

Hasted's Kent

Boxley in 1798

Edward Hasted, *The history and topographical survey of the county of Kent*, second edition, volume 4 (Canterbury, 1798), pages 324–53

BOXLEY.

ADJOINING to Maidstone north-eastward lies the parish of Boxley, written in Domesday, Boseleu, and in the Textus Roffensis, Boxele and Boxle, a parish noted, as well for the famous assembly of the whole county, held at Pinenden heath, within the boundaries of it, in the reign of the Conqueror, as for the abbey not long afterwards founded in it.

THE VILLAGE of Boxley situated at the foot of the chalk hills, above which this parish extends among the coppice woods, over a barren dreary country covered with flints, to Dun-street, at the northern boundaries of it. Southward it extends to the rivulet in the valley, at a very small distance from the town of Maidstone, a length of near four miles, the width of it is not more than three at its greatest extent, and in most parts much less; the soil from its extent is of course various, to the northward it is chalk; in the middle,

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and towards the west a deep sand; to the eastward a wet cludgy earth, and to the south and south-east for the most part a not unfertile loamy soil bounding upon the rock. It is a situation much more healthy than it is pleasant, owing to its chalky and sandy soils, and its bleak situation. The village is watered by a clear spring, which rises just below the church, and directs its course through the street; this spring, as well as another, which rises likewise at the foot of the chalk hill, just above Boxley abbey, are both very inviting to the sight, but the water is very hard and unfit for culinary uses, especially the latter, which in two months will petrify wood, the incrustation resembling brown and unpolished marble. These join just below the abbey, and flow together into the Medway, almost opposite to Allington castle.

The village lies on a descent from the hills, there are several genteel houses in it; at the upper or northern part of it is Boxley house, lord Romney's, inhabited by his three sisters and Mr. Coker; somewhat lower down is a house, which for many years was the property and residence of the family of Charlton, who bore for their arms, Or, a lion rampant gules, the last of them, John Charlton, esq. dying in 1770 unmarried, it came by his will, together with the chief of his other estates, to his eldest nephew, the Rev. George Burville, (son of the Rev. Henry Burville, by Anne his sister). The Burvilles bear for their arms, Argent, a chevron between three oak leaves erect, vert. Mr. Burville married Juliana, daughter of William Bowyer, esq. of Denham, in Buckinghamshire, by whom he has a son John, and daughter Frances, married to the Rev. Philip Rashleigh. He is the present possessor of this house, in which he resides; below this is the parsonage and vicarage, the latter a handsome genteel house, and just above it at a small distance from the east side of the street, the church; almost adjoining to Mr. Burville's house, is another more antient one,

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called Park-house, once part of the estate of Boxley abbey, and afterwards in like manner, the estate of Sir

Thomas Wyatt, whose son forfeited it for treason in the 1st year of queen Mary. How it passed afterwards I have not found, though it seems never to have been restored to his descendants; in the beginning of the present century it was in the possession of the family of St. John, in which it remained till Mrs. St. John joining with her son, Paulet St. John, sold it in 1720 to Maudistley Best, esq. (son of Mr. Thomas Best, of Chatham) who resided and kept his shrievalty here in 1730, bearing for his arms, sable, two cross croslets in chief, and a cinquefoil in base, or. He died in 1740, leaving two sons, Thomas, late of Chilston, esq. and James, of Chatham, and a daughter, married to the hon. Robert, afterwards lord Fairfax, of Leeds castle, who died s. p. He gave by will this seat to his youngest son James, who served the office of sheriff in 1751, and resided here at times, and died in 1782, leaving by Frances his wife, one of the daughters of Richard Shelley, esq. four sons and four daughters, to the eldest of the former, Thomas Best, esq. he by will gave this house and his estate in this parish, and he now resides in it. There has been from time immemorial a warren for rabbits here, the lands of which lay close at the foot of the chalk hills, it formerly belonged to Boxley abbey, and was afterwards in the possession of the Wyatts, and is now from them the estate of lord Romney, and there was likewise another part of it used likewise as a warren, lying near Pinenden-heath, which was part of the Park-house estate, and as such, is now the property of Mr. Best, but the name only remains, the rabbits having been for some time destroyed, and the land made arable. About a mile eastward from the village in a low flat situation, at no great distance from the high road from Rochester to Maidstone, is Boxley abbey, with a small hamlet of houses near it, and nearer to the hills the abbey farm.

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The plantations of the estate called the Park-house, likewise, the old seat of which was situated in Maidstone parish, near the high road to Rochester, as has been already described, extend into the western part of this parish. The late Sir Henry Calder, whose property it was, pulled down the old house, and on a beautiful spot near adjoining, though within this parish, began a handsome stone mansion, which after his death was finished by his widow, who with her son Sir Henry, for some time resided in it; it is now inhabited by Mr. Osborne. At a small distance eastward from hence, in nearly the centre of this parish, excepting that Maidstone stretches itself with a point or nook over a part of it, is that noted plain Pinnenden, now usually called Pickenden heath, a place made famous in early times; the western part is in Maidstone parish, the remainder in this of Boxley. From its situation almost in the middle of the county or shire of Kent, this heath has been time out of mind used for all county meetings, and for the general business of it, the county house for this purpose, a poor low shed, is situated on the north side of it, where the sheriff continues to hold his county court monthly, and where he takes the poll for the members of the county, and for the coroners, the former of which, after a few suffrages is usually adjourned

to Maidstone; on a conspicuous hill on the opposite side of the heath, though in Maidstone parish, is the gallows, for the public execution of criminals condemned at the assizes.

At the time of the conquest it was the noted place for the public meetings of the county; for in the book of Domesday there is mention made, that when the inhabitants of Kent were summoned to meet *ad sciram*, that is, in public assembly at the *shyregemot* or Sheriff's-tourn, for the trial of certain customs therein mentioned, they should go for that purpose as far as *Pinnedenna*, but no further.

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In the year 1076, being the 11th of the Conqueror's reign, a famous assembly was held at this place on the following occasion.

Odo, bishop of Baieux and earl of Kent, had by means of his great power, defrauded the church of Canterbury of many manors and lands, and of several liberties, and had kept possession of them; but upon Lanfranc's being made archbishop in the year 1070, he represented the whole of the injury done to his church to the king, who forthwith commanded that it should be enquired into and determined by the nobles, and other competent men, not only of this county, but of the other counties of England, assembled for this purpose at this heath.

There were present at this meeting Goisfrid, bishop of Constance, who sat as the king's representative on this occasion; archbishop Lanfranc, who pleaded his church's cause; Odo, earl of Kent, who defended himself against his accusers in what he had done; Ernest, bishop of Rochester; Agelric, bishop of Chester, an antient man, and well versed in the laws of the realm; who on account of his great age was, by the king's order, brought hither in a waggon, in *una quadriga*; Richard de Tunebrige, Hugh de Montfort, William de Arsic, Hamo Vicecomes or Sheriff, and many others, barons of the king and of the archbishop, many tenants of those bishops, and many others of good and great account, as well of this as of other counties, both French and English.

This trial lasted three days, at the end of which the archbishop recovered several of the antient possessions of his church, as well from Odo as from Hugh Montfort and Ralph de Curva Spina or Crookthorne, and established the liberties of it, in matters between the king and himself.^{/x}

^{/x} See Eadmer, p. 9, 197.

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On the south side of the heath the turnpike road from Maidstone through Detling to Key-street and Sittingbourn crosses this parish, and another branches off from hence to Bersted and Ashford; in the southern part of it are the hamlets of Grove green and Waverling-street, Newnham court, and the beautiful seat of Vinters, most pleasantly situated; below which in the vale is the stream which turns the paper mills, and separates this parish from Maidstone. At Grove, as has been already noticed, is a remarkable fine vein of fuller's earth, by the working of which Mr. John

Watts, the owner of it, at the beginning of this century, became famous. But this earth was in working in 1630, at which time John Ray, merchant, of London, was sentenced to a severe fine and punishment in the Star Chamber, for transporting of it clandestinely to Holland. This vein lies about thirty feet deep, and is about seven feet thick. There are two sorts of it, the blue and the dark grey, the latter of which lying under the former is most valuable; a great quantity of this earth is sent from hence by sea for the use of the clothiers in distant countries. For the manufacture carried on in this parish for the making of paper there are four sets of mills, two of which are situated at the south-east extremity of it, on the stream called the Little River, which rises near Lenham, and runs by Leeds castle hither; the upper ones, belonging to lord Aylesford, and the lower ones to Messrs. Hollingworth's; the other two are situated on the western side of the parish, near Aylesford, on the rivulet which rises under the chalk hills, and are made use of for making an inferior kind of merchandize, one of these belongs to lord Romney. The lower mills above-mentioned belonging to Messrs. Hollingworth, stand at a small distance on the north side of the road leading from Maidstone to the Mote, and are called the Old Turkey

/y Rushworth, vol. ii. p. 348.

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Mills, they deserve a more particular notice in this place for their superiority, as well in the many extensive buildings, machines and conveniences erected for carrying on this large and curious manufacture, and the number of people continually employed in the different branches of it, as the easy and regular method, and the neatness with which the whole is conducted. They were formerly used as fulling mills, but on the decay of the cloathing trade in these parts, were, by Mr. Gill, the proprietor, converted into paper mills, and used by him as such for a few years; he sold them to Mr. James Whatman, who in 1739 pulled the whole of them down, and erected them on a much more curious and extensive plan, which was afterwards much more improved by his son James Whatman, esq. who with infinite pains and expence, brought his manufactory of writing paper, for no other sort is made here, to a degree of perfection, superior to most in the kingdom. In 1794 he sold these mills to Messrs. Hollingworth, and retired to Vintners, where he now resides, and they now carry on this manufacture here; under the buildings is a strong chalybeat spring, which however does not produce any great quantity of water. In 1711 a Roman urn was dug up at Grove, by the workmen, near the vein of Fuller's earth there, as several others have been since, with other relics of antiquity and coins, both there and at Vintners, most of the coins having the inscription of the emperor Adrian, and the like have been from time to time discovered at Goddard's hill, in this parish, where there are several stones set up similar to those about Horsted.

OUR BOTANISTS have observed the following scarce plants in this parish:

Borago minor silvestris, small white bugloss, or Ger-

man madwort.

Scopyllum angustifolium glabrum, smooth narrow-leaved thyme.

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Buxus, the box tree, which grows plentifully in the woods here./z

Stellaria sanicula major, ladies mantle.

BOXLEY, at the time of taking the general survey of Domesday, was part of the vast estate of Odo, the great bishop of Baieux and earl of Kent, the Conqueror's half-brother; in which record it is thus described:

Robert Latin holds to ferm Boseleu. It was taxed at seven sulings in the time of king Edward the Confessor, and now at five sulings. The arable land is twenty carucates. In demesne there are three carucates, and forty-seven villeins, with eleven borderers having sixteen carucates. There are three mills of thirty-six shillings and eight-pence, and sixteen servants, and twenty acres of meadow. Wood for the pannage of thirty hogs. In the time of king Edward the Confessor, and afterwards, it was worth twenty-five pounds, now thirty pounds, and Robert yet pay fifty-five pounds. Alnod Cilt held it.

Four years after the taking of the above survey, about the year 1084, this estate, on the bishop of Baieux's disgrace, became forfeited to the crown, among the rest of his possessions.

In the year 1146,/a William d'Ipre, earl of Kent, who afterwards became a monk himself at Laon, in Flanders,/b founded an ABBEY at this place for monks of the Cistercian order, some of whom he brought from Claravalle, in Burgundy, for this purpose, and dedicated it to the Virgin Mary, as all the houses of this order were. The first monastery of this order in England was at Waverly, which was built in 1129, by Walter Gifford, bishop of Winchester. They were a branch of the Benedictines, called by the English, from their habit, White monks, and likewise Cis=

/z Raii Synopsis, p. 228, 231, 445.

/a Thus Chron. MSS. S. Werburgæ et de Parcoludo. Dugd. Mon. p. 827, places it in 1144. Leland, in his Collection, in 1143, and Camden, in 1145.

/b See vol. i. of this History, p. lx.

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tertians; which last name they had from the town of Cistertium or Cisteaux, in the bishopric of Chalons, in Burgundy, where this order was first instituted by Robert, abbot of Molesme, in the year 1098. There were eighty-five houses of this order, at the time of the dissolution, in England.

King Richard I. in his 1st year, anno 1189, gave the MANOR of BOXELE/c to this abbey, which king Henry III. in his 37th year, confirmed by his letters of inspeximus./d

King Henry III. in his 37th year, granted to the abbot and convent to hold a market weekly within their manor of Boxley./e The place where it was held appears to have been called Farthings.

In the 7th year of Edward I. the abbot claimed, before the justices itinerant, certain liberties, by the

charters of king Henry and king Richard, and the confirmation of them by the charter of king Henry, the then king's father. And he claimed to have warren in all his demesne lands in Kent and Surry, which he had in the time of king Henry, the king's father; and that he and his predecessors had fully used those liberties, &c. and it was then found, that the abbot had in his manor of Boxley a free court, &c. and that the tenants of the manor ought to plead in the hundred of Maidstone, pleas of Withernam, &c. and that the abbot ought to allow pannage, &c. and that the tenants of the manor owed pontage, and paid it to Rochester bridge./f

The abbot of Boxley was summoned to parliament twice in the 23d year of king Edward I. once in the 24th, and twice in the 28th years of that reign, but never afterwards, that I can find./g

/c Dugd. Mon. vol. i. p. 827. See this charter among the Harl. MSS. No. 6748-26. /d Dugd. ibid.

/e Cart. ejus an. m. 11. Tan. Mon. p. 214.

/f Plac. Lib. ejus an. Rot. 56 dors. Reg. Roff. p. 180. Regist. Christ Church, Cant. Cart. 153.

/g Tan. Mon. pref. p. xxvi.

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In the reign of king Henry III. there were sixty-four abbots and thirty-six priors summoned to parliament; but this number being thought too great, king Edward III. reduced them to twenty-five abbots and two priors, to which were afterwards added two more abbots, so that there were no more than twenty-nine in all, who stately and constantly enjoyed this privilege, of which only St. Austen's, near Canterbury, was in this county./h

King Edward II. in his 15th year, honoured this abbey with his presence, where, on Oct. 25, he granted to the aldermen and citizens of London to nominate a mayor out of their own body, at his will./i King Edward III. in his 33d year, granted to the abbot, &c. free warren in their manor of Boxele, &c./k

In the reign of king Richard II. the revenues of this abbey were valued at 218l. 19s. 10d. of which 98l. 19s. 7d. was in the diocese of Canterbury./l

John Dobbes, the last abbot, and the convent of Boxley, surrendered it into the hands of Henry VIII. on January 29, in the 29th year of his reign,/m and it was, together with all the lands and possessions belonging to it, confirmed to the king and his heirs, by the general words of the act, passed in the 31st year of that reign for this purpose; after which there were pensions allowed to the abbot, 50l. and to eight of the canons, from 2l. 13s. 4d. to 4l. yearly, for their lives, or until the person was promoted to a benefice of equal or superior value; the five last of which pensions remained in charge in 1553./n

It was endowed, at its dissolution, with 204l. 4s. 11d. per annum, clear revenue, according to Dug-

/h Steven's Mon. vol. ii. Appendix, p. 12.

/i Rot. Pat. ejus an. ps. 1ma.

/k Cart. ejus an. N. 4. Tan. Mon. p. 214.

/l Stev. Mon. vol. i. p. 32, 39.
/m Rym. Fœd. vol. xiv. p. 592.
/n Aug. Off. Inrolments. Wil=
lis's Mitred Abbies, vol. ii. p.
96.

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dale; or, according to Speed, with 21l. 9s. 10d. per annum, yearly income./o

The coat of arms belonging to it was, Argent, a dexter bend lozenge, gules; on a canton of the second, a crozier or pastoral staff of the field./p This coat, without the crozier, as also another, being a pastoral staff, surmounted of a bend, are still remaining carved in stone on the capitals of two pillars, from which springs a small circular arch in the garden, at the back of this abbey.

There was a chapel, dedicated to St. Andrew the apostle, founded hard by the outer gate of this monastery, which was served by a curate appointed for that purpose.

The lands of the abbey of Boxley, of the order of Cisterians, were as such, in particular circumstances, exempted from the payment of tithes. Pope Pascal II. exempted all the religious in general from the payment of tithes for lands in their own occupation, and this continued till the reign of Henry II. when pope Hadrian IV. restrained this exemption to the three religious orders of Cisterians, Templars, and Hospitallers, to which pope Innocent III. added a fourth, viz. the Præmonstratenses, from whence these were generally called the four privileged orders. After which the general council of Lateran, in 1215, further restrained this exemption to lands in their own occupation, and to those which they possessed before that time. After this the Cisterians procured bulls to exempt all their lands likewise which were letten to farm. To restrain which, the statute of the second of king Henry IV. cap. 4. was made, which enacted, that whoever, religious as well as secular, should put these bulls in execution, and purchase any others, and by colour of them should take any advantage in any shape, should be guilty of a præmunire. This restrained

/o Tan. Mon. p. 213. /p Ibid. Arms, No. LXVII.

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their privilege again to such lands only as they had before the Lateran council above mentioned; so that the lands they afterwards acquired are in no wise exempted, and this statute left them subject to the payment of such composition for tithes of their demesne lands as they had made with any particular rectors, &c. who contesting their privileges, even under that head, brought them to compound. This monastery of Boxley was one of those dissolved by the act of the 31st of king Henry VIII. the only ones which continued these privileges to their possessors afterwards; by which act, as well the king, his heirs and successors, as all others who should have any of those monasteries, their lands or possessions, were to hold and enjoy them, according to their estates and titles, discharged and acquitted of payment of tithes, as freely, and in as

large and ample a manner as the late abbots, priors, &c. of the same before held them./q

In the Registrum Roffense,/r are the names of the fields, woods, and other premises in the parish of Boxley, of which the abbot and convent here should in future be free and exempt from the payment of all tithes whilst they were in their own hands.

In the church of this abbey was the statue of St. Rumbald, usually called by the common people, St. Grumbald, which was held in great reverence for his sanctity by them, for the miracles it was said to perform.

King Henry VIII. in his 32d year, exchanged with Sir Thomas Wyatt, of Allynton, for other premises, the house and scite of this monastery, lately dissolved, and the church, steeple, and church yard of it, with the buildings, lands, &c. as well nigh and adjoining to the scite and precinct of it, his lordship of Boxley, Hoo, and Newenham court, with their appurtenances and the farm and lands, called Upper Grange, and all

/q Burn's Eccl. Law, vol. iii. p. 381. /r Page 185.

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lands, tenements, and other premises late belonging to it, in the parishes, townships, or hamlets of Boxley, Boxley-street, Burley, Burthin, Sandelyng, Wilston, Wavering, Havurland, Oxefryth, Dunstreet upon the Hill, and elsewhere, in Kent, excepting to the king the parsonage of Boxley and the advowson of the parish church;/s all which were soon afterwards again vested in the crown, as appears by the Escheat rolls of the 38th year of that reign,/t when the king re-granted the whole of them to Sir Thomas Wyatt, son of Sir Thomas before mentioned, to hold in capite by knight's service, who having, in the 1st year of queen Mary, with other gentlemen of note in this county, raised a rebellion, was found guilty of high treason, and executed that year, and his estate was confiscated to the crown; but the queen, through her bounty, the next year, granted the manor of Boxly, with the Upper Grange, and some other lands adjoining, to his widow, the lady Jane Wyatt, (daughter and co-heir of Sir William Haut, of Bourne) and her heirs male, to hold in like manner. On her death, her son, George Wyatt, succeeded to them; but the abbey seems to have continued in the crown, for queen Elizabeth, in her 11th year, granted the scite and mansion of it to John Astley for a term of years. In the 13th year of that reign, George Wyatt, esq. was restored in blood by act of parliament, after which he became possessed of this seat, and resided here, having the fee of it granted to him by the crown. He died in 1624, and was buried in the chancel of this church, as were his several descendants, who bore for their arms, Per fess azure and gules, a barnacle argent, the ring or; he left several sons and daughters, of whom the second son, Haute Wyatt, was vicar of this parish; and Francis, the eldest, succeeded him in the

/s Deeds of Purchase and Exch. Augtn. Off. Box A. 55. Inrolments, Augm. Off. /t Rot. Esch. ejus an. ps. 2.

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manor of Boxley, the mansion of the abbey, the Grange, and his other estates in this parish. He was afterwards knighted, and was twice governor of Virginia. He died in 1644, leaving two sons, Henry, his eldest son and heir, and Edwin, who afterwards became possessed of this manor, seat, and estates, above mentioned, and a daughter, Elizabeth, who married Thomas Bosvile, esq. of Littlemote in Eynsford, esq. whose daughter Margaret became the wife of Sir Robert Marsham, bart. great grandfather of the present lord Romney.

Henry Wyatt, esq. was of Boxley abbey, and left an only daughter and heir, Francis, who carried this manor, seat, with the Grange and other estates above mentioned, in marriage to Sir Thomas Selyard, bart. but Edwin Wiat, the younger brother of Henry above mentioned, disputing at law the lady Selyard's title to them, recovered the manor of Boxley, with other estates last mentioned, in this parish and elsewhere; but the abbey, with the lands belonging to it, remained in the possession of Sir Thomas Selyard, as will be mentioned hereafter.

Sir Thomas Selyard, or Seyliard, as the name was frequently spelt, was grandson of John Seyliard, of Delaware, in this county, whose eldest son, Sir John Selyard, of Chiddingstone, was father of Sir Thomas of Boxley abbey above mentioned. His second son, John Selyard, esq. was of Salmon's, in Penshurst, and was ancestor to those of that place, of Blechingley, and of London. They bore for their arms, Azure, a chief ermine; which coat, belonging to an ancestor of this family, is carved on the roof of the cloisters of Canterbury cathedral.

Edwin Wiat, esq. above mentioned, was made a sergeant at law in 1684; he was a justice of the peace, recorder of Canterbury and Maidstone, and a Burgess in parliament for the latter place, and chief justice of the grand sessions for the counties of Carmarthen, Pembroke, and Cardigan. At what time

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this family altered the antient spelling of their name from Wyatt to Wiat, I am not certain, though I believe Mr. Sergeant Wiat was the first who did so. He died in 1714, aged 85, and was buried, with his ancestors, in the chancel of this church, having had by Frances his wife, daughter and coheir of Tho. Crispe, esq. of Quekes, several sons and daughters; he was succeeded by his eldest surviving son, Francis Wiat, esq. who resided at Quekes, in Thanet. He married the widow of William Buller, esq. of Cornwall; he, at his death, without issue, devised his estates here by will to his only surviving brother, Richard Wiat, esq. who died possessed of them in 1753, without issue, and by will gave them to his relation, Robert lord Romney (grandson of Sir Robert Marsham above mentioned) whose son, the Right Hon. Charles lord Romney, is the present possessor of them.

A court leet and court baron is regularly held for this manor, the tenants of which are freeholders in free socage tenure.

BOXLEY ABBEY remained with Sir Thomas Selyard above mentioned, whose son, of the same name,

left two daughters and coheirs, viz. Margaret, married to Mr. Nicholas; and Elizabeth to Mr. Medlicott; and they sold it to Francis Austen, esq. of Sevenoke, who quickly afterwards passed it away to Edward Austen, esq. who afterwards, on the death of Sir Sheffield Austen, bart. succeeded to the title of baronet, being grandson of Robert, second son of Sir Robert Austen, who was created a baronet in 1660. He resided at Boxley abbey, and having married Susanna, daughter of Mr. Edward Walsingham, of Callis-court in Ryarsh, died without issue in 1760, and was buried in Allington church, being succeeded in the title by his only brother, Robert Austen, esq. of Tenterden, who died in 1772, without issue, and the title became extinct. /u By his will he devised Boxley

/u See Bexley, vol. ii. p. 175.

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abbey, among the rest of his estates, to his wife's cousin John, son of Nicholas Amherst, of West Barming, in tail general, remainder to the late John Amherst, esq. of Rochester, and the two sons of Mr. James Allen, subject to lady Austen's life, and a power to her of devising the same. Lady Austen, by her will confirmed Sir Edward's disposition of his estate, and died about fifteen years ago, upon which John Amherst, esq. above mentioned, late of Bersted, succeeded to Boxley-abbey, with the rest of Sir Edward Austen's estates in this county, and is the present owner of it, and resides here. /w

NEWNHAM-COURT is a manor, situated at the south-east corner of this parish, which, as already has been mentioned, belonged to the abbey of Boxley, and being after the suppression of it granted by king Henry VIII. to Sir Thomas Wyatt, became forfeited to the crown by the attainder of his son of the same name, in the 1st year of queen Mary, and remained there till queen Elizabeth, in her 11th year, granted it for a term of years to John Astley, esq. master of her jewels; and afterwards, in her 26th year, granted the fee of it to his son, Sir John Astley, who alienated it to his nephew, Sir Norton Knatchbull, afterwards, anno 1641, created a baronet. He alienated this manor, in the reign of king Charles II. to Sir John Banks, bart. who died in 1699, leaving two daughters his coheirs; the eldest of whom, Elizabeth, married Heneage Finch, second son of Heneage earl of Nottingham; and on the division of their inheritance he became in her right entitled to it. He was afterwards created baron of Guernsey and earl of Aylesford, and from him it has descended down to his great grandson, the Right Hon. Heneage Finch, earl of Aylesford, who, excepting about forty acres of the demesne lands of it, which together with an estate called POLL

/w See more of the Amhersts under both the Farleighs and Barmings.

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MILL, in this parish, which he exchanged for other lands elsewhere, with Mr. Whatman, to authorise which an act passed in 1785, continues the possessor of this manor and estate of Newnham court.

There is no court held for this manor, which is subordinate to that of Boxley.

WAVERING is a hamlet in the southern part of this parish, the manor and estate of which seems in the reign of Richard I. to have been part of the possessions of the family of Hougham, of Hougham, near Dover, tho' at that time, as appears by the letters patent of king Richard I. in his 1st year, by which he granted the manor of Boxley to the abbot and convent here, they then possessed some lands at Wevering, for the king confirmed in them certain agreements made between them and John de Horspole, and his sons, for the land at this place; and king Henry III. in his 37th year, granted to them certain liberties within their demesne lands at Wavering, &c. what became of this part afterwards I do not find; but most probable it became esteemed as part of their manor of Boxley, and continues so at this time.

ANOTHER PART of Wavering seems about the same time to have been vested in the family of Bourne, of Bourne, near Barham; John de Bourne held lands in Wavering in the reign of king Henry III. and in the next reign had a charter of free warren for his lands here and elsewhere in this county.

But the greatest part of Wavering, as well as the manor itself, appears to have continued vested in the family of Hougham.

Robert de Hougham died possessed of it in the 2d year of king Edward I. when it was found, that he held of the king in capite in Weveringe, forty shillings rent, rendering this service from it, that whenever the king should march with his army towards Wales, /x he should find a horse of the price of 5s. with a wallet and

/x Rot. Esch. ejus ann. No. 14.

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a broche/y for forty days at the king's cost. His son of the same name, died possessed of it in the 29th year of that reign, holding it in capite by the like service. His daughter, Benedicta de Hougham, carried her interest in this place in marriage to John de Shelving, of Shelvingbourne, son of Waretius, whose father, John, by marriage with Helen, daughter and heir of John de Bourne, about the end of king Edward I. possessed likewise his property in Wavering.

John de Shelving, the grandson, died possessed of this manor in the 4th year of king Edward III. holding it by the service above mentioned; and his wife, Benedicta, died possessed of it in the 22d year of that reign, upon which it came to their daughter and heir Benedicta, the wife of Sir Edmund de Haute, of Haute's-court, in Petham, whose eldest son, Nicholas, leaving two sons, Nicholas of Petham, and William of Bishopsbourne, the latter of them possessed this manor of Wavering; from whom it descended down to Sir Wm. Haute, of Bishopsbourne, who lived in the time of Henry VIII. and left by his second wife, Mary, relict of Christopher Kempe, daughter of Sir Richard Guldeford, two daughters and coheirs. /z On the partition of their inheritance, the manor of Wavering was allotted to Sir Thomas Wyatt, in right of his wife, Jane, the youngest of them; and an act pas=

sed, anno 31 Henry VIII. for the assurance of it; but he being convicted of high treason, and attainted in the 1st year of queen Mary, it was, among the rest of his estates forfeited to the crown, where it remained till queen Elizabeth, in her 24th year, restored it to lady Jane Wyatt, his widow; and her son, George Wyatt, esq. for three lives; but the reversion remained in the crown till king Charles I. granted the fee of it to Stephen Alcock, esq. of Rochester, who

/y A broche is a large vessel of leather, to carry wine in.

/z MSS. pedig. Haute, Colepeper and Wyatt. Philipott, p. 89.

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alienated it to Sir Francis Wyatt, son of Geo. Wyatt above mentioned, who then possessed the before mentioned term in this manor, and he died possessed of it in 1644; after which it passed with the manor of Boxley and his other estates to the Seyliard's, from whom it was recovered at law, in like manner as has been already mentioned above, in the account of that manor, by Mr. Sergeant Wiat, and was afterwards devised with them, by his youngest surviving son, Richard, in 1753, to his relation, Robert lord Romney, whose son, the Right Hon. Charles lord Romney is the present proprietor of it.

The fee farm of this manor was purchased of the crown, by Sir Robert Marsham, in the reign of king Charles II. by virtue of the act passed for the sale of it.

There is no court held for this manor, which is now included in the paramount manor of Boxley.

VINTER'S, formerly called Vintner's, the mansion of which is situated in the southern part of this parish, antiently afforded both seat and surname to the possessors of it.

Roger Vinter resided here, and was one of the conservators of the peace for this county in the 18th year of king Edward III. anno 1343, in the 40th year of which he founded a chantry in Maidstone church, called Gould's chantry, from the estate with which he endowed it. His son, John Vinter, in the 10th year of king Henry IV. sold it to John, son of Sir Ralph de Fremingham, of Loose, who dying two years afterwards, without issue, it came to Roger Isley, of Sundrish, as nearest of blood; and in his descendants, Vinter's continued down to Sir Henry Isley, who by the act of the 2d and 3d of king Edward VI. procured his lands in this county to be disgavelled.

Being concerned in the rebellion raised by Sir Tho. Wyatt, in the 1st year of queen Mary, he was attainted, and executed at Sevenoke, and his lands were confiscated to the crown. Soon after which queen Mary

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granted this seat to Cutts, who in the next reign of queen Elizabeth alienated it to Sir Cavaliero Maycott, alias Mackworth, his name being so spelt in this parish register, who about the middle of James I.'s reign conveyed it by sale to William Covert, esq. who was great grandson of Richard Covert, esq. of Slaugham, in Sussex, by his third wife Joane, daughter of William Ashburnham. They bore for their arms, Gules, a fess ermine, between three martlets or./a His

son, Walter Covert, about the beginning of Charles I.'s reign alienated it to Sir William Tufton, the fourth son of Sir John Tufton, of Hothfield, bart. a younger brother of Nicholas, created baron Tufton and earl of Thanet. He resided at this seat of Vinter's, or Vintner's, as it was then commonly called, and was created a baronet of the kingdom of Ireland by king Charles I.

On his death his eldest son, Sir Benedict Tufton, bart. succeeded to this estate, who dying without issue, his next brother, Sir Charles Tufton, bart. became possessed of it, and in the reign of king Charles II. alienated it to Daniel Whyte, esq. who resided here, and died possessed of it in 1689; his son of the same name, in the reign of queen Anne, passed it away by sale to Sir Samuel Ongley, one of the South Sea directors, who devised it to his nephew, Samuel Ongley, esq. of Old Warden, in Bedfordshire, in tail; on whose death, s. p. in 1747, this seat came, by virtue of the will of Sir Samuel Ongley, above mentioned, to Robert Henley, esq. barrister at law, who took upon himself the surname of Ongley, and was afterwards of Old Warden; and in 1776, was created baron Ongley of the kingdom of Ireland. In 1783, he obtained an act to vest this estate in trustees, to be sold, and they accordingly conveyed it to James

/a Visitation of the County of Kent. Pedigree, Covert.

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Whatman, esq. of this parish, who has since rebuilt this mansion, in an elegant manner, and now resides in it.

Mr. Whatman has been twice married, first, to Sarah, eldest daughter of Edward Stanley, esq. secretary of the customs, by whom he had two daughters; Camilla, married to Sir Charles Style, bart. and Lætitia; secondly to Susannah, eldest daughter of Jacob Bosanquet, of Essex, by whom he has one son, James. He served the office of sheriff in 1767, and bore for his arms, Party per pale or and sable, a pheon counterchanged.

This seat was for many years inhabited, as tenants, by the family of Champneis, many of whom are, from time to time, mentioned in the parish register of Boxley; the first of them, Walter Champneis, being mentioned in 1582. The last occupier of this name was Henry Champneis, esq. who died at it in 1781, unmarried./b

THE TITHES of this estate of Vinter's were part of the possessions of the priory of Ledes, and coming into the hands of the crown, at the suppression of that monastery, in the reign of king Henry VIII. were granted by the king, in his 33d year, by his dotation charter, to the dean and chapter of Rochester, then newly founded, by the description of all the tithes of corn, wool, hay, and other tithes whatsoever, of all those lands and tenements called Vintner's. This portion of tithes, in the parishes of Boxley and Bersted, of the yearly value of six pounds, was let by the late dean and chapter, 15 Charles I. at the yearly rent of twelve shillings. The present lessee is Mr. William Fowle.

OVENHELLE, now commonly called Overhill farm,

from its situation on the chalk hills, in this parish, was once accounted a manor, and in the reign of king Edward I. was held in sergeantry by Sir Osbert

/b See more of this family under Westenhanger in Stanford.

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de Longocampo or Longchamp, by the service of attending the king in his army into Wales, /c forty days at his own expence, with one horse of the price of five shillings, and with one wallet of the price of sixpence, and with a broche to the same wallet. /d Soon after which it became the property of Stephen de Pencestre, by one of whose daughters and coheirs, Joan, it went in marriage to Stephen de Cobham, of Rundell in Shorne, /e who possessed it in the reign of king Edward II. and was a baron of this realm; his son, John de Cobham of Rundell, died possessed of it in the 36th year of king Edward III. holding it by the like service.

He left two sons, Thomas and Reginald, of whom the eldest, Sir Thomas Cobham, succeeded him here, and died in the 17th year of king Richard II. being then possessed of this manor, situated in Ovenhell in Boxley, held of the king in capite by the above mentioned service. It continued in his descendants till it was alienated to Wyatt. Sir Thomas Wyatt, of Alington, died owner of the manor of Ovenhill in the 34th year of king Henry VIII. holding it in capite by knights service, leaving Sir Thomas Wyatt his son and heir, who in the 1st year of queen Mary forfeited this, among the rest of his estates, to the crown for high treason; but it was afterwards, with other estates in this parish, regranted to his family, in whom it continued till Richard Wiat, esq. dying in 1753, without issue, bequeathed it by his last will to Robert lord Romney, /f whose son, the Right Hon. Charles lord Romney is the present possessor of it.

This manor, with others in this neighbourhood, was antiently bound to contribute to the repair of the fourth pier of Rochester bridge.

/c In Rot. Hund. anno 3 Edw. I. Rot. 7 Kanc.

/d See Blount's Ten. p. 61.

/e See more of him, under Randall in Shorne, vol. iii. of this History, p. 447. /f See above, p. 338.

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QUEEN MARY, in her 1st year, granted to George Clarke several parcels of land in Boxley, late belonging to the abbey of Boxley, and parcel of the estate of Sir Thomas Wyatt, attainted of high treason, and the GRANGE, called the NETHER GRANGE, (so called, to distinguish it from the Upper grange, mentioned above) in Boxley, and many other lands and tenements there, to hold in capite by knights service. On his death, in the 1st year of queen Elizabeth, his son, Geo. Clarke, succeeded to them, by the description of one messuage, three hundred and forty acres of land, meadow and pasture, in Boxley, to hold of the queen as above mentioned. In the 22d year of that reign, he alienated it to Robert Bruer, gent. whose son and heir, John Brewer, esq. for so the name was now spelt, in 1611, succeeded him in these premises, of which he

appears to have been possessed in the reign of king Charles I. It was afterwards purchased by James Calder, esq. afterwards Sir James Calder, bart. whose son, brigadier General Sir Henry Calder, bart. died possessed of it in 1792, leaving his widow surviving, and an infant son, now Sir Henry Calder, bart. and in them the fee and possession of this estate is now vested.

THERE is a large farm here, called the COURT-LODGE, which was possessed by the family of Bartholomew; one of whom, Leonard Bartholomew, esq. of Oxenhoath, dying without issue in 1757, bequeathed it by will to the second son of Francis Geary, esq. of Polsden, in Surry, by Mary his half sister; which second son, now Sir William Geary, bart. of Oxenhoath, is the present owner of it./g

THE GROVE is an estate in the southern part of this parish, which in the reign of king Henry IV. was conveyed by Isabel de Wavering to Tho. Burbige, whose descendant, of the same name, possessed the Grove, with a dove house and other lands adjoining to it, in

/g See Oxenhoath, in Peckham.

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the reign of king Henry VII. after which great part of the land was from time to time sold off from it, but what remained with the house descended to Mr. Tho. Burbige, who dying without issue, and being the last heir male, gave it by will to his sister; and she, in 1702, conveyed it by sale to Mr. John Watts, who afterwards became famous for working the remarkable fine vein of fullers earth here. His heirs passed it away by sale to general William Belford, colonel commandant of the first battalion of the royal regiment of artillery, who died in 1780, leaving by the daughter of Mr. Schalch, of Woolwich, two sons and one daughter; the sons, Gustavus and William, were both officers in the army, and by their father's will became jointly possessed of this estate; the former colonel Gustavus Belford still possesses one moiety of this estate; the latter is since deceased, having left by his wife, one of the daughters of Thomas Jones, esq. of East Wickham, two daughters his coheirs, who are now entitled to the other moiety of it. They bear for their arms, Argent, a chevron, a rose in base gules.

CHARITIES.

WILLIAM KEMBER, once a poor boy of this parish, afterwards a tanner of the town of Faversham, by will, in 1611, gave to the vicar of Boxley and his successors for ever, the yearly sum of 30s. out of his house and garden, in Court-street, in Faversham, for the use of the poor inhabiting and dwelling in this parish, to be paid to them yearly at the usual church porch on St. Thomas's day, with power of distress, &c.

THE SUM of 50l. due by bond from the commissioners of the Sandling turnpike, for the use of the poor of this parish, is vested in the Rev. Mr. Burville, and is of the annual product of 2l.

BOXLEY is within the ECCLESIASTICAL JURISDICTION of the diocese of Canterbury, and deanry of Sutton.

The church, which is dedicated to All Saints, stands on the east side of the village; it is not large, but neat, and contains three isles and a chancel, with a handsome square tower at the west end, in which hang

four small bells, which were cast in 1652, by M. Darby.

In this church, before the Reformation, was a famous rood, called the Rood of Grace, which was held

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in great esteem for the miracles it was supposed to work. It was broken to pieces by the king's command at St. Paul's cross, in London, on Sunday, February 24, 1538, in the presence of John Hilsey, bishop of Rochester, and a vast concourse of the populace.

The church of Boxley was given by king Henry I. in 1130, to the church of Rochester, with all its liberties and rights, in like manner as his chaplain, Jeffry or Ansfred, the clerk, had ever held it; but that church and monastery, having been destroyed by fire, and the monks dispersed abroad, king Stephen, in 1137, dispossessed them of this church, which, however, on their return to their monastery, was on their remonstrance to the court of Rome, by the pope's bull, restored and confirmed to them; and Walter, bishop of Rochester, not only confirmed to them the appropriation of it, but granted to them the free disposal and presentation of the vicarage, saving the right of the bishop of the diocese; which grant was confirmed likewise by the several archbishops of Canterbury afterwards.

In the year 1180, there was an agreement made between the monks of Boxley and those of Rochester, concerning the parochial tithes of this church; by which the latter granted to the former a certain field belonging to the parish church of Boxley, above the hills, but by the consent of the former they retained out of it for ever half an acre of wood for fencing; and the monks of Rochester granted to those of Boxley all the tithes above the hills of all lands, as well of those free lands, which the latter had of the king's gift, as of those which they had acquired, to be held finally in villenage, or might acquire in future, at any time for their own use; and likewise certain land belonging to this parish church, under the hill, with the meadow

/h See Lambarde's Peramb. p. 238. Kilburne's Surv. p. 36.

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adjoining, between the abbey and village of Boxley; on the other hand, the monks of Boxley granted to those of Rochester all their tithes under the hills, without the bounds of the abbey and grange; that is to say, of all corn only and pulse, of all their lands under the hills, as well of those antiently as newly cultivated, and which they had from the foundation of the abbey, or might bring into culture at any time in future; and that the monks of Rochester should have all the tithes on the sides of the hills of all lands which at that time, or before were reduced to culture, excepting the field which the monks of Boxley bought of John de Horespole; which composition was confirmed by Richard, archbishop of Canterbury.

The confirmations of this church to the priory seem afterwards to have been but little regarded, and they were again dispossessed of it, with a reservation of 60s. annual pension only from it; and it appears, that the

bishop of Rochester, together with the prior and convent, used to present to it on a vacancy, till the time of archbishop Islip, who at the petition of the monks, with the consent of the bishop, in 1363, restored this church to them, in as ample a manner as they had before held it; and he granted them full liberty to re-enter into the corporal possession of it, with all its rights and appurtenances, on the vacancy of the rector then incumbent on it; reserving, nevertheless, in the first place, a proper portion out of the fruits and profits, for the maintenance of a perpetual vicar, at the presentation of the bishop, to be instituted by him and his successors, and for the due support of the episcopal and archidiaconal burthens, and others belonging to it; and a vicarage was afterwards accordingly endowed in it by archbishop Sudbury, in the year 1377.^{/i}

In 1403, a definitive sentence was passed concerning the tithes of this vicarage;^{/k} at which time, and so

^{/i} Regist. Sudbury, f. 124. MSS. Lamb.

^{/k} Aug. Off. Chart. Antiq. D. 101. Reg. Roff. p. 185.
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late as the year 1485, this church and advowson belonged to the priory of Rochester, for in the latter year, archbishop Bouchier, cardinal and apostolic legate, confirmed the appropriation of it to them; and a composition was entered into, anno 20 Richard II. between the prior and convent, and Adam Motrum, archdeacon of Canterbury; that as the archdeacon and his archdeaconry was detrimented in the yearly sum of 6s. 8d. the like sum should be yearly paid to the latter, out of the profits of it so long as they possessed it.

The appropriation, as well as the advowson of the vicarage, seems very soon afterwards to have passed into the hands of the prior and convent of Boxley, tho' by what means I do not find, before its dissolution, which happened in the 29th year of king Henry VIII. for that king, by his dotation charter, in his 32d year, settled his rectory and church of Boxley, late belonging to the dissolved monastery of Boxley, and the vicarage of it, on his new erected dean and chapter of Rochester, part of whose possessions they now remain.

In the 15th year of king Edward I. this church was valued at 32l. the vicarage is valued in the king's books at 12l. 19s. 2d. and the yearly tenths at 1l. 5s. 11d.

King Henry VIII. in his 29th year, let to Thomas Vicary, one of his surgeons, the tithes of corn and the glebe lands of this rectory, and the capital messuage, houses, and buildings belonging to it, and ten pieces of land, late belonging to the monastery of Boxley and the advowson of the vicarage, for twenty-one years, at the yearly rent of forty pounds.

In the exchange of lands, made between Henry VIII. and Sir Thomas Wyatt, in the 32d year of his reign, the parsonage of Boxley, and the advowson of the vicarage, with their appurtenances, were particularly excepted, to remain to the king's use.

By a survey of this parsonage, on the abolition of deans and chapters, after the death of king Charles I. in 1649, by order of the state, it appears, that the par-

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sonage-house, a fair and goodly house, with its appur-

tenances, tithes, &c. late belonging to the late monastery there, and forty-eight acres, three roods, and two perches of land, in the improved rents, were the whole of them worth 140l. 3s. 6d. per annum; and were let by the dean and chapter, anno 15 Charles I. to Robert Parker for twenty-one years, at the yearly rent of 26l. 13s. 4d. and twelve couple of conies, or 16s. in money; that the lessee was bound to repair the chancel, and that the vicarage, which was excepted out of the lease, was worth sixty pounds per annum.

The present lessee of the parsonage is Mr. William Fowle; the vicarage is reserved out of the lease of it, and is in the disposal of the dean and chapter.

The vicar of Boxley has belonging to him all tithes of wood, hops, hay, clover, cinquefoil, flax, wold, wool, lambs, milk, eggs, apples, cherries, and other fruit, and of pasture; his dues are, for burials, 2s. for marriages, 5s. for christenings in houses, 2s. 6d. and for churchings at church, 6d. at home, 1s. for Easter offerings he can demand of every person, above sixteen years old, 6d. so of a man and his wife, 1s.

He has a pension of 8l. per annum, payable out of the exchequer, as an augmentation; the fees for receiving of which are, if he receives it himself, 12s. if by another, 20s./l

The land the vicarage house, with its appurtenances, stands on, with the garden and court yard, is not above the third part of an acre; which, with the herbage of the church yard, is all the glebe the vicar has. The house, which is built of brick, and sashed, is handsome and commodious, and has proper offices adjoining to it. It was erected by Mr. archdeacon Spratt, whilst vicar of this parish; since which it has been considerably improved by Dr. Markham, vicar likewise, now arch=

/l This account is entered in the parish register, with the subscription of Jo. Wyvell, vicar, 1694.

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bishop of York, who sometimes resided in it, as did his successor, Dr. North, now bishop of Winchester.

In 1733, the vicarage was valued at 200l. it is now 300l. per annum.

Bishop Henry de Sandford, by his decree temp. Henry III. at the petition of the vicar and parishioners, changed the feast of the dedication of this church, from the 10th of February to the Monday next after the feast of St. Peter and St. Paul.

CHURCH OF BOXLEY.

PATRONS,

Or by whom presented. RECTORS.

Prior and Convent of Rochester Galfridus, in the time of king
Stephen./m

Gregory de Romania, 1240./n

VICARS.

Robert Marre, in 1385./o

William Snelle, obt. March 10,
1451./p

John Munden, 1481./q

John Quene, 1557./r

David Jeffrie, obt. Mar. 1558./s

Dean and Chapter of Rochester. Roger Jones, obt. Aug. 1566.
Philip Hilles, ind. Oct. 1566,
obt. June 1589.
George Case, A. M. 1589, obt.
June 1632.
Haute Wyatt, ind. Oct. 3, 1632,
obt. Aug. 1638.
John Balcanqual, S. T. P. induct.
1638, resig. 1640.
Walter Balcanqual, January 21,
1640, resig. 1646.
Thomas Heymes, obt. 1678.
Humphry Lynde, 1678, ob. 1686./t
John Wyvall, A. M. ind. Jan.
11, 1690, obt. 1704./u
/m Reg. Roff. p. 182.
/n Ang. Sacr. vol. i. p. 349.
/o Reg. Roff. p. 181.
/p Of All Souls college, Oxon. He
lies buried in this church.
/q Hist. of Maidstone, p. 39.
/r Reg. Roff. p. 588.
/s He lies buried in this church, as
do his four next successors.
/t And curate of Maidstone.
/u Prebendary of Rochester.

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PATRONS, &c. VICARS.

Dean and Chapter of Rochester. Thomas Spratt, A. M. obt. June
12, 1720./w
Edm. Barrell, A. M. obt. 1765./x
The King jure Reg. Wm. Markham, LL. D. 1765,
vacated 1770./y
Brownlow North, D. D. February
1771, vacated 1774./z
Wm. Nance, A. M. May 1775,
resig. Nov. 1780.
Dean and Chapter of Rochester John Benson, D. D. Nov. 1780.
Present vicar./a

/w He was rector of Stone by Dart=
ford, prebendary of Rochester and Win=
chester, and archdeacon of the former.
He was son of Thomas Spratt, bishop
of Rochester.

/x First a prebendary of Norwich, and
then of Rochester. See Sutton at Hone,
vol. ii. p. 367.

/y Prebendary of Durham, and dean
of Rochester, now archbishop of York.

/z Dean of Canterbury, which he
resigned that year, on being made bi=
shop of Litchfield. He held this vi=
carage in commendam till 1774, when
he was advanced to the see of Wor=
cester, now bishop of Winchester. He
was a younger son of Francis, earl of
Guildford.

/a Prebendary of Canterbury. He
exchanged the rectories of Great Chart
and St. Michael, Harbledown, for this

vicarage, with his predecessor.