

THE CHAPELS ROYAL OF BRITAIN.¹

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I. CHAPELS OF ST. JOHN AND ST. PETER IN THE TOWER OF LONDON.

THERE are surely no buildings in Britain with so much present interest and past memories, so full of glad tidings and sad recollections, or containing so many relics of tragedy as do these Royal Chapels throughout the British Isles. Many more have passed away or are no longer in Royal hands, for in the olden days the monarchs were prone to take up their abode at many places, building their chapels wherein to worship. Those that remain have in many cases been shorn of the pomp and glory with which they were once resplendent, and their grim, grey old stones alone are left to tell their story of sorrow and joy, tears and laughter, tortures, gladness, sickness, birth, life and death, and to bear testimony also that through all the changing scenes of life they remain an emblem for us that as our Father was worshipped in the past so is He still and shall be for ever and ever, world without end.

The present articles can only deal with them in a cursory manner, and it is only proposed to give what appears to be the more interesting matter of all the hosts of information that is available.

The Chapels of St. John and St. Peter in the Tower of London are of exceptional interest. There are vague accounts of a chapel of an earlier date, but the present Chapel of St. John was built in the reign of William the Conqueror, under the guiding hand of Gundulph, the Bishop of Rochester. Commenced in 1078 it is situated in the White Tower, and is a very perfect specimen of ecclesiastical Norman architecture. Massively built and situate in the old Keep, it has a charming originality about it that deeply impresses one. It consists of a nave and two broad aisles separated from it by six stalwart, stone, circular pillars which support a gallery of equal breadth to the aisles, the East end forming a semi-circular apse, and with a most beautifully proportioned coved roof.

The Palace, once standing here and used in each reign as a

¹ These articles are inserted for their historical value; they will be read with interest.

Royal residence from the time of William Rufus to the reign of Charles II, was also commenced about the same time by William the Conqueror, but it has long since passed away.

The Chapel of St. Peter-ad-Vincula is a small structure not far distant from the White Tower, and was built in 1512 to replace a former one built by Edward I, which had been burnt down. There was also a chapel here before King Edward's time, and was probably of the same time as that dedicated to St. John the Evangelist. The history of this chapel is of scarcely less interest to that of Westminster Abbey, for here the remains of many whose names are indelibly written on the pages of English history were laid to rest. The chapel consists of a nave and north aisle separated by a row of low Tudor arches resting on a row of columns, and it measures sixty-six feet in length, fifty-four feet in width, with a height of twenty-five feet. The dedication of the Chapel to St. Peter in "Chains or Bonds" would point to the probability of its having been the place of worship for the prisoners in the fortress, while the Chapel of St. John would be reserved for the use of the Sovereign and his Court when in residence. There are two "altars" in the church, dedicated to St. Mary and St. Peter respectively, and a hagioscope or squint in the east wall enabled the priest officiating at St. Mary's "altar" to see the priest at St. Peter's.

Macaulay, in his *History of England*, speaks of the interments that took place in the chapel thus:—"Thither have been carried by the rude hands of gaolers, through successive ages, without one mourner following, the bleeding relics of men who had been the captains of armies, the leaders of parties, the oracles of senates and the ornaments of Courts." A memorial tablet near the door reads as follows:—

LIST OF REMARKABLE PERSONS BURIED IN THIS CHAPEL.

1. GERALD FITZGERALD, EARL OF KILDARE	1534
2. JOHN FISHER, BISHOP OF ROCHESTER	1535
3. SIR THOMAS MORE, THE CHANCELLOR	1535
4. GEORGE BOLEYN, VISCOUNT ROCHFORD	1536
5. QUEEN ANNE BOLEYN	1536
6. THOMAS CROMWELL, EARL OF ESSEX	1540
7. MARGARET OF CLARENCE, COUNTESS OF SALISBURY	1541
8. QUEEN KATHERINE HOWARD	1542
9. JANE, VISCOUNTESS ROCHFORD	1542
10. THOMAS, LORD SEYMOUR OF SUDELEY	1549
11. EDWARD SEYMOUR, DUKE OF SOMERSET	1551

12. SIR RALPH VANE	1552
13. SIR THOMAS ARUNDEL	1552
14. JOHN DUDLEY, DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND	1553
15. LORD GUILDFORD DUDLEY	1554
16. LADY JANE GREY	1554
17. HENRY GREY, DUKE OF SUFFOLK	1554
18. THOMAS HOWARD, DUKE OF NORFOLK.	1572
19. SIR JOHN PERROT	1592
20. PHILIP, EARL OF ARUNDEL	1595
21. ROBERT DEVEREUX, EARL OF ESSEX	1601
22. SIR THOMAS OVERBURY	1613
23. THOMAS, LORD GREY OF WILTON	1614
24. SIR JOHN ELIOT.	1632
25. WILLIAM, VISCOUNT STAFFORD	1680
26. ARTHUR, EARL OF ESSEX	1683
27. JAMES, DUKE OF MONMOUTH	1685
28. GEORGE, LORD JEFFREYS	1689
29. JOHN ROTIER	1703
30. EDWARD, LORD GRIFFIN	1710
31. WILLIAM, MARQUIS OF TULLIBARDINE	1746
32. WILLIAM, EARL OF KILMARNOCK	1746
33. ARTHUR, LORD BALMERINO	1746
34. SIMON, LORD FRASER OF LOVAT	1747

Strange indeed are the vagaries of life, and stranger still they may become in death. Here in the centre before the "altar," lie the remains of the two Dukes of Somerset and Northumberland, through life ever engaged in strife and rivalry and now lying side by side in death. And on either side of these two lie the remains of the two ill-fated Queens of King Henry VIII, while near to are the bodies of the innocent Lady Jane Grey, "the nine-days Queen," and her husband, Lord Dudley, the victims of Queen Mary. And Lord Cromwell, the blacksmith's son, who served as a common soldier and rose eventually to be Grand Chamberlain of England, and then was arrested for treason and despite all his prayers for mercy became yet another name to be added to the list of Henry VIII's victims. The notorious Judge Jeffreys was buried here after dying of delirium tremens in the very prison to which he had sent so many, but his body was afterwards removed to the Church of St. Mary, Aldermanbury, on the application of his friends. Viscount Stafford, who, like his Royal master, Charles I, was executed, was also buried here, as was the body of Sir Thomas More, the witty chancellor of Henry VIII's reign, who even is recorded as making a jest as he walked to the scaffold.

Numerous records there are of christenings, marriages, and burials, the latter dating from the year 1550, while the marriages

date from 1586 and the christenings from 1587. The list given above only enumerate those buried actually in the chapel, and a large number were interred in the cemetery without, while still more were removed altogether.

Here exist the records, then, of days happily gone past when innocent people suffered death through spite and jealousy and others were foully butchered in the name of Christ, while others forfeited their lives because they knew not Christ and pursued the paths of evil. If we can all meet death whensoever it shall come with the quiet fortitude and deep-rooted faith that so many of these hapless victims of spites and intrigues showed, then indeed, may we look forward to the time when we shall be called upon to give an account of our stewardship in the full confidence that it will be said, "Well done thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord."

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