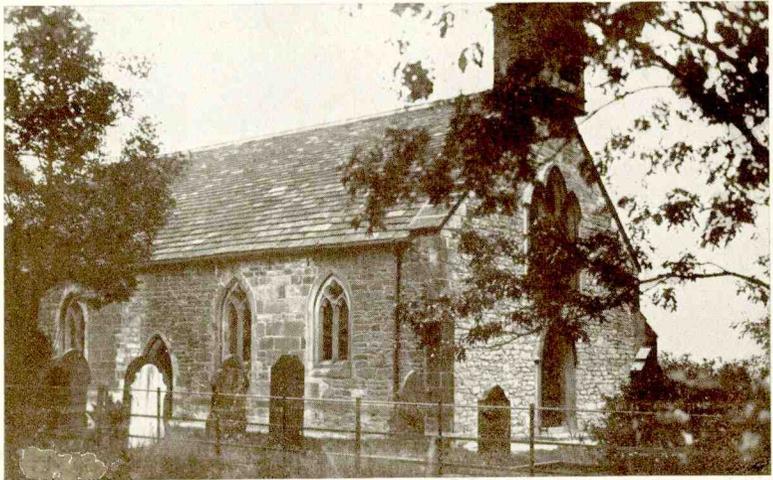




EUXTON CHAPEL FROM S.E.



EUXTON CHAPEL FROM N.W.

EUXTON CHAPEL.

By *F. H. Cheetham, F.S.A.*

Read March 12th, 1925.

EUXTON is one of the nine townships forming the ancient parish of Leyland. The parish was large and of very irregular shape, the church being in the western half, some eight miles from the eastern boundary. Euxton township lies immediately south of that of Leyland and has an area of 2934 acres, with a population (in 1921) of 1231. The village lies along the main road from Wigan to Preston, a little to the east of the centre of the township and about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile north of the river Yarrow, which, flowing westward here forms the southern boundary of the parish. The chapel stands on high ground above a small stream called the Chapel Brook,¹ which joining the Yarrow just outside the township divides it into two unequal parts. The road, as it goes north, crosses the stream by a single arched bridge known as Euxton Chapel Bridge,² and then makes a steep ascent to the village, passing on the west side of the chapel, which lies at the south end.

The name Euxton is English, and is found spelled in a variety of ways in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, Euceston, Euekeston, Euckeston, Eukeston, Eukestan, Hewkeston, and Heukestone. The first element is almost certainly a personal name: Professor Ekwall says perhaps *Æfic* or *Efic*; Mr. Sephton suggests a *k* diminutive of *Eowa*.³

¹ Called in its upper course 'German Brook,' and in lower 'Culbeck Brook.'

² Widened on the east side in 1909.

³ Ekwall, *Place-Names of Lancs.* (Chet. Soc., 81, n.s.), p. 133; Sephton, *Handbook of Lancs. Place-Names*, 170.

Euxton was one of two pre-Reformation chapels belonging to the parish church of Leyland. The other was at Heapey, some three miles to the north-east and about four miles east of Leyland. The chapel at Euxton is two miles in a direct line south-east of the parish church.

The origin of the chapel is obscure; there is no written evidence of its existence as old as that of the fabric itself. The later history of the building, too, is by no means clear, owing not only to the absence of documentary evidence, but also to statements made in print by modern writers which are difficult to substantiate, and are sometimes contradictory. Unfortunately there are no chapel wardens' account books at Euxton and the registers begin only in 1774. At Leyland parish church there is a vestry book beginning in 1748, but the entries are not continuous and they contain nothing which throws light on the later re-buildings or restorations of Euxton Chapel. The Leyland churchwardens' accounts do not begin until 1823, and no details of expenditure are set out. General expenditure at Heapey chapel is given as a separate item, but not that at Euxton. The sources of knowledge respecting the fabric during the eighteenth and early part of the nineteenth century are thus meagre and uncertain, and scarcely more informative than those of an earlier date.

HISTORY OF THE CHAPEL.

The present paper being concerned principally with the fabric, the history of the chapel is considered only as it bears on the erection of the building. The chapel has never been properly described, and there are few references to it in local publications or in the *Transactions* of local Societies. The writer who contributed the architectural descriptions to the *Victoria History of Lancashire* unfortunately did not visit Euxton, and all that is said concerning the building in that work is contained in the general account of the township. It is there stated that

A chapel, of which traces are extant, existed in the 14th century, and is supposed to have been rebuilt by one of the Molyneux family in 1513. After the Reformation the chapel seems to have been allowed to fall into decay, and it is said that the only use made of it as a place of worship was by the missionary priests, who occasionally said mass there. It had, however, a minister in 1650. In the time of Charles II, Lord Molyneux claimed it as his private property, but it was recovered by the Church of England about 1700, repaired, and provided with a small endowment through Thomas Armetriding, vicar of Leyland, whose heirs had the patronage. No dedication is known.¹

To some of the statements here set out reference will be made later, but the absence of precise information and of any mention of the chapel earlier than the fourteenth century, may be noted. The phrase 'traces of which are extant,' though strictly accurate, is perhaps a little misleading, as the remains of the structure of that period are fairly considerable and include most of its architectural features. The date 1513 is an error for 1573, as will be shown later in this paper.

There is no record as to when the chapel of Euxton was founded, but the existing fabric appears in the main to be a fourteenth century rebuilding of an earlier structure, little architectural evidence of which remains, though there are grounds for believing that it dated from the thirteenth, or even from the end of the twelfth century.

The list of clergy of 1542² records four priests at Leyland in addition to the vicar and chantry priest, one of whom was doubtless chaplain at Euxton. The number of clergy at Leyland, as recorded in visitation lists in 1548, 1554, 1562, 1563 and 1565 varies, but Thomas Shorroch is named as curate or chaplain at Euxton from 1548 to 1563,³ though it does not necessarily follow that he was resident. A curate at Heapey is named in 1563, but in

¹ *V.C.H. Lancs.*, vi, 22. References are given for the statements made.

² *Record Soc. L. and C.*, xxxiii, 17.

³ *V.C.H. Lancs.*, vi, 3, 22.

1565 neither Euxton nor Heapey is mentioned, the only clergy at Leyland being the vicar and his curate, John Worden. Euxton is described about 1610 as "an old chapel without a curate,"¹ and there was also no curate at Heapey at that time. Both chapels, it has been surmised, were served only irregularly, if at all, until the time of the Commonwealth.² The statement that after the Reformation Euxton chapel "seems to have been allowed to fall into decay," however, needs qualification, as the stone now over the west doorway, whatever its original position, clearly indicates that something was done to the building either by way of restoration or addition by Richard Molyneux in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. The history of the chapel at this time is obscure and the statement that the Roman missionary priests occasionally said mass there is apparently based on a passage in Hewitson's *Our Country Churches and Chapels*, to the effect that the building was "held by the Catholics long after the Reformation and the persecuting reign of Elizabeth had deprived them of almost every other," though it was not often used "owing to the persecution of priests."³

The first Molyneux to be lord of Euxton was the William de Molyneux who married Joan daughter of Robert de Holand and who died in 1358; but whatever the early connection of the family with the chapel may have been it is clear from the dated stone over the west doorway that Richard Molyneux in 1573 thought it worth while to spend money on the structure. This, of course, is assuming that the dated stone belongs to and represents work done at the existing chapel, no portion of which, however, can with confidence be assigned to that period.

The minutes of the Committee for the relief of Plundered Ministers, and the Commonwealth Church Survey put us on surer ground. Under date November 27, 1649, it is

¹ *Kenyon MSS.* (Hist. MSS. Com. Rep.), xiv. App. 4, 11.

² *V.C.H. Lancs.*, vi, 8.

³ *Op. cit.*, 253.

recorded that in June 1647, the Committee had granted the yearly sum of £40 out of the inappropriate tithes arising within the township of Euxton, sequestered from James Anderton, delinquent, for the maintenance of a minister at Euxton chapel such as the committee should approve of, and they now (1649) ordered that the said sum be paid to " Mr. Seth Bushell, minister of Euxton aforesaid."¹

In the Church Survey of 1650 Seth Bushell is described as ' incumbent ' of Euxton, having come into the place by an order from the Committee of Plundered Ministers. The report on Euxton reads as follows (shortened):—

We present that Euxton is a town within the parish of Leyland, in which is one Chapel distant from the parish church two statute miles and a half or thereabouts, and from Heapey Chapel five statute miles; and that the tithes of Euxton is worth £55 per annum; and that Mr. James Anderton, of Clayton, claims the said tithes as his inheritance, and is now sequestered for the State for the said Mr. Anderton's delinquency, and that the small tithes in Euxton are worth £2 5s. per annum, and belong to the vicar of Leyland. And that Mr. Seth Bushell is the present incumbent there, and is a godly preaching minister and conformable to the present government, and came into the said place by an order from the Committee of Plundered Ministers, and hath had for his salary £40 per annum issuing out of the sequestrations of the tithes aforesaid.²

There follows a recommendation that certain houses in Charnock Richard, and the ' rest of the said town,' should be annexed to Euxton and made a parish, as " lying nearer adjacent unto Euxton chapel than to any other church or chapel."

The Seth Bushell here named conformed at the Restoration and was vicar of Preston 1663-1682, and of Lancaster 1682-84. He married as his second wife, in 1657, the daughter of William Stanfield of Euxton, and his son, William Bushell, curate of Goosnargh, 1692-1735, and rector of Heysham, 1699-1735, was born at Euxton in

¹ *Record Soc. L. and C.*, xxviii, 81.

² *Com. Ch. Surveys*, *Record Soc. L. and C.*, i, 102.

1661.¹ Seth Bushell appears to have remained at Euxton till he went to Preston in 1663. He died at Lancaster and is there buried. Although 'conformable to the government' in 1650, his epitaph describes him as "faithful to the two Charleses in very difficult times."²

What condition the chapel was in during Seth Bushell's incumbency it is difficult to say, but in 1687 it appears to have been in use by the Roman Catholics, for in that year the Bishop of Chester, Dr. Cartwright, wrote in his diary

Mr. Walmesley, of Leyland, came to visit me and he delivered me a petition for the restoring of the Euxton Chapel to the inhabitants, the key whereof was in the hands of Molyneux, who alledges that it is his and not theirs, that it hath no maintenance nor any prayers said in it for the twenty years last past.³

This would seem to imply that the chapel had been abandoned for Anglican worship since 1667, or four years after Seth Bushell's appointment to Preston; and that it was in the time of James II used by the Roman Catholics may be inferred from the fact that in this same year (1687) the Vicar-apostolic, John Leyburne, when visiting the northern counties to administer confirmation in September, confirmed no less than 1138 persons in Euxton chapel,⁴ a number exceeded in Lancashire only at Wigan. In Leyland Hundred there were also confirmations at Eccleston (755), Wrightington (464), and Lostock (86), so those confirmed at Euxton cannot have been drawn from a very extensive area.⁵

¹ Dr. William Bushell, founder of Goosnargh Hospital, was son of the rector of Heysham.

² Smith, *Preston Parish Church*, 62. Dr. Seth Bushell (D.D. in 1672) is noticed in the *Dict. Nat. Biog.*

³ *Cartwright's Diary* (Camden Soc.), 28.

⁴ Dr. W. A. Shaw in *V.C.H. Lancs.*, ii, 93.

⁵ Fourteen places in Lancashire are recorded, three in West Derby Hundred, four in Leyland, three in Blackburn, and four in Amounderness—the total number of confirmees being 8,958. Euxton therefore had about one eighth of the whole.

It can hardly be doubted that the 'Euxton Chapel' in which the confirmation took place was the Burgh Chapel, as the building we are considering was often styled. In the account of Euxton township in the *Victoria History*, it is stated that nothing is known of the provision for Roman Catholic worship for a century and a half after the Reformation,¹ but that a room in Euxton Hall was used during the eighteenth century. A chapel was not built until 1817. Hewitson is probably right in surmising that "occasionally, when a more tolerant spirit was in the ascendant, the Roman Catholics might venture to use the Burgh Chapel,"² though mass would no doubt be said normally at Euxton Hall even before the eighteenth century.

The Chapel seems to have become neglected and disused by the Church of England in the latter part of the seventeenth century, and in 1717 Bishop Gastrell certified that nothing belonged to it and that it had "been ruined about 20 years, since which [time] no service hath been performed in it,"³ but he modified this later by saying that divine service had been performed there 'about 1705.'⁴ This is confirmed by the terms of a petition presented sometime in the year 1706⁵ to the Bishop (Dr. Stratford) signed by fourteen 'near neighbours to the parish of Leyland,' praying him to recommend the chapels of Heapey and Euxton for augmentation out of the Queen's Bounty, in which it is certified that in both chapels "a Liturgy and Rites of the Church of England as now by law established are used and observed."⁶ The chapels are described as standing remote from the parish church,

¹ *V.C.H. Lancs.*, vi, 23.

² *Our Country Churches and Chapels*, 257.

³ *Notitia Cest.* (Chet. Soc. xxii), 384.

⁴ *Ibid.*, quoting Pap. Reg.

⁵ The date is not given but one of the signatories was buried in 1706.

⁶ The petition is printed in the Rev. D. S. Rennard's *Hist. of Heapey Chapel*, 20; a letter to the bishop on the same subject, signed by Wm. Farington and Thos. Armetriding (vicar of Leyland) is dated February 10, 1706.

and the good people there "mixed and environed with great numbers of Papists and other sectaries"; but although Heapey had only £6 yearly belonging to it and Euxton nothing at all, the bishop's efforts, if he made any, do not appear to have been successful.

In 1724 the vicar of Leyland certified that the chapel "is now repaired, but no seats or pulpit yet in it,"¹ though Ecton's *Thesaurus* (ed. Browne Willis, 1753) describes it as "destructa," a manifest exaggeration if taken literally but perhaps intended to mean no more than 'ruinated.' The addition by Browne Willis of this descriptive word to Ecton's former bare naming of the chapel is not easy to account for.²

About 1690 Dr. Richard Kuerden, the historian, a native of Leyland,³ stated that Euxton had "a fayre chappel by Sir W. Molineux of Sephton, lord of the manor of Euxton,"⁴ which Baines quotes with the word 'built' inserted after 'chappel,'⁵ though it is not in the original, nor any signs of a break. Some word is manifestly wanted, but whether Dr. Kuerden intended to write 'built,' or something else, will never be known. His calling the building, with the appearance of which he must have been familiar, a 'fayre chappel' does not suggest that the fabric was then in a state of ruin. Had it been so, he would probably have noted the fact. Kuerden's statement that the chapel was [? built] by Sir W. Molyneux in all likelihood has reference to the first Sir William (d. 1372), but later writers⁶ seem to have been misled by this, and by a wrong reading of the date over the west doorway, into the belief that the second Sir William built the chapel in 1513.

¹ *Notitia Cest.*, 384.

² He may be using a description supplied many years before: if restored in 1724 the building could hardly be ruined again by 1753.

³ Born about 1622, died 1700.

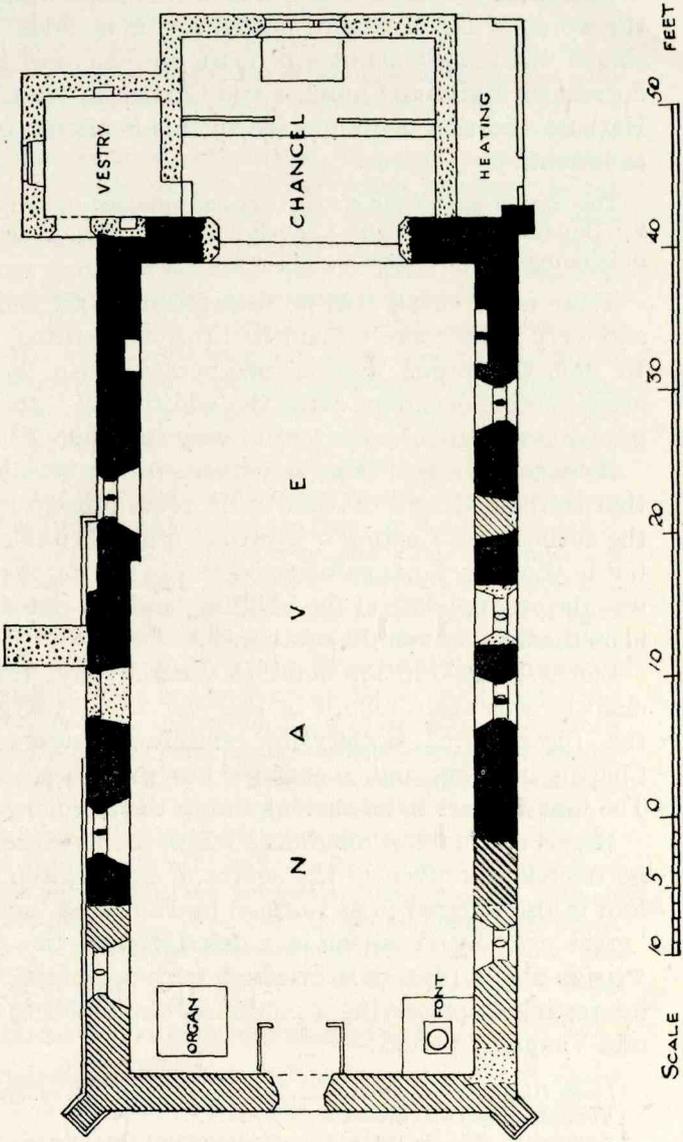
⁴ *Harl. MS.*, 7836, f. 2176.

⁵ *Hist. of Lancs.* (1836), iv, 452.

⁶ E.g., Hewitson, *op. cit.*, 253

EUXTON CHAPEL

Euxton Chapel.



Baines (1836) has no description of the chapel other than the words of Dr. Kuerden, but in a note he adds, "This chapel was rebuilt about A.D. 1710, and enlarged by the Society for Building Churches and Chapels in 1829."¹ In Harland's edition of Baines (1870) this is altered to read as follows:—

This chapel was rebuilt about 1724 and enlarged by the Society for Building Churches and Chapels in 1829. The original date of building 1513 (*sic*) remains on the south wall.²

There is, however, still no description of the building, and very little more is said in Croston's edition (1891) In this, the former note is incorporated with the text, after quoting Kuerden, with the addition of "there are piscina and sedilia, and a font of very early date."³

As regards some of these statements it may be supposed that Harland altered the date of the rebuilding to 1724 on the authority of Gastrell's 'Notitia' (published in 1850),⁴ but he was very far from being correct in stating that 1513 was the original date of the building, and the dated stone is on the west, not on the south wall.⁵

Canon Raines, in his notes to Gastrell, says that the chapel "was again rebuilt in the year 1816, enlarged by the Incorporated Society for Building Churches and Chapels in 1829, and a chancel has since been added. The font appears to be ancient and in the Norman style."

Here a new date of rebuilding (1816) is introduced, but no reference is given to the source of information. The font is also referred to as Norman by Hardwick, and as of 'great age' by Hewitson in a description of the church written about 1872, part of which may be quoted. It is interesting as preserving a picture of the building in the mid-Victorian period:—

¹ *Lancs.* (1836), iv, 452. ² *Ibid* (1870), ii, 139. ³ *Ibid*, (3rd. ed.), iv, 174.

⁴ Vicar of Leyland's certificate, quoted above.

⁵ Hewitson in 1872 (see below) correctly states that the stone was then, as now, over the west doorway. Harland's authority was probably C. Hardwick's *Hist. of Preston* (1857), where it is stated to be on the south side.

The church stands upon the brow of a hill on the southern side of the village and has a very antiquated, rustic appearance. . . . The building is small, is very homely in its architecture, has a thick mass of ivy in front of it and is surmounted at this end with a little turret containing a small, unpretending bell. Over the doorway at this end there is the date 1513 (*sic*); but it is covered with ivy and is entirely out of sight. The walls, windows, and roof are all plain and we saw nothing outside to relieve the eye beyond the ivy, the bell-turret, and eleven patriarchal nails driven between some stones in the north-east corner. . . . From the eastern part of the burial ground there is a beautiful and extensive view of the surrounding country. . . . The interior of the church is simple and yet very venerable looking. The walls are puritanically plain; the windows are of the same stamp; the roof is open, is supported by five very old-fashioned semi-circular principals, and filled in with aged rafters and wooden angle ornaments. The timber throughout is in a good state of preservation, and the roof, of its kind, a very excellent one. . . . The pews are old, high, and narrow. At the western end there is a whimsically formed gallery; it is a beaked sort of gallery, has a round projection in front, and within the projection the 'sweet singers of Israel' are placed. The chancel is simple and primitive in construction, and has nothing in its windows or upon its walls of an ornamental character. On the left of the communion rails there is an old, strong, stone font, like an inverted cone; it bears no date and no carvings, but is clearly of a great age, and the pedestal supporting it—a square stone, reminding one more of a Roman altar than anything else—bears equally distinct traces of antiquity. Fronting the chancel and standing in the centre of the floor there is a 'three-decker' arrangement—the clerk's place, the reading desk and the pulpit. . . . In the south-west [south-east] wall at the side of two old pews, and opposite the pulpit, there is a holy-water stoup [piscina], with an adjoining recess. . . . The church will accommodate about 250 people¹; the average attendance is from 150 to 200; the congregation consists of the most part of farmers, their servants, and factory operatives. The singers may be placed in the category of the 'vigorous'—they are strong-winded and tuneable.²

Of Canon Raines's statement that the chapel was again rebuilt in 1816 I have been able to find no confirmatory

¹ Mannex's *Directory*, 1854, says 'it contains 350 sittings, of which 252 are free.'

² *Our Country Churches and Chapels*, 254-256.

evidence, and it is difficult also to understand what exactly is meant by "enlargement" in 1829, unless it refers simply to an increase in the seating. One can only regret the vagueness of statement of these early writers in recording matters which at the time were no doubt familiar to everybody, but on which the church books neither at Euxton nor Leyland throw any light.

The chancel was added in 1837, and since then the plan of the building has remained unaltered, though the fabric has been twice restored. In the same year a plot of land "for a school or schoolroom for the education of poor children" was secured in the village,¹ to the north of the chapel, and a school built in the following year. The parsonage house, now known as the vicarage, was also erected in 1838, at the charges of Lady Hoghton of Astley Hall, as a gift to the newly appointed vicar, the Rev. John Williams (1838-1892), who had been curate to the former non-resident incumbent, the Rev. Robert Proctor (1799-1838).

The chapel remained as described by Hewitson until 1894, when the nave was re-floored and re-seated, the gallery taken down and the walls stripped of their external coat of plaster. It had been intended to place a new roof on the church and to build a new vestry, but the cost being found to be too great the scheme was abandoned.²

In the autumn of 1921 there were signs of failing in the roof which seemed to show a tendency to increase, and in 1922 an appeal was issued. On the advice of the Diocesan

¹ Deed of 27 September, 1837, conveyed a plot of land for a school, or schoolroom, for the education of poor children to the vicar of Leyland (G. Baldwin), R. Proctor incumbent of Euxton Chapel, John Williams curate of the same, John Hodgkinson church warden, and John Anton chapel warden: Book of School Trustees. The book was presented to the Trustees, November 5, 1844, by George Johnson Wainwright, of Runshaw Hall, Euxton. The records begin July 29, 1839, on which day the new Trust Deed was signed, but the next entry is July 29, 1844. The last is in 1909. Upon the school house is the inscription "National and Sunday Schools erected by subscription and grant 1837."

² A scheme to build a new chancel and north aisle, plans for which had been prepared by Paley and Austin, had previously been considered but not proceeded with.

Surveyor the two western principals were securely propped for the time being by the insertion of strong double-bolted uprights. In April, 1924, Mr. Theodore Fyfe reported on the state of the roof and the condition of the structure generally. He suggested certain repairs, and in the following June three members of the Manchester Diocesan Advisory Committee visited the building. They endorsed Mr. Fyfe's Report and recommended that he, or some other competent architect, should be asked to superintend the work, emphasising "the importance of preserving this interesting building." The work, begun in July, 1925, and finished in March, 1926, was carried out under the direction of Mr. Isaac Taylor, architect, of Manchester, by Mr. E. Mathews, builder and contractor, of Euxton. The nature of the restoration as regards the roof is described later, and it need only be said here that at Euxton no trace of beetle, insect, or fungus of any kind was found in the timber, the weak places being due solely to wear and ordinary decay.¹ Small sections of the north wall were taken out and rebuilt and the west wall, after being stripped, was pointed and grouted. Internally the spaces between the roof rafters were re-plastered, and the plastered east and west walls were distempered. The wall drainage was thoroughly overhauled.²

THE FABRIC.

From what has been said it will be gathered that the history of the fabric is a somewhat obscure one, owing to the many—sometimes contradictory—dates cited as to when rebuildings and enlargements have taken place, without specific statement as to what was done at any particular time. It is therefore with some diffidence that I put down what are, after all, only opinions or

¹ Architect's Report.

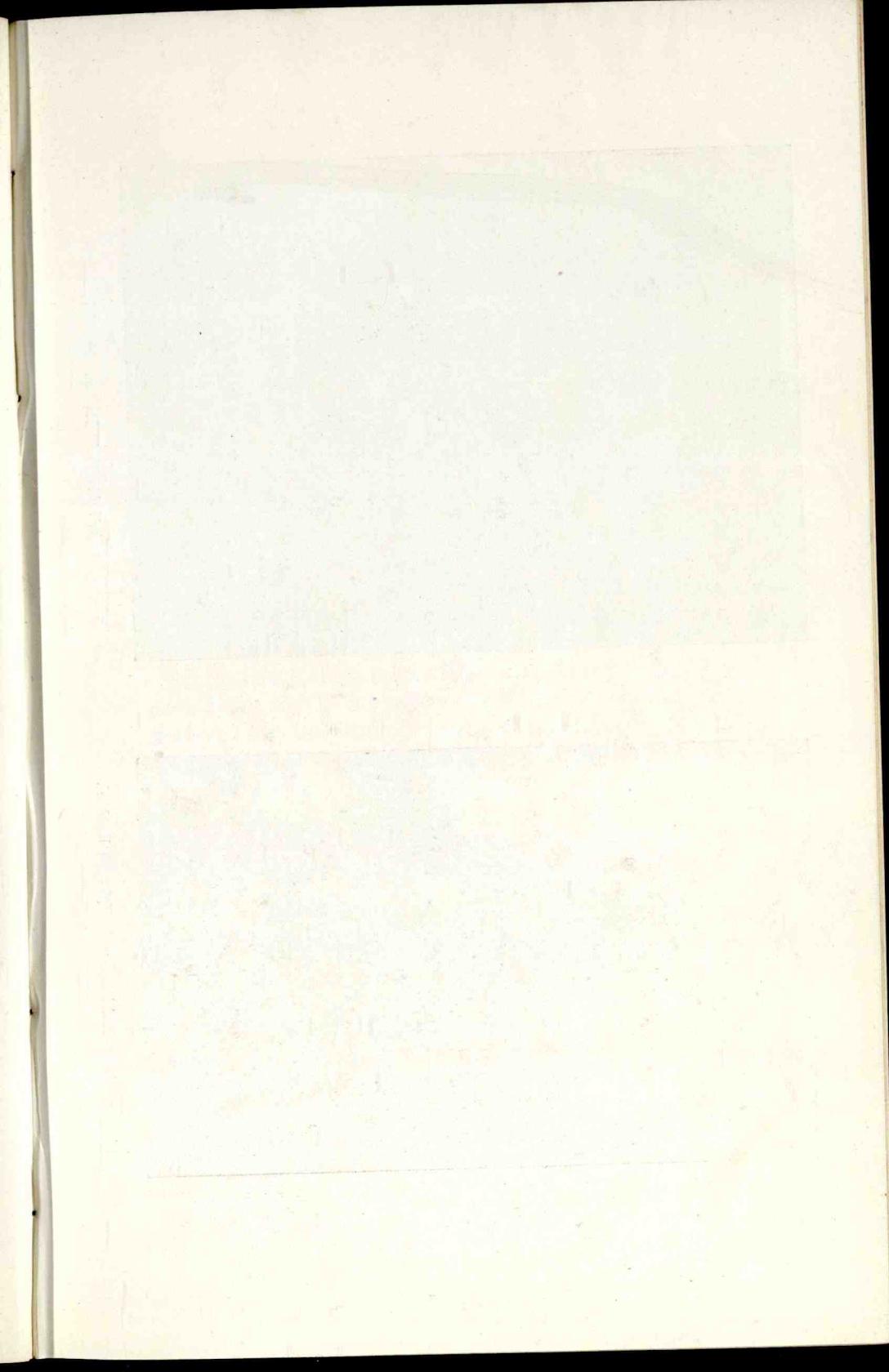
² The foundations on the north and south sides were uncovered and examined in June, 1924: they showed a fair foundation of rubble about 2 ft. deep on hard clay; Report of Advisory Committee.

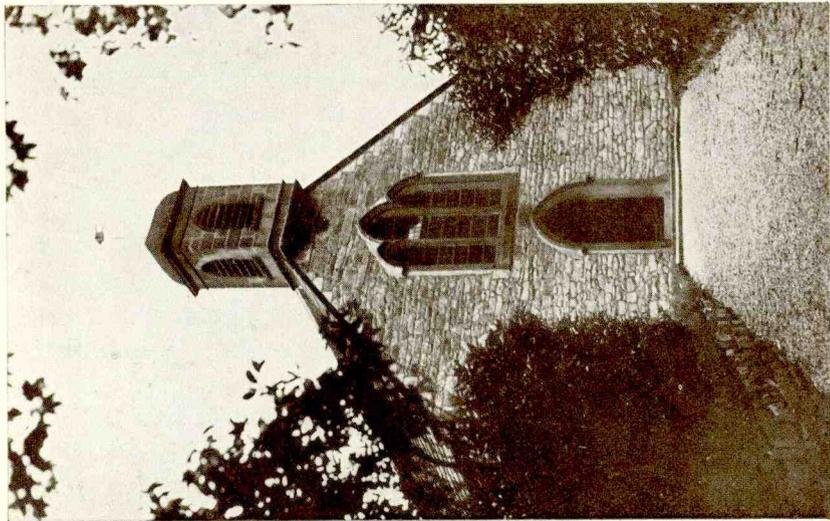
suggestions as to the dates of various parts of the building; and in shading the plan, here reproduced, I have purposely indicated all mediæval work, whether of one period or more, in black, and have shown the western extension, of whatever date it may be, by hatching. Though the main portion of the nave is of fourteenth century date some parts may be older; but it is not easy to assign a precise date to every foot of walling, Euxton Chapel, small as it is, offering problems to which no certain answer can be given.

The building is one of very considerable interest; in the words of Mr. Theodore Fyfe, in his Report of 1924, it is for the most part "a valuable piece of old English work, and should be preserved intact as far as possible."

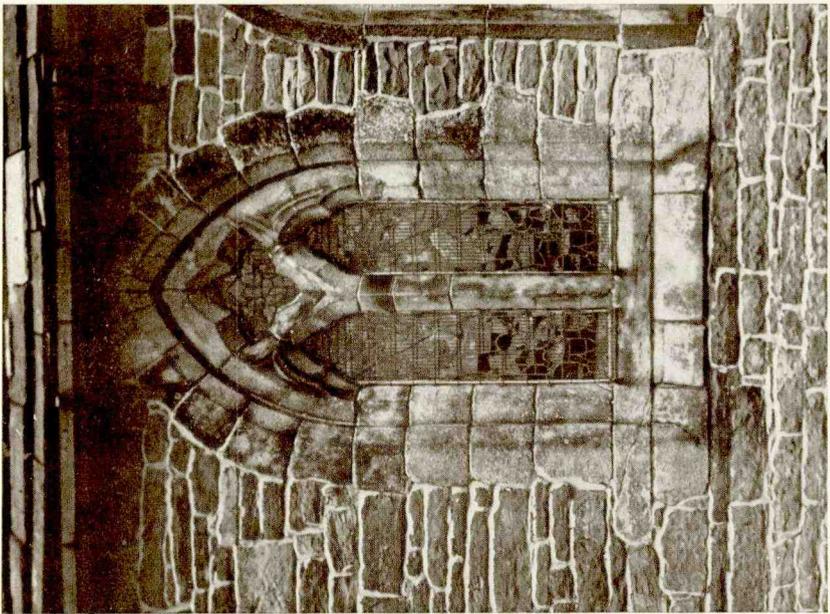
Apart from the short modern chancel, which measures internally 12 ft. 9 ins. from west to east by 17 ft. 10 ins. from north to south, the church consists of an aisleless nave 57 ft. long,¹ the width of which, owing chiefly to a break in the north wall, diminishes from 24 ft. 3 ins. at the west end to 23 ft. 5 ins. at the east. There are three windows and a blocked doorway on the north side, and four windows and traces of a doorway on the south, the entrance being at the west end below a three-light window. There is a small modern vestry on the north side of the chancel. The walls, which are about 12 ft. high inside to the wall plate, are of red sandstone rubble roughly coursed, but the windows are of grey stone. The roof is covered with stone slates overhanging at the eaves, with a flat stone coping at each end. Above the west gable is a small rectangular stone bell-turret, of eighteenth century date, with domed roof and iron vane, sitting awkwardly on the coping and corbelled out from the face of the west wall. The roof is an open timber one of six bays, of late fifteenth or early sixteenth century date in the main, but extended westward later. Internally the east and west

¹ The exact measurements are 56 ft. 11 ins. on the north side and 57 ft. 9 ins. on the south.





EUXTON CHAPEL: WEST FRONT.



WINDOW IN S. WALL

walls of the nave, and the chancel, are plastered, but the north and south wall are of bare rubble, having apparently been stripped of plaster at a former restoration. Until 1926 the west wall, which is comparatively modern, was covered with ivy above a coat of rough-cast, but both ivy and rough-cast are now removed. There are diagonal buttresses at the north-west and south-west angles, but the massive buttress shown on the plan against the north wall has been taken down. At the east end of the south wall is a double piscina and a single priest's seat (sedile), and in the north wall opposite an aumbry.

Before describing these features in detail it will be necessary to say a few words about the plan of the building and to try and determine the general lines of its development. For, simple as this small aisleless nave may appear at first sight, it is by no means so when examined more closely. The chief architectural features remaining are the windows in the north and south walls; these are all of the same type, but the two westernmost (one on each side) are modern, and the third from the west on the south is a restoration. The other four are of fourteenth century date, and consist of two trefoiled lights with a quatrefoil in the head; the jambs are double chamfered, the outer chamfer being taken round the head of the window as a containing arch; there are no hoodmoulds. These windows, on any ordinary grounds of dating, might very well be assigned to about the year 1320, or even earlier, though it is possible that here they may be later, and if it can be proved that the first William Molyneux built, or rebuilt the chapel, it might be allowed that the windows were of his time. Mr. Fyfe in his Report calls them 'late Decorated,'¹ but the term, if strictly applied, might well describe work done about 1320, the early Decorated style covering the latter part of the thirteenth century and down to about 1315.²

¹ Probably meaning about 1350.

² It is sometimes asserted that the chamfered cusp, as used in the Euxton windows, is invariably late; but "late" is a relative word and this form of cusping is sometimes found in the first quarter of the 13th century, while soffit cusps occur as late as about 1300: Bond, *Gothic Architecture*, 509.

Whatever the exact date we may be safe in assuming that the Euxton windows, as well as the north doorway and the piscina and sedile, belong to the first half of the fourteenth century; the question then arises whether any part of the fabric is older, and if so, what form the fourteenth century rebuilding assumed.

From the plan it will be seen that in the north wall, about two-thirds of its length from the west, is a break of some 7 or 9 ins. in the masonry, and at the south-east corner of the building will be observed an early form of buttress covering the angle. This clasping buttress, which measures 26 ins. on the face and projects 16 ins., is of a single stage weathering back at a height of about 9 ft. It is of yellow gritstone and appears to belong to an older building, perhaps of early thirteenth century date, no other architectural features of which remain, but to which the font, mentioned above, belonged.¹ If correctly described, however, the font was Norman, and this suggests an even earlier building than that to which the buttress was attached, but the font having unfortunately disappeared it is impossible to speak with any certainty about it.² The buttress, however, is not earlier than the thirteenth century and may be assigned to the first quarter. It is very unlikely that fourteenth century builders would have constructed a buttress of this shape unless they were rebuilding on earlier foundations, and perhaps not even then. Still the re-erection of an existing feature is possible, though this, of course, in no way weakens the argument for there having been a thirteenth century chapel on the site. It is more likely that the fourteenth century builders left an old buttress standing when they rebuilt the chapel. Beginning at the east, or chancel end, they may have started with the north

¹ *Supra* p. 30.

² Enquiries as to when the font was removed from the church and as to what came of it have so far proved ineffective.

wall, where the break occurs, leaving the east wall with its buttresses standing,¹ and then proceeded with the south wall, continuing it westward without a break, leaving the north wall of the nave till the last. If they made some slight miscalculation of the width at the west end (or for some reason slightly increased the width of the building) they would have found it necessary to gather in the north wall at its junction with the earlier part, and the break in the north wall, about 21 ft. from the east end, is accounted for. If the new nave was rather longer than the old one the difference might be due to taking the whole width of the west face of an existing north-west clasping buttress into the measurements for the new wall, without allowing for its projection beyond the outer line of the north wall. Whether or not this interpretation is the right one it at least offers a possible explanation of what may have happened at the fourteenth century rebuilding of the chapel, mediæval builders being quite capable of making slips of such nature.

There was probably never a structural chancel at Euxton until the modern one was built. The building would follow the common rectangular type of chapel plan, without a dividing arch. The break in the north wall, where the rebuilding began, proceeding eastward, may, however, mark the limit of the ritual chancel, but it is most improbable that it had anything to do with an earlier chancel arch. Had there been a break on the south side as well, it might have helped such a theory, but without necessarily confirming it.

As a chapel of Leyland Euxton would be served by a chaplain appointed by the vicar, who, unless there was some arrangement with the people of the chapelry to maintain their own priest (which does not appear to have been the case), would also be responsible for his stipend.

¹ There is no buttress at the north-east angle, but one may have existed before the vestry was added.

Nominally the appropriators of the church of Leyland, the prior and convent of Penwortham, would be responsible for the upkeep of the chancel, but in such chapels repairs and rebuilding were in practice probably left much to the local people, and in the chapel plan the common absence of distinction between nave and chancel is most likely due to this.

The extent of the fourteenth century nave westward can now only be conjectured, as the present western bay is comparatively modern, but whether it was an addition or a rebuilding remains to be considered. It is generally stated to be of eighteenth century date, in all probability part of the 1724 rebuilding of the chapel already referred to, but I suggest that the 'rebuilding' of that period may (as regards walls and roof at any rate) have been concerned only with the west end of the structure, which may have fallen into so bad a state of repair as to merit the terms 'ruinated' and 'destructa.' It is obvious from the present condition of the fourteenth century masonry and of the later mediæval oak roof, that the whole of the building was never actually in ruins. May it not be possible that the fourteenth century nave was of the same extent as the present one, that some repairs or reconstruction may have been effected in 1573, and that its west end having fallen into grievous decay was rebuilt *de novo* about 1723-4? The west wall, however, has the appearance of being even later, the doorway and window above it being of a type more likely to occur in the early part of the nineteenth century than in the days of George I. They may have been insertions in either 1816 or 1829, years in which, as we have seen, work of some nature was done on the building. The diagonal buttresses, though modern, may have been copied from earlier ones, the type being one which the fourteenth century builders would be likely to use.

The date of the nave windows having been discussed its

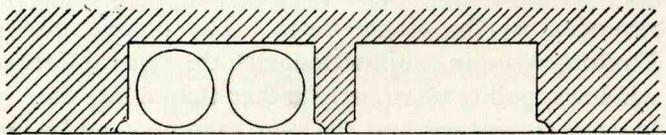
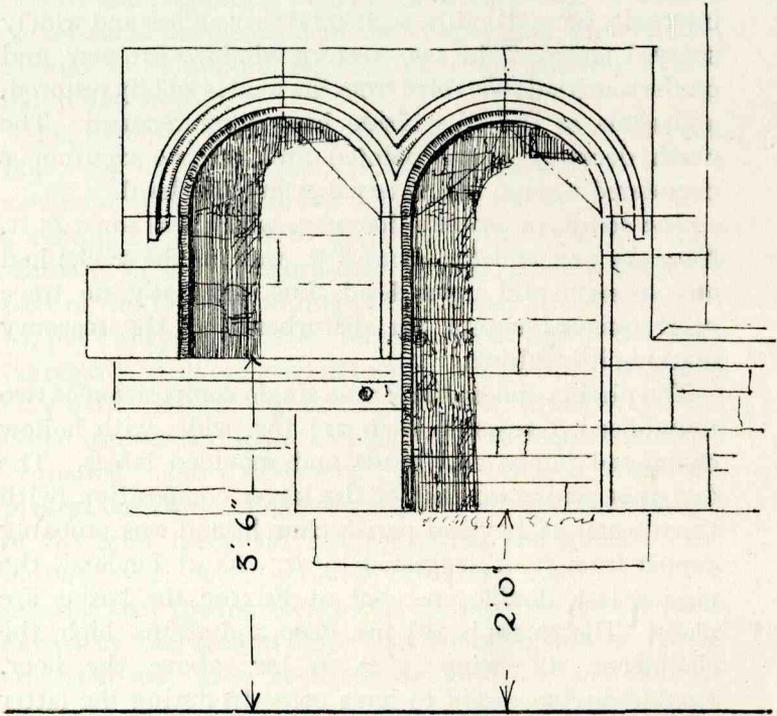
is sufficient here to state that they are all of the same pointed type of two trefoiled lights, with openings 2 ft. 6 ins. wide over all, the lights being each 12 ins. and the mullions 6 ins. They are about 6 ft. in height and internally have flat sills, segmental rear arches and widely splayed jambs. The two western windows are new, and on the south side the third from the west is wholly restored, and some of the sills inside have been renewed. The north doorway has a pointed arch of two continuous chamfered orders, and internal segmental head.

The south, or priest's doorway, which was some 15 ft. from the east end (or about 8 ft. west of the sedile) had also a segmental inner head, but externally no trace of it remains except the disturbance of the masonry marking its position.

The piscina and sedile form a single composition of two round-headed recesses, each $21\frac{1}{2}$ ins. wide, with hollow chamfered jambs and heads and moulded labels. The design is similar to that of the larger composition (with three seats) at Leyland parish church, and was probably copied from it or suggested by it. As at Leyland, the piscina is a double one, but at Euxton the basins are plain. The recess is $10\frac{1}{2}$ ins. deep and 28 ins. high, the chamfered sill being 3 ft. 6 ins. above the floor. Double piscinas seem to have come in during the latter half of the thirteenth century and to have extended well into the fourteenth century,¹ but later on there was a reversion to the single basin. The double piscina at Euxton, taken in conjunction with the general form of the windows, points to an early rather than a late date in the fourteenth century, and the year 1320 may not be far out. The division between the piscina and the seat is $4\frac{1}{2}$ ins.

¹ Bond, *Chancel of Eng. Churches*, 146, where the whole question is discussed, and Cox and Harvey, *Eng. Church Furniture*, 63. There is a double piscina in the chancel of Norbury church, Derbyshire, built about 1320-30; at Croston is one apparently of 13th century date, discovered in 1866.

EUXTON CHAPEL, Piscina & Sedile.



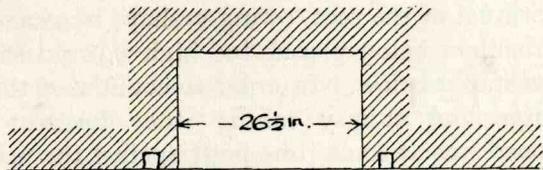
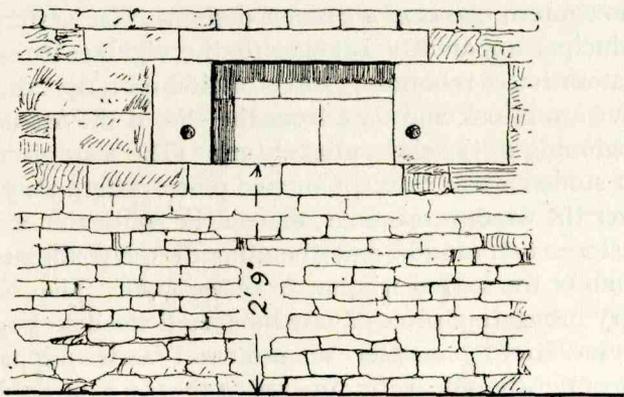
← 2½" — 4½" — 2½" →

PLAN

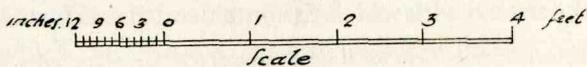
thick, and the seat itself is 2 ft. above the floor. Originally it projected in front of the wall, but the ledge has been cut away.

The aumbry, in the wall opposite, is 5 ft. from the east end. It is a rectangular recess, or cupboard, measuring $26\frac{1}{2}$ ins. long, by $15\frac{1}{2}$ ins. high and 16 ins. deep, the head of which is formed by a single stone 3 ft. long.

EUXTON CHAPEL, Aumbry.



PLAN.



It is 2 ft. 9 ins. above the floor, but the opening is not rebated for a door, and seems to have been covered by a moveable wooden shutter fastened by iron pins, the holes

for which remain on either side.¹ Being quite without architectural features the aumbry is difficult to date with accuracy, but it is probably co-eval with the piscina.

The roof, as already stated, consists of six bays, with five open collar-beam and king-post principals, placed irrespective of the window openings and carrying two moulded purlins on each side, wavy wind braces, and exposed rafters,² the spaces between which are plastered. There is a moulded wall plate, and at each end a wall principal, that at the east being similar to the others, but the western one is of a plainer design. The westernmost principal apparently belongs to the eighteenth century restoration or rebuilding, and is of pitch-pine, but the other four are of oak and date from the end of the fifteenth or beginning of the sixteenth century. The wall pieces rest on stone corbels,³ except in two places where they come over the window openings, one on the south side over the easternmost window and the other on the north over the jamb of the second window from the west. The roof is a very interesting piece of late mediæval woodwork and its preservation a matter of profound satisfaction. The spread of the side walls outward at the top is no doubt due to the thrust of the roof, owing perhaps in some measure to the collars being placed too high but principally to reasons stated below. In order to counteract this thrust the large and clumsy raking stone buttress already mentioned was at some time built against the north wall, immediately to the east of the doorway. This buttress, when taken down in 1926, was found to have been built against the stucco with which the outside wall was formerly

¹ Or the holes may have been for staples through which pins, or bolts, were passed. The holes are $1\frac{1}{2}$ ins. diameter and 2 ins. deep. They are low down upon the jambs of the aumbry (4 ins. above sill). There is a similar single hole the use of which is difficult to determine, below the sill of the piscina, near the seat.

² Six rafters to each bay, except at the west end where the number is seven.

³ The later west principal dies out into the wall at each side at the level of the wallplate.

covered. The date of its erection must therefore have been comparatively recent, assuming that the plaster removed thirty years ago was applied at the eighteenth century rebuilding, or extension at the west end.

When examined in 1924 the roof principals still showed signs of spreading, but all were in a reasonably sound condition, except the western one, which was split badly and considerably sap-rotted.¹ This and the one next to it were temporarily shored, and the roof made secure until the work of restoration was taken in hand two years later. It was then found that a considerable amount of sap wood had been used which had led to extensive surface decay and loosening of joints, resulting in a general spreading of the roof, and in several cases to the actual breaking of the principal backs.² In spite of the apparent decay, however, it was found that a core of sound timber remained amply sufficient to do the work of the roof if its spreading could be counteracted. This was done by an arrangement of tie-rod and steel channels inserted at the back of each principal, by which the whole was made secure. The decayed sap wood was scraped away and the defective joints between the purlins and principals strengthened with oak cleats bolted through the backs of the principals.³ A few decayed rafters and pieces of wind bracing were replaced by new, and oak curved ribs were added to strengthen the pitch-pine principal at the west end. The roof was stripped and after being strengthened by packing at the top of the rafters, was re-slatted with the old grey stone slates.

The difficulty of arriving at a conclusion as to the year in which the western bay was added or rebuilt has already been referred to. It may be sufficient to state here that the evidence of the masonry on the south side point to the

¹ Mr. Theodore Fyfe's Report.

² Report of Mr. Isaac Taylor, architect.

³ *Ibid.*

reconstruction as comprising about 18 ft. of wall. But the nature of the walling (red sandstone rubble) is the same, and possibly stones from a then 'ruinated' part of the structure may have been used. When stripped of its plaster in 1926 the west wall was revealed as of the same nature as the rest of the building. The angle buttresses, west doorway and window are all of ashlar, and have a modern appearance.

The bell formerly in the turret is dated 1723, and assuming that it was cast for the position it so long occupied, it is reasonable to suppose that the west end of the chapel, including the bell-turret, was being rebuilt about that time, a supposition made the more likely by reason of the vicar of Leyland's certifying in 1724 that the chapel "is now repaired."¹

At the north-west angle, high in the wall, its longer side facing north, is a wrought quoin stone 19 by 12 by 8 inches, inscribed 'Roger Wa. . . .', the remainder of the name having been cut away. The name is upside down, and the stone (which from the character of the lettering appears to be of eighteenth century date) was no doubt brought from elsewhere and re-used here at the repairs.

The 'beaked sort of gallery' at the west-end described by Hewitson, with its 'round projection' in front, was in use until its removal in 1894. It is shown on a plan of that date 14 ft. in width (its front nearly lineable with the west jamb of the second window on the north side), exclusive of the bay for the singers which had a projection of 5 ft. and was 8 ft. across. This 'circular' projection is shown as half a sixteen-sided figure, supported by iron pillars. Access to the gallery was by a staircase from the outside on the south, the doorway of which was close against the south-west buttress. This staircase was done away with in 1894. The intention at that time was

¹ *Supra* p. 28.

to rebuild the gallery, with an internal stair in the north-west corner, but the proposal was abandoned.¹

The font is modern and of stone; it stands in the south-west corner of the nave. The disappearance of the ancient font (see p. 31) is much to be regretted.

The three-decker pulpit mentioned by Hewitson has been replaced by a square pulpit of pitch-pine framing enclosing carved oak panels, apparently of seventeenth century date. The pulpit was reconstructed in 1926 and its position slightly altered.

There is a brass eagle lectern, inscribed round the base "A thank offering to God by Mrs. Mayhew of Duxbury Park for mercies received October 1897."

The east window is filled with glass depicting the Tree of Jesse, given in 1900 by the Rev. H. W. Bretherton and other members of the family in memory of Mrs. Bretherton of Runshaw Hall, who died in 1897.² A brass tablet on the north wall of the nave bears the following inscription:

Giving thanks to God and in loving memory of MARGARET BRETHERTON of Runshaw Hall, who entered into rest Sept. 3rd, 1897, her children caused the east window in this church to be set up.

The two middle windows on the south side of the nave are filled with stained glass in memory of John Dean Manning. The easternmost of the two has figures of our Lord and the rich young ruler, and as the good Shepherd, and is inscribed:

This window is erected to the glory of God and in affectionate remembrance of the late John Dean Manning Esq., of Euxton, by his niece Mrs. Jessie H. Pilkington, June 2, 1910.

¹ The gallery having been found to be rotten and the cost of rebuilding it beyond the means at the disposal of the Building Committee a meeting of the parishioners was held to consider the advisability of doing away with it. Its demolition was agreed upon without opposition: Ch. Minute Book, June 23, 1894.

² Faculty granted Dec. 1, 1899; window placed in church, March 24, 1900.

The second window has figures of St. John the Baptist and St. John the Divine, and bears the inscription:

To the glory of God and in Memoriam John Dean Manning Esq., of Euxton. Born October 1st, 1823, died June 2, 1909.

All the other windows are filled with plain glass.

The bell now in the turret is by J. Taylor & Co., of Loughborough, and was placed there in 1898. It is difficult of access and I have had no opportunity of inspecting it. The late vicar, however, informed me that it bears only the name of the founders and the date. The bell which it displaced is now at the School house. It is 16 ins. in diameter, and is by Abraham Rudhall, of Gloucester. It is inscribed round the shoulder

COME AWAY MAKE NO DELAY A.R. 1723.

The motto was one much used by Rudhall on small single bells and on the treble bell of a ring. It is found in Lancashire at Platt chapel, Rusholme (1718), Gateacre chapel (1723), Monton chapel (1725), Wigan parish church ting-tang (1732) and on the original treble (now third) at Croston (1787).

The Communion plate consists of four pieces:

(1) A silver cup, $7\frac{1}{2}$ ins. high, inscribed 'The Gift of Mr. Longworth Lord of'e Mannor to the Township of Euxton 1740.' It bears the London date letter for 1739-40, and the maker's initials P.H.

(2) A modern plated paten.

(3) A silver breadholder, $6\frac{3}{4}$ ins. diam., Sheffield make 1878-9, inscribed "Euxton Church. The gift of Mr. and Mrs. Rawcliffe, June 11, 1879."

(4) A silver breadbox inscribed "In loving memory of my mother Alice Fairclough, Died 17th June, 1917. By her daughter Alice."

In 1821 the chapel possessed a pewter flagon and plate in addition to the cup.¹ The Communion was administered four times a year.

¹ *V.C.H. Lancs.*, vi, 23.

The registers begin in 1774. The first volume contains entries of christenings from April 17, 1774, to December, 1812, and of burials from March 29, 1787, to December, 1812. There are six blank leaves after the christenings, and seven more at the end of the book. From 1774 to August 31, 1787, each page is signed by James Armetriding, minister, and by a church or chapel warden, the entries being in Mr. Armetriding's handwriting. From October 19, 1787, to February, 1796, the pages are signed by John Lowes, minister,¹ and a warden, and from September, 1796, to September, 1799, by P. Hargreaves, officiating minister.² H. Brierley signs as 'minister' from September 5, 1799, to 1803, and after that as 'curate.'³ In the christenings the occupation of the father is generally given after 1781, the chief trades being those of blacksmith, cotton-weaver, warper, weaver (frequent), husbandman (frequent), and paper-maker. The ages of those buried are not stated.

THE DATED STONE.

It remains to discuss the dated and inscribed stone over the west doorway. This, as already mentioned, seems to have been in its present position during the last century, notwithstanding statements that it was on the south side. Of its original position nothing is known, and there seems to be no documentary evidence of any work of reparation or rebuilding done at the time it was fashioned.

The stone measures over all 22 ins. by 9½ ins., and the raised middle portion 13 ins. by 7 ins. The nature of the inscription and the character of the letters and numerals will best be understood by reference to the accompanying outline drawing, which was made from a rubbing. The letters and numerals are in relief, standing about half an inch above either surface. The initials R.M. are 6 ins.

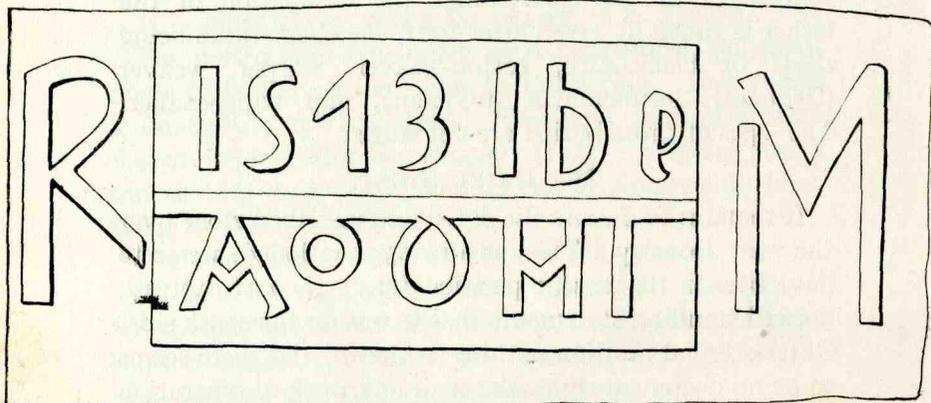
¹ He was minister of Euxton, 1795-1799.

² Assistant curate to the Rev. Robert Proctor (appointed 1799).

³ Assistant curate to Mr. Proctor.

high and the numerals $2\frac{1}{2}$ ins. The middle portion stands out about $\frac{1}{8}$ in. in front of the rest of the stone, or rather the surface of the stone all round has been sunk to that depth.

It will be seen at once that the date is 1573, and not 1513 as hitherto printed. The initials are R.M., and cannot therefore refer to Sir William Molyneux (d. 1548), who is sometimes regarded as the builder of the chapel. They are clearly those of his great-grandson Richard Molyneux, who succeeded to the estates in 1568, was knighted in 1586, created a baronet in 1611, and died in 1623.



Had the date been 1513 it would have been an extraordinarily interesting example in stone of early Arabic numerals, but unfortunately that distinction cannot be claimed for it, as in 1573 this type of numeral was well developed and widely distributed. The Euxton figures are therefore quite normal for their period. The top stroke of the 7 is well defined, and this third numeral differs essentially from the first. Unfortunately the 1513 reading has been copied by all writers on Euxton since the

middle of the last century and from year to year the Manchester Diocesan Directory repeats the statement that Euxton chapel "existed in 1513."

The three characters following the date are generally regarded as *Ihc* but the correctness of that interpretation is by no means certain. If *Ihc* is meant it is an example of very provincial workmanship. The letters look more like *Ibe*, but no phrase suggests itself for which this would be an obvious contraction, though it is possible that the initials had reference to some Latin motto that the carver, or rather his employer, had in mind. As nobody then had two christian names they cannot be a man's initials. Perhaps, after all, *IHC* is the easiest solution. Other suggestions made to me seem unlikely and far fetched. The second line is, of course, "A° Dmi" for Anno Domini.

It may be of interest to recall that in 1573 three years had elapsed since the publication of the Papal bull of excommunication and deposition against Elizabeth.

THE CHAPELYARD.

The burial ground lies chiefly on the south and south-west sides of the church with extensions east and north. The older part extends to the edge of the high bank above the Chapel Brook, and the west end is a considerable height above the road, from which it is approached by an inclined pathway. From the churchyard there is an extensive and beautiful view eastward to the Anglezark moors.

To the south-west of the nave is a pedestal Sundial. It has a circular baluster stem with moulded top and base, and stands on two circular stone steps. Its height above the top step is 4 ft. 6 ins., and the steps are each 7 ins. high. The plate bears the inscription

Rich^d Broxup
Churchwarden

1775

The oldest gravestone appears to be an upright one dated 1787, the year in which the burials begin in the Register Book.¹

The west wall of the churchyard was rebuilt in 1926, and the north and east boundaries improved. A lychgate was erected in 1927.

On the west side of the road opposite the church is the pedestal of a stone Cross. The shaft has been broken off flush with the top of the socket stone, or pedestal, which is 18 ins. high and 24 ins. in diameter. "This cross," says Mr. Henry Taylor, "may have been placed in its present position at the top of a steep hill as the last resting place for funeral processions before reaching Euxton church."² Canon Raines was of the opinion that the cross was 'formerly in the chapel,' a most unlikely place for it. He describes the pedestal in 1850 as lying "neglected outside the gate to the chapelyard," and as "used by the Roman Catholics at their funerals as a station."³

BENEFACTIONS.

The first Register contains abstracts of the wills of Thurston Pincock (1727), and of John Beatson (1800), benefactors to the township of Euxton.

(1) The first is entitled "Abstract of Thurstan Pincock's Will proved in the court of Chester the 12th of February 1727," in which the testator left to his brother Thomas Pincock of Euxton, gentleman, his part or share of a certain close or parcel of land lying in Euxton containing about two acres and also all that parcel of waste ground in Old Lane, Euxton, upon trust

Nevertheless that he and his heirs shall out of the yearly profits thereof pay the sum of twenty shillings a year for ever unto the

¹ Hewitson wrote: "In the yard which surrounds it (the chapel) there are numerous headstones and old-fashioned slabs, but upon none of them are there any dates, or names, or epitaphs calling for notice": *Our Country Churches and Chapels*, 254.

² *Anc. Crosses of Lancs.*, 49.

³ Notes to Gastrell's *Notitia Cest.* (Chet. Soc. xxii), 384.

poor inhabitants of Euxton aforesaid at the feast of the nativity of our Saviour in every year after my decease. And also upon this further trust, that he and his heirs shall out of the yearly profits of the said land likewise pay to the curate of the Chapel of Euxton aforesaid for the time being the like sum of twenty shillings a year so long as the said chapel shall continue and remain under the Episcopal Government.

The charges under Thurston Pincock's will continue in force, the moiety for the poor being distributed by the vicar of Euxton in money or in tickets for coal and grocery.¹

(2) The abstract of the will of John Beatson, of Cateaton street, London, proved in Doctors' Commons, March 1800, reads as follows:—

I do give and bequeath unto the minister and chapel warden for the time being of the Chapel of Euxton and their successors for ever the full sum of one hundred pounds upon trust that they the said Minister and Chapel warden do and shall lay out and invest the same in some one of the publick funds or stocks, and from time to time to pay and apply the interest dividends and annual produce thereof in the purchase of bread to be distributed, and which I do hereby will and direct shall be given to and distributed every Sunday morning after Divine service as far as the same will extend unto and amongst such of the poor people of the Township of Euxton aforesaid as shall regularly and invariably attend Divine service and to no one else.

Following this is a Memorandum dated December 24th, 1803, which reads as follows:—

The above mentioned sum of one hundred pounds was first invested in the 3 per cent. Consols in the names of Robert Proctor, Minister, James Bretherton and John Medcalf, chapel wardens, by whom a power of attorney was given to Thomas Armetriding to receive the Dividends. Upon the death of the said Thomas Armetriding the two surviving Trustees (James Bretherton being previously dead) elected two others in his room and the stock was accordingly transferred into and now stands in the names of Robt. Proctor, minister, John Medcalf, Robert Latham and William Clarkson who have appointed Reginald Parker of the Bank of England, gentleman, William Esdaile, John Hammet and James Hammet, of London, Bankers, jointly and severally their lawful

¹ *V.C.H. Lancs.*, vi, 9.

Attornies to receive and give receipts for the Dividends on £149 5s 9d., three p. cent. Consols.

N.B.—If Mr. Parker dies, then a letter must be addressed to Sir James Esdaile and Co., requesting them to receive dividends, as Mr. Will. Esdaile, Mr. John Hammet or Mr. James Hammet or any of them will be able to receive them so long as the present Trust lives. If any of the present Trust dies, say nothing of it until a second or a third dies, when two or more are dead then the Trust must be again renewed, in the manner already done, for if all are dead, before a new Trust be created it must be the executor or administrator of the survivor that must receive and convey and under the authority of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury.

Henry Brierley, Curate,
Dec. 24th, 1803.

Four years later there is a second memorandum in connection with the Beatson charity, reading as follows—

In a former page of this book an account is entered of the legacy left by Mr. Beatson the interest of which to be laid out in bread to be given to the poor of the Township of Euxton who regularly attend the Chapel every Sunday morning. It is here to be noted that the power of Attorney there mentioned as given to Mr. Parker, Mr. W. Esdaile and others is now cancelled and a new power has been given to Samuel Smith, George Smith, John Smith, Abel Smith, Samuel George Smith and George Robert Smith, Bankers, and John Abel Smith esquire, all of London, to receive the Dividends on £149 5s 9d., 3 p.c. cons. for the future.

Nov. 12th, 1827.

Henry Brierley, Minister.

The income of the Beatson bequest was £3 19s. 4d. in 1911, and seven loaves were distributed each Sunday after service.¹

(3) Another entry in the Register book refers to a bequest made in 1718 by the Rev. Thomas Armetriding, vicar of Leyland:—

It appears from the will of the Rev. Thomas Armetriding dated in 1718 that amongst other legacies to charitable purposes he left to James Armetriding, Thomas Sumner, and Edward Woodcock, £100 for bible and books for the poor of Euxton and the surplus for teaching poor children to read. Of this bequest no trace has yet been found.

H.B. Dec. 30, 1825.

¹ *V.C.H. Lancs.*, vi, 9.

The most important charity is not mentioned in this book, viz., that founded by Richard Hodson, yeoman and linen-weaver, who left £40 which, having been invested in land, now produces £15 a year for the poor.

The chapel was provided with a small endowment through the above Thomas Armetriding, who bequeathed £200 after the death of his wife (she lived till 1730), and a grant from Queen Anne's Bounty was also secured.¹ This was augmented a quarter of a century later, as recorded on a tablet now on the north wall of the nave:

A.D. 1756.	
This C. of EUXTON was augm ^d	L.
And A.D. 1758 Lands purch ^d with	400
Whereof Given by	
Q ⁿ ANNE'S Bounty	200
By EXEC ^{rs} of W ^m STRATFORD LL.D.	70
By other Benef ^{rs}	130

The Dr. Stratford here mentioned was a nephew of Nicholas Stratford, bishop of Chester (1689-1707). He was Commissary of Richmond, and a great benefactor. He and his executors after him augmented a great number of livings in the archdeaconry of Richmond and elsewhere. He died in 1753 and is buried at Lancaster parish church.

THE MINISTERS.

A list of Curates and Vicars of Euxton, taken from the papers at the Diocesan Registry, Chester, from 1729 to 1911, is printed in the *Victoria County History Lancs.* (vi, 22). The Rev. John Williams, appointed in 1838, was minister for 54 years, and had previously been assistant curate. He was described by Hewitson in 1872 as a "dignified, neatly-built, evenly proportioned, aristocratic looking gentleman," with a "tasteful polished contour and well made up in his details." But he had formerly been "solemnly cantankerous and self willed," considering that the ratepayers "should look upon him as

¹ *V.C.H. Lancs.*, vi, 22.

the Fadladeen of the village and that all the people should say Amen." But he was a scholar and a gentlemanly, courteous, and pleasant man, "if you kept off his coat tail."¹ He died in 1892. His successor, the Rev. Henry John Greswell Beloe, retired in 1919 and was followed by the present vicar, the Rev. William Lawson Hugill, M.A. To Mr. Hugill I am indebted for much kind help and interest freely given, and for some of the illustrations. For two of the photographs I am indebted to Mr. H. Isherwood, and to the proprietors of the *Preston Guardian* I owe the use of the block of the dated stone.

¹ *Our Country Churches and Chapels*, 256.

