatory were also under the care of the Camerarius.

The Common House, or rather the common room, was a place where a fire was kept all the winter, for the monks to come and warm themselves at, no other fire being allowed them, except the masters and officers of the house, who had their several fires.

The Common Treasury was the place where the ready money, the charters, registers, ledger books, evidences, and accounts of the Abbey, were kept in strong chests and presses of iron; and where neighbouring gentlemen, if they pleased, by the Abbot's favour deposited their deeds and writings for better security. This place was all built of stone, as a security against force, there not being so much as a peg of wood; and the whole was carefully plastered up in every chink and corner, to prevent rats and mice getting in.[43] The care of the treasury was committed to the treasurer, who had the assistance of another monk called the undertreasurer. The last who held these offices were John Thorne and Boger James, the two monks who were executed with Whiting, for denying the supremacy of king Henry the Eighth, (p. 18).

Up another staircase was the Dortoir or Dormitory, where the monks lodged and had their chambers, which was over the cloister and gallery, and had alleys all round. In this dormitory every monk had his chamber to himself, which was close wainscotted, but small, by reason of the partition between each chamber,—but no chimney. In each chamber there was a narrow bedstead, only big enough to hold one person, upon which there was a straw bed, a flock mattress, a coarse blanket, a rug, and a bolster of straw or flock. By the bed-side there was a Pries Dieu, or desk to kneel at, with a crucifix on it, and another desk or table, with shelves and drawers for books and paper, and a chair.

At each end of the dortoir alleys, and also in the middle of each dortoir, there were cressets or lanterns, wrought in stone, with lamps, to give light to the monks, when they rose in the night to their matins, or on other necessary occasions. There were a hundred religious more or less, in the house at the time of its suppression,[44] from which it may be presumed there were two dormitories containing cells sufficient for so numerous a community. This dortoir or dormitory was under the care of the Camerarius.

The Infirmary was an apartment for the sick, and therefore as soon as any of the religious sickened they were conveyed there, where they had a fire and other conveniences. There belonged to this apartment a chapel,—several chambers with furniture fit for sick persons, a separate common room, and a separate kitchen,—the dead man's chamber, which was the place to which the dead were carried, where the corpse lay till it was washed, cleansed, and clothed in the habit that it might be conveyed to the Church, to be exposed and interred. This apartment was under the care of the infirmarius, who had a cook, and other handy servants under him, to assist in the due execution of his office.

Some part of the Abbot's apartment was standing in the year 1712 ; but a short time afterwards it was taken down and the best of the materials were used in building a little neat house, on the south-west side of the enclosure. It stood south of the great hall, and the main of the building ran north and south, the front of it was towards the west, and it was built almost in the form of the great Roman capital (E), only at the north and south end it jutted out some yards. It was only three stories high, and had ten stone windows on each floor in the front. The ascent to this apartment was by half-a-dozen or more large handsome stone steps, which led to several stately rooms, which were for the most part wainscotted with oak, the ceilings as well as the sides of the rooms: in divers panels of the wainscot, particularly in the ceilings, and over the chimney places, there were the arms of England neatly carved, quarterly France and England, and the arms of the Abbey.[45] In the first quarter, our blessed Lady, with our Saviour in her right arm, and a sceptre in her left, all Or, being the coat armour that was borne by the famous king Arthur, who, it is thought, honoured this Abbey so far as to bestow this coat upon them. Up one pair

of stairs, at the south-eastern end of this building, was the Abbot's bedchamber, which was about eighteen feet in length, and fourteen in breadth, in which there was an old bedstead, without tester or posts, boarded at the bottom, and a shelving board at the head. According to the Tradition of the place, this bedstead was the same that Abbot Whiting laid on, and it was considered to be a great curiosity. This apartment lay neglected for many years, no one caring to occupy it, it having been said that no one who had dwelt therein ever thrived, and an enclosure there, had never continued in one family more than thirty years together since the dissolution of the Abbey : to this apartment there was a garden, and two stables, the one for the Abbot's saddle nags and geldings, and the other for mules and horses, for his horse litter.

The King's Lodgings. That there was such an apartment, there is no doubt ; but whether it was part of the guest-house, or a distinct building, is uncertain ; but it appears that King Edward I. and his consort Queen Eleanor with their retinues, came to the abbey in April, 1278, and were conveniently lodged there during their stay, and were magnificently entertained at the expense of the abbey.[46]

The Guest House was an apartment for the entertainment of strangers and reception of travellers, where all persons, from the prince to the peasant, were entertained according to their rank ; and none were brow-beaten, or commanded to depart, if they were orderly and of good behaviour.[47] There were in this apartment a noble hall, several lodging rooms, clean and well furnished, a cellar well stored with wine and beer, a stable well furnished with hay and provender, and all the conveniences that might be met with at an inn, or in a nobleman's or gentleman's house; and all this was gratis. This apartment was committed to the Hospitalarius, who had under him a butler, grooms, and other proper persons, to help him in the execution of his office.

The Eleemosynarium, or almonry, was a place where the alms of the Abbey were distributed; here, not only the poor of Glastonbury, but all the poor of the neighbourhood found relief. These alms were always distributed by a grave monk, called Eleemosynarius or almoner, whose business it likewise was to enquire after the sick, feeble, ancient and

disabled persons in the neighbourhood, and such as were ashamed to beg, whom he bountifully relieved, as well as to those who came to the almonry. This almoner was also overseer of the Hospital Pilgrims ; and he had also an inspection of the hospital for poor women, which was founded by Abbot Breere, (p. 11) which stood in the town of Glastonbury, and not in the enclosure of the Abbey.

The Apartment of the Clerks of our Lady was a little college of secular priests, endowed with rents and allowances to say mass daily, for the intention of the founder, at some chapel or altar in the Church, particularly at the Chapel of our Lady : this was also built by Abbot Breere. These secular priests lived under the same discipline, and were subject to the Abbot, who provided them with all necessary conveniences.

The Boys' Apartment was a sort of seminary for youth to be taught their Christian doctrine, music, and grammar, by which means they became fit for the university, their number is uncertain, they served the Church as choristers, and were found with all necessaries gratis : there belonged to this apartment a school, dormitory, hall, &c. The care of these boys, and their apartment, was committed to one of the monks, who was their master, and who had a cell in their dormitory, where he constantly laid, to keep them in good order.

The Kitchen. This was the only entire building that remains ; it is all built of stone, without so much as a single peg of wood about it. The outside is a four-square, and the inside is octangular. There were in it four fire-hearths, each hearth is about sixteen feet long, and they face each other, without any chimney,[48] having no tunnels to let out the smoke, and it does not appear how the smoke from these hearths was conveyed away. The inside of this kitchen was twenty feet high to the roof, which runs up in a figure of eight triangles, equal and equilateral. The top is crowned with a sort of a double lantern, of curious design, not unlike those in the colleges of Oxford, or the Inns of Court, to which lantern, by some means or other, it is probable the smoke of the four hearths was conveyed. On the east and south there were two great doors, and in the squares opposite to these doors, two large windows; but there remains no

signs of any dresser or pavement. This kitchen, it is said, was built by Abbot Whiting.

Every monk of the house served a week in the kitchen as it came to his turn, unless he was in a post wherein he could be more serviceable, or was prevented by sickness. He was called Dispenser, and his business was to appoint what diet was to be dressed, to carve the portions for the community, and to book down the papers and bills that related to his office. He had under him the Coquus and Soccoquus, and they under them porters to bring in fuel, garden stuff, &c., and turnspit boys. He was also obliged at the end of the week to see the towels, dresser-cloths, and the rest- of the kitchen vessels, clean scoured, that he might deliver them up in that order to the Cellararius, who re-delivered them the next morning to the next dispenser that succeeded. This is all that has been collected respecting the inclosure, the remainder of the ground which was not built upon was taken up in yards, courts, and gardens.

From what has been said of the history of this Abbey, some idea may be formed of what the Monastery was before its suppression. This once splendid kitchen is at this time used as a barn.

## Notes

1. Sanctus Greal, quoted by some authors.
2. Broughton's Antiquities
3. Samme's Antiquities of Ancient Britain.
4. According to Malmesbury.
5. See Dugdale & Dodsworth's Monasticon, and Antiquities of Glastonbury ; see also Belden, who quotes William of Malmesbury for it, who died in the year 1142.
6. Willis.

7. See Broughton's Antiquities of Glastonbury.
8. Stillingfleet, Collier, &c.
9. Capgrave.
10. Baker and Speed. According to Bohan.
11. Mentioned by Cressy in his Church History.
12. Herlewinus was the 35th Abbot, and governed the Abbey for nineteen years. and died in 1120.
13. Turatine succeeded in the year 1083, and continued Abbot also for nineteen years, and expended vast sums on the Monastery.
14. According to Stow.
15. According to Leland and others.
16. According to Willis.
17. See the Monasticon.
18. Dr. Saunderson's Schisms, Dugdale's Warwickshire, Dr. Keyling's Reformation, Tanner Notitia Monasticon, Collier's Ecclesiastical History, vol. ii,—and many others.
19. According to Dr. Saunders; but, according to Collington, on the 22nd of the same month.
20. See Fuller's History of Abbeys.
21. Collier



22. The Editors of the Monasticon have given in the first vol. two views, one of which contains a prospect of the town, and a view of the remaining ruins of the Abbey; and the other the platform, with letters of reference to the enclosure, with its venerable remains.
23. According to Willis.
24. See the Monasticon.
25. He presided over the Abbey of Glastonbury seven years, and died on the 4th of May, 1178.
26. Monk of Glastonbury.
27. He was Abbot fifty years, and died in 1420.
28. Monk of Glastonbury. He died at Domerbam, which was a considerable manor belonging to this Abbey, on Michaelmas night, 1290.
29. He died on the 11th of December, 1303, and was buried on the north side of the altar, in a fine new tomb, which he built for himself.
30. He died in 1322.
31. He succeeded Tremont; but he died before confirmation.
32. Called by Leland, Sudbury, and Solury, who gave the seven great bells belonging to the Church, and died in 1335.
33. He died in 1374, 49 Edw. III.
34. He died in 1455.
35. He died in the same year.

36. He died in 1493, after whose death one Thomas Wasyn was elected Abbot, but whose election was made void Nov. 12, 1492, by Richard Fox, the then Bishop of Bath and Wells.

37. He died on the 29th of January, 1524.

38. Sir James Ware's Antiquities of Ireland:—but some authors differ as to St. Patrick's coming to Glastonbury. The editors of the Monasticon (p. 11) say it was in the year 533 or the beginning of the year 534. Cressy says he retired here in the year 439. See p. 6 ante.

39. See a print of this in the Monasticon.

40. Built by John Chinnock, about 140 years before the dissolution of Monasteries, and previous to the year 1420.

41. See Leland, who saw the Abbey at the time Whiting was Abbot.

42. Dr. Tanner.

43. The Treasury of Loycock, which is near the Abbey of Glastonbury, was thus carefully built.

44. According to Dr. Saunders and Father Reigner.

45. Vert, a cross, bottone argent.

46. According to Leland.

47. According to the 53rd chapter of the Rules for the regulation of the Abbey.

48. So called by Dr. Plott, in his Letter to Bishop Fell, printed at the end of Leland's Itinerary, vol. II.

## **A short Topographical and Historical Account of the Town of Glastonbury**

The Ancient Borough Town of Glastonbury is situated almost in the middle of the county of Somersetshire, about nineteen miles south from Bristol, fifteen south-west from Bath, about five miles, veering a little to the west, from Wells, twelve miles (almost east) of Bridgewater, and about seven miles (inclining a little to the west) of Ilchester, lying in a fenny marshy country, a town not easy to be got to in early days, either on foot or on horseback.[1] Since then it has become a great thoroughfare, standing in the great road between Bristol and Exeter, from the latter of which places it is distant forty-one computed miles, towards the north-east.

This town, which is said to have been built in the days of Ina, king of the West Saxons, about 708, (page 1.) It flourished considerably till the arrival of the Danes in King Alfred's time, about the year 873, when they laid it desolate.[2] But this is contradicted by another author,[3] who says " those infidels in their invasion and persecution attempted to destroy it, but were prevented by two of their men being stricken with blindness." But be that as it may, it certainly was repaired by St. Dunstan, and by the liberality of king Edmund, the ninth Saxon king, it was entirely re-edified, about the year 944, who made the town entirely subject to and dependent upon the abbey, but exempted it from all imposition and oppressions, and endowed it with the rights, liberties, and privileges, before mentioned in the charter of king Edgar,[4] noticed in the account of the Abbey (in page 39.)

In the year 970, twenty-six years after, King Edmund granted the above charter to St. Dunstan and his monks; Glastonbury then became a small city, with a strong wall of a mile about, replenished with stately buildings, amongst which was the hospital for pilgrims.

The town suffered very considerably when the Abbey was destroyed by fire in the year 1171, or as others say, 1184; but it suffered more from the earthquake, which threw down St. Michael's Church on the *Torr*, in the year 1270. The town was afterwards re-edified, and consisted chiefly of

two streets, the principal one running east and west to the market cross, and extended six furlongs in length, leading to *Bridgewater*; the other street running from the west end of the market cross south and almost north, on the road to *Exeter*, about two furlongs in length.

There were two parish Churches in Glastonbury; the one dedicated to St. John the Baptist, (p. 24) on the north side of the principal street, towards the middle of it; and the other dedicated to St. Bennet, otherwise called St. Cuthbert, in the other street[5]

St. John the Baptist's is a fair Church, and the east part of it was in Leland's time elegant and aisled:[6] the body of the Church had arches on each side. There were three monuments standing here in Leland's days ; the first, to one Richard Atwell, who was a considerable benefactor to the town of Glastonbury, who died about the year 1472, and was buried on the north side of the choir ; the second of Johanna his wife, both being buried under very handsome marble stones ; and the third was that of one Camell, a gentleman who lies buried in the south part of the transept. There is a quadrate tower for bells, which is very high and fair.

There is nothing very remarkable of St. Bennet's Church, but it appears from some very ancient figures on the porch, which is on the north side, that it was built in the year of Christ, 1133. The two figures of (1) resemble two (S.S.), and the two figures of (3) resemble a great (B), from which some think these characters stand for Sanctus Benedictus.

Serjeant Gould, who was a judge in the reign of the Prince of Orange, lies buried in the north isle. The Church is little and low, and is esteemed only for its antiquity.

The Market Rouse was a neat pile of building, built with stone from the Abbey; but the town lost in a great measure their market since its building, which was imputed to its having been built with materials that once belonged to the Church.

In Leland's time their market day was weekly, on Wednesday, but it was afterwards changed to Tuesday.[7] They have two annual fairs, the one

on the 8th of September, and the other on Michaelmas-day, the chief commodities sold there being horses and fat cattle.

Breere's Hospital was a small ancient building of stone, on the north side of the principal street, entering Glastonbury from Wells, built by Abbot Breere on the north side of the Abbey, as an almshouse for seven or ten poor women, probably soon after his return from his embassy to Rome in the year 1503 or 1504 (p. 11).[8]

The Pilgrim's Hospital was another very ancient building in the same street, on the same side of the way, a little beyond St. John the Baptist's Church, where all persons that resorted to Glastonbury were entertained gratis, on the score of devotion. It was built with free-stone, and it was afterwards an inn, known by the sign of the White Horse, and called by the inhabitants the Abbot's Inn. From many circumstances this building has been considered to have been part of the Pilgrim's Hospital, which was under the direction of the Eleemosynarium of the Abbey, who had under him a master, chamberlain, cooks, and other officers. Its endowment consisted of distinct and separate lands, and it was one of the 110 hospitals which were suppressed at the close of the reign of Henry the Eighth, or the beginning of the reign of Edward the Sixth.

There is a little neat house on the south of the inclosure of the Abbey, built in the year 1713, or the year following, with the materials of the Abbot's apartments. In the front of it there was the large coat of arms of the Abbey, carved out on large stones.

The Torr, which has been already mentioned, might be seen many miles round the country; some remains of the tower are still standing.

In the year 1684, a story was extant, that " a mason, wanting a free-stone, came to the renter of the Abbey and gave sixpence for it: the saw standing somewhere fit for his turn, the mason sawed it, and out came several pieces of gold, of three pounds ten shillings value a-piece," of ancient coin.[9] This story is related by others, but with this difference, that the number of the pieces of gold was about sixty.[10] This stone probably

belonged to some chimney piece, and the gold was supposed to have been hidden in it when the dissolution was near.

The Holy Thorn of Glastonbury,[11] which has been already mentioned, (p. 20) grew on the south ridge of Weary-all-Hill, afterwards called Werrall Park, a ground formerly belonging to a gentleman of the name of *William Strode*. This thorn had two trunks or bodies till the reign of Queen Elizabeth, in whose days a story prevailed, that a saint-like puritan, taking offence at it, cut down the largest of the two trunks, and would have cut down the other, had he not been miraculously punished by cutting his leg, and one of the chips flying up to his head put out one of his eyes. Though the trunk cut off was separated quite from the root, excepting a little of the bark which stuck to the rest of the body, and laid above the ground above thirty years, yet it still continued to flourish as the other did which was left standing ; and after this, when it was taken up and thrown into a ditch, it flourished and budded as it did before. About a year after this it was stolen ; but it was not known by whom.

The remaining trunk was the size " of the body of an ordinary man,—it was a tree of that kind and species, in all its natural respects, which is termed the white thorn ; but it was so cut and mangled round about the bark, by engraving people's names resorting thither to see it, that it was a wonder how the sap and nutriment should be diffused from the root to the boughs and the branches, which were also so maimed and broken, that it was the surprise of all how it continued to vegetate, or grow at all; yet the arms and boughs were spread and dilated in a circular manner as far or farther than other trees, freed from such impediments, of like proportion, bearing haws as fully and plentifully as others.

"The blossomes of this tree were such curiosities beyond the seas, that the Bristol merchants carried them over into foreign parts.

"It grew upon, or rather near, the top of a hill, in a pasture bare and naked of other trees, and was a shelter for cattle feeding there, by reason whereof, the pasture being great and the cattle many, round about the tree the ground was bare and beaten as any highway, floor, or any continual trodden place. Yet this trunk was likewise cut down by a military saint in

the rebellion which happened in king Charles the First's time. However, there are divers trees from it by grafting and inoculation, preserved in the town and country adjacent ; amongst other places, there is one in the garden of a currier living in the principal street, a second at the White Hart Inn, and a third in the garden of William Strode, Esq."

It has been doubted whether there ever was such a person as king Arthur, whose remains are said to have been discovered in the Church-yard of Glastonbury, (as mentioned in p. 9.) The following account of this celebrated and renowned prince may, perhaps, in some measure remove these doubts. It is certain, however, that this prince fell in a great battle between him and his nephew Mordred, which was fought at Camblan, after which he was taken to Glastonbury, where he died of the many and severe wounds which he received during the conflict. There are many incredible stories reported of king Arthur, by Geoffrey of Monmouth and others, who, from the fictions of British bards, made a medley of truth and falsehood, for beautifying their histories or delighting their readers. In this, without speaking more than truth, they might have set off king Arthur as a prince of a most magnanimous and heroic spirit; it being allowed by the most judicious and impartial historians, " that, had it not been that Almighty God had given up the Britains to destruction, no hand could have been more proper and able to rescue them than king Arthur's; and no doubt it was to his valour the security of the remnant of them, among the mountains of Wales, ought to be ascribed." [12] Uter Pendragon, Arthur's father, who was brother of Ambrosius, dying by poison in the tenth year after the coming of Cerdic, the West Saxon, his son Arthur, then a youth of only fifteen years of age, began to rule the

Britains. His mother's name was Igera, and he was born in the castle of Tintagell in Cornwall. King Uter, died in the year 506, some authors say 508, and others 516, which is said to have been the year of Arthur's coronation, [13] which ceremony was probably performed by St. Dubrius, either at Winchester or Caerlegeon, in a general assembly of the bishops and noblest Uter left Arthur engaged in a war against the Saxons; and his accession to the throne was not approved by Lotho, king of the Picts, and Gowran, king of the Scots, who had married his aunts, Anna and *Alda*, his father's sisters. *Lotho* pretended to the crown in right of his

wife, the elder sister, of which marriage was descended *Mordred*. The Saxons being informed of this, brought these princes, though Christians and uncles, into an alliance with them against king *Arthur*, who, being thus beset, marched his forces into the north, and attacking the Saxons in Northumberland he drove them to York, where he besieged them. *Colgerne* their leader, privately conveying himself out of the city, went into Germany, where he got fresh succours from *Chardick*, a king of that country, who with 700 sail came in person to the relief of the Saxons, and landed in Scotland. *Arthur* hearing of the arrival of this new supply, raised the siege of York and retired towards London, and sent for aid to his nephew *Hoel*, his sister's son, the then king of *Armonica*, (now called Brittany) who came over in person, bringing with him a powerful army. *Arthur*, being thus reinforced, marched from *Southampton* to *Lincoln*, which city *Chardick* had strongly besieged[14], where he not only raised the siege, but forced them to fly to a wood, and being surrounded, they were compelled to surrender to *Arthur's* victorious army, on condition to depart the land, and to leave behind their horse armour and other furniture.

After this, he fought twelve pitched battles with the Saxons, and overthrew them in every one, which victories popish authors say he obtained by invoking the assistance of the Virgin Mary, whose image he wore over his armour, and which also was painted upon his standard.

King Arthur made an expedition upon some unknown occasion into France; and, forgetting the unkindness he had formerly received from his uncle Lotho, he not only took Mordred, Lotho's son, into favour, but intrusted him with the government of his kingdom, and committed to his care his wife, queen Guinever. Mordred took advantage of king Arthur's absence, and violently took the queen to his embrace, and to strengthen himself, entered into a confederacy with the king of the West Saxons, to whom he yielded several provinces, which, coming to the ears of king Arthur, he returned out of Brittany, inflamed with unquenchable rage and hatred against Mordred, who was prepared to prevent his landing. Arthur having landed, a most sanguinary battle was fought between them, at Richborough, near Sandwich, in Kent,[15] in which Augusellus, king of Albania, and Walwan, two of king Arthur's relations, and noted as being two warlike thunderbolts, duo fulmina belli,[16] fell by his side. The king



having the advantage, renewed the fight, and compelled Mordred to fly to Winchester, whither he pursued him, and again put him to flight, which he directed towards Cornwall; but Arthur, not ceasing to follow, at length overtook him near the river Alaune, (by corruption called Camblan) where the town of Camelford stands, in which place the controversy was ended, but fatally to both.

Mordred, having ranged his army, in a desperate fury rushed amongst his enemies, resolving rather to die than to shew his back to them again. In this combat, which continued a whole day, after horrible bloodshed on both sides, king Arthur with the courage and fury of a lion rushed to the troop in which he knew Mordred was, and accordingly making his way with the sword, he slew Mordred outright, and dispersed his enemies ; but in the fight he himself received many mortal wounds. Upon this, he was conveyed to the Abbey of Avalon, now called Glastonbury, (where he died on the 21st of May, in the year 542,) by the charitable attentions of a noble and worthy matron, Morgains, a kinswoman ; and, as she looked after and also dressed his wounds there while he was alive, she took upon herself the chief care of his funeral after he was dead, which was managed with much privacy, and he was buried sixteen feet under ground, in order to prevent the Saxons insulting or offering any indignity to his corpse, in case they prevailed; but they never could find out where he was buried, for it was not known till upwards of 600 years after. King Henry the Second, after two successive campaigns, gained considerable advantages over the Irish, and went himself into Ireland in October, 1172, and passing through Wales, at Pembroke he thanked the Welsh for their service, and told them, that in a great measure the success was owing to their British courage and valour. The Welsh, pleased with the king's taking notice of their loyalty, entertained him according to the dignity of a king; and one of their bards, playing upon the harp, sung a ballad, while the king was at dinner, in which the place where king Arthur was buried is alluded to.[17]

Near the bones of King Arthur were found those of his Queen Guinever, who after Arthur's death retired either to the nunnery of St. Julius the Martyr in Caerlcron, or to that of Amesbury in Wiltshire, from one of

which places her corpse was conveyed with much secrecy to Glastonbury, and there privately buried in or near Arthur's grave.

When the tomb was opened some years after (A. D. 1728) the Queen's body seemed to be perfect and whole ; her hair was neatly plaited, which was of the colour of burnished gold ; but her corpse being touched with the finger by one who stood by, it fell to dust :—so it is reported by several authors of repute.[18]

After the spectators had gratified their curiosity, the abbot and his monks took all the remains, both of Arthur and Guinevere, out of their coffins, and putting them into chests made for the purpose, they first deposited them in a chapel in the church, till a monument suitable to the dignity of a King and Queen could be made for them in the presbytery of the choir, where in finishing the church, a stately monument of touchstone was erected, engraven on the outside; that which contained the body of the King was placed by itself at the head of the tomb, and that of the Queen at his feet on the east side of it, on the west side of the tomb : and where the King's bones were deposited there was the following inscription engraved:

HIC JACET ARTURUS, FLOS REGNUM, GLORIA REGNI, QUAM  
MORES PROBITUS COMMENDANT LAUDE PERENNI.

and on the east side, where the Queen's remains were placed, there was the following inscription:—

ARTURI JACET HIC CONJUX TUMULATA SECUNDA, QUOE  
MERUIT COELOS VIRTUTUM PROLE FECUNDA.

Here did the remains of this great King, and his Queen, rest eighty-five years, at which time, A.D. 1278, King Edward I. and his Queen Eleanor, came to Glastonbury, attended by many of the first men of the nation, clergy as well as nobility. Whereupon, on the 19th of April, they caused the tomb to be opened, and both the shrines to be taken out of the monument, which, when the court and its attendants had thoroughly viewed, King Edward opened the shrine in which King Arthur's bones

were laid, and Queen Eleanor the chest wherein were those of Queen Guinever, and then each of them taking the respective bones out of the chests, they exposed them on two side tables, near the high altar, till the next morning, for every one that was desirous to gratify their curiosity to see ; and early the next morning, being Wednesday before Easter, the King and Queen, with great honour and respect, wrapt up all the bones (excepting the two skulls, which were set up in the treasury) in rich shrouds and mantles, and placing them again in their separate shrines, the King put into that of Arthur's the following inscription:

" How sunt ossa nobilissimi regis Arturii, qua anno dominica incarnationis 1278, decimo tertio calend. Maii, per dominum Eadwardum regem Anglia illustrem, hic fuerunt sic collocata, præsentibus Leonora, serenissima ejusdem regis consorte, et filia domini Ferrandi regis Hispanicæ magistro Gulielmo de Middleton, tune Nor-wicensi electo, magistro Thoma de Becke, archdicano Dorsetensi, et pradicti regis thesauratio, domino Henrico de Lascey, comite Lin-colnia, domino Arnadio, comite Sabandia, et multis magnatibus Anglia."

Then the King and Queen fixing their royal signets to each chest, they caused the chest to be placed in the old mausoleum, where they remained undisturbed about 250 years, till the dissolution of the abbey in King Henry the Eight's time, " and then this noble monument,[19] among the fatal overthrow of infinite more, was altogether razed at the disposal of some then in commission, whose over hasty actions, and too forward zeal in these behalves, hath left unto us the want of many truths, and cause to wish that some of their employments had been better spent."

This perhaps will be sufficient to show that there was such a person as King Arthur: as to further information on that subject, the reader is referred to Leland[20]

Besides the holy thorn, there was a miraculous walnut-tree, which grew in the Church-yard, near St. Joseph's Chapel, (mentioned in p. 58.)[21] The stock was alive at the time Mr. Broughton wrote, who saw it with a few small branches, too young and tender to bring forth fruit; but this tree, as well as the thorn, was cut down. Dr. James Montague, bishop of Bath and Wells, in the early days of king James the First, was so wonderfully

taken with the extraordinariness of this thorn and the walnut-tree, that he thought a branch of these trees was a present worthy of the acceptance of the then queen, (Anne) consort of James the First. Fuller ridicules the holy thorn ; but he is severely reprov'd for it by *Dr. Heylin*, (a protestant writer), who says " he hath heard from persons of great worth and credit, dwelling near the place, that it hath budded and blow'd upon Christmas-day."

## Labor ipse volwptas

### Notes

1. Leland's Collectanea,
2. Ibid.
3. Mr. Broughton.
4. See the Monasticon.
5. Ibid.
6. Leland.
7. According to Ogilby.
8. Leland's Itinrarum.
9. Mr. Paschal, in a letter to John Aubrey, who wrote the Survey of North
10. Wiltshire, dated 11th of November, 1684.
11. The Editor of the New Description of England.

12. Cressy's Antiquities of Glastonbury.

13. Cressey.

14. Leland. See also Cressey's Antiquities of Glastonbury.

15. Stow's Chronicle.

16. According to Leland.

17. See Leland's Collectanea, vol. 5, and Cressy's Church History, 11th book; also, Stow, Speed, Bishop, Usher, and others, from Giraldus Cambrensis.

18. Leland, Stow, Speed, Bishop Usher, and others from Giraldus Cambrensis, who was an eye witness of the fact.

19. According to Speed.

20. See 5th vol. of Leland's Collectanea, and Cressey's Church History, 11th book.

21. Mentioned by Camden.



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*M. Burg. sculp.*

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