

St Anne's Church Baslow
an extract from

The Churches of Derbyshire
By John Charles Cox
1875



Baslow Church from the north

Showing the North Aisle and the Tower

St Anne's Church Baslow

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John Charles Fox published his book on the Churches of Derbyshire in 1875, in which he described all the churches in the county. It includes an early history of the church or chapel, references available to him and a description of the fabric.

The text for this article is taken directly from his work on Baslow, but I have added paragraph headings, a contents page and an index.

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The Chapelry of Baslow

Early History of Parish

Baslow was one of the numerous chapelries of the extensive parish of Bakewell, and it is only of late years that it has acquired the position of a distinctive vicarage. There can be no doubt that the chapel of Baslow was in existence at the time that King John bestowed Bakewell and its various chapelries on the Dean and Chapter of Lichfield. When Archbishop Peckham made his stringent visitation throughout the province of Canterbury, the differences between the mother church of Bakewell and its dependencies were settled, and it was then agreed that the Dean and Chapter of Lichfield should contribute at least two and a half marks to the salary of the minister of Baslow, and a like amount be provided by the parishioners. But this agreement did not long hold good, for we find that the Dean and Chapter, in the year 1315, only paid 15s. to the minister at Baslow, and declined all responsibility in connection with the repair of the fabric.

According to the *Valor Ecclesiasticus* (27 Henry VIII.), the chapelry was of the clear value of £27 0s 8d. and it paid a pension of 2s per annum to the Lichfield Chapter.

The Parliamentary Commissioners of 1650 did not specify the value of the different chapelries of Bakewell, but they speak of Baslow as "a parochial chapell thought fitt to be made a parish, with Bubnell, Corber, and Caulver. Mr. James Hewett officiates Toadepoole, Froggat, and Heywood, members of Baslow, thought fitt to be united to Stonye Middleton."

Early History Lords of Manor

In Bassano's manuscript volume of Church Notes, taken about 1710, we find several notes relating to the chapel of Baslow. The "Kinges Armes " were then to be seen in the east window of the south aisle, and in the same aisle was " a fair Quire, no tradition to whom." "In east window of north aisle, in ye toppe of it Christ coming to judgement, his robes yellow and gules. Here is ye Rood loft very perfect with stairs and a door into it. In one of ye south windowes of chancell Eyres coat with a crescent. On ye north side wall is ye Duke of Rutland's arms and crest painted. In east window is Eyres arms impaled with , and in another part is Robert Eyre, of Bubnell." " Robt. Eyre de Bubnell Hall, generosus, dec. oct. die Febr. sepultus fuit. A.D. 1593."

William Eyre, second son of Edmund (otherwise Edward) Eyre of Brookfield and Reaton, Notts., who was tenth son of Robert Eyre by Joan Padley, purchased the manor of Bubnell (a sub-manor of Baslow) in the beginning of the fifteenth century. His eldest son, Edmund Eyre

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of Bubnell, married Margery, daughter of Robert Coyny, by whom he had issue Robert. This Robert of Bubnell, married Dorothy, daughter of George Columbell of Darly, by whom he had six sons and seven daughters.

The mention of the arms of the Duke of Rutland in this church, induces us to briefly allude to the history of the manor of Baslow, in order to show the connection of the Vernon family therewith.

Both Baslow and Bubnell were berewicks of the extensive royal manor of Ashford at the time when the Domesday Survey was made, but in the next century we find that William de Avenell, Lord of Haddon, also held Baslow. On the death of William de Avenell without male issue, towards the close of the twelfth century, his property in Derbyshire, Buckinghamshire, and Northumberland was divided between his two daughters and co-heiresses, Elizabeth and Avice. Elizabeth was married to Sir Simon Basset, and Avice to Richard de Vernon. There appears to have been a dispute between the two families as to the due division of the Avenell estates, and we find from a roll of King John (of uncertain date, but probably of the first year of his reign), that this dispute was settled, so far as the manor of Baslow was concerned, by its equal division between them. But the Bassets displeased that quarrelsome monarch, and we find that, in the last year of his reign, the land at Baslow which had been in the hands of the Bassets, was granted to Hugh de Neville. In the succeeding reign, however, Richard Basset obtained the license of the Free Warren over the manor of Baslow. We then lose sight for some time of the history of this part of the manor, but we have little doubt that it was through the Nevilles (by the marriage of Gilbert, Lord Talbot, with Maud, only daughter of Sir Thomas Neville) that it passed to the Earls of Shrewsbury, who were seized of it in the reigns of Henry VI. and Edward VI.

With respect to the other portion of the manor, which was held in conjunction with Haddon by the Vernons, it appears that homage was done to William de Ferrers who held it of the King, but Henry III. changed this service into one by which it was held directly from the King. Richard de Vernon had, by his wife Avice, an only daughter who conveyed his estates by marriage to Gilbert le Frances. Gilbert le Frances died in the reign of Edward I., seized, according to the terms of the Inquisitions, of the manor of Haddon and the hamlets of "Baselowe, Rowsley, and Bubbenhull." His son Richard, on succeeding to the property, assumed the name of Vernon, and a roll is extant confirming his grant of Baslow, and of two manors in Buckinghamshire, to his son Richard, and Eleanor his wife, daughter of Giles le Frenes. We will not pursue this manorial history further, as it has only an incidental connection with the church; suffice it to say that Baslow, together with Haddon, passed, on the death of Sir George Vernon in 1567, to Sir John Manners, second son of Thomas

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Manners (Mitchel), Earl of Rutland, and direct ancestor of the present Duke of Rutland, by his marriage with that celebrated co-heiress - Dorothy Vernon.

Curates

Bassano gives the following list of the curates of Baslow, with the years of their incumbency.

| | |
|------------------------|-------|
| Robert Tinmouth, | 1565 |
| Richard Allsop, | 1568 |
| John Elswigge, | 1550. |
| Roger Rowley, | 1582. |
| John Bankes, | 1602. |
| George Longden, | 1606. |
| Richard Smyth, | 1610. |
| John Daken, | 1620. |
| Robert Mower, | 1630. |
| - Huet, . . . | |
| - Barlow, | 1653. |
| - Prince, (18 months). | |
| - Raynes, | 1662. |
| Robert Mathewman, - | |
| John Cantrell, - | - |
| William Feme, | 1668. |
| William Walker, | 1677. |
| Joseph Feme, | 1678. |
| Joseph Nicols, | 1681. |

Notes (Mitchel)

In Mr. Mitchell's Derbyshire Collections, now at the British Museum, are several notes relative to this church, apparently taken from the churchwardens' account.

" May 4th, 1569. The dispute about repairs of church at Bakewell, settled by John Manners, Esq.

" 1759. Inhabitants subscribed for a new clock, and hearse, harness, etc.

" 1759. A new pulpit and two desks erected, and a pulpit cloth and cushion of velvet and gold given by William Taylor, of London, gent., and Yeoman of the King's Guard."

Mr. Mitchell also speaks of "the *confessional* still remaining with two Gothic niches in the chancel," which strange misnomer we suppose he applied to the sedilia.

In Lysons' volume of Church Notes, taken about 1815, are some pencil drawings of these two stalls or sedilia. Though they have pointed arches, the intervening shaft seems to be of Norman date. Unfortunately these sedilia were swept away when the chancel was rebuilt.

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The appointment of the minister of Baslow remained in the hands of the Vicar of Bakewell until the year 1811, when the patronage of Baslow as well as Buxton were by Act of Parliament vested in the Duke of Devonshire.

Dedication

The *Liber Regis* is silent as to the dedication of this ancient chapel; certain directories give St. James as the patron saint, but others ascribe it to St. Anne. We believe the latter dedication to be the correct one, as the village feast takes place in the first clear week in August, which is the date of St. Anne's day (old style).

Description of Church

The church, which was restored upwards of 20 years ago, consists of nave, side aisles, south porch, chancel, and tower, surmounted by a broached spire, at the west end of the north aisle.

There are now no details to connect this fabric with the days when the Norman style of architecture prevailed.

The Tower & Spire

The oldest portion of the building appears to be the tower and spire, which occupy an unusual position, viz., at the west end of the north aisle, instead of at the end of the nave. Probably what is now the north aisle served as the nave when this tower was first erected. We believe the date of this part of the church to be of the latter half of the thirteenth century, at the close of the Early English period. The tower is supported on the west side by two buttresses placed diagonally at the angles. In the west wall there is a small double-lancet window, with trefoiled heads, and above it is a single-lancet light. There are no other windows to the tower, but immediately above the broached angles of the octagon spire are four pointed openings, the jambs of which are built perpendicular, so that they stand out from the spire after the fashion of dormer windows. The apex of these dormers is unpierced, but the lower part is divided into two lights with trefoiled heads. There are also four similar windows, hut of a single light each and much smaller, near the top of the spire. The weather moulding stones on the east side the tower, above the present roof of the aisle, show that it formerly supported the gable of a high-pitched roof. There is also an Early English buttress at the south-west angle of the nave.

The Nave

The nave now projects beyond the north-west aisle so as to conceal half of the south side of the tower. The three-light west window of the nave, with its four quatrefoils in the upper tracery, is a good specimen of the geometrical Decorated. This window seems to have been a new insertion when the church was restored, but there is an abundance of old work of this

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period about the fabric, in fact nearly the whole of it may be attributed to the fourteenth century, though varying somewhat in date. To the earlier part of the century may be assigned the south entrance within the porch, the east and west windows of the south aisle, the windows of the north aisle, and, in the interior, the three arches with their supporting pillars, on the side of the nave, which separate it from the aisles. To the latest period of the Decorated, or rather to the commencement of the Perpendicular (about the close of the same century), we must attribute the south porch, the heavy battlements of the porch, nave, and aisles, together with a square-headed two-light window to the right hand of the porch, and perhaps the clerestory windows, of which there are four on the south side and three on the north. The battlement, much of which has been renewed at later dates, is ornamented with crocketed pinnacles; those in the centre of the parapets of both nave and aisle are placed diagonally, and terminate at the base in small gargoyle heads. The old stone bell-cote for the Sanctus bell, now empty, should be noted on the east gable of the nave, though it is nearly overshadowed by the new roof of the chancel.

The Interior Roof

There is not much of interest in the interior of the church. The roofs of both the aisles are slightly gabled, and retain much of the old timber. The roof of the nave is a flat one of the Perpendicular style.

The Font

There is an old octagon font near the south entrance, on an octagon base which has Decorated mouldings, but we think that the base stone is a modern one. This font was recovered for its sacred uses, at the time when the church was restored, from the vicarage cellar. We were told by the present incumbent that it had been therein used for the salting of bacon; but further inquiry inclines us to the more charitable surmise that it had been placed there with the intention of preserving it.

Rood Loft Screen

The rood-loft screen, the coloured glass, and the memorial to Robert Eyre, which were here a century and-a-half ago, as mentioned above, have all disappeared, and there are no monuments of any antiquity.

Tablets

A small iron plate, in an oak frame, against the north wall of the north aisle, bears the following curious inscription :-

" Underneath here was interred ye Body of Tho. Marple son to John and Elizabeth Marple of this town who departed this life Aug. 17th A.D. 1742.

O youth consider and be wise,

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*Lest sudden death do you surprise
Short was my time as it appears
I not exceeding 16 years,
My friends I desired to cease their tears
I shall arise when Christ appears.*

*And near this place lyeth ye body of Helen Marple Grandmother to Tho. Charles Cook,
schulsit."*

There are also small mural brasses to the memory of Richard of Bubnell Gate, smith. who died in 1753, aged 71, and of Mary and John Grundy, of Baslow, who died in 1784 and 1790. On the north wall of the chancel there is a monument, which, though of modern date, is worth transcribing, as it relates to two incumbencies of unusual length, under the last of which the church was restored : —

"In memory of the Rev. John Barker, M.A., for thirty years incumbent of this chapelry. He died June 6th, 1824, aged 63 years.

"Also of his eldest son, the Rev. Anthony Auriol Barker, M.A., who succeeded his father, and after an equal period of useful labour, during the last years of which he was permitted to effect the restoration of this church, he entered into his rest Dec. 21st, 1855.

"I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase.'—1 Cor. 3, 6."

Coffin Lid

The porch contains a genuine relic of antiquity. In the south wall is built in a large monumental slab or coffin lid, discovered during the alterations. It bears no inscription, but has a cross sculptured in slight relief with floriated limbs. On the sinister side of the stem are two keys. The key used to be considered as the symbol of the female sex, but this has been abundantly disproved, and there can be little doubt that it indicates the duties of the person commemorated, such as the steward or comptroller of a large household, or a local official or magistrate of some importance. The date of this stone we believe to be of the first quarter of the thirteenth century. It is not then an improbable conjecture to imagine that this stone was carved to the memory of some High Bailiff of the Peak, or perhaps, still more probably, to the steward of the household of Richard de Vernon (who married the co-heiress of Basset), and the two keys (which are but rarely met with on monumental slabs), might then signify his double stewardship of the manors of Haddon and Baslow.

Sepulchral Stones

There are also several incised sepulchral stones forming the lintels of the clerestory windows, which were freed from plaster when the church was restored. From what can be seen of these, stones, three on the north side and two on the south, it appears that they are all of one date, probably of the commencement of the twelfth century, and have the stems of

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plainly incised crosses down the centre. All of them bear symbols. On one is a staff, shears, and key, signifying an official who was a wool merchant; on another, only a key; on it third, two keys; on a fourth, a bow for a forester; and on a fifth a curiously shaped hammer, perhaps for an armourer. A sixth lintel on the south side also bears an incised Latin cross formed simply of two lines at right angles.

The Bells

The tower contains a peal of six bells, bearing the following inscriptions :—

- I. "Thomas Mears, Founder, London.
 Josh. Broomhead Church Wardens
 John Elliott
 John Marples Ringers
 John Brightmore
 Geo. Merral
 Wm. Cocker
 Thos. Merral
 Josh. Marples
- II. "Robert Froggatt, Joshua Gregory, Chapel Wardens, 1745. Thomas Hedderly, Founder."
- III. This bell bears the monogram Ihc, a fleur-de-lis stamp, and a cross fleury. Below the cross fleury is the bell-founder's mark, consisting of the Lombardic initials R.H. surmounted by a crown.
- IV. "Ihc. Gloria in excelsis Deo. 1620." Bell-founder's mark, a shield with the initials G. H., above a fylfot cross.
- V. "Sit nomen Ihc benedictum." The same founder's mark as on the third bell.
- VI. "The Duke of Rutland's Gift, 1754, Tho. Hedderly, Founder."

The donor of this last bell was John Manners, 3rd Duke and 11th Earl of Rutland, and lord of the manor of Baslow. He was born in 1696, and died in 1779.

To the south of the churchyard, are the four square steps of the old cross, which now support a comparatively modern base and shaft about a yard high. On the top of this is a metallic sundial, bearing the date - June 25th, 1789. Bassano's notes contain the following reference to this cross, which appears to have been then nearly perfect: - " In ye churchyard is a fair cross of five greeces (steps) with a top stone and standard."

Charity Endowment

We have not been able to discover any trace of a chantry endowment at Baslow, either in the Chantry Rolls or elsewhere, and therefore we merely reproduce the following story from the pen of Mr. Peter Furness, of Eyam, for what it is worth. Mr. Furness speaks of it as an anecdote related by Francis, last Earl of Newburgh.

" One of the of Hassop left by will a yearly sum for ever to the officiating priest at Baslow to say mass and pray for the repose of himself and wife. It is presumed that at the Reformation

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both the praying and paying fell into desuetude, but a late incumbent of Baslow having discovered that a bequest had been made, at once wrote to Earl Newburgh (descendant of the Eyre of Hassop) to claim payment of the stipend. His lordship courteously replied to the applicant, stating his belief that the claim was correct, but took no further notice of the matter. Encouraged by the pleasing tenor of the note, the clergyman next applied personally for the money to his lordship, who in his blandest manner informed him that he did not in the least contemplate evading payment, but he must recollect that before he did so he should insist on the prayers and masses being duly performed according to the directions in the will of the donor. It is needless to say that the clergyman went away, 'shorn of his beams' "

But whether the above tale is apocryphal or not, a somewhat similar instance of the disregard of a pious founder's bequest of a much later period occurs in the Charity Commissioners' report on Baslow, taken in 1827. One Humphrey an, by will of the year 1777, left lands within the manor of Hartington, the rents of which were to be appropriated in stipulated quantities to the schoolmaster, minister, and poor of Baslow. The bequest to the clergyman was - "To the minister of Baslow who should preach an anniversary sermon on 5th November, 10s. yearly, as his stipend for the preaching thereof." The Commissioners say that the minister was receiving his proportion of the rent, which then amounted to 16s., but "no such sermon is now preached." The observance of this day is best honoured in the breach, and we merely draw attention to it as another of the innumerable instances in which the express intentions of a benefactor are put on one side as inconsistent with the opinions of a subsequent generation.

The Dog Whip

In the vestry there still remains the weapon of that ancient parish functionary, of whom we read in so many churchwardens' accounts in almost every county of England –

the dog-whipper. It was his duty to whip the dogs out of church, and generally to look after the orderly behaviour of both bipeds and quadrupeds during divine service. The whip in question is a stout lash, some three feet in length, fastened to a short ash stick, with leather bound round the handle. It is said that there are those yet living in the parish, who can remember the whip being used. We believe it to be an unique curiosity, as we cannot hear of another parish in which the whip is still extant.

The Flagon

A large pewter flagon, nearly two hundred years old, and which had been discarded from its sacramental functions when silver plate was substituted, has recently been rescued from oblivion, rebrnished, and appropriated to the purpose of supplying water for the font. It bears on it the following names and dates :—

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| | |
|--|--------------------------|
| "Mr. Richard Froggatt Robert Oliver | Chappell wardens 1685 |
| "E. M. Wrench, F.R.C.S, C. Scott, | Churchwardens, 1875 |

The Registers

The Registers of Baslow, which are in a most dilapidated condition, begin in 1569. They contain numerous interpolations, utterly irrelevant to matters ecclesiastical, especially in the 18th century. In 1721 a whole page is occupied by directions for pruning and manuring nectarine trees. In 1730, after notice of a bequest to the poor of the chapelry, is written in another hand,

" Vidi sed vidisse, pudet puduitque videre."

On 22nd August, 1749, after the entry of a wedding - "The same night was the most terrible for lightning, thunder, and rain there was ever known in this age."

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