

S T A G E VIII.

Buckland.—St. Rhadagund's Abbey.—Waldershare.—West Langdon Abbey.—Ewell.—Barham Downs, and Watling-Street.—Broome.—Denhill.—Nethersole.—Barham.—Hleden.—Higham.—Bishopshourn.—Bridge.—Patrickshourn.—Bifrons.—Bekeshourn, to Canterbury.

AFTER leaving Dover, in our road to Canterbury, the first place we arrive at is the little village of Buckland which has a small church, but it contains nothing remarkable.* About a mile and a half to the left of this village are the remains of Bradsole, or St. Rhadagund's abbey. It was founded by Hugh, its first abbot, and filled with monks of the Premonstratensian order, which religious society was instituted by St. Norbert, about the year 1119. Lambard says, at the suppression it was valued at 98l. a year.

About five miles and a half to the right is the village of Waldershare. The church is small, but contains some good monuments of the ancient family of Monins, who were lords of the manor. In a separate chancel, built by sir Robert Furnese, bart. is a noble Monument of sir Robert's father, well executed in marble. In this parish is an elegant and pleasant seat of the earl of Guildford. The house, which is a fine structure, situated within a noble park, and surrounded with spacious gardens, was built by sir Henry Furnese. In the park is erected an high belvedere, which commands a beautiful and most extensive view of the country. Opposite to lord Guildford's seat are the remains of West Langdon abbey, which was founded by sir William de Auberville, knt. in the reign of Richard I. for monks of the Premonstratensian order, and dedicated to

* A new bridge, to the great convenience of passengers has lately been built over the river which crosses the road at this place.

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St. Mary and St. Thomas the Martyr, of Canterbury. It was suppressed in the reign of Henry the Eighth.

Between the sixty-eighth and sixty-ninth stones on the road is the small village of Ewell. This place is remarkable for having been the residence of the Knight's Templars, who had a grand mansion here, which probably was situated about half a mile to the right, where now is a place called the Temple. Proceeding towards Canterbury, and passing the sixty-third stone, we enter Barham down, which extends in length about four miles. On the left is a beautiful vale, which contains several pleasant villages and gentlemen's seats; the view to the right is not quite so open from the road, but on ascending the eminence, the prospects are equally diversified and more extensive. On this down is the site of an ancient camp, with three ditches round it, which some conjecture to be the work of Julius Cæsar, on his second expedition to this island. Dr. Stukely, in his *Itinerarium Curiosum*, says, "To Dover from Canterbury the Watling-street is still the common way; it is left entire over Baram-Down, with a high ridge, strait pointing to Canterbury cathedral tower; as soon as it enters the Down it traverses a group of Celtic barrows, then leaves a small camp of Cæsar's; further on it has been inclosed through two fields*, and levelled with ploughing; then it passes by a single barrow, whereon stood the mill, which is now removed higher up; then it ascends the hill to a hedge corner where are three barrows, a great one between two little ones, all enclosed with a double square entrenchment of no great bulk; I fancy them Roman, because parallel to, and close by, the Roman road; the great barrow has a cavity at top, and an entrance eastward; whether casually, or with

* Several other considerable enclosures have been made since Dr. Stukely published his *Itinerarium Curiosum*.

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design, I know not*. At Lydden the Watling-street falls into that noble valley of Dover, made of two huge ridges of chalk, which divide themselves into lesser vallies dropping into the great one at regular distances, as the little leaves of plants meet at the main stem; this valley when viewed from the end, looks like a landscape on scenes, lessening, according to perspective, to Dover, between the two *phari*, and the sea at the end enclosed between them. The street slides along the northern declivity, crosses the rivulet which wanders through the middle of the valley at Buckland, so to Biggin-gate, where is its termination, by the side of the old port, having now run from Chester about 250 miles. Many barrows are on the sides of those hills."

On a part of these downs called Breech, several human skeletons were discovered in 1758, lying near the road side; one of which had round the neck a string of beads of various forms and sizes, from the bigness of a pigeon's egg to that of a pea; by the side lay three instruments of war, a kind of scymetar, a dagger and a spear; seven others lay in good order, about a yard apart, and two feet underground, but without any thing to distinguish them.

About the year 1212 king John encamped on Barham-Down with an army of 60,000 men, to oppose the French, who threatened him with an invasion. Simon Montford, Earl of Leicester, also drew up a large army here in the reign of Henry III. many other scenes of war and peace have passed, too numerous to particularise. In 1760, when an invasion was expected from our natural enemies the French, here was an encampment of seven regiments of

* Some of these barrows were opened a few years since by that learned and ingenious antiquarian the late Rev. Bryan Fauſſet, of Heppington, when several valuable relicks of antiquity were found, some of which were of pure gold.

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In the valley on the left is Broome, the fine seat of sir Henry Oxenden, bart. On the right is Denhill, the seat of Hardinge Stracey, esq. which commands a most delightful view of the adjacent country. Near this stood Nethersole-house, the ancient mansion of John Winchester, esq. which was pulled down in 1788, by the owner of the adjoining seat of Denhill. John Nethersole, esq. proprietor of this estate in the reign of Henry VIII. was so great a favourite, that he was indulged to wear a cap in the King's presence.

To the left of the Down is the village of Barham, which gives name to this delightful spot. The church has in it some monuments of the Diggs family, who resided at Diggs-court in this parish, now the seat of Charles Dering, esq. On the opposite side of the Down is Ileden, the seat of Thomas Watkinson Payler, esq. and about two miles farther towards Canterbury is Higham, the new seat of James Haller, esq. On this part of the Down, Canterbury horse races are annually exhibited. The course, till within these few years, extended two miles in length, but is now much improved and made round, by which the sport is greatly increased, as the horses pass in view twice in each four mile heat. An handsome building was completed in 1774 for the reception of the numerous and genteel company which frequent those races, and underneath are convenient offices. On the left is Bourne Place, late the seat of Sir Horatio Mann, but now of John Harrison, esq. in the midst of a paddock, with a beautiful trout stream running at an agreeable distance from the front of the house. Since the game of cricket has been patronised by several of our nobility and gentry, in this paddock many grand matches have been decided, between the greatest heroes of the *Bat* this age, or perhaps

perhaps any other, ever produced. The parish of Bishopbourn, in which this seat stands, was so called because it was given by king Kenulph, at the request of archbishop Athelard, to the priory of Christ-Church. In the church are several good monuments, particularly that of the Rev. and learned Mr. Richard Hooker, author of the Ecclesiastical Polity, who was rector of this parish; and in the seat of Bourne-place, is a most curious painted window executed from Holland.

From the west end of the Down we descend into the village of Bridge. This place took its name from a bridge over a branch of the Stour* which runs through it. It rises from a spring in the parish of Bishopbourn, and is some times almost dry; at other times a flood comes down from springs about Elham, with great rapidity, till interrupted by what the neighbours call swallows, where it sinks into the earth till that is saturated, then rushes on again to the next interruption of the same kind, so that a stranger might be amazed at walking near this river's side and down the stream till he has lost it, and finds the channel dry. Near a mile to the right is the small village of Patrickbourn; formerly it had the name of Cheney, and was the residence of the noble family of Cheney, before they removed to Shurland in the isle of Shepey. The church is a building of considerable antiquity; over the south door is a curious Saxon arch, carved with a variety of figures. In this parish stood the ancient and very pleasant seat called Bifrons, the residence of the Rev. Edward Taylor. "It was built,"

* This bridge being decayed and otherwise inconvenient for carriages, a new and more commodious one has been built by subscription, for which the public are much indebted to the assiduity of the Rev. Mr. Taylor, also for his great attention to the improvements on the road up Bridge hill, before the repairs under the late turnpike act.

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says Dr. Harris, " by Robert Bargrave, esq. or one would rather think by his lady, if one may judge by this motto which was placed upon it :

Diruta ædificat uxor bona, ædificata diruit mala.

The old house was pulled down in Feb. 1775, and is now rebuilt on a modern and more commodious construction.

Near this village is that of Bekefbourn, which anciently belonged to the cinque port of Hastings, and enjoyed the same privileges. Henry de Beke held certain lands in this parish by grand sergeantry, to find one ship each time Henry III. passed the sea. Philipot says, the branch of the Stour was navigable to this place in the reign of Edward III. There was a chantry in the church, founded in 1314, by one James of Bourne, the revenues of which were translated to Cokyn's hospital in Canterbury, in 1362. The archbishops of Canterbury had here a small but elegant palace, of which the gate-way still remains. Near Bekefbourn is the new erected seat of Isaac Bough, esq. who bought the estate of Sir Philip Hales, bart. and pulled down Howletts, the ancient residence of the Hales family.

From Bridge to the city of Canterbury we meet with nothing remarkable till we come to St. Laurence, the seat of the late colonel John Graham, near which, on the left, lies the high road to Romney marsh. This seat is between the 56th and 57th mile-stone.

We have now brought our traveller to the end of our intended route ; and if we have given him that entertainment which might be expected from this little volume, we shall be happy on a future occasion to accompany him to some other part of the county of Kent, a county still fruitful in various events, and which has ever made so distinguished and principal a part of our English history.