

REVIEW

THE STORY OF HAVERSHAM, by S. HILTON, M.A., RECTOR.
 Crown 8vo. pp. 136, with foreword by GEORGE
 ELAND. Price 1/9, paper backed. 3/- cloth
 backed, post free. To be obtained from the
 Rector, Haversham, Bletchley, co. Bucks.

HAVERSHAM is described in "Kelly" as a parish in a fertile valley on the Ouse; $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles N.E. from Wolverton station, and $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles S.W. from Newport Pagnell. The area of the parish is 1634 acres and not being traversed by an important road, it is isolated more or less. Domesday records a possible 29 families, say a population about 120 to 150 people. In 1931 the census found 46 houses and 164 people. For some years in the 19th century when farming flourished the population was higher; in 1831 there were 54 houses and 313 people. Knowing the sort of cottages usual during the 18th and early 19th centuries, there was probably over-crowding. The population could not have varied much for several hundred years.

Dr. O. W. Holmes wrote: Every small town thinks that the axis of this earth is seen sticking up out of the ground in the midst thereof, always styles itself 'the good old' and glories in a great history. The compiler of this 'story,' on page 108, permits himself to write 'rich in historical association,' and of the church 'one of the Nation's cherished treasures'; of course this is laudable hyperbole: a small parish so retired cannot be expected to be of great interest to the many, however interesting to the natives, local historians, and specialists.

Primarily written for the parishioners, the compiler has been successful in writing an excellent condensed history. A considerable amount of recent research has produced a full and satisfactory story there is no trace of unnecessary historical matter, padding, or other signs of amateur workmanship. Worthy of high commendation it may be used as a model by those contemplating similar work.

The arrangement in consecutive order of the many details gleaned from divers records shows much work and careful thought.

This book is not a mere compilation of previously printed matter, for it contains much that is new.

The history of the parish is that of the Manor, and the attempt to present the information in eleven chronological chapters is an admirable arrangement and quite successful.

The earliest documentary mention of the parish is in the will of Aelfifu, about A.D. 970, this lady having prayed for the permission of her Royal Lord, that she may be entitled to make her will, bequeathed as follows: "and I grant to my Royal Lord the estate of Haefaeresham." The old Scandinavian name Hafr is a common one, so it may be assumed the name means the homestead or estate of Haefer.

The Conqueror gave the Manor to William Peveral, who held nine manors in Bucks, besides landed property in other counties and a castle in the Peak. He was ancestor of "Peverel of the Peak," from whom the local puritans prayed to be delivered, as well as from popery and prelacy.

In 1154, Henry II confiscated the Peveral property. In 1175, Robert de Haversham and Nicholas first appear. The Manor passed by descent through heiresses to the families of de la Plaunche; Strickland; and Lucy of Charlecote; and was sold in 1664 to Maurice Thompson, his son became Lord Haversham in 1696. In 1728 it was sold to Mr. Lucy Knightly, a descendant of the former owners. In 1764 it was bought by Alexander Small, and since then has passed by purchase several times and is now owned by Mr. Alfred G. O. Randall.

The Lords do not appear to have resided on the Manor, they all owned more important property in other counties. Though the Lucy family was Lords for 200 years, they lived at Charlecote near Stratford on Avon, where the name and fame of Sir Thomas is Shaksperian.

Being so exhaustively described in the Historical Monuments volume the compiler perhaps considered detailed account of the church unnecessary. The H.M.C. describes the 12th cent. remains in the church as interesting, though limited to that part of the west wall on either side of the entrance to the tower. The chancel, north aisle, are 13th cent., the south aisle 14th cent., and the porch was added about 1390. The tower was added to the original church about 1190.

On page 133 are outline plans showing the probable development of the building; this enables one to see easily the periods of the different parts.

For so small a parish the church is above the average in size and interest. Restored in 1934 at a cost of £800, several hidden architectural features were revealed.

The tower, with its very thick walls and design, suggests the emergency or fortress. As late as 1304, the Lord obtained a licence to crenellate his dwelling in Haversham, which shows that it was prudent to have a residence strong enough to resist attack.

A few of the rectors must be mentioned; John de Cheshull, Bishop of London, was rector 1264-74. In 1311 William de Ledcomb resigned the living owing to the violent hostility of the Manorial Lord, who assaulted him and drove away his cattle and so treated them that many died, incited the people to refuse payment of tithe and not to speak to him, etc., for no known reason.

The next rector, Robert Sturmeay, when defending himself from the violence of William Golds, accidentally killed him. The Rector was held blameless and continued in office.

After 21 years in office the Rector, Rev. Edward Cooke, died in 1824. This learned scholarly man was not only an excellent parish priest, but an industrious antiquary; his voluminous collections came into the possession of Dr. George Lipscomb and are the foundation of his County History.

W. BRADBROOKE.