

THE CHURCH OF ST. OSWALD, MALPAS, CHESHIRE

ALTERATIONS TO
THE BRERETON AND CHOLMONDELEY CHAPELS

CONSIDERABLE alterations are now (1950) in progress at Malpas church. This building, one of the finest examples of fourteenth and fifteenth century ecclesiastical architecture in Cheshire, is also notable for the Brereton and Cholmondeley chapels which are separated from the nave and aisles by fine screens. Vaults underlie both Chantry chapels, and when they were opened recently, I attended with photographers in order that a permanent record should be preserved of their appearance before the tomb chests were moved, and before the Cholmondeley vault was collapsed and permanently sealed.

The photographs, secured with the Marquess of Cholmondeley's full permission, and with his private Chaplain in attendance, are remarkable, and the entire series of pictures I have deposited with this Society for consultation by historians and antiquaries now and in the future. One of the lead shells representing a life-size figure of a woman is quite unique: it contains the body of Katherine Cholmondeley, daughter of John, Lord Stanhope, Earl of Harrington and wife of Robert Earl of Leinster, who played an active part in advancing the Royalist cause in Cheshire during the Civil War. Attached to the effigy is a plate which reads:—

"Here lieth interred the body of Katherine daughter of John Lord Stanhop Baron of Harington and late wife of Sr. Robert Cholmondeley Baron of Cholmondeley Viscount Kelles in the County Chetr. and Earle of Leinster aged 59. She dyed June 14th 1657."

The Brereton vault, constructed entirely of pink sandstone, has various dates "smoked" on the roof by torch bearers. These are as defined and readable as the night when the stones were first marked.

RAYMOND RICHARDS