

KEMPSFORD



By Rev. A. B. Mynors

Kempsford lies in Gloucestershire upon the Thames halfway between Gricklade and Lechlade where the river parts Gloucestershire from Wiltshire. Some care is needed in the unravelling of its history because the name of the parish appears to have afforded scope for even more variations in spelling than is usual. At least 47 different forms of the name have been found.

It is of more interest however to trace the meaning of the name. Chenemersforde or Kynemesforde appears to mean the ford of the principal river, or of the great boundary as the Thames may properly be called in this part of the country. The name is by others explained as the ford of the great marsh. Others again are content that the name should simply mean Kynemere's ford. For there was a hero of this name in the border wars between the West Saxons and the Mercians His family is often mentioned in the records of St. Peter's abbey, Gloucester, and he had his moated dwelling in the meadow which lies between Painswick beacon and Kimsbury farm. Kimsbury itself means Kenermersbury or Kynemere's Bury. Kemerton near Tewkesbury also probably means Kynamere's enclosure.

The ford itself is of an unusual type. It is entered from the Gloucestershire side below the present manor farm. It is necessary to keep upstream for about 150 yards, following the northeast bank where the bottom is gravelly and the water shallow, avoiding the southwest bank where the water is deep. There are ugly holes with clayey bottom until a point a few yards above the present flight of stone steps leading into a garden. At this point the shallow water and the gravel bed extend across the river and an easy slope leads up on to the Battlefield and Wiltshire. It was through inattention to these peculiarities of the ford - according to local tradition - that there occurred the tragedy of the drowning of Henry, the young son of the good Duke of Lancaster, as will be found recorded later.

1. *Rudder, History of Gloucestershire, 1779, P.509.*

If this configuration of the ford be borne in mind it is easy to see what a strong place of defence was the original Saxon earthwork on the northeast or Gloucestershire bank. For, raised above the river naturally, and further raised artificially and faced with stone perhaps in the twelfth century and battle-mented still later, the present terrace, some 50 yards long, which is now within the vicarage garden and is still known as 'Lady Maud's Walk' completely dominates the ford, and commands a wide field of observation over the flat pasture land in the Wiltshire bank.

Kempsford emerges upon the stage of history for the first time in the year A.D. 800. In those days England was not as yet one kingdom. There was a king of Mercia and his kingdom include, what is now the county of Gloucester. There was also a king of the West Saxons, whose kingdom included what is now the county of Wilts. The Thames was here the boundary between these two kingdoms, and Kempsford guarded an important ford upon this boundary. Not improbably, therefore, history had already been made here. But no record of such events appears to survive until 16 January 800. On that day Ethelmund, earldorman of the Hwiccsians - the Worcestershire and Gloucestershire people belonging to the king-dom of Mercia - rode over on horseback to Kempsford upon an expedition against the Wiltsaetas - the Wiltshire people belonging to the kingdom of the West Saxons. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle notes that on that date the moon was eclipsed at the second hour of the night and that Beorhtric, king of the West Saxons and Worr, the earldorman, died. Does the writer mean that these three events happening upon the same day were merely coincidences? Does he mention them together only to fix the date with precision? Or does he mean that the expedition into Wessex was undertaken because news had arrived of king Beohtric's death? Was it a deliberate attempt to seize upon Wessex territory before the new king Ecgbryht should be firmly seated upon his throne? It is perhaps in favour of this last, theory that Ecgbryht was absent from his kingdom, having taken refuge at the court of the Emperor Charlemagne. Professor Freeman however does not appear to think that this was the case: 'the war seems to have been quite local', he says.

Ethelmund, then, crossed the river 'at the ford which on the lips of the Angles is called Cymeresford' but was met by Weoxtan (or Wearitan or Werstan); earldorman of the Wiltsaeti or Wiltonienses or Wiltonenses - i.e. the Wiltshiremen - with some hundreds of his people. There was a great fight: 'many of these and of those ran upon death and both the leaders were killed but victory rested with the men, of Wiltshire'. Spearheads and iron bits, larger than those now used, were dug up in 1670, in the great hundred-acre meadow still known as the Battlefield 'which fixes the site of the transaction.

Ethelmund was the son of Engeld. His widow Ciolburga became abbess of Berkeley. He himself was buried at Deerhurst priory near Tewkesbury, of which St. Alphege was abbot in the following century. Ethelmund was succeeded by his son Ethelric, who in disposing of his property in 804 gave land to Deerhurst monastery for himself and for his father Ethelmund a condition that he too should be buried at that minster.

After figuring thus in the limelight for a brief period the curtain is rung down upon Kempford until the time of the conquest. The fortress guarding the ford doubtless remained as in part it still remains. But the strategic importance of the ford depended upon its position upon the frontier between the kingdoms of Mercia and Wessex. When those two kingdoms were merged into one there was no longer need for a garrison to be maintained here. It is not unnatural therefore that the importance of Kempford should have declined.

There are, however, references to the place in later Saxon times, which point to 'a tradition that Kempford was the site of a royal palace, and that the palace and manor belonged to Harold, but such references are somewhat vague. Domesday is more definite, recording that the manor belonged to Harold and that 'Osgood had held twenty one hides here of Earl Harold'.

From the time of the Conquest official records are no longer silent. The pages of Domesday show that the manor of Kempford was granted by William the Conqueror to Arnulph or Ernulph de Hesding. He came from a family of rank and influence in France, with its headquarters at Hesdin in Artois or Picardy in the lands of the Counts of Flanders. But despite all researches this great Baron Ernulph de Hesding still remains one of the most mysterious personages in Domesday. He is recorded there as holding some fifty lordships in a dozen different southern English counties, besides being a tenant of the Bishop of Bayeux in Normandy. His fief in Gloucestershire was the barony of Kempford, consisting of twelve knight's fees or 'twentyone hides, in which there are 24 plough tillages and 4 corn mills, the whole producing £56'. He also held lands at Hatherop, Ampney, Oldbury, Badminton, Acton Turville, and Hanham near Bristol. So high was he in the favour of the court that his charters are executed in the presence of William the Conqueror and his queen. Yet he disappears directly afterwards and not only is it unknown precisely of what family he was, but the devolution of his manors has never yet been fully or satisfactorily accounted for. Hesdin in Artois had its line of counts, but the name of Ernulph does not occur in their pedigree and they inherited no portion of his estate. Sir Henry Ellis adopted the notion long since exploded that he was Count of Perche. Professor

Freeman appears satisfied of his identity with the gigantic champion of the Hyde abbey chronicle who, falsely charged with complicity in William de Odo's plot, vanquished his accuser in single combat and then, disgusted with the treatment which he received from William Rufus, resigned his lands in England and died at Antioch as a crusader. An Ernulph de Hesding, however, presumably his son, holds Keevil 35 years later. This Ernulph was hanged at Shrewsbury in 1138 by Stephen for having prolonged the defence of the castle there after William Fitzalan, sheriff of the county and constable of the castle had privately withdrawn, and the town, but for Ernulph's intervention, would have accepted the king's moderate terms. His three sisters, Aveline, Matilda and Sybil, were thus left as co-heiresses. It may be conjectured that Rufus seized the lands of the first Ernulph in 1095, Ernulph the son receiving a small share only; that a portion was given to his sister Sybil on her marriage to Walter de Salisbury - for her son Patrick Earl of Salisbury was in possession in 1166 of part of the barony of Kempsford 'the heritage of his mother'; while the greater part of the first Ernulph's Domesday lands in the western counties passed before 1100 to Patrick de Cadurcis or Chaworth, who married Ernulph's daughter Matilda - for Patrick and Matilda confirm Ernulph's gift of Hatherop and Kempsford to the abbey of St. Peter at Gloucester, to which reference will be found below, and Rufus again confirms the same gift.

THE CHAWORTH FAMILY

Patrick de Cadurcis or Chaurcis or Chaworth was son of Pagan de Montdoubleau or Mondabel, a foreign favourite of Rufus. Pagan had assumed the title of Montdoubleau, from his family's original castle in France, in the Orleanaise. Dugdale calls, him a Breton, but 'Civitas CaducorumI, or Cahors, was the capital of Guienne in southern France.

In the years which followed the estates, or some of them, were alienated from the male heirs of the family. For on the accession of Henry of Anjou (Henry II) in 1154 a charter was granted by him to Pagan de Montdoubleau the younger giving to Pagan all lands in England, which his grandfather Patrick de Cadurcis had held. Some of the alienated lands however had fallen into strong hands, notably those of the Earl of Salisbury. The king's sweeping edict therefore was unwelcome, and in 1166 after a struggle lasting twelve years Pagan had only recovered seven knight's fees, and was uneasy about his holdings. The barony of Kempsford however had been restored to him, perhaps through help of the Earl of Pembroke. It is of interest to note the value attached to that barony at this date: it was rated in the Great Survey at twenty hides, not more than the- equivalent of four knight's fees.

A later Pagan de Montdoubleau, moreover, grandson of the last named, was compelled in 1218 to defend his rights against a law suit brought by William Longsword, Earl of Salisbury, who claimed the barony of Kempford in right of his wife Ela, a descendant of the first Patrick de Cadurcis.

Ernulph de Hesding was a great benefactor to the church, both in England and in France, and especially to the monks of St. Peter's abbey, Gloucester. The history of his grant to this abbey of the church of Kempford with its tithes and glebe is of interest because of the way it illustrates the need, which was apparently felt, of the repeated confirmation of such a gift by successive authorities.

This grant then, originally made by Ernulph de Hesding, is confirmed by his daughter Matilda and his son-in-law Patrick de Cadurcis: 'we have placed it, for our souls' sake, upon the altar in the dedication of the church'. The same grant is next confirmed twice by the king - first by William II and later by Stephen. It is then confirmed by the bishop of Worcester - in whose diocese the parish was at that date. Pagan de Cadurcis, grandson of the original donor, again confirms the gift for the soul of my brother Hugo and for the souls of all my ancestors and for my own soul', and this renewal of the grant is confirmed by Henry II - apparently twice over, It is further confirmed by Rotrou II, consul de Pertico, between 1144 and 1147. And finally - to clinch the transaction for ever beyond all doubt or question - the grant is confirmed by Pope Celestine the third.

Other gifts were also made by the de Cadurcis family to Gloucester abbey. Thus Patrick gives the mill in Horcote, Kempford, 'in the time of William the Abbot'. Pagan gives three mills in Kempford 'in the time when Serlo was Abbot', He also gives one-tenth of two mills in Walleford (Whelford), also in Kempford- ' and '-unam mansuram apud nigrum fossatum', and a virgate of land in Kempford 'free of all charges'.

It is specified that the vicar's tithe, mentioned above, shall include the tithes of cheese, of yearlings, of waters, of little pigs, Of wool, let pasturam octo boum et bobus, do ' mini; but an annual pension of four marks payable at Michaelmas is reserved, though it is not specified for whom.

As an example of grants made to the Church overseas it will be sufficient to mention a charter of exquisite finish and perfect preservation, complete with its big green seal, by means of which Pagan de Chaurcis with the assent of Patrick his eldest son and Gundreda his wife gives to the church and monks of St. Mary of Tironneau in the diocese of Le Mans in Normandy, a rent of £7 out of the manor of Kymemerfford.

Sir Hugh de Standene, Sir Alex de Cheverelle, Sir Robert de Ebor Hervey de Chaurcis, Sir Nicholas parson of Linley ? Will de Arnber and John the Chaplain 'qui hoe scriptum, composuit being witnesses (Lord Frederick Campbell's Charters, Catalogue 0, vii, 2. British Museum).

The last of the de Cadurcis family were Roger who died 1237, his son Patrick who died 1257, and his son Patrick, Lord of Kidwelly in Carmarthen and of Ogmore Castle in Glamorganshire who died 1282, leaving an only daughter and heiress Maud.

Maud was first given in marriage by Edward I in 1282 to Edmund son of Henry Lacy, Earl of Lincoln, 'being then but a girl five years old, which Edmund died very young before he came to maturity'. In 1298 Maud became the wife of Henry Plantagenet (known as Guismond, son of Edmund, Crouchback), Earl of Lancaster.

In 1336 Henry, being blind, came to his wife's old home and resided at Kempford.

Henry, who had long been regarded as the foremost man in the kingdom, now gave himself wholly to the devotional life. In 1330 he began the building of a hospital at Leicester for fifty infirm old men, a master, chaplains, and clerks. At this time also, between 1336 and 1344 Henry pulled down the former chancel of Kempford church and rebuilt it in the decorated style, as it now is, inserting also the present west window. He was succeeded by his only son, Henry of Monmouth, known as Pert Col or 'wry ned who in addition to being Earl of Lancaster and Leicester was also Earl of Derby and of Lincoln. He married Isabel, daughter of Henry Lord Beaumont, and their children were Henry, Maud, and Blanche.

This Henry was drowned at Kempford while yet a boy and saddened by his death, Henry hastened away and forgot his grief in the excitement of the French wars. It was as he quitted the place for ever that his horse cast a shoe which the inhabitants nailed up upon the north door of the church, where it may still be seen, 'in proud remembrance of the honour'. But to the present writer it does not seem easy to say what 'honour' is implied. Another writer says it was nailed to the church door where it remains as a memorial of the event to this day. But what event? Was it supposed to be an omen of good fortune? or of evil fortune to the Duke or to the inhabitants themselves?

In the French wars Henry won high honour and in 1350 was made Duke of Lancaster. This was a greater honour even than it appears, for he was -the first of all the nobility of England, with the exception of the Black Prince who had been created Duke of Cornwall some fourteen years earlier, to be invested with the title of duke. Having earned the yet more enviable title of

'the good duke', Henry died in 1361, leaving his daughters Maud and Blanche as coheiresses.

While living at Kempsford, Blanche, Chaucer's patroness, was wooed by John of Gaunt in 1358.

Henry was esteemed throughout Western Europe as a perfect knight. Brave, courteous, charitable, just, temperate and a wise counsellor, he was loved and trusted beyond all others by Edward III. A deeply religious man given to prayer and good works he wrote a book of devotions called 'Mercy Gramercy'. To the hospital at Leicester founded by his father he added a College with Dean and Canons. In the Gough collections in the Bodleian Library at Oxford there is a remarkable quarto volume entitled 'Epicedia academiae oxoniensis in obitum celsissimi principis Henrici ducis Glocestrensis'¹ which consists of seventy-four pages of poetry in Greek, Latin, Hebrew, and Arabic by sundry Heads of Colleges, Professors, Fellows and Scholars, entirely written in his honour. He must indeed have been an outstanding figure in his generation.

Having arrived at this point' it is worth while to look back and note the number of men and women prominent abroad as well as at home who have been closely connected with Kempsford. It is to the present writer a constant source, not of interest merely but of inspiration, to think of all those who during the past 800 years have knelt in worship within the walls of the church, a stately throng crossing the castle green from the great house and entering by the south porch, Edward I often, Edward II probably as a prisoner, Edward III perhaps as a boy, and Henry IV certainly. Then those great nobles with their wide-flung possessions and influence in church and state, at home and in France, for good or for evil - the Cadurcis, the Plantagenets, the Thynnes. Chaucer too, the first great English poet, and John of Gaunt's foreign wife Constance, daughter of the king of Spain, and Philippa, John's daughter wife of the king of Portugal.

We must now follow the story of these two daughters of Duke 'Henry of Lancaster. The Lady Maud Plantagenet married first Ralph, son and heir of Lord Stafford, and secondly William, Duke of Zealand and Earl of Hainault or Herault, son of the Emperor Lewis, of Bavaria; but she died of the plague on 10 April 1362 without issue, whereupon the whole of the vast possessions of her father reverted to her sister Blanche and her husband.

1. Gough Collection, catalogue, p.265, no. 54.

The Lady Blanche is described as the flower of English womanhood, golden haired, tall and graceful. On 19 May 1359, at the age of 19, she married (by dispensation of the Court because she was his cousin) John of Gaunt, also 19, Earl of Richmond, fourth son of Edward III, who was born at Ghent (Gaunt) in Flanders in March 1340.

John of Gaunt is an attractive personality, but the temptation to digress and write of him more fully has to be resisted, and it must suffice to record the bearing of this marriage upon the history of the period. By it John of Gaunt became father of Henry IV. By it also he became the first subject of the crown in power, wealth and position. For a dozen years he was the uncrowned king of England. And his fate was moulded by this marriage with the heiress of Kemplford. His biographer does not hesitate to ascribe to this his wealth and power, for Blanche was sole heiress of Henry of Lancaster, the most prominent man in England, one of the ablest of her generals. Yet during the period of John's unpopularity it was rumoured that he had poisoned Maud his sister-in-law in order to obtain her share also of the inheritance. It was also rumoured that he was plotting to do the same for his nephew Richard II.

Blanche died in 1369, another victim of the plague, and was buried in St. Paul's, London. Their only son was Henry of Bolingbroke, born at Bolingbroke castle in Lincolnshire on 3rd April 1367 - the very day of the victory won by his father and the Black Prince at Najara. He was Earl of Derby and Duke of Hereford, and became king, as Henry IV, in 1399. He married Mary Bohun, coheiress of the Earl of Hereford. Lady Blanche's daughters were Elizabeth, who first married John Holland, Duke of Exeter, and afterwards Sir John Cornwall; and Philippa who married John, King of Portugal.

Lady Blanche was the patroness of the poet Chaucer. For her Chaucer wrote 'The assembly of Foules' during her wooing by John of Gaunt, 'Chaucer's Dream' to celebrate her wedding, and 'The Book of the Duchess' as a poem of mourning on her death. It is still said in the village of Kemplford that Chaucer resided in the castle here and wrote some of his poems in Lady Maud's walk. This is probable enough, but it is improbable that there is any direct evidence of the fact. The poet afterwards married Philippa de Rouet, sister of Katharine Swynford, John of Gaunt's third wife, thus becoming brother-in-law of his patron.

After Blanche's death in 1369 her husband married as his second wife Constantia, eldest daughter and heiress of Pedro, king of Castile and Leon in Spain. Thereafter for 15 years John of Gaunt was titular king of Spain, and it

1. Sidney Armitage Smith, John of Gaunt.

continued to be the fruitless object of his persistent ambition to become so in reality. He always styled himself king of Castile and Leon; he raised armies, mortgaging his vast possessions for that purpose; he fought one campaign after another; but all in vain. Constantia died in 1394. In 1396 his father conferred upon him title of Duke of Aquitaine, and John of Gaunt went into Aquitaine 'to obtain the good will of the inhabitants, but was suddenly called back into England by the King and as soon as he returned he married as his third wife Katharine Swynford to the wonder of all men, which Katharine formerly waited on Blanche his first wife'. Katharine was daughter and coheir of one de Rouet, a Gasconing called Guyon-king-of-arins for that country, and was at this time widow of Sir Otes Swynford a knight of Lincolnshire. 'The wonder of all men' appears to have been stirred by the previous relationship of John of Gaunt and Katharine. She had been his mistress since 1371 - not, be it noted, during the lifetime of the Lady Blanche - and they already had four children: John, Thomas, Henry and Joan. Katharine lived until May 1403, but John of Gaunt, who, had been created Duke of Lancaster in November 1362, died on 3rd February 1399, aged 60, at the Bishop of Ely 's.lodgings in Holborn juxta London and lies honourably buried in St. Paul's Cathedral near to Blanche his first wife. He is chiefly to be remembered by Kempsford people as the builder between 1385 and 1399 of the great tower, the chief glory of their glorious church, as a memorial to his first wife the Lady Blanche.

The memory of the Lady Maud is kept green in Kempsford because of the tangible reminder afforded by 'Lady Maud's Walk', the raised and fortified terrace in the garden adjoining the church, commanding the ford and the Wiltshire bank of the river. The green walk is believed to be haunted by the 'Lady of the Mist' as she has been named by the villagers because she has usually appeared floating above the river in the pale moonshine. She still awaits the return of her young brother Henry from the cruel embrace of the treacherous waters of the ford. Mr.Alfred Williams, however, in his delightful 'Round about the Upper Thames', tells a very different story, a dramatic story powerfully told: but his facts are not true to history. He confuses Maud Plantagenet with her grandmother Maud Cadurcis. He executes Henry at Pontefract, while it really was his elder brother Thomas who was there beheaded. It may be suspected that the whole story is fiction. It will be seen also from what has been said that two theories cherished by some Kempsford people are due to misunderstanding or to confused tradition. John of Gaunt was not the husband of the Lady Maud, as is popularly supposed, but of her sister Blanche. It was not John of Gaunt's horse that cast the shoe still affixed to the north door of the church, but that of his father-in-law, Henry, the good Duke of Lancaster.

THE MANOR

Under Edward the Confessor the manor of Kempsford yielded £30 yearly, and under William. I, £66. 6s. 8d. In Domesday it is taxed at twenty-one hides, there being seventy four plough tillages and four watermills, the meadows yielding £9 yearly together with a hundred and twenty weight of cheese.

In 1350 (23 Edward III) Henry, Duke of Lancaster, granted the manor to the Collegiate church of St. Mary in Leicester for the maintenance of a hospital there called Newark or New Work. And it remained in the possession of the Church until the dissolution of the religious houses when, in 1549, Edward the Sixth sold these estates to Sir John Botteville, other wise Thynne, a favourite of the Protector Somerset. Thynne had been Secretary to the Duke of Somerset and manager of his great estates. He distinguished himself in the Scottish Expedition in 1544 and was knighted on the field at the battle of Musselburgh. He seems to have been a man of great shrewdness and ability, 'a very eminent person'.

The manor descended to his son John, to his son Thomas, to his son Henry who died in 1680, to his son Thomas 1st Viscount Weymouth -who died in 1714, to his great-nephew who died in 1741, and again to Thomas 3rd Viscount Weymouth.

The grant of the manor of Kempsford and other lands in Gloucestershire to the Thynne family is enrolled on the Patent Rolls, 19 May, 3 Edward VI, 1549. The clear yearly value of the whole was £228. 15s. 6^{1/2}d, and the amount 'paid to the hands of the Treasurer of our Court of Augmentations' by Sir John Thynne was £4,340. 8s. 9^{1/2}d. The grant is as follows:

'Of our most abundant and ample grace and will to John Thynne Kt and Lady Christiana his wife under our Great Seal of England we do give and grant all that our Manor of Kemmysford with all its rights members and appurtenances lately belonging and appertaining to the late College of the New Work of Leicester now dissolved ... and all and singular our messuages houses buildings.

1. Patent Rolls, 4 March 1355. Licence for the special affection which the king bears for Henry, Duke of Lancaster and the Duke's mani- services, for the alienation in mortmain by him to the master or warden and chaplains of the hospital of the Annunciation of the Virgin Mary, Leycestre founded by his father, Henry Earl of Lancaster, of the manors of Kynemersford. (Calendar, 1354-8, p. 184).

barns stables dovecotes ponds fishponds garths orchards gardens lands tenements mills meadows feedings pastures commons wastes furzes heaths marches waters fisheries fishings woods underwoods rents reversions services courts leets views of frankpledge chattels waived estrays chattels of felons and fugitives free warrens and all other rights jurisdictions franchises liberties privileges profits commodities emoluments and hereditaments whatsoever with the appurtenances in Kemmysforde Welford and Herecourte . . . as fully freely and entirely and In as ample manner and form as any Dean Master Warden or Guardian or other ministers of the said late College heretofore having or possessing the -premises . . . and assize and assay of bread wine and ale'. (Calendar, 1548-9, P. 329).

Yet even after this some kind of suzerainty seems to have been reserved; for in the Court Rolls of the Manor of Cirencester* under the heading 'Brightosbarow Hundred' it is recorded:

'View of Frank Pledge there held the 25th day of April in the 1st year of the reign of our Lady Elizalbeth by the grace of God of England France and Ireland Queen Defender of the Faith etc. Kemesforde The Tithing man there did come with 4 from his Tithing and did seek of the lord of that liberty licence that the steward of the Manor of his lord of Kemesforde aforesaid should keep his view there And he doth render thereof for certain for the who 'le year 5 shillings according to the ancient account and composition thereof'.

Seven similar entries follow in succeeding years, and from this it may be surmised that a certain measure of over lordship was claimed by the manor of Cirencester, represented by an annual payment of five shillings, but that the Lord of the Manor of Kempford endeavoured to maintain his own Frank Pledge and with it his independence of the Manor of Cirencester.

*These Rolls were presented to the Society by Mr. E.C. Sewell 1st December 1836 and by his wish the Council agreed (6 October 1913) to deposit them, with the translation prepared, in the Bingham Library, Cirencester, it being understood that in the event of the dissolution of the Library the Rolls would be returned to the Society. Editor.

1. For further information as to the Thynne family see the of Gloucestershire by Atkyns and Rudder.

It was Sir Thomas Thynne who pulled down the old castle in the reign of James I. Of the big house then erected Rudder says that it was a very large and handsome house, now uninhabited and in a very ruinous condition. 'This manorial mansion', writes Bigland in 1786, 'within a few years levelled with the ground was a quadrangular structure of very large dimensions, ornamented in the style of the day'. A plate of it appears in Atkyns' Gloucestershire. Rachel Bowley in 1853 says 'it was taken down about seventy years ago. In 1812 there were many persons in Kempsford who well remembered it'. Taunt states that Lord Coleraine 'through extravagance was reduced to pull down the house which was sold for the value of the materials. The trees were also cut down, the gardens dismantled, and everthing allowed to go to ruin. The present manor farm was built out of the materials, but much was also loaded on to barges and floated down the river to Buscot for the building of Mr.Loveden Price's house there, Buscot Park. Mr.Price was a great champion of the improvement of the navigation of the upper Thames.

The Calendars Of Close Rolls and of Patent Rolls provide several side lights which are not without interest. On 10th April 1243 Henry III granted at Bordeaux to Patrick do Cadurcis and his heirs a weekly market at Kempsford on Tuesday and a yearly three-days fair, to wit on the Eve day and morrow of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, but he is cautious enough to safeguard himself by adding 'unless these be a nuisance to neighbouring markets and fairs'. The fair survives to the present day - in name at least - in the shape of 'Feast Sunday the Sunday following 19th September.

The castle, we may infer, was of sufficient importance to serve as a royal residence upon more than one occasion. For on 11 February 1276¹ and again in December 1305 Edward 1 dates from Kempsford a number of appointments, licences, and writs of various matters: for example, the appointment of a sheriff for Southampton, a bailiff of Clarendon, a sheriff for Leicester, bailiff of Woodstock, an abbot of Berwick on Tweed, a writ referring to the bishopric of Durham, a licence to a certain lady to marry whom she will. Then there follows a projection evidently in reference to one of the foregoing, until Ascension Day for Henry de Guldeford going on the king's service to the bishopric of Durham. There is a writ also dealing with persons who cut down trees, fished in the king's stew, and carrie away fish and other goods.

On 21 August 1349 the king dates from Westminster a pardon to Hervey de Mohun for acquiring for life from Henry Earl of Lancaster £10 of rent out 'of the manor of Kinemasford which manor is said to be held in chief - with a licence for him to retain the same.

1. Calendar Close Rolls, 1272-9, p. 269; 1302-71 PP.357-9

And as examples of later references to Kempsford in chantry certificates the following may be quoted:

In 1394 Richard II grants a licence to William Taillour of Kymesford, who was born in Ireland, to remain for life in England notwithstanding the proclamation requiring all men born there to return by the next Feast of the Assumption. under penalty of forfeiting all that they have. (Calendar Patent Rolls, 1391-6, p.452).

In 1396 a pardon is granted by Richard II to John Osgod the younger of Kynemersford for stealing there on Thursday after the Assumption six muttons value five shillings the goods of John Sheperde of the county of Somerset. Was this Osgod, we wonder, a descendant of the Osgood who had been King Harold's chief tenant? (Calendar Patent Rolls, 1391-6, P. 70 5)

In 1761 Thomas, third viscount Weymouth, sold the manor to Gabriel Hanger, who in 1762 was created Baron Coleraine in the peerage of Ireland. He died in 1773 aged 71 and was succeeded by his sons, (1) John, who died in Paris in 1794, aged 51; '(2) William, died 1814 aged 70 and buried at Kempsford;¹ (3) George whose burial in 1824 is recorded below. At his death the peerage became extinct. He was known as 'Blue Hanger' and after imprisonment in the King's Bench in 1798 and 1799 for debt traded in 1800 as a coal merchant and then lived in Paris to escape his creditors. He was among the convivial companions of George IV 'but ' his eccentric manners became somewhat too free and coarse for the royal taste'. He was often caricatured because of the singularity of his dress. He published several whimsical pamphlets.²

The property then passed to Anne, only daughter of the first lord, who married Colonel Arthur Vansittart - born 1726, died 12 November 1804 at Shottesbrooke House;³ and after being in 'the possession of that family the

1. Will proved 17 December 1814 by Vansittart, clerk, the nephew and residuary legatee.

2. Life, adventures, and opinions of Colonel George Hanger contraning, 7, portrait of the author on a gibbet; Advice to the lovely Cyprians; Free remarks on polygamy, compulsive wedlock, etc. See Lewis Mielville, Beaux of the Regency.

3. Colonel Eden Vansittart, A history of the Vansittart family, 1910.

manor was sold by them to Mr. East who owned it in 1853. Sir Gilbert East was drowned at Ryde in 1866 and it was his son and successor who sold the property to the Faulkner family in 1870.

The most recent Court Leet and View of Frankpledge of the manor was held in Sir Gilbert East's lordship on 2nd October 1851 before George Frederick Crowdy, gentleman, deputy steward. The minutes of this court deal in detail with the appointment of tithingmen, haywards and constable, with the cutting of weeds and throwing of flams in the river Coln and repairing of its banks, the cutting, throwing and cleansing of sundry ground drains and watercourses and the keeping up of stanks and puddle gutters, under specified penalties; also with the prevention of the turning out in any lane or road of any beast whether horse, ass, bull, ox, or cow; and the fees payable to the hayward for any breach of the said order.

THE CHURCH

No trace of the church attributed to the time of Edward the Confessor now remains but the present church may be presumed to stand upon the site then chosen - at the extreme end of the long village street; so chosen because it was within the castle walls.

The church consists of a Norman nave, c.1120, retaining four of the original deeply splayed windows, north and south doors, and flat buttresses at the west end. The north door has good chevroned mouldings and shafts with spiral mouldings and varied capitals; but the tympanum is plain. The south door is finer in every way, with a grotesque mask at the top and a 'scratch' sundial above it; but the tympanum intended for sculpture or fresco appears not to have been completed. The nave clerestory and fine roof with a good parapet are Perpendicular and were probably built by St. Mary's Hospital, Leicester about 1450. The south porch is spacious and has on the west side an Early English window. It formed the entrance from the castle. The north porch, dated about 1520, was built by some member of the Hichman or Hickman family. It has a four centred slightly depressed arch, but it has been much altered and mutilated. . In the restoration of 1860 the gable of this porch was entirely rebuilt in exact conformity with the old gable. A new gable cross also exactly copied from the old was erected. The roof being in perfect repair was untouched. The ground on every side was lowered to the base of the pillars at the outer arch of the porch. In doing this a stone coffin was uncovered lying beneath the easternmost wall of the porch - the head of the coffin being within the porch, the feet protruding into 'the church yard. Another stone coffin is known to exist a little to the northwest of this one.

The west window is decorated, c.1340. The chancel only 20 feet shorter than the nave - is also decorated, c.1336 to 1344, but some apparently Early English masonry survives in the east walls, which are rough in character; the earlier walls being apparently pulled down to the string-course and the new and windows built up on the old. The early decorated windows and the north door are good, and the east window is curious with a double hood, the inner being cinquefoiled. Beneath the east window runs a string-course swelling into a ledge in the centre for a super-altar. The roof is in cradle form.

The glory of the church, however, is its noble tower, built by John of Gaunt about 1390 to 1399. It has particularly massive piers, two grand windows, an elaborately groined roof with shields of arms, roses, and numerous badges. The masonry throughout is very fine but the niche for the patron saint has unfortunately been robbed of its statue. The family of Cooling or Coeling or Couling, still numerous in the village, retains a tradition that its forefather was a mason brought from Oxford for this work. The tower is finished with a lofty pierced parapet and soaring pinnacles. It is interesting to conjecture what existed here before this tower. Presumably there was a central tower - on the usual Norman plan but no trace of it survives. The windows on each side to the west of the tower, now filled with bad glass painted by the Rev. H.F. St. John and Mr. Vernon Benbow in 1862, are apparently of the same date as the tower. At the eastern springer of each of these windows remains a corbel to carry the timbers of the rood-loft.

THE INTERIOR

The interior of the tower is strikingly beautiful with four principal stone ribs and eight subordinate ones with bowtells running down the window splays capped and based. The corners of the groining display the shields of Edward the Confessor, Clare, Earls of Gloucester, Plantagenet and Lancaster. The circular centre is bordered with sixteen red roses of Lancaster, the bosses, ribs, and small shields are painted in proper tinctures and charged with armorial bearings and the spaces are decorated with Madonna lilies. This fine emblazonry is also the work of St. John and Mr. Benbow in 1862.

1. *Azure, a cross florey between martlets or.*
2. *Three chevrons.*
3. *A gauntlet within a bordure; or the stool of a tree eradicated within a bordure, bezanted.*
4. *3 lions in pale, in chief a label of 3 Points.*

The original stone seats against the north and south walls of the tower survive - a feature more frequently retained in the churches ..of Normandy and Brittany than in England - but they were re-worked in 1866 by John Price of Down Ampney 'a good man and clever workman'.

An hour-glass near the pulpit and the Royal Arms finely carved in wood over the vestry door should be noticed.

The south chapel was built in 1858 by Dr. Woodford, vicar, afterwards vicar of Leeds and bishop of Ely, who deposited a glass bottle containing papers and coins in the buttress at the east end inside the stone which is marked with a cross.

It remains to mention a curious conundrum in the north porch. The head of a holy-water stoup is here, built in above its original level. But there is also a richly canopied 15th or 16th century ogee niche flanked by pinnacles with traces of ancient colouring, which is much more puzzling. Is it a reliquary? Is it 'a niche for the Rood'? Or is it an Easter sepulchre which has been removed from the chancel? The late Charles E. Keyser ¹ notes that it is an example of an appendage in many of the churches in the district, but rarely found elsewhere in England and queries whether at that time some part of the service was not held in the porch.

The monuments and inscriptions², effigies ³ and brasses⁴ have all been recorded and it seems necessary to mention only three of them, here.

In the floor on the south side of the altar is a good brass to Walter Hickman who died 27 September 1521, his wife Cristyan, and their four sons.

Against the centre of the north wall of the chancel is a large and pretentious but coarse and clumsy perpendicular tomb having an arched recess below, intended for a recumbent full length figure and surmounted by a loner scroll intended for an inscription, held by three angels with feathered arms outstretched The first word only of the scroll has as yet been deciphered SVNT. A panel-led canopy above reaches to a height of nine feet and terminates in two bulky and topheavy seated figures, now so mutilated as to render identification uncertain. But the whole structure lacks finish, especially at the top, and it may be doubted whether it was ever' occupied.

1. *Transactions B.G.A.S. XLI, 176*

2. *Bigland, Collections, 11, 121-4.*

3. *IML M.Roper, Effigies of Gloucestershire, 1931, p.640-1, 1*

4. *C.T.Davis, Brasses of Gloucestershire, 1899, p.126.*

A recumbent figure of an unknown priest of about the middle of the 15th century has interesting details worthy of close study. Sir Stephen Glynne¹ thinks that his dress proves him to be a canon; but Miss Roper² holds that the absence of a cope shows that he was not a canon or dignitary. The manor was at that date held by the collegiate church of St. Mary, Leicester, which would account for the use of the tonsure. This figure now lies within the recess of the perpendicular tomb above described, and has been supposed to belong to it. Clearly, however, they have nothing to do with each other. The Priest's figure is some 50 years earlier in date, and is 12 or 13 inches too short for the recess in which it lies.

It may be added that until 1858 there stood by the south chancel wall a monument consisting of a white marble Coffin on the top of a marble pedestal about four feet high. In this coffin repose the mortal remains of Lord Coleraine. But when the south chapel was built this monument was placed in it underneath the organ, sunk into the ground so that the top of the coffin is level with the encaustic tiles on the floor. Parish tradition maintains that this Lord Coleraine was a man of so evil a life that he refused to be buried underground fearing that if that were done the devil would get at him more quickly.

The parish possesses a plain massive chalice date L660 weighing 23 oz. 10 dwt., with paten-cover weighing 9 oz. 10 dwt., lettered R F with five pellets; and a credence paten with gadroon rim. This is inscribed 'the gift of Francis Jenner to the parish church of Kempsford 1842'. There is also a chalice with paten given in 1869, with the inscription Kempsford Church Easter 1869'. Vide J.T. Evans, *Church Plate of Gloucestershire*, 1906.

There are six bells, with the following inscriptions and measurements.

1. John Hill and John Loock, Churchwardens, Henry Bagley made mee, 1739. Diameter 28 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches.
2. Peace and good neighbourhood. A.R. (Rudhall), 1700. 31 inches.
3. Anno Incarnationis Domini nostri Jesu Christi MDCLXXVIII 34 inches.
4. Similar inscription. 36 inches.
5. Richard Hewer and Daniel Arkell, Churchwardens, 1846. C. and G. Mears fact. 38 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

1. *Gloucestershire Church Notes*, p. 109.

2. *Transactions B.G.A.S.* XXXI, 69.

6. I to the Church the living call and to the grave do summon all. Thos.Arkell and Danl.Edmonds, Churchwardens, 1830. 1. Rudhall, fect. 45 1/2 inches Note E flat.

The arms of Thynne (barry of ten) impaling Coventry (a fesse ermine between three crescents) appear on a shield on the third and fourth bells, which were probably given to the Church by Sir Henry Frederick Thynne (father of the first Lord Weymouth) who was lord of the manor of Kempford. These two are by an unknown founder. Their large thin letters resemble those at Barton on Heath, Warwickshire, dated 1674.

In 1831 the tenor bell was recast by Rudhall of Gloucester £4 1.10s.0d. For carting of it, £2. 4s.0d. 'For beer the men had taking down the bell and putting it up again, 12s.9d.' Another bell was re-cast in 1849, towards the cost of which G. East gave £20. And finally in 1905 the fifth bell was re-cast and all six were rehung.

VICARS

There are gaps for the earlier years which can only be filled from the Worcester Diocesan Registers. For the list as it stands, and other particulars, I am indebted in great measure to the late Mr. F.S. Hockaday who did so much for the ecelosiastical records of Gloucestershire.

The patronage of the living was held by St. Peter's abbey, Gloucester, and the Bishop of Gloucester. George Lloyd presented in 15781 and Queen Elizabeth 1597.

	Radulph
	Ambrose
	Matthew de Cygony
1196	William de Furnelle
1304	John Gymel
1325	John de Bromholm (Cobham Register, 242)
	Richard Hampslap
1356	James Cok
1356	Robert Modecombe or Mouthecombe, d. 1361. ¹
1400	John the Chaplain
1434	John Sutton
1498	Sir John Dursley

1. Died here 21 September 1361 'in the time of the second pestilence'.

- 1513 William Burghill
- 1521 William Watkyn
- 1524 Sir David Vycars (curate witness to will 19th Dec.)
- 1526 William Clayton
- 1532 Walter Hachelet or Hackelet
- 1538 Sir Humfrey Galimore
- 1554 Gilbert Bursley
- 1555 Thomas Allen
- 1563 Void

Because vacant through deprivation for not subscribing the 39 articles. In 1563 in the Gloucester Consistory Court - 2 churchwardens and two parishioners being present - it is presented 'that Sir H. Gallymore Vicar there is not resident but hath let his benefice to ffarme to Mr. Francis Chessillden who is there resident and keepeth house there. Item our church wyndowes lack reparation'.

In 1564 Archbishop Parker writes to Bishop Cheyney 'pray tolerate the poor old man in his possession, which your lordship upon some suggestion seemeth to challenge to bestow elsewhere, belike not like long to continue by his sickly age in any of his small livings'.

- 1566 Humphry Galimore or Halimote or Delamore.

In 1569 it is presented' Humphrey Gallymore lets Vicarage to farme and keeps no hospitality but dwells near in another house. Did not appear on citation and was pronounced contumacious and suspended from entering the church'.

Archbishop Parker to Mr. Drury:- Mr. Drury, I commend me unto you. Where this bearer, farmer of a Parsonage in Gloucestershire sueth to have one other benefice and a chapel to be united together, this is to require you.if upon the understanding of the matter ye shall see c'ause to give out such an unition to grant it'.

- 1572 Anthony Higgins

1572. The Vicar is not resident neither giveth the XLth part of the benefice.

John Hayes did not receive the Communion. Oct.3.* he confessed his crime and was monished to receive the eucharist by the least of the Nativity.

- 1578. John.Brooke
- 1597 Henry Blackborne
- 1639 Godfrey Goodman, D.D.¹
- 1643 EdWard Hitchman, L.L.B., d. 1672²
- 1673 John Scott, M.A., d. 1686.
- 1686 Denys or Dennis Huntington, M.A., d.1711.
- 1711 Thomas Dresser, M.A.1 d. 1714
- 1714 Joseph Cookson, M.A., cession 1716

1 . Bishop of Gloucester, 1625-49.

2. Inscription in chancel. Prebendary of Wells: he built 'ye present Vicarige House'.

1716	George Gerrard, M.A., d., 1735
1735	Samuel Clarke, 1, M. A. 1 d. 1757
1757	John Warren, LL.D., resigned 1761
1761	William Price, M.A. d. 1798.
1798	William Roskilly, M.A.
1810	Thomas Huntingford, M.A.
1855	James Russell Woodford D.D. ¹
1868	John James Barlow M.A.
1881	Maurice William Ferdinand St. John B.A.
1898	Arthur Heber Browne, LL.D. ²
1904	Walter William Arthur Butt, M.A.
1909	Alexander Nairne Scott, M.A.
1919	Charles Mitchell Barham, M.A.
1922	Aubrey Baskerville Mynors, M.A.
1928	Charles Johnstone Bourne Webb, M.A.
1932	Clyde William Jacob M.A.
1935	George Thomas Caton, B.A.
1949	Francis Henry Lawrence, B.A.
1955	Eric Walter Thomas Lane.

THE REGISTERS

The registration of baptisms, marriages and burials was ordered by Thomas Cromwell in 1558. In many parishes however the order was not at once obeyed, and then not in such a manner as to secure a permanent record. It was afterwards required that the registers should be written on parchment.

There are in the charge of the Vicar of 'Kempsford ten Registers exclusive of those now in use. The contents are as follows: -

1. Baptisms, 1573; marriages, 1573; burials, 1575 year by year until 1597. Then burials, 1598-1653, with 2 in 1660 and 1 baptism in 164-2. Then baptisms 1598-1660 with the following omissions:- 1604- 1617 'defective through negligence', 1624-29 (pages torn out), 1639 and 1654-1659 vide infra; burials 1672-1679.

2. Births 1653~1658; publications and marriages, 1653-1657; dyed 1695~1697; born and baptised 1697-8.; buried 1698 marriages 1699 and 1700; christening 1699 and 1700. At the other end of the volume, briefs, 1694-174

1. Afterwards Bishop of Ely, 1373-85.

2. Afterwards Bishop of Bermuda.

3. Christenings 1686-1775; marriages 1686-1754; burials 1686-1774; persons excommunicated; a list (incomplete) of the vicars of Kempford.
4. Marriages, May 1754 - Oct. 1812; at the other end of the volume, Rules and Directions for Kempford Charity School, without date.
5. Burials 1775-1812; baptisms 1775-1812.
6. Marriages 1813 - June 1837. Burials 1813 - 1860 1
7. Burials 1813 - 1860.
8. Baptisms 1813-1840. Various notes on parish history and the topography of the vicarage.
9. Baptisms, 1841-1868, Various notes on contemporary parish history.
10. Baptisms, Dec. 1868 - Oct. 1909.

For notes on these Registers see Gloucestershire Notes and Queries, V, 132-4, and Crisp's Registers of Kempford, 1653-CO. 1887.

MISCELLANEA

Some further details of the modern history of the parish will be of interest in years to come.

A clock was first installed in the tower of the church 1813 at a cost of £78. Peace was celebrated in 1814 by a parish feast costing £50 when a table four hundred and fifty feet long was set out in the street.

In 1858 the church was restored by Mr. G.E. Street and the south chapel built.

The cost of this restoration amounted to £738. 1s.10d. the principal contract was for £420. In addition to this £131 was paid for the oak seats in the nave; £11.17s. 0d. for mason's work in the nave; £24. 10s. 0d' for plasterer's work in the nave; ?? to the glazier; and £21. 8s. 4d. for faculty and legal expenses. Towards this outlay the vicar (Rev. J.R. Woodford) gave £200, the Warneford trustees £120, the Incorporated Society and the Bishop of Gloucester £50.

In 1859 the east window of the chapel was filled with coloured glass - St. Alban and Edward the Confessor

In February 1860 Sunday services were begun in a barn at Whelford in June 1863 Sir Gilbert East laid the corner stone of St. Anne's church (G.E. Street, architect J. and S. Mitchell, contractors) and on the 4th church was consecrated

From October 1861 to Trinity Sunday 1862 Mr. H.F. St. John laboured at the painting of the stone vault of the tower and in 1862 Mr. Street designed a lamentable pulpit which was made by Price the Mason at Down Ampney.

In 1864 the big south window was filled with glass which has been an eyesore ever since and in 1866 the west window was repaired and filled with stained glass and the tower and nave were paved with tiles. The lych-gate and churchyard wall were rebuilt in 1865.

The 15th century font with a plain octagonal bowl which had survived the restoration of the church in 1858 was discarded in 1868 in favour of the present font, carved at Latton by William Roseblade, and no trace of the Perpendicular one can now be discovered.

The six Perpendicular windows and the four Norman windows in the nave were filled with Mr. Kempe's beautiful glass by Mr. Hampson Jones. The clerestory windows represent beginning from the west end: on the north, Noah, Melchizedek, Moyses; St. Benedict, St. Boniface, St. Augustine of Canterbury St. Margaret, St. Catherine, St. Agnes; on the south Jeremiah. David, Isaiah; St. Edmund Rex, St. Helena, St. Edward the Confessor; St. Laurence St. Alban, St. Stephen. The four Norman windows below contain the four evangelists.

The great north window of the tower is also filled with Mr. Kempe's handiwork. Beginning at the bottom on the left hand: 1 and 2 The Annunciation, 3 and 4 St. Gabriel and the shepherds, 5 and 6 the shepherds with the Holy Child, 7 Mary and Elizabeth, 8 the angel bids Joseph flee to Egypt, 9 the Presentation, 10 and 11 The Magi, 12 the flight into Egypt It will be seen that there is a curious and inexplicable confusion in the historical sequence of the events.

It may be added that the floods in June 1903 did £83 worth of damage to the church; one half of which sum was spent, on the cleaning and repair of the organ.

In 1905 a further sum of £244 was laid out in re-roofing the tower with lead, re-casting the fifth bell, and re-hanging all the bells.

BENEFACTIONS

In 1548 the Commissioners of Edward VI recorded loon cowe gevyn for the findinge of an yerelie obitte there priced to be woorth XII s distributed yerelie to the pore at the keeping of the said obitte vj d'. (Maclean, 'Chantry Certificates', Trans. B.G.A.S., VIII, 302). But for practical purposeq the only gifts to be here recorded are of much more recent date.

Writing in 1735 the Vicar says 'here is a benefaction to the church by a person unknown of a certain quantity of hay arising from Sir John Dutton's meadow ground called Abbat's mead to the number of 16 haycocks and let at 16 shillings a year to adorn and beautify the church'. This sum is still received annually by the churchwardens.

In 1709 Thomas Lord Viscount Weymouth gave '10 a year charged on his manors of Ross and Weobley in Herefordshire' to teach poor children to read and write'. In 1750 the Lord Weymouth also gave land for a building, and a school house was erected by the inhabitants, which still bears on its north wall the inscription: erected by the inhabitants as a testimony of gratitude for the benefactions above mentioned as well as to promote useful learning'. In 1735 'as the custom now is the poorer children pay nothing for being taught ' to read ' but if they write 2.pence per week to the Scool Master; the better sort pay one penny for Reading and 4 pence for writing'.

The Regulations of the School are extant and may appear somewhat drastic. 'No other recreation' for example for playtime be allowed to master or scholars than the Christmas Easter and Whitsun week besides 6 weeks in the whole in the hight of Hay and Corn Harvest and that the hours of School from Lady-Day to Michaelmas be from 6 o'clock in the morning to 6 o'clock in the evening and during the rest part of the year they are to begin and end as near these hours as daylight will permit, allowing only an hour for dinner'. On Sunday morning and afternoon all the children are to come to -hurch 'attending the Master in a clean neat and decent dress'

It is recorded in the consistory Court at Gloucester that in 1761 John Edwards subscribed the, XXXIX Articles on license to teach this Free School: in 1764 the then curate also subscribed, his salary being £40.

The Reverend Canon Barlow, vicar of the parish, by a deed of gift dated 15 September 1879, conveyed to the vicar of Kempsford and the rural dean of Fairford as trustees a house and parcel of land at Dunfield, the nett income to be devoted to the repair, of the parsonage house at Whelford and to the improvement or repair of the parish church.

Mr. John Hampson Jones by his will dated 28 November 1888 bequeathed to the vicar and churchwardens of Kempford as trustees the sum of £1000, the income to be spent according to the discretion of the trustees for the benefit of the poor of the parish.

Mrs. Agatha Gresham Wells by deed of gift, dated 18 February 1901, conveyed to the vicar of Kempford as trustee a house and parcel of land for the use of a nursing sister who should minister to the aged and infirm people of the parish.

WILLS

Several wills of parishioners of the sixteenth century are preserved in the Probate Registry at Gloucester. There is always a commendation 'to the Blessed Virgin Mary and all the celestiall company of heaven'. The will of Walter Costert, 19 September 1543, goes on 'my sowle to God; to be buried in the churche yarde of Kymesford; to the Hey Autor (High Altar) of Kymeford 4d; to Thomas my son four shepe two bullocks a quarter of barley; to Chrystyan my daughter four shepe a calffe and a quarter of barley; to Kateryn my daughter four shepe a calffe and a quarter of barley; to Agnes Fyllymore four shepe and a quarter of barley; to Walter my sone four shepe a heffor and a quarter of barlye'.

Robert Fort in 1544 leaves 'my soule to God; to be buryed in the church yard of Kymesford; to the Hey Autor 3s 4d; to John Duggull 12d; to A a yerling heffer to two Godchylde 3s 4d. a pece'.

The will of Walter Hichman, 7 February 1522: to be buried in the chancel of Kemersford church; to the high altar for tithes forgotten 12d; to the six lights there 6d apiece; a priest shall sing for my soul and, the souls of my father, mother, and brother Robert in the parish church and in the chapel of our Lady next to the same church for five years taking for his stipend 113s 4d quarterly saying two times in the week placebo and dirige and mass of requiem.

One further example may be added, 10 February 1525: 'To the high autor of Kemsford 12d: to the six principal lights 6d each . . . Sir Robert Kyng after his service is complete for Walter Hickman shall sing for my soul for three yeares takyng eight markes yerely and he shall sing in the parish church with two daies in the weke in the chapel of Our Lady'.

THE VILLAGE CROSS

In the engraving of Kempsford House, then the seat of Lord Weymouth in Sir Robert Atkyns's Gloucestershire (1st ed. 1712) may be seen the drawing of a cross standing in the centre of the village. Mr. Charles Pooley in Old Crosses of Gloucestershire,. 1868, writes 'Part of (a cross) is still to be seen in a cottage garden consisting of a hexagonal socket into which is mortised about 3 feet of an octagonal shaft which I take to belong to the original village cross. It is well preserved and has been at this spot time out of mind. Fourteenth century'. This cross was removed to Reevey from 'the Cross Tree' for fear that a limb of the big elm might fall upon it. It was finally transferred in 1890 to the new churchyard.

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

The population* of the parish has shown considerable variation: -

Year, Pop	Year, Pop	Year, Pop	Year, Pop
1700, 340	1810, 657	1861, 1007	1901, 711
1732 482	1820, 850	1871, 951	1911, 752
1779, 493	1830, 885	1881, 828	1921, 664
1801, 635	1851, 1003	1891, 790	1931, 757
			1951, 972

Plough-land

In 1800 by direction of the Government a census was made of the crops then being grown, In Kempsford there were

Wheat	422 acres	Beans	77 acres
Barley	227 acres	Peas	38 acres
Turnips and Rape	176 acres	Potatoes	16 acres
Oats	165 acres	Rye	5 acres

Church Rates.

In	1810 at 3 pence produced	£39. 10. 2 ^{1/2}
	1811 " 3 " "	£38. 15. 5 ^{1/4}
	1817 " 4 ^{1/4} " "	£59. 5. 10 ^{1/4}
	1823 " 6 " "	£79. 19. 9 ^{3/4}
	1844 " 1 ^{1/2} " "	£29. 3. 0
	1848 " 3 " "	£61. 19. 7
	1851 " 1 " "	£20. 12. 1 ^{1/4}

*In 1608 the number of men in Kempsford declared fit for His Majesty's Service in the Wars was 35. (John Smyth's MS. of Men and Armour for Gloucestershire was printed for Lord Sherborne in 1902. - Editor).

THE VICARAGE

The income of the Viclar is recorded as follows:

In the Queen's Book, £19.

In 1549 at the dissolution, £104 ls ld.

In 1714 (Furney MSS. IV, p. 212), £80.

In 1768 3 £100.

In 1799 £230.

Canon St. John (vicar 1881 to 1897) published a balance sheet showing that the net income did not exceed £30 per annum.

In 1897 5 £17 18s 9d.

In 1901 'the Living is actually held at a loss'.

In 1904 the income is nominally £33, but does not exceed £10 per annum nett.

In 1911 £40 5s 9d.