

**BRIEF NOTICES OF THE
FABRIC AND GLEBE OF
SAINT MARY ALDERMARY,
IN THE CITY OF LONDON**

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Brief Notices of the Fabric and Glebe of Saint Mary Aldermary, in the City of London by H. B. Wilson

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H. B. WILSON

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BRIEF NOTICES
OF THE
FABRIC AND GLEBE

Saint Mary Aldermary,

IN THE CITY OF LONDON.

BY

THE REV. H. B. WILSON, D.D. F.S.A.

RECTOR OF THE UNITED PARISHES OF ST. MARY ALDERMARY AND ST. THOMAS THE
APOSTLE, AND LECTURER OF THE UNITED PARISHES OF ST. ANTHOLIN AND
ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST.

LONDON:

W. PICKERING, 57, CHANCERY LANE; AND R. JENNINGS & Co.
62, CHEAPSIDE.

MDCCLL.

TO

Mr. THOMAS BOWLEY,	}	CHURCHWARDENS,	} Of St. MARY ALDERMARY;
Mr. JOHN EDWARDS,			
Mr. WILLIAM CARLILE,	}	PARISHIONERS,	
Mr. EDWARD HENMAN,			
Mr. MOSES EDWARD LEGG,			

AND

Mr. JOHN LINDOP,	}	CHURCHWARDENS,	} Of St. THOMAS THE APOSTLE;
Mr. WILLIAM BUTLER,			
Mr. WILLIAM TEW,	}	PARISHIONERS,	
Mr. ISAAC JOLLIFFE,			
Mr. THOMAS COURTNEY,			

THE COMMITTEE

APPOINTED BY

THE RESPECTIVE VESTRIES OF THE UNITED PARISHES

To Conduct the Repairs of the North Wall of the Parish Church,

These Brief Notices

ARE,

IN TESTIMONY OF

THE DISINTERESTEDNESS, IMPARTIALITY, AND ATTENTION,

WHICH THEY HAVE HITHERTO DISPLAYED

IN CARRYING INTO EFFECT THE INSTRUCTIONS OF THEIR CONSTITUENTS,

RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

BY

THE AUTHOR.

*Norfolk Street,
31 Dec. 1839.*

BRIEF NOTICES,

§c.

THE Commissioners of Sewers for the city of London, acting under the statute of 57 Geo. 3, cap. 29, commonly called 'The Metropolis Paving Act,' having recently widened Watling Street, between Queen Street and Bow Lane, by laying into the highway a plot of ground, whereon formerly stood five houses, numbered from 33 to 37, both inclusive, (see *Plate 1, No. 2,*) being a considerable portion of the glebe land on the North side of the church of St. Mary Aldermary, one of Sir Christopher Wren's most beautiful erections, it may not be uninteresting, at this conjuncture, when the attention of the neighbourhood, and of the city in general, is drawn to the improvement which has taken place, to bring together, from various printed authorities, the records of the parish, and documents in the Rector's possession, a few brief notices of the Fabric and Glebe: should a second edition of these pages be called for, it may possibly be in his power to render them, by a further Selection from his MS. Collections, more worthy the acceptance of his Antiquarian Friends, but it seemed desirable to send them to the press without loss of time, though somewhat too hastily, before the North Wall (see *Plate 1, No. 1,*) is hidden from observation by the new facing. (See *Plate 2.*)

This Church is known by the adjunct *Aldermary*, or *Oldermary*, to be the oldest church in London called by the name of St. Mary, and therefore originally of a very ancient foundation, prior even to St. Mary le Bow, which was a church in the days of William the Conqueror*. (*Hatton's New View of London*, 8vo. Lond. 1708, p. 361.)

* "The fact that this latter church was formerly called *New Mary Church* is confirmatory of the statement."—*Godwin and Britton's Churches of London*, 8vo. Lond. 1839, p. 3.

At the same time, it would be uncandid to suppress the following MS. note,

Richard Chawcer, vintner, gave to this Church his tenement and tavern with the appurtenances, in the Royal Street, the corner of Kerion Lane, and was there buried in 1348*. (*Strype's Stow*, fol. Lond. 1720, B. iii. p. 18.)

Roger de Balton, by will, in the 35th year of Edward the Third, (1361,) gave a house, in Cordwainer's Street, in the parish of Aldermary, for the repairs and upholding of this Church and the Ornaments within it, according to the disposition of the Pariahioners and Rector of the same Church †.

which occurs in one of the copies of Hatton's View, in the British Museum:—

' It is dedicated to the Companion of Mary Magdalene, whom St. Matthew calls, *The other Mary*. She was mother of James and Joses, ch. xxvii. vers. 53 and 61, *id est*, *Sancta Maria altera Maria*.' But the conjecture appears to be very far-fetched; and among the many deeds written in the Latin language, which have at different times come under the Rector's notice, he has not met with one that affords it any support.

* The Rector has among his papers some illustrations bearing on the history of this benefactor and his gift, but he cannot immediately lay his hand on them.

† De Balton's will is enrolled in the Court of Hustings, Ro. No. 32, 35th Edw. 3. An imperfect abstract of it is given in a roll preserved in the Exchequer, containing a record of lands, &c., given by deeds or left by wills, in mortmain, for religious uses in the City of London, from 7th Edw. 1. to 38th Edw. 3.

This property having, as was alleged, become blended with some belonging to the Drapers' Company, they brought an action of ejectment against the Rector and Churchwardens of the pariah, and succeeded in recovering the portion in dispute. It was the Rector's impression at the time, that the action was not well defended; and it was, at a Vestry held on the 16th of March, 1819, for the purpose of receiving a report of the proceedings, that the occurrence took place stated in Barnewall and Alderson's Reports, vol. iii. p. 241, and still more circumstantially related in Dr. Jos. Phillimore's Reports of Cases in the Ecclesiastical Courts, (vol. iii. p. 67,) which led to the decision in the Court of Peculiars respecting the right of Rectors to preside at Vestries, so frequently cited as the case of *Wilson v. M'Math*. The suit was instituted in the Court of Peculiars of the Deanery of the Arches, because the parish of St. Mary Aldermary is one of the peculiars belonging to the Archbishop of Canterbury.

The house which is understood in the parish to have been derived from this devise, is a house marked No. 13 in Bow Lane, which street appears to have

The Fabric immediately before the present was founded by Sir Henry Keeble, Grocer, Mayor in the year 1510. He died in 1518, and was buried here in a vault on the North side of the Quire, having bequeathed £1000 to finish the Church with a steeple, which however was not accomplished for upwards of a century. This noble benefactor, says Stow, seemed to have no monument set over his body for divers years, till the year 1534 or 1535, when William Blount Lord Mountjoy, who married Alice, the said Keeble's daughter, by his last will, dated Oct. 1534, ordered a stone to be laid over him, upon this consideration, that there was no stone upon him, and for that he had been a special benefactor to the building of Aldermay Church, to the value of £2000 and above, which was a great sum of money in those days. And afterwards, as the same historian informs us, his bones were unkindly cast out, and his monument pulled down, to make room for those of Sir William Laxton, grocer, Mayor, who dying in 1556, was buried in the vault prepared by Keeble for himself. But though he was not permitted a resting place for his bones in the building he had so munificently contributed to erect,

formerly borne the name of Cordwainer's Street. This house is now [1820] held by James Brown, under a lease for twenty-one years from Lady Day, 1820, at £45 per annum. The rents of this house were, for a considerable number of years, applied in aid of the poor rates. But, at a Vestry held on the 26th April, 1820, the following Resolutions were made: Resolved, unanimously—That in the lease covenanted to be granted to Mr. Brown, of the house, No. 13, Bow Lane, the rent shall be reserved to be paid to the lessors, to be by them appropriated to the uses and upon the trusts, and for the intents and purposes mentioned and set forth in the will of Roger de Balton, the original donor, and the decree of the Barons of the Court of Exchequer in the cause for the recovery of the property to the Parish in the reign of Queen Elizabeth.—Resolved, that the foregoing resolution be communicated by the Rector, Churchwardens, and Vestry Clerk, to the Commissioners acting under the Acts of the 58th and 59th of the late King, cap. 91 and 91; accompanied with a request, that they will condescend to point out and interpret the proper construction of the will of the donor, and the particular application to which the bequest was intended. And in consequence of these resolutions, which were communicated to the Commissioners, it is expected there will be a separate account of this charity opened, and its produce applied to the particular purposes intended by the donor, as nearly as they can be accomplished.' *Further Report of the Commissioners for inquiring concerning Charities*, No. vi. pp. 202, 203.

his epitaph long remained on the outside of the folding tables*, which hung in the upper end of the chancel:

Here is fixt the Epitaph of
 St. Henry Kebyl, Knight,
 Who was sometime of London Maior,
 a famous worthy wight,
 Which did this Aldermary Church
 erect and set upright,
 Though Death prevail with mortal Wights,
 and hasten every day,
 Yet Virtue overlives the Grave,
 her Fame doth not decay.
 As Memories doe shew reviv'd,
 of one that was alive,
 Who being dead, of virtuous fame
 none should seek to deprive,
 Which so in Life deserv'd renowne,
 for facts of his to see,
 That may encourage other now,
 of like good mind to be.
 Sir Henry Keble, Knight, Lord Maior
 of London here he sate,
 Of Grocers worthy Company,
 the chiefest in his State,
 Which in this City grew to Wealth,
 and unto Worship came,
 When Henry reign'd who was the seventh
 of that redoubted name:
 But he to Honour did achieve
 the second golden yeere
 Of Henrie's reign, so called the eighth,
 and made his Fact appear.
 When he this Aldermary Church
 'gan build with great Expence,
 Twice thirty yeeres agon, no doubt,
 counting the time from hence:
 Which work began the yeere of Christ,
 well knowne of Christen men,
 One thousand and five Hundred just,
 if ye will add but ten.

But, lo, when man purposeth most,
 God doth dispose the best,
 And so before this work was done
 God call'd this Knight to rest.
 This Church as then not fully built,
 he dyed about the yeere,
 When ill May Day first took his name
 which is down fixed here. 1516.
 Whose Works became a Sepulcher,
 to shrowd him in that case:
 God took his Soule, but corps of his
 was laid about this Place.
 Who when he dyed, of this his worke
 so mindful still he was,
 That he bequeth'd one thousand pounds
 to have it brought to passe.
 The Execution of whose Gift,
 or where the Fault should be,
 The work as yet unfinished
 shall shew You all for me.
 Which Church stands there, if any please
 to finish up the same,
 As he hath well begun, no doubt,
 and to his endless Fame;
 They shall not only well bestow
 their Talent in this Life,
 But after death, when bones be rot,
 their Fame shall be most rise:
 With thankful Praise and good Report
 of our Parochians here,
 Which have of right St. Henrie's Fame
 afresh renew'd this yeare.
 God move the minds of wealthy men,
 their Works so to bestow
 As he hath done, that though they dye,
 their virtuous fame may flow.
 Inclyta perpetuo durabit Tempore Virtus,
 Et foret Fato non violanda truci.

Stygg's Stow, B. iii. p. 19.

* Tables of benefactors were antiently placed, not only in parish churches, but in college chapels. Chandler, in his *Life of William Waynflete*, p. 262, informs us, that vellum tablets were placed over the altars in Magdalen Chapel, in which the names of benefactors were inserted. It is remarkable that there is no table of benefactors in the present church of St. Mary Aldermary. In 1827, the Churchwardens very commendably printed a list of them, of which a copy is framed, and hung up in the vestry; but it was unavoidably very limited in the information it conveyed. The account furnished by the Commissioners' Report on Parochial Charities, above referred to, docs, however, in a great degree, supply the defect.

Thomas Hind, Mercer, gave ten foddor of lead to the covering of the middle aisle about the year 1528. (*Strype's Stow, ibid.*)

The East window was made or glazed by Charles Blount, Lord Mountjoy, as appeared by his arms in it. He was buried in this Church, about the year 1545, having this epitaph made by himself:

Willingly have I fought:
and willingly have I found
The fatal End that brought
thither, as Duty bound:

Discharg'd I am of that I ought
to my Country by honest wound,
My Soul departed Christ hath bought:
the End of Man is Ground.

Strype's Stow, B. iii. p. 19.

The oldest Account Book of the Parish commences in 1597. Between that date and 1631, we find—in 1610, 'p^d to the glazier for new ledging of 20 f^t. of old glass in the great East Chancel window,' &c.; in 1612—'p^d for mending the pews and the Chancel door;' and in other years, other items, which shew that the incidental charges of repairing and fitting up the Chancel were carried to the account of the parishioners.*

In 1605, Jasper Lambert gave £5 to remain in stock till there might be some other well disposed persons, or otherwise, that the Church-stock may be sufficient to re-edify and repair the steeple and battlements. And in 1625 Thomas Rowe bequeathed £5 towards the repairs of the Church.

Mr. William Rodway, born and buried in this parish, at the time of his death (which occurred in the year of our Lord 1626) gave towards the rebuilding of the steeple of this church, then greatly decayed and perished, the sum of £300. In the same year died in this parish one Mr. Richard Pierson, who towards the better and more beautiful building of this steeple gave 200 marks, with this condition, that the steeple thus to be built *should follow its ancient pattern*, and go forward and be finished, according to the foundation of it, laid 120 years before by the founder of this church, Sir Henry Keeble, which within three years after was so finished, the cost of it amounting to £1000, all which, except the gifts of those two worthy benefactors, was raised by the parish. (*Strype's Stow, B. iii. p. 18.*)

In or about the year 1629, it was ordered by Vestry that £50 of Kemp's loan money, and £40 the amount of a legacy given by Mrs.

* The above, and many other extracts from the Parish books, were taken some years ago, when an attempt was made to throw the repairs of the Chancel, contrary to the well known custom of London, upon the incumbent.