

This is an account, published around 50 years later (c. 1890) in the Castle Rising Parish Magazine; of the Church as remembered by Mrs Bagot (Mrs Bagot was the wife of the Rev. Charles Walter Bagot Rector of Castle Rising from 1846 until 1885). This material was transcribed from entries taken from the Castle Rising parish magazine of the time in a scrapbook in the ownership of Lord and Lady Howard.

The sections are taken from photos of articles in the Parish Magazine of c. 1888, and there is uncertainty about the correct order.

Then a note pasted on which says “ *We have received from Mrs Bagot ,some very interesting notes on the parish fifty years ago. They will we hope be ready for publication in our next issue*

Begins

1) “*When I first knew Castle Rising in the year 1839, the village was in many respects very different from what it is now, though perhaps the Church and Rectory are the most changed. At this time, the Rev. William Brodrick, afterwards Lord Middleton, was the Rector. The Church had not been restored. There was a low square tower, the top built of brick, with battlements; the pitch of the chancel and nave roofs was much lower than at present, that of the arches of the arcade, and the apex was not higher than the bottom of the circular window, which did not then exist. The arch of the west doorway was more or less in ruins, and the door never used as an entrance. There was a picturesque little porch of no particular architecture, at the south door; a large square-headed window, to the west of the porch, and to the east of the porch a small Norman window which still exists. The traces of the transept were clearly visible on the south side of the tower, and a beautiful transition arch, now opening into the transept, was bricked up.*

“*On the north side of the chancel there was a large three lighted Perpendicular window, cutting through the little Norman zig-zag arcade, and partly destroying*

Inside the present (restored) Sedilia and Piscina. The east window existed as at present, only filled at that time with plain glass, but thick clusters of ivy hung over the north-east corner, partly concealing one light. There were no windows on the north side of the chancel, and only one small one by the pulpit on the north side of the nave. Also no vestry. The present churchyard wall on the north side was not built, the Church itself, with a sloping green bank surmounted by a row of black poplars, forming, the boundary of the Rectory garden, and from the chancel to the wall opposite the hospital there was a little wicket gate in the corner leading into the Churchyard. The gravestones were all erect, and the ground around the Church was at least two feet higher than it is now: there was no gravel, the grass grew up to the walls and sheep grazed in the Churchyard.

2) (continued)by Mrs Bagot. *The little notice printed in the August Magazine described the exterior of the Church and the Churchyard as I remembered it in 1839 and 1840. The interior is almost more altered than the exterior. At that time there was a low white-washed ceiling extending the whole length of the nave under the beautiful Norman Triforium, which it effectually hid, and which was then in ruins. There were high square pews in the nave, a large reading desk, clerk's desk, and pulpit, with a sounding board over it, where the present pulpit stands. The little Norman Altar with the fresco was bricked up, and the whole inside of the Church, including the stone-work, was distempered a dirty yellow. The only window on the north side was a small one by the pulpit, which had evidently been put in at a later date simply to give light to the preacher. As stated last month, the arch leading to the present transept was bricked up, and a small square window had been put in which lit the sacrarium, on each side of which were old wooden benches (now in the hall of the Hospital) occupied when there was a celebration by those who intended to receive the Holy Communion.*

In 1827 there were I believe, three bells. The largest remains, the second was sent to the church Mrs Howard was building at Levens in Westmoreland ,and the treble being cracked, was sold by Mr. Brodrick for about £17 and the money applied to the purchase of a grind organ. As the west door was unused, the organ was placed in front of it, the choir and school children used to stand up on the benches to raise them above the rest of the congregation; and I remember on several occasions when they did not begin at the same time as the organ (as it could not be put back), the tune or chant had hastily to be ground through, the choir in the meantime waiting until the hymn or canticle began

again. Mr. Greene, father of the late Mr Henry Greene of the Black Horse, was school master at the time, and an extremely clever and ingenious man. He was a watch and clock maker as well as a school master: and he made two or three new barrels for the organ, adding several new tunes and chants to the instrument.

The chancel roof was much lower than at present: the floor was of flag stones partly covered with matting. There were two steps up to the Altar, and in front were high painted wooden rails: there was no footpace, or reredos. The niche on the north side of the window existed, and was supposed to have been for the occasional Cross or Mayor's mace. There was no credence table; and the Altar then in use was the small oak table now in the Hospital Chapel. The Altar itself was covered with a flowing red baize cloth; but there was no retable (sic) nor cross, candlesticks, and flower vases. In the next number I propose speaking of the Services, and the manner in which they were conducted at that time (to be continued)

3)Note on Castle Rising (cont) by Mrs Bagot. *“Before writing of the Services in 1839 and the subsequent changes made in them, I have been requested to say a few words about the painted windows in the Church. There was only one painted window in the Church when I first came to Castle Rising, namely, the west window, afterwards removed and placed in the east window of the hospital chapel. It has erroneously been supposed to have been an old window representing St. Lawrence, the patron Saint of the Church; but in reality it is of Dutch glass I believe, and was purchased by Colonel Howard. The figure is that of St' James. The present west window. Intended to represent the shepherds watching their flocks by night, was adapted from Raphael's “Transfiguration” by Mrs Howard; the circular window above being filled with the “multitude of the Heavenly Host” singing the **Gloria in Excelsis.***

The east window, by Wailes, was dedicated by Viscountess Downe to the memory of her sister Miss F Bagot, who died after a few days' illness at the Rectory, while on a visit to her brother the Rev. Lewis Bagot, in 1842; her grave, a flat stone with a cross, is under the east window.

The two painted windows on the south side of the chancel. By Lusson (a Franchman,) were given by Mr John Redin Beck (who held the Castle Farm for about 30 years) in memory of his wife, who died on the birth of her youngest child, now the Rev. John Beck.

The small window on the north side of the chancel was given by Mrs Howard, and was executed by a native of Sandside, Westmorland; she also placed to the memory of her father and mother the east window in the present transept, which is the work of Clayton and Bell.

The south window of the transept was put up by Lady Audrey Buller to the memory her husband (sic) the Hon Greville T. Howard.

The services as I first remember them consisted of Morning and Afternoon Services on Sundays, the Ante-Communion Service was read from the reading-pew, the Altar being considered too far off for the congregation to hear. The Holy Communion was celebrated four times a year; and Holy Baptism was administered after the ordinary Service was concluded, the sponsors forming the congregation. There were no Services on such days as Ash Wednesday, Holy Thursday, nor were the sessions of Lent and Advent noted by extra Services.

*In 1839 the Rev. Lewis Bagot became Rector, and in 1842 he commenced a Wednesday and Friday Service in Lent, a daily evening Service in Holy Week, introduced a monthly celebration of Holy Communion after Morning Prayer (early celebration being then unknown), and revived Saints' Day Services with a short Sermon or Lecture. In announcing these changes to his parishioners he said, "I daresay you all know that the Prayer Book requires us to have prayer **daily** throughout the year: and it is my deliberate opinion that daily public worship is as much enjoined on Christ's Holy Catholic Church under the Gospel, as was the Jewish daily Service under the Law and I trust that some of us may live to see the daily Service restored both in this parish and also elsewhere. He has not lived to see it; but his wish is fulfilled and you now have the blessing of a daily Service together with many other privileges.*

*During the incumbency of your late Rector, the Rev. Bagot were added a weekly celebration early except on the first Sunday in the month, daily prayer during Advent and Lent, Evening Services and Litany on Wednesdays and Fridays throughout the year. I may mention here that I believe Castle-Rising was the first **Village** Church in England where there was a Choral Service. I must take this opportunity of expressing how gratified I was by the warm welcome I received from all my old friends in the village on the occasion of my visit to Castle-Rising last month. I only regretted I had not time to go to every cottage. I thank you all most heartily, and assure you that not only your*

welcome to myself, but your faithful and affectionate remembrance of him, my beloved husband, who had lived and laboured among you for upwards of 38 years has brought me both pleasure and comfort. May God's blessing rest on you all. Mary Bagot. 1888

4) A careful study of the whole church was made in 1841 by Messrs. Buckler architects of Norwich, when many interesting details of this beautiful specimen of Norman architecture were pointed out. It was originally built from about the middle of the twelfth century; the nave is 63ft 6 inches long by 23ft 6 inches wide; the walls which are between 3 and 4 feet thick, are built of large boulders of Carr stone {this is silver carr not small carr F.C.} and are so firmly rooted in the ground that they stand as securely as when first built. But many innovations had been made and much of the original Norman work was dilapidated and more or less in ruins; and in 1843 the Hon Col. And Mrs G Howard determined to commence the restoration of the Church. The roof, which is in a very bad state, together with the flat ceiling, were removed, a high pitched open roof of timber substituted, the arcade restored inside; over the Norman arch and at the west end of the gable was raised, and the present very plain round window inserted; the whole interior was re-seated, and the organ moved to the tower. The window by the pulpit was built up and the Norman windows in south side of nave restored. The small stone altar adjoining the Norman tower arch was discovered which had been previously bricked up flush to the wall, and the fresco of the Crucifixion found at the back. As this began to fade on exposure to the air the outline was lightly re-traced. There were several traces, when the whitewash was removed, of other painted ornaments of early date in the tower, some of which still exist, though much faded. At the same time the sediliae {sic} (in ruins) were discovered on the south side of the chancel. Externally the south porch was removed, the chancel rebuilt and enlarged, and the earth round the Church considerably lowered. At what period the top and stage of the tower was destroyed is unknown. Its substitute was a mean parapet of brick, embattled 4 ft. in height; this being in an unsound state was removed, and a saddleback roof erected, with the eaves overhanging the walls, the present weather-cock (the cock being copied from a very fine cock belonging to Mrs. Woods, who at that time held the "Black Horse Inn") was placed on the top of the tower. The vestry also was built. The row of black poplar trees on the north side of the Church were cut

down, and the bank levelled, and the present wall built enclosing the Churchyard. Formerly (but not in my recollection) the high road ran between the Rectory and the Church, and there is still a stone in the wall marking where it turned into the road now called Wood Close Lane.

5) The magnificent pointed arch on the south side of the tower clearly indicated the existence at some time of a transept, and the Hon. Mrs. G. Howard decided in 1859 to rebuild it. In digging for the foundations, the foundations of the original transept were found, but shorter in length. Several carved stones were found and among other things, the small bell now used in the Vestry, which had evidently been the Sanctus bell. Stalls were placed in the tower for the Choir and the present reading desks. The organ was removed into the transept and seats placed there for the schoolchildren.

In addition there was a clipping in the collection about the church as follows

48) Article on the restoration of the church. “The chancel was restored in the summer and autumn of 1856 by the Hon Mrs. G. Howard, G. E. Street, Esq being the architect. The roof was raised, though not to the original Norman pitch, the present windows on the south side put in, and one introduced on the north side, the sedilia and piscine restored, the six carved reredos and side arches put up, the altar raised a step and placed on a foot pace, the whole chancel paved with tiles, the carved string-course and that under the roof were also introduced, not having previously existed. On the occasion of the opening of the chancel, January 1st 1857, the sermon was preached by the Rev. W. Legge, Rector of Ashted, from Psalm xxvi, 4, and the boys in the Choir, six in number, wore surplices for the first time (among the boys were Rev. Lewis Bagot, now Vicar of Stanton Lacey; Rev. Fred Hervey, Rector of Sandringham; Mr John Smith, Clerk of Castle-Rising.). After the death of Hon. G. T. Howard the transept was still further lengthened and the organ was removed to its present place in the tower, it having been the intention then of making it a sort of mortuary chapel. The further alterations to the tower, raising it to its present height, building the Norman porch, and enlarging the organ, were made after the death of the Hon. Mrs. G. Howard, by money expressly left for the purpose, and by her wish Mr. Parish was employed as the architect. She left a further sum of £100 towards a peal of bells. In 1865, the present Church clock was put up by donations and subscriptions from the parishioners, the Rector, and other friends. The gold Communion plate was presented by the Hon. Mrs. G. Howard also the red velvet

altar-cloth. The green, white, and violet altar-cloths were worked by Hon. Mrs. W. Howard, and presented to the Church with the other fittings for the altar by the late Rector and Mrs G W. Bagot. The Litan-desk was given by the Rev. W. Bateman on his leaving the Curacy. The Litany book by the Rev. H. Blogg.