

**A DESCRIPTION OF THE
PRIORY OF
CHILTON-SUPER-POLDEN,
AND ITS CONTENTS**

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A Description of the Priory of Chilton-Super-Polden, and Its Contents by William Stradling

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WILLIAM STRADLING

**A DESCRIPTION OF THE
PRIORY OF
CHILTON-SUPER-POLDEN,
AND ITS CONTENTS**

A DESCRIPTION

OF

The Priory

of

Chilton=super=Holden,

AND ITS CONTENTS.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

A

MISCELLANEOUS APPENDIX,

CONTAINING SEVERAL

ANCIENT DOCUMENTS NOT BEFORE PUBLISHED.



BY WILLIAM STRADLING.

BRIDGWATER:

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AND F. MAY, TAUNTON.

1839.

TO
C. K. K. TYNTE, Esq., F. S. A.,

LORD OF THE MANOR OF

Chilton = super = Bolden,

COLONEL OF

THE WEST SOMERSET YEOMANRY CAVALRY,

RIGHT WORSHIPFUL P. G. MASTER OF

FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS

FOR THE PROVINCE OF SOMERSET,

&c. &c. &c.

"Chys lptyl Booke"

IS HUMBL Y DEDICATED,

BY HIS

FAITHFUL BROTHER, MUCH OBLIGED FRIEND,

AND OBEDIENT SERVANT,

W. STRADLING, P. P. G. R.

P. G. T. & P. M.

OF THE

Lodge of Perpetual Friendship,

BRIDGWATER.

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WHEN a man builds a lowly cottage on a high hill, at its completion he sits in his rustic porch, and points out to his beloved partner the different objects in the delightful prospect before them, as they are brought to his notice by the varying lights of the setting sun, while his little prattlers fondly climb about, or sit on his knees. When the last ray has passed o'er the fairy picture, they take possession of their neat little fireside, (the true Englishman's greatest comfort,) and after a plain but hearty meal he retires to rest, quite as proud as a Prince of his palace, and perhaps much more happy than the greatest Monarch on his down. Yet this probably passes without a single observation being made on the event. But when his neighbour ventures to erect an edifice which can be seen for many miles in almost every direction, it completely alters the case: a remark is made by every passer-by, and he is called to account in every quarter for having dared to obtrude anything so ugly, unmeaning, ill proportioned, yet still so conspicuous, on the omnipotent eye of the public. I, the pro-

ii.

prietor of Chilton Priory, have committed such a heinous offence, and not being disposed to quarrel with John Bull on so trifling a subject, will endeavour to keep him in good humour by giving a short account of the Building, the materials of which it is formed, and its contents.

Previous to the dissolution of religious houses, the Abbots of Brewton held Lands at Chedzoy, three miles from the town of Bridgwater; and tradition says there was a Chapel belonging to them in a large common field called *Slapeland*. The farmers had often complained of their ploughshares having been injured by striking against large stones: I was induced to make a search for foundations, but, to my surprise, found the remains of a Roman Villa instead of a Chapel. There was a quantity of broken pottery, scoria of iron, ashes, &c. &c. and the remains of a large Hypocaust nearly entire, and formed of large Hamhill stones. This part of the building being much deeper in the earth than the rest, had escaped the hands of the destroyer.

I determined on a further search, and at length succeeded in coming to what appeared to be a church path, sunk below the surface in the same

way as that which now leads through the yard to the parish church. At the end of it were the remains of foundations of very thick walls, and a Coin with a heavy buttress was easily traced. Some fragments of the tracery of Gothic Windows were also discovered; this I think accounts for the many loads of carved stones which from time to time have been found, walled into the farm-houses erected about the time of Henry VIII. and his immediate successors.

By the kindness of the late and present Lords of the Manor, Thomas and Henry Porter, Esquires, I have been enabled to preserve the most interesting of those relics; which first induced me to erect the Priory, as a Repository for many curiosities which would have otherwise been destroyed.