

STAINED GLASS FROM WESTLINGTON HOUSE, DINTON.

THE glass here represented—and an excellent reproduction and representation it is—was given to me by the late Mrs. Francklin,* with some other fragments. It had long existed in the window of a room used as the Servants' Hall, and was all more or less of the fifteenth century. A representation of one other piece has already appeared in a former volume of the RECORDS OF BUCKS—"The People's Chaplain."

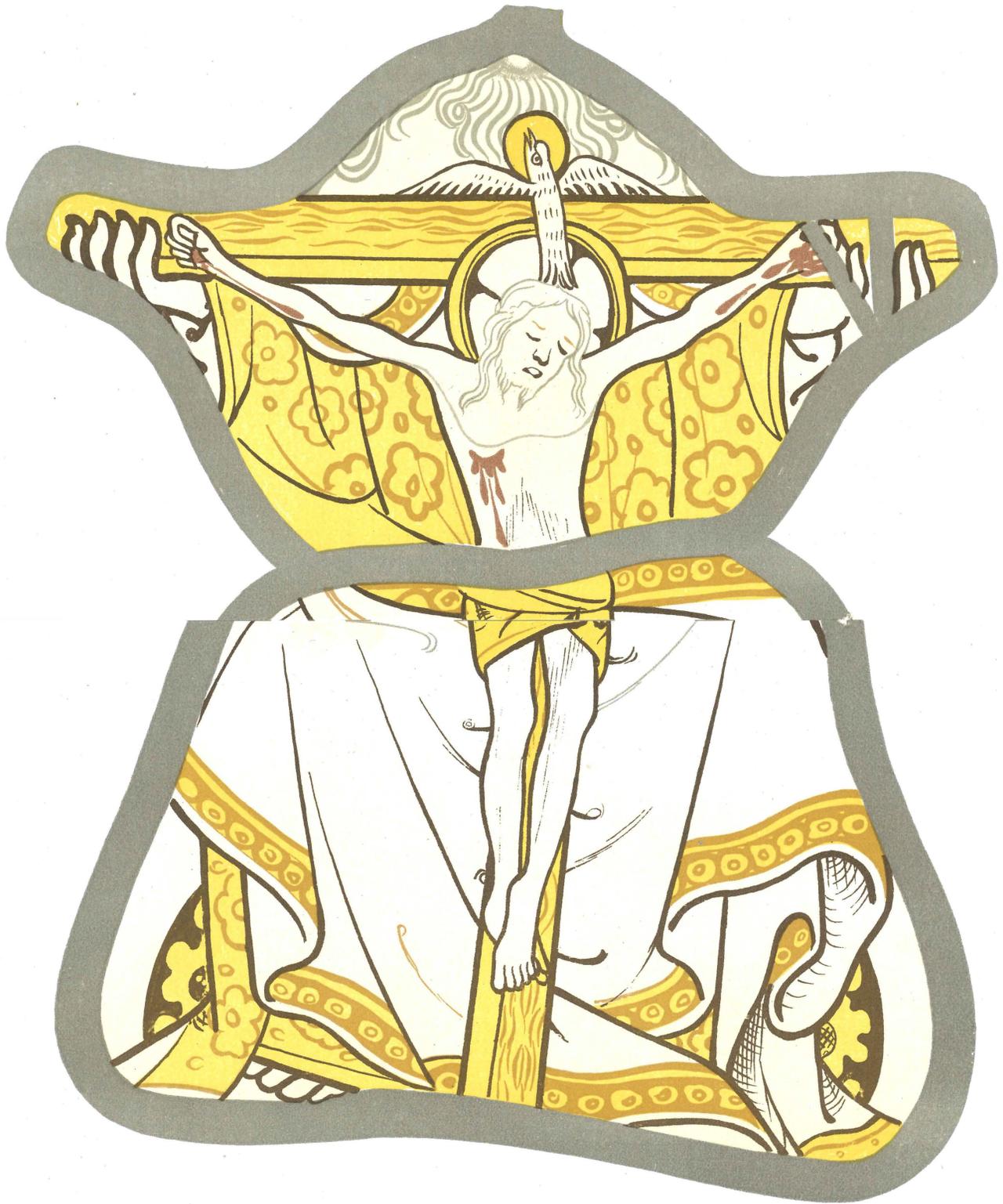
The portion now reproduced is a fragment conventionally representing the Blessed Trinity. Such are exceedingly rare and interesting. Here the figure of the Eternal Father is almost all lost; but the dove, a symbol of the Holy Ghost, is perfect, as is that of our Blessed Saviour on the cross. The figures are all drawn with power, taste and artistic excellence, while the tints of the glass and the few bold or slender lines, which give so good an effect to the drapery and back-ground,—though of the utmost simplicity,—are made to be perfectly subservient to an artistic and reverent representation of this Christian subject.

Tradition appears to imply that all these glass-fragments were long ago brought to Westlington from the adjacent village of Chearsley; where, so early as the year 1440, the family of Francklin had been Lords of the Manor.† Members of the same race lived at Crendon, Thame, Watlington and Haddenham.

* This lady was Jane Elizabeth Rose of Chearsley and Winchendon—the member of a family which appears duly entered in the Visitation of Bucks, A.D. 1634. (Harl. MSS. No. 1391.) The carved oak shield over the porch of Westlington represents the armorial bearings of Francklin impaling Rose.

† Of this family, George Francklin of Haddenham, Esq., served as High Sheriff of Bucks in 1729, and Joseph Francklin, of the same place, as Sheriff in 1803. Amongst their ancestors, maternally, were the Bekes of White Knights, Lord Lovelace—a peer of the Great Rebellion, and the Cromwells of Huntingdon.

Formerly at Westlington House, Dinton, Bucks.



THIS PLATE IS PRESENTED TO THE RECORDS OF BUCKS BY THE REV. DR. LEE,
OF THAME AND LAMBETH.

2/1/53

When the north aisle of Thame Church was rebuilt in 1443, it is on record that "Joh' frangklayn of Schreysley" contributed to the cost of the same.*

A brass† to the memory of this man, his wife and seven children, still remains in the chancel of Cheersley Church, with the following inscription:

Here lyth John Frankleyn and Margarete hys
wyfe which ordegned leystowe to this Chirche
and divine service to be doone every holy day, in
the yer A° mcccclxiij. On whos' soules' God
habe mercy. Amen.

The church itself is simple, but picturesque, and placed on the slope of a hill on the north bank of the river Thame. The old Manor House was certainly repaired, and possibly almost wholly rebuilt about the year 1663. Whether the glass depicted was removed from the church, or from some oratory or room of prayer in the Manor House itself, appears uncertain. It may have been removed only to preserve it. For more than a century before the Great Rebellion, Elizabeth's bishops and their officials were most active in the destruction of all glass of this character, leaving the fabrics without ornament, and more like barns or mere whitewashed rooms. The removal, moreover, of many sacred objects of Christian Art under Elizabeth was very disastrous. What remained was obliterated or destroyed by Puritans of "the Will' Dowsing tribe" under Oliver Cromwell. Buckinghamshire was one of their special preserves.

Our first secretary, the faithful and accomplished Rev. Arthur Baker, gave me in 1855 an excellent account of what Archdeacon Aylmer of Lincoln had effected throughout Buckinghamshire in the way of destroying church ornaments, vestments and pictures, a MS. record of which is still preserved amongst the archives of Lincoln Cathedral. For example, the Bishop of the diocese—then including Bucks—made a decree

* Churchwardens' MS. Accounts.

† There remains likewise in Watlington Church, Oxon, a brass in memory of William Franckleyn, his wife and children, A.D. 1485.

that "Images, pictures, and al monuments of fained miracles, as well in walls as in glass windows be defaced; and namely [*i.e.*, particularly] the Image of the Crucifixe and the two Mariés in the chauncell windowes." Little enough of ancient glass remains in the Bucks churches now, nor do the modern examples, as a rule, suffice to satisfy many people for the loss of the old.

Since the death of Mrs. Francklin, Westlington House—a small but picturesque mansion—has been vested in her two co-heiresses, and is now let to a Kentish gentleman. Anciently it contained much old and curious oak and walnut wood furniture, in one cumbersome piece of which a large, long leathern purse full of Jacobean silver and gold coins was quite accidentally discovered about fifty years ago. In the library was an old Lincoln Horae B.V.M., with family entries and MS. prayers—a rare and curious book.

FREDERICK GEORGE LEE.