

History
of the
Church of St. Peter,
Kinver.

CYNEFARE,
CHENVARE,
KYNFARE,
KENEFARE,
KYNVARE,
KYNFAR,
KINFARE,
KINVER.

Set on a hill which cannot be hid.

Foreword by the Lord Bishop of Lichfield.

I GLADLY commend this little book and the cause which it serves. The work of repairing and restoring this ancient and well-loved Church of Kinver which has fallen to this generation is no new task. The story which this book tells is of love and devotion that has continued throughout the centuries during which this Church has crowned the hill above the village. It is not to be thought of that at a time when we are celebrating our English heritage we should fail. I hope that the study of the history of this well-known landmark will kindle afresh the loyalty and devotion of all Church-people.

Edward Lichfield.

Note from the Vicar.

KINVER CHURCH has long wanted a Guide and I am very thankful that this careful and valuable little book has been produced. I hope that visitors will read it as they explore the different parts of our beautiful old Church and I hope that parishioners will enjoy it and that the story it tells will endear the old Church still more to their hearts and strengthen their resolve to maintain it.

The story is partly of preservation and partly of expansion and beautifying. We should like to-day to beautify it still more but the urgent need is for preservation. I most earnestly hope that the love and research that Mr. Grainger has put into this book will result in real help towards our task.

A dead Church could never preserve an old one. I believe that the Faith that this Church expresses is the very life of the world and its only saving against greed, fear and destruction. May all who read this book dedicate themselves afresh to the service of Him for whose sake it has been written.

J. C. West.

July, 1951.

Note from the Author.

THIS SMALL BOOK is a modest attempt to remind readers of Kinver's Parish Church of St. Peter, "set on a hill which cannot be hid." A religious landmark for centuries past and, God willing, for centuries to come. Its age may be in doubt and its structural or architectural features altered down the ages, but it is still preserved as a Church and this should influence residents and visitors alike to keep it so.

It may have proved to some only a visit and to others service and worship, but I trust it will still bring happy memories.

I have no proof or evidence that any book solely devoted to Kinver's Church has been published in this 20th century.

Personally, I am grateful to the many people and to the various sources of information and for the co-operation of the Parish Church Council and friends in compiling this History.

I trust the request for it will be such as to show that it supplies a long-felt want; — and that it will interest friendly readers and benefit the Restoration Appeal Fund is the aim, object and wish of

Yours respectfully,

Herbert Grainger.

"Modena," Kinver, Staffs.

August, 1951.

Guide to History of Kinver Church.



Preface and Appeal.

THIS fine old Church of St. Peter, set on a hill, has been a landmark and a religious and educational influence on many generations of what was once the town of Kinfare. That, God willing, it shall continue to do so for generations to come is what I am humbly concerned with in this little "Church Guide" by reminding readers of the wonderful heritage that Kinver possesses. We have crossed the threshold of a new and important half century and a look backwards may spur some readers on to some special effort for the future or to appreciate progress that has been made.

To tell a story that goes back to Doomsday means research in and among old documents and manorial records not easy of access, while the histories of Church and Parish are closely interwoven. Yet each deserves separate written records and I understand that the History of the Parish is likely to be published shortly. By the kindness of Mr. O. Grazebrook I have been permitted to make extracts from "The History of Stourton Castle and the Royal Forest of Kinver" published in 1919. Also I have had access to the parish archives and those preserved at the Salt Library, Stafford.

The position of the Church on the hill-top, unrivalled to-day for beauty in the Midlands, was decided by its early builders on safety first grounds. It proved a beacon for the guidance of travellers as well as a refuge and defence from marauders from over the Welsh borders during early and troubled times. It was high and dry away from the marshy ground liable to flooding, as early parish records shew.

History repeats itself in the life of our Church. In the past, devout worshippers and friends made good wear and tear, defied change and decay and enriched the Church with offerings of beauty—often when times were harsh and hard and the sacrifices of time and money were real. The tithe or small sum for Church maintenance used to be held a duty. In our day the repairs to the roofs alone are estimated by expert opinion to cost nearly £3,000. Surely we who pride ourselves on our loyalty are called by our sacrifice and by our response to the Kinver Church Restoration Fund Appeal to ensure that, please God, the work of the Church shall go forward for centuries to come as in the past nine hundred years.



THE SPELLING OF KINVER.

The following is the list of spellings with the dates of the evidence;
A.D. 1000—Cynefare, 1100—Chenvare, 1200—Kynfare, 1359—Kenefare,
1434—Kynvare, 1511—Kynfar, 1600-1800—Kinfare, 1900—Kinver.

KINVER AND ITS CHURCH

BOTH have an History and although so closely allied for centuries deserve separate written records. The need for both is so much overdue although many eminent writers and local historians have referred to our lovely old Church in their books. Guides, local Journals and Parish Magazines and of course Authors of authority on County History have made interesting references to Kinver's origin, its position, views, famous Edge and Camp, Ancient Forest and Early Industries.

We all agree as to the charm of this old world village (once a town) and the beauty spots and walks within easy distance and its healthy surroundings are recognised by the increasing number of visitors from local industrial centres and distant towns as transport becomes available.

It appears to me at this period of our Church Life on the threshold of another half century and Festival Year to recall and record some of the history of our old Church, St. Peter's—the Church on a hill which cannot be hid—which has been preserved for centuries and handed down to us, but now requires immediate and extensive roof repairs.

The old Church dedicated to St. Peter (the Rock)—is rightly named and has been known as such from the sixteenth century. But—from time whereof no man hath memory there has been worship, perhaps Pagan, upon the Edge, Cliff or Tableland. History, if not silent, says little, but Tradition much, on Kinver of old. No proof, written or printed, is available to the writer as to the date of its first Christian building or community in open air worship. Our early ancestors, rock-hewn cave-dwellers or cliff-side cottagers would probably be there previous to a wooden or stone structure for sanctuary or defence.

Its geographical position lends itself to the thought of a Druid's Temple up there in the remote ages on the adjoining Table-land or Plain with its reputed pre-Conquest Camp and Earthworks, the battle ground of the past—but, fortunately, the pleasure-ground of the present.

Our very early Saxon rulers encouraged in Mercia the building up of village communities in preference to the large centres of community life in our early civilisation. Kinver as a place-name was known in Mercia (the Mid-England counties) for over a thousand years when really our people were sons of the soil engaged in crude methods of agriculture when the order of the day and period appeared to be "Work for self-preservation in food and shelter." But history does prove that some of our early rulers interested themselves not only in possessions or administration but encouraged the spread of the Christian Faith and we read in History of Kinver of its royal patronage and interest. Also that even before William the Conqueror came on the scene and his survey says that there was a Priest in charge at Kinver which is evidence of a spiritual need of its people even if the Church as an actual building or its position is in doubt—Yes, before the Conquest.

The position of the original Church of St. Peter's was wisely chosen by its unknown builders whether Anglo-Saxon or Norman. Its unrivalled position as a beauty spot and religious landmark for miles around is even today agreed upon. But judged by present day standards it is difficult of access. Yet safety of fabric and worshippers were considered in its building which entailed both primitive and difficult transport although stone and wood were available locally from our cliff-side quarries and the Royal forest of Kinver, where historians tell us that tide and time have passed over the strata of sand stone rock leaving a bed of pebbles and sandy plain as evidence. The late Rev. J. Hodgson who was an authority on Kinver history says in an old Church magazine that there was a small Church probably built in the reign of King Wulfhere, as towards the end of his reign he did accept Christianity and nominated or invited our first Bishop of Lichfield, St. Chad.

His two sons are reputed also to have been killed and at a later date recognised as saints. Whether truth or tradition, our own diocese does date back to this period and several Churches (probably Kinver's first Church) were built in the Midlands about 700 A.D.

Another record of 1043 A.D. says "Algar the Earl held Kinver in the time of Edward the Confessor." Shaw the historian describes the Survey in Domesday Book (1068) as "King William holds Chenevaire. It contains 5½ hides with their appendages. The cultivated land is 16 carucates. In the demesne there is one carucate and three serfs, seventeen villeins and seven borderers, twenty-four families, with the Priest holding ten carucates. There are also two mills valued at twenty shillings and six acres of meadow. The Woodland is three leagues long and one wide. It was and is worth a hundred shillings. The land of the King is in the Hundred of Saisdon, Staffs."

The Earl of Algar above referred to was the son of Leofric the husband of Lady Godiva of Coventry. Thus Kinver is an ancient part of Crown Lands (the Terra Regis) of the Kingdom of Mercia and received its early status valuation and population. And it now receives Religious Education, Taxation and Administration.

But this early reference to a priest at Kinver is not proof of his being in charge of the very early Kinver Church. It is known that a small Church or Chapel was considered part and parcel of the early local nobleman's household in Hunting Lodge, Manor House or Castle and yet we may assume he was in charge of the spiritual welfare of our early ancestors without clear proof that Kinver Parish was an ecclesiastical benefice or whether the early religious building was Anglo-Saxon, Danish or Norman or even earlier. It is recorded that some of the very early owners of Stourton Castle held the living or advowson of Kinver Church and was occasionally in dispute with Church or State but to their credit some of them (particulars elsewhere) gave both men and money for the spiritual benefit of Staff and Tenants, also Neighbours and the future Kinver people.

The Manor of Kinver at this period was in the hands of Fitz-Anculph who is reputed to have held twenty-five manors in the Midland Counties. But Kinver was situate in the Seisdon Hundred and was then the largest parish out of the twenty hamlets which comprised the Seisdon Hundreds for early administration according to the Seisdon Rolls of Staffs. But very few references (if any other) are made concerning Church or Building in the eleventh century other than Robert Earl of Staffs owned Stourton Castle, 1087, and that Kinver Manor was farmed by Urse d'Abetote.

Time marches, and even today tradition recalls an atmosphere of religion in the sand-stone cave of Augustine who may have been some good man or hermit assisting travellers via the old track, Kingsford Lane.

KINVER'S EARLY EDUCATION.

From Church Records it is known that many manorial rights were involved or associated with its Church, Endowments, Livings, Revenues, and the early Kinver Clergy would be responsible for both Religious and Educational Instruction to the few local gentry, their households and staffs and perhaps a few retainers. Letter writing was almost unknown and would be a sealed and folded parchment paper and sent by courier or servant on horseback generally. Travelling was dangerous and so early tuition given or received would be at home and so local clergy, we find at later dates, were tutors and teachers and some early Church appointments were "dual", viz.: teaching at school and preaching at Church and it is interesting to recall that a long line of our clergymen were also schoolmasters and lecturers of Degrees and as history unfolds the same names appear in different generations or centuries. The Grammar School foundation appointment, 1511, of its first Schoolmaster-Priest shews "Rev. Richard Blockley" as being present and many old deeds relating to gifts and leases when it was by Royal Decree granted its status as a Free Grammar School appear in 1571, 1579, 1590, 1604; and in 1621 Grammar School lands were leased to Humphrey Dickins for 99 years and a hundred years later Messrs. Worrall, Bate and Jukes are replaced by Harry, Earl of Stamford, W. Foley, Esq., E. Jordan, Esq. as Trustees and even "today" local trustees or Governors are still responsible for some educational privileges to Kinver boys and girls.

THE EXTERIOR.

APPROACHING the Church through the Lych-gate one notices on each side of the red sand-stone Tower two massive flat Norman buttresses in grey stone. These mark the corners of the earliest Church and, from within, the corresponding corners can be discerned on each side of the wide Chancel arch. The Tower belongs to the extensive additions made in the fourteenth century. The masonry is very strong and it is most probable the original plans included a spire. Passing to the south, one notices on the wall of the tower the marks of the old staircase that leads to the gallery of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

The South Aisle is a fine specimen of Decorated work and must probably be attributed to the monks of Bordesley Abbey, near Evesham, to whom the Church was given as a peculiar in 1380.

The South Porch was built in the eighteenth century for a vestry.

A little to the east behind the massive tomb of the Bates family can be seen a Mass-dial of a crude character. (There is, however no trace of a door close to it.)

Continuing eastwards the contrast between the geometrical tracery of the Decorated work and the late Perpendicular of the East end is noticeable. Nothing is known of the stages or dates of the fifteenth century extensions towards the east. They have led to a splendid East window. (The stokehold was constructed in the nineteenth century). To the north of the Chancel is seen the Foley Chapel, the most beautiful piece of architecture in the Church. It seems to have been erected as a separate memorial. The buttresses and mouldings of the windows all indicate another planner from the rest of the Eastward extensions and a special purpose.

The door in the middle window on the north side was inserted in the nineteenth century when (in 1857) the Church was enlarged by the addition of the present North Aisle.

This was clearly intended to balance the South Aisle and the tracery in the windows corresponds. The architect was Mr. T. Smith of Stourbridge.

Before we leave the exterior this will be a good place to answer the question whether there was a Church earlier than the Norman Church of c. 1100 A.D. The only piece of evidence of any sort is connected with the original North Wall of the Church which was taken down to allow the new North Aisle to be built. No pictures of this wall survive, but a traveller of the Eighteenth Century (Bishop Lyttleton) who visited the Church in 1743, wrote—"By the circular form of the arch over the windows, on the North side of the Church, I suspect this part of the fabric as co-eval, if not prior to the Norman conquest." Another writer says boldly (and probably imaginatively):—"On the North side of this Church are two small windows, undoubtedly Saxon. All the other part of this structure is more modern." But in those days one would not expect very careful distinction between Saxon and Norman work. The architect's plans of the original north wall shew what appears to be an ordinary Norman window in the most probable position, but it must be admitted that these plans contain some inaccuracies in some points that were irrelevant to his purpose. Hence we cannot say whether there was a Saxon Church.

Concluding the circuit of the Church one can just observe the remains of a Norman string course in the older masonry. From the height of the buttresses (confirmed by evidence inside the Church) it is clear that the Norman Church must have been a most impressive building and obviously was intended to match the splendid site. In those days the Forest was largely predominant and the Church was intended to serve a large area. The low-lying land near the river will have been often flooded and clearly no site could then have appeared suitable down in the narrow strip of land hugging the hillside which forms the present High Street. It is difficult to imagine a better site in those days. It is the lowest and most convenient of the spurs reaching out from the Edge, while if anyone had told the Norman builders or their sturdy villeins that a couple of hundred feet of hill climb would put their Church completely out of bounds the good man would have stood and stared. Until the arrival of the motor bus, no one in the country minded half-an-hour's walk to Church. But we must go inside. We can return to the Churchyard later.

THE INTERIOR

ON entering the Church through the South Porch (unless we are brides, who enter by the West door) we are impressed with its quiet dignity. This is largely due to the lofty SOUTH AISLE in which we first stand. In the south wall will be noticed much of the original grey stone masonry from the Norman Church. This supplied the Decorated builders with the first four or five feet of their wall and some stones with Norman diaper ornament will be marked. This Decorated aisle included the first bay of the chancel and terminated in an Altar of which the piscina and sedilia can be seen behind the organ. Like the windows they are plain and dignified. Their position shews how much in the course of time the floor level has changed. It will be noticed that the stones of the actual seats are grey and contrast with the upper red sandstone. The same applies to the tracery of the windows. Stone from the Norman Church will have been used, a few of which survive and are placed in the window sills.

In the arches of this arcade it will be noticed that there is a joint between stones exactly at the apex of the arch, whereas in the modern counterparts on the north side of the apex. An antiquarian affirmed that this was an infallible test for genuinely ancient masonry.

Above the South door between the two tables of the Ten Commandments (which of course originally were on the east wall of the Church) can be discerned a small area of old Mural Decoration and that of two periods. There are traces of drapery belonging to Mediaeval paintings and over were painted in the seventeenth century black letter texts as was so often done. The texts were "This is a faithful saying . . . profitable unto men. Titus iii, v.8 and . . . the way that leadeth to . . . Enter ye in at the strait gate" Matthew vii.

The Inner Porch was added in 1937 from the Martha Whittle legacy. The work was carried out by the Eromsgrove Guild under the supervision of Mr. H. Jennings, the honorary architect.

THE FONT has an ancient base and a modern top with an unusually small basin. The base may have been that of the ancient stone pulpit which is said to have been in the Church. For many years when the south-east door was the main entrance the font was near it and is thus shewn on the 1833 plans of the Church.

The window near depicts (above) Mary and Martha and (below) the Raising of Lazarus and the inscription reads: "This Window is dedicated by John Crump Johnson, churchwarden, to the honour and glory of God and in loving memory of his parents and of his brother and sister. A.D. 1906.

THE BENEFACTION TABLES refer to many interesting points in the history of the Parish Church and come in that section.

THE CHARTER of A.D. 1627 with seal attached is preserved in a glass case and the translation by the side explains the privileges and exemptions to which Kinver became entitled. (For this subject see Local History).

In the GLASS CASE are kept our Chained Books, namely: "The Whole Duty of Man" with "The Gentleman's Calling" (1703) bound with "The Ladies' Calling, The Government of the Tongue, The Art of Contentment and The Lively Oracles given to us," (1704); and Burkitt's Commentary on the New Testament, 1716.

In addition there is: Jewel's Apology for the Church of England, with other works of Jewel, printed and published in 1609; Fox's Book of Martyrs (early, rebound by W. B. Collis, a churchwarden, in 1856; and Hammond's Paraphrase of the New Testament, 1702. The signatures in this book are of exceptional interest. It is signed "Geo. Wharton, Kinver," who was Vicar from 1837 to 1867 and presented, but it also bears more than once the signature "Thos. Wilson." The present Vicar has received the following interesting letter from the Bishop of Sodor and Man, to whom he sent a facsimile of the signature.

"I have compared the signature with that on a black stone which is set into the wall at Bishops court. The name of the great Bishop of Sodor and Man is engraved in similar characters to those which you have given. It is noteworthy that the date tallies with that of your book. Wilson was Bishop here from 1698 to 1755 and it seems most likely therefore that the book belonged to the Bishop."

Bishop Wilson was one of the greatest Saints and heroes of the Church of England and a relic of him is a great possession.

Here too, can be seen the NOBBLER (knobbler?) last wielded by John Hubble, sexton. It is said that Kinver was the original church in which the squire was caught in his own trap. It is also said that observing bad behaviour, including sleeping during the sermon, he equipped the sexton with a staff and instructions promising him a crown for the first offender caught. He was surprised to be awoken up with a start, confronted by the smiling face of the sexton demanding two half-crowns, which he duly paid.

The WAR MEMORIAL with the impressive figure of St. George trampling on the dragon is the work of Messrs. Davies Bros. of Old Hill. The names of those who fell in the Second World War were added later.

The WINDOW near is in memory of Walter Showell, of Stourton Hall, and was inserted in 1901 by his widow.

THE TOWER.

The fine Tower arch was filled with screening to diminish the draughts in the Nave to the detriment of the architecture. The STAINED GLASS was inserted "by public subscription"; the lower section in 1886 and the upper through the Martha Whittle legacy in 1937. Mr. Hodgson says that it was in memory of Mr. Foster, Agent for the Prestwood Estate about 1860.

In the gallery days the CLOCK CHAMBER was one floor up and contained the following local rhyming rules.

Welcome, all you that come to ring,
But first consider well this thing:
If that a bell you chance to throw,
Fourpence you must pay before you go,
And if you ring with spur or hat,
Then sixpence you just pay for that;
And if you chance to swear or curse,
A shilling it shall cost your purse.
Our laws are old, they are not new;
Therefore each man shall pay his due.

Isaac Fryer, Clerk. 1741.

In 1920 the bells were returned and two new bells, the Treble and Second were added, named respectively Peace and Goodwill. The weights are as follows—

	cwts.	qrs.	lbs.
Tenor	12	2	14
Seventh	9	0	5
Sixth	7	2	0
Fifth	6	1	11
Fourth	5	1	22
Third	5	2	23
Second	4	3	14
Treble	4	2	11

The Inscriptions on the bells are as follows—

- 1 In Christum solo Spem meam repono
- 2 Cui Deus pater Ecclesia est mater
- 3 In suo Templo Numen adoro
- 4 Fac manus puras Caelo attollas
- 5 Opem petentibus Subvenit Deus
- 6 Joseph Lye and John Lax, Churchwardens, A.D. 1746.
- 7 William and Samuel Brown, Churchwardens, A.D. 1790.

The meanings are—

- 1 In Christ alone My hope I place
- 2 Who has God for his Father Has the Church for his Mother.
- 3 In His own Temple I worship the Godhead
- 4 See that thou raisest Pure hands to Heaven
- 5 Them who seek His aid God helps.

THE NAVE.

Here, as one would expect in the oldest part of the Church, there have been many changes. From the eighteenth century until 1886 there were galleries across the West end and in the South Aisle. Recent examination of the roof shewed that the present inner ceiling of wood has replaced a plaster ceiling; it is not known when.

In the North-east corner are to be seen the upper steps of a staircase leading up to a doorway of Norman ornamentation. (This was revealed through nineteenth century restoration work). In the South-east corner, behind the pulpit, can be seen the last Norman buttress, thus enabling us to determine the area of the Norman Nave. About the Chancel we have to guess; it was probably quite small.

We know that there was a Norman, and possibly a Saxon, window in the old North Wall, removed in 1859 to allow for the North Aisle.

The oak pews replaced the old family pews in the restoration undertaken by the Rev. J. Hodgson with Sir Gilbert Scott as Architect. Behind the westernmost pews will be seen some beautiful DECORATED WOODWORK, clearly coming from ancient screens. These used to front the gallery and thus have been preserved.

The LECTERN was given by Mrs. Price, of Rockmount, in memory of her little daughter who died on the day before her fifth birthday. The inscription reads: "To the praise and glory of God, and to the loving memory of a dear one, May Moor Beetlestone Price, born May 19th, 1875. Fell asleep May 18th, 1880. A mother's offering."

The PULPIT is part of the old three-decker which stood against the old north wall. It was restored in A.D. 1903 by Mr. Paul Foley. It bears the terse and attractive inscription:—"Richardus Blockley dilexit Templum et erexit suggestum. A.D. 1625. Luke vii, v. 1." i.e., Richard Blockley loved the Temple and built the pulpit. A.D. 1625.

There is a tradition that Richard Baxter preached from it, as is quite probable, since Philip Foley, who bought Prestwood and became Lord of the Manor and Lay Rector in 1673, was such a stalwart Puritan.

Above the pulpit the small NEWY TABLET commemorates much the most interesting of the Vicars of Kinver. He died in 1716, aged 80, having been Vicar for 54 years. On his death a lawsuit followed which was taken to the House of Lords to decide who had the right of patronage. (See the History of the Parish).

On the Eastern South PILLAR the following inscription has been cut: "Will Bannister and Thos. Pixell, Churchwardens." Nothing is known about why they did this. The date, ten years after the Restoration, suggests a piece of Restoration in the Church. In the locality there are other ornamental medallions slightly above the capitals of the arches.

The NORTH AISLE was added in 1857, and was clearly designed to match the South. Mr. Wharton had been Vicar for about twenty-two years and just about the same time founded the Church Day School, so that there there may well have been a real need for more seating in the Church, though it is not apparent nowadays. By covering every inch with seats, the architect was able to add 185 seats. The tablet on its north wall displays subscriber's names and the pews allotted to them.

The two Eastern Windows are in memory of members of the Brindley family of Union Hall, Compton, who died young, a daughter who died in 1856, aged twenty-four and a son who died only two years later, in 1858, aged thirty-four. The Brindley Charity, distributed every Christmas is their foundation.

The RESURRECTION WINDOW was given in memory of William Henry Price, of Rockmount (1830-1903), by his widow and daughter at Easter, 1905.

THE CHANCEL

There was a local usage of calling all three members of the East end of the Church "Chancels." "The Foley Chancel" repeatedly occurs in documents and plans. The Burial Register for 1676 relates that Edward Mosely, Gent., was buried in Mr. Gray's Chancel and in 1679, that Mary Dee, was buried in "Mr. Henry Gray's Chancel," leave being first obtained of the said Henry Gray. In 1675 Mr. John Barton was buried "in the Middle Chancel" and in 1670, Francis Talbot, Gent., was buried "in Kinver Chancill."

In the fourteenth century, directly after the South Aisle was built, the Chancel ended about half-way across and in the fifteenth century it was considerably enlarged mainly to create the present splendid perpendicular East Window. When the Foley and Gray Chapels were built we cannot say for certain. There are no documents and what indications there are point to a date very close to the actual chancel.

In 1902, as the memorial to the late Rev. J. Hodgson, Vicar from 1867 to 1901, plaster was taken from the roof and walls. The organ was taken from the eastern arch and moved to the western, some large box pews were taken out and the present stalls erected and the panelling taken from some of the pews (as the lock and hinge marks reveal) placed round the Altar. The Communion rails were restored by Mr. Paul Foley, along with the Pulpit.

A screen between the Chancel and the Gray Chapel was planned but not carried out. Tablets near the Altar commemorate the two Vicars (Mr. Wharton and Mr. Hodgson.) The doorway, discernable behind the panelling in the south wall, with the small cupboard door by it belonged to the stokehold in the nineteenth century. They are not ancient.

The EAST WINDOW glass is in memory of Mrs. Bourne, of Heathlands (1853); Mrs. Foley, The Hon. and Mr. Raybould who died in 1849. The plan of the window was drawn up by a friend of Mr. Wharton's (according to Mr. Hodgson, who had been his curate). The three centre lights concern our Redemption. The main theme is the Ascension, with the Crucifixion and the Mother holding the Child on either side. The two outer lights contain six scenes from the life of St. Peter, in order as follows:

	North light	South light
Top	The Call "Follow Me"	The Confession and the Keys
Middle	The Feet Washing	The Agony & the Three Asleep
Lower	The Arrest, seizing the sword	Peter denying before the maid.

In the small lights in the tracery are the Four Evangelists; St. Peter and St. Paul and various incidents of the Passion.

The ORGAN, by Machonacher of Huddersfield, is the third instrument in the Church. It is as good a specification for a Parish Church Organ as can be desired. It is largely due to the enthusiasm of Mr. W. Easterfield, at one time Churchwarden and Organist. He is commemorated on a tablet near.

The ALTAR FRONTAL which is used on Festivals includes hangings used in Westminster Abbey at the Coronation of King George VI. The material was presented by Miss Nancy Price and the cost of having it made up was borne by Mrs. Stuart Smith (then of Heathlands).

An old notice board in the Chancel, March 19th, 1741, says that the expenses of repairing this Chancel was settled and apportioned by John Ingram,

of Bewdley, as follows: The whole charge is divided up into 20 parts of which W. Foley, Esq. pays in every £1, 12 $\frac{1}{2}$, Mr. Caswell 4 and Mr. Hartle 3 $\frac{3}{4}$, so that Mr. Foley pays 12s.3d., Mr. Caswell 4s. and Mr. Hartle 3s.9d. in each £1.

THE GREY CHAPEL.

This is the eastward extension of the South Aisle, which originally terminated close to the piscina by the sedilia. The rest was added some time in the fifteenth century. The blocked up piscina will be found under the south window, indicating a floor level considerably different from the present level.

Under the east window is the GREY TOMB, which a Guide Book of 1791 describes as placed "at the top of the middle aisle fronting the rails of the altar". The tomb has been badly damaged as well as moved. The brasses of the coats of arms have disappeared and the stone work is badly decayed in many places. A translation of the Latin inscription is:—"Here lies Edward Grey, soldier, son and heir of Humphrey Grey, Knight. He died on the fourteenth day of February, 1528, in the twentieth year of the reign of King Henry the Eighth—on whose soul may God have mercy." On the marble rests the brass depicting him with his two wives, seven sons and ten daughters.

The estates of the Grey family of Enville include land in the Parish of Kinver and there have always been close links with the Church. The Earl of Stamford used to be a Trustee of the living and contributed both to the first Organ and to the North Aisle. Much local history is bound up with the history of this family.

The large BRICK WORK ARCHES were presumably inserted to strengthen the structure and to help carry the roof which here is considerably wider than over the south aisle. Nothing is known about details. Many guess from the wooden tablet fixed on the eastern end and dated March 7th 1741, referring to costs of repairing "this chancel" that the work was done about then. "This chancel" probably means not the chancel of this church but "the Grey chancel" in which the tablet was actually put.

Over the door is the large TABLET erected to his father, Sir William Talbot, of Whittington Hall, and then of Stourton Castle, who died in 1686, by his son, William, who became Bishop of Durham. There is a very long and highly complimentary inscription in Latin. The most interesting points are his loyalty to the precepts and discipline of the English Church and his efforts to promote peace just after the Civil War.

Right at the top of the South Window survive some fragments of the ancient glass.

In the tracery of the next window are the arms of Sir John Hampton. Mr. Hodgson was very interested in his story and thus commemorated him, as the inscription makes clear;—"In A.D. 1891, John Hodgson, vicar of this parish now for twenty-four years, adorned this window with this notable coat of arms of John Hampton, soldier, formerly of Kynvare, who died in A.D. 1471. (From the Latin).

THE FOLEY CHAPEL.

The reason for this name is that the chapel, or chancel—as it used to be called—has belonged to the Foley family since they purchased the living in 1672 and used it for many generations as a burial place. Under the window are four brass tablets, of which the inscription begins as follows;—"This chapel was repaired in A.D. 1856 by John H. Hodgetts Foley, Esq., of Prestwood, many of whose family lie buried underneath."

Since the North Aisle was built in 1857 and in consequence the Pulpit brought into the Chancel away from the old north wall it is not unlikely that the present large pew was erected at that time so that the family might have seats near the pulpit. Similarly the modern door in the north wall was probably made to preserve an independent entrance after the ancient

door had become inside the Church. The stained glass and probably the inner wooden ceiling belong to that time. The fragments of ancient stained glass will be noticed above the north door. There are also several monuments to members of the Foley family.

The most interesting relic is the damaged FIGURE OF A KNIGHT IN ARMOUR. This is all that survives of a once "notable tomb" (to quote Bishop Lyttleton, who saw it in 1743). On the tomb the following (imperfect) inscription ran: "Here lie the bodies of Sir John Hampton and Agnes, his wife, in the very (?) tomb...who ended their days...John in the year 1472, Agnes, however, in the year 1444, on whose souls may God have mercy."

The Bishop noted that the collar of the knight's armour was SS work, which is a point of interest to antiquarians.

The Hamptons were Lords of the Manor and owned Stourton Castle throughout the fifteenth century—(Capt. Grazebrook, in his "History of Stourton Castle", tells the whole story). Many old writers, therefore, say that the Hamptons built the chapel.

It is divided from the chancel proper by two beautiful four-centred arches and as a whole it is a perfect specimen of a Perpendicular Chantry chapel. Sir John Hampton's tomb probably stood in the centre before the altar and the arches will have been filled with beautiful screen work.

Until the Reformation there was an endowed chantry of St. Mary in Kinver Church, the priest of which, in 1511, was made the first schoolmaster in Kinver. Mr. Hodgson states that this chapel was the chantry chapel of St. Mary. Though this is overwhelmingly certain there are no documents to prove it. (See History of the Parish).

KINVER GRAMMAR SCHOOL

EARLY educational efforts were made to improve the boys and girls of Kinfare in 1511. This unfortunately did not apply to parish apprentices as their only hope was from a kind or considerate master or mistress. The poor children (always then in the majority) were held by indentured service but little better than Child Slavery under the broad but elastic term of Labour as the Acts of Husbandry or Housewifery, (non union hours) Day-light Work to Darkness; Bed, Food, Clothes, and compulsory Church attendance. Their only recreation was stolen pleasure and learning to work was then the order of the day.

But fortunately some local people, to their permanent credit, realising the value of education to others, founded by grant Kinver's first charter for free education and in the same century other successful efforts were made by Kinver men to broaden the system of education by grants of land and money, and Kinver Free Grammar School was established and received official approval from Church and State. Some of those early benefits or privileges are fortunately in operation today and 'let it be remembered' that the influence in education and religion for over four hundred years by those pioneers—Gentry, Industrialists, Clergy or Laymen, has been reflected in the welfare, lives and destiny of generations of Kinver people, until the period when improved education was asked for and granted officially and nationally free which replaced in many instances those known as Charity or Church Schools.

I am reminded that the last Kinver Grammar School Master was Rev. C. H. Cole, B.A., Curate under whom many of Kinver Adult population received their education. It is interesting also to recall according to Noakes, 1851—an hundred years ago—that "Prestwood School, built and maintained by J. H. H. Foley, had 60 Day School scholars and 75 Sunday School. The National Schools at Kinver contained 90 juniors but 210 Sunday School and the School being too small for increasing numbers of scholars, two new class rooms are now in course of erection in the centre of Kinver, the funds being raised by the Rev. G. Wharton, Vicar; Architect—J. Smith, Stourbridge; Builder—Mr. Thompson, Kidderminster."

Charters.

KINVER, according to an old Parish Church Magazine is recorded as a Royal Manor, and received several Charters (4) granting to the Town and Inhabitants of Kinfare certain Privileges, Liberties, Franchises and Immunities—Freedom from Tolls and other Feudal Payments, viz:

First by King Richard I or Edward I—11th Century. Both Charter and Copy unfortunately are missing.

Second by King Henry VIII, 1526, as confirming the previous Charter.

Third by Queen Elizabeth, 1559, renewing the previous two Charters.

Fourth by Charles I, 1629. Repeating and confirming the above three Charters, this later one is fortunately preserved and now on view in Kinver Church. It is signed at Canterbury by Wolsey and bears the Great Seal of England. It is well worthy of inspection if only to remind Kinver people and others of our Ancient Rights.

Copy of Charter for Kinver, 1526.

A true copy of a most free Charter of the Inhabitants of Kinfare and Stowerton.

Anno Decimo Henrice Octavi

Henry, by the Grace of God, King of England and France, Lord of Ireland. To all Mayors, Sheriffs of Cities, Counties and Towns; Bayliffs, Sergeants, Constables and all other our Officers and Ministers within our Realms of England, to each of them we send Greetings.

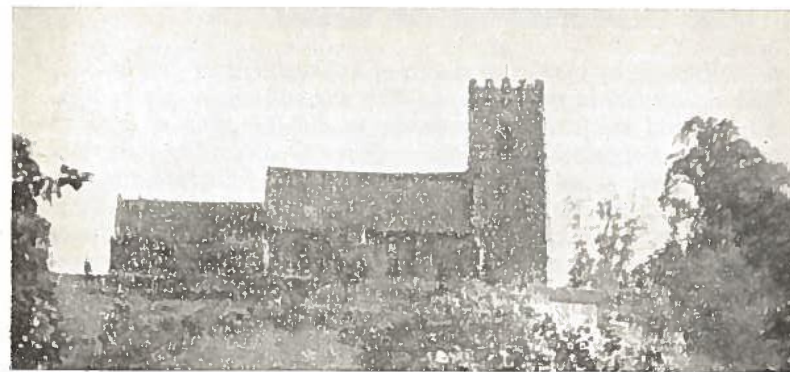
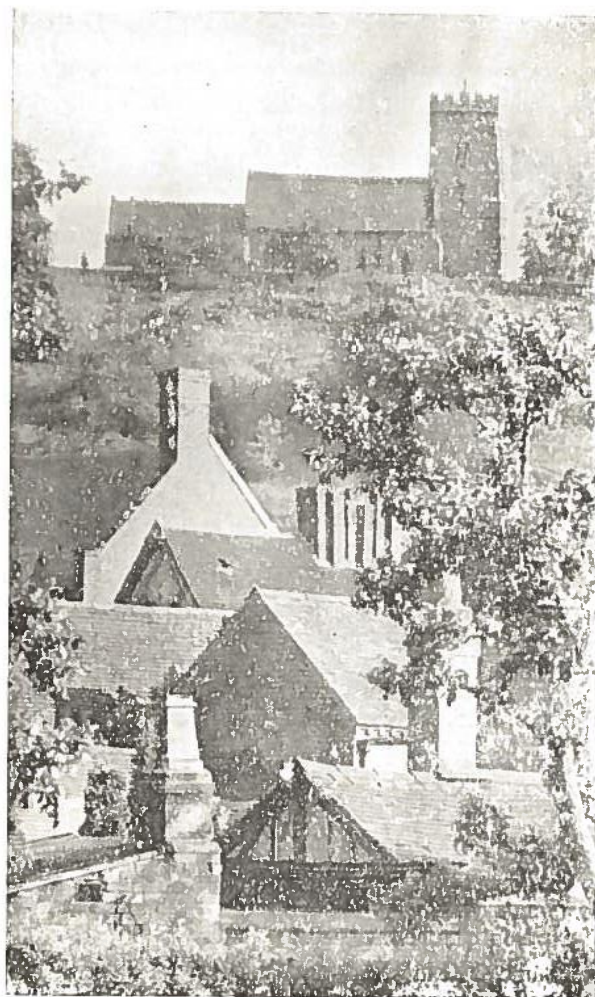
Know ye we of our Special Grace to have given Granted as well as to all Tenants and Inhabitants of and in the Manor of Kinfare and Stourton, otherwise called Stowerton, by the Names of the Towns of Kinfare, as to all other Tenants and Residents of and in all their Lands or Lordships (?) to be quit for evermore of all Tolls, Pannage, Pontage, Keyage (?), Passage, Payage, Lastage, Stallage, Scott and Gill, Hidage, Sculage, and of all Works of Castles, Parks, Bridges, Closures, Houses, Fortifications Royal, and all other Sects, Counties, Hundreds and Wapen-takes and of all other Helpes of Knights, Sheriffs and their Bayliffs, and of all other Watches, Fines and Aspects and Grants awarded by view franke, Pledge or Press, to us, our Heirs or Successors, to be paid, and also the Executions of Felony and Murther when it shall happen, and of all Knights' Paynes and Expences coming to our Parliment and of all such Customs by all our Kingdom and Power and in confirmation whereof have done to be made these our Letters Patents.

Witness our Self at Westminster the 18th day of January and in the 17th Year of our Reign.

(This is a true copy. Witness our Hands.)

P. White, (Minister).

Richard Foxall, Churchwarden.



*Showing the urgent need for Roof Treatment,
From Architect's Report.*

Copy of Charter for Kinber, 1559.

"Elizabeth, by the Grace of God of England, France and Ireland, Queen, Defender of the Faith, etc. To all and singular our bailiffs, officers, and ministers, whomsoever in our Kingdom of England wheresoever appointed, greeting. Whereas, according to custom hitherto existing and approved in our Kingdom of England, the men and tenants of ancient demesne of the crown of our Kingdom aforesaid ought to be free, and from time immemorial always hitherto have been accustomed to be free of Tollage, Stallage, Chiminage, Pontage, Picage, Murage, Pannage, and of the charges of the Knight of the Shire coming to our Parliaments, and those of our ancestors, through the whole of our Kingdom aforesaid. We command you, and every of you, that ye and every of you permit the men and tenants of the Manor, or Vill, of Kynvare in the County of Stafford,—which is of ancient demesne of the crown of England as fully appears by a certain certificate thereof in the Court of Chancery of Mary, late Queen of England, our beloved Sister, issued, at her command, by her Treasurers, and Chamberlains, and remaining on the files of Chancery aforesaid,—to be free from the payment of Tollage, Stallage, Chiminage, Pontage, Pannage, Picage, Murage, Passage, and from contribution to the expenses of the Knight for the said County, coming to our Parliaments and to those of our ancestors, through the whole of our Kingdom aforesaid, according to the custom above recited.

Witness myself at Westminster, the 28th day of October, in the 1st year of my reign."

Translation Copy of Charter of Charles 1st in the year 1629,
now in possession of Kinber Church.

Charles, by the Grace of God of England, Scotland, France and Ireland King and Defender of the Faith. To all and singular our Baliffs, Officers, and Ministers whatsoever within our Kingdom of England wheresoever appointed, Greetings. Whereas, according to custom in our Kingdom of England hitherto obtained and approved, the men and tenants of ancient demense of the crown of our said Kingdom ought to be free and from time to time wheresoever there is no memory were always accustomed to be free of Tollage, Stallage, Sorage, Pontage, Picage, Murage and Pannage, Expenses of Knights to our Parliament and of our Ancestors formerly Kings of England given for the Counties through our said Kingdom.

We command you and every one of you that the men and tenants of our Manor or Ville of Kinfare in the County of Stafford, which is

of Ancient Demesne our Crown of England and by a certain Certificate delivered in the Court of Chancery of our beloved Sister Mary, late Queen of England, sent by her Treasurer and Chamberlain, in obedience to Mandate and remaining upon Record in the said Chancery appears plainly from Payment of Tollage, Stallage, Sorage, Pontage, Panage, Picage and Murage and from the contribution to the Knight's expenses of coming to our aforesaid Parliaments and by our Members for the Counties for the aforesaid throughout our whole Kinghom aforesaid. To you and every one of you do permit to be Free according to our Custom aforesaid. As Witness whereof, we have caused these our Letters to be made Patents.

Witness Resolved at Canterbury, first day of August, in the fourth year of our Reign.

Molseley.

Translation of Terms:—Tollage: Toll. Stallage: A duty paid for Stalls. Pontage: Money paid for maintaining Bridges. Picage: Money paid in Fairs to the Lords of the Soil, for breaking ground to set up stalls. Murage: Toll for repair of Walls. Panage: Money given for cattle fed in the forest. Sorage: Money given for food of horses and cattle.

Copy of the Foundation Deed of a Grammar School at Kinber, Dated 1511.

THIS INDENTURE, made the Vth day of the month of January, the Year and Reign of King Henry VIII, the Second Year, between Sir Edward Grey, Esq., John Whorwood, Gent, of the Parish of Kinfare, within the County of Stafford; Richard Brockley, Humphrey Harris, Humphrey Bradley, Richard Rudge, William Welford, Roger Rudge, John Bolond, Thomas Clerk, Robert Sargent, John Hat..., William Shingler, Nicholas Hacket, Hugh Bate, Humphrey Holton, John Jordan, Thomas Hillman, John Watkis, Thomas Hill, John A. Moseley, Richard Walter, yeomen; of the same County and Parish, on the one part, and S. Thomas Rondyll, Priest, on the other part.

WITNESSETH the said Sir Edward and all others above named, their Heirs and Assigns or Executors, shall pay yearly to the above named S. Thomas, his Assigns or Executors, VIII Marks of lawful money of England, at IIII Terms in the Year, that is, to wit—At the Feast of the Annunciation of Our Lady, in March, XXVIs VIIIId. At the feast of the Nativity of St. John Baptist, XXVIs VIIIId. At the feast of St. Michael the Archangel XXVIs VIIIId. At the feast of the Nativity of Our Lord XXVIs VIIIId. And so forth from year to year, from feast to feast, every year and feast next following after unto such time as the said S. Thomas have lawful institution and induction of and in the Chantry of Our Blessed Lady of Kinfare as afore by the (above named) Edward with all other above written was promised with a Rental to (gather) all manner of Rents and Profits as belong to the said Chantry. As concerning the yearly value of the above said VIII Marks with all the profits and improvements that shall belong unto the said Chantry for his Time for the which Promise and Institution the above named S. Thomas shall say Mass at the Altar of Our Blessed Lady in the Church of Kinfare, not bounden daily but when he is disposed.

Furthermore the said S. Thomas binds himself so long as he is in good health to teach Grammar within or near the Town of Kinfare, so that it shall be lawful unto him to take Wages reasonably as well as of the Children of the Parish of Kinfare as of other from wheresoever they resort like as he and their friends can agree.

Also, it shall be lawful for the said S. Thomas yearly to have a Month Liberty together or else at diverse times as his business may happen, to the intent he may go to visit his friends, or do his pilgrimages, or any other reasonable business, without interruption or debarring.

And in performing all and singular covenants and conditions above rehearsed upon the part of the aforesaid Edward and all the other above named the aforesaid Edward with all the other above named bind themselves to the said S. Thomas £XL as more at large it appeareth by the obligation of the said S. Thomas thereof made bearing the date of this present Indenture.

In witnessing thereof the Parties above singularly have put to their seals.
Given at Kinfare, the day and year above.

(Signed) THOMAS.

Seal Pendent, Red Wax, An Abbess with Crosier.

PARISH REGISTERS

ALTHOUGH there were probably some earlier Church Records or Registers than those now fortunately preserved in our possession, (which date back to the late sixteenth century) they would be written in Latin by the very early clergy, not the churchwardens, and copies are not available from Lichfield Diocesan Registers. Our early Church and Parish officials would be no doubt loyal and in Henry the Eighth's reign the order came to the incumbent in each and every parish of the diocese to keep one book in which should be written the Day and Year of every Wedding, Christening and Burial made within the parish for your time and every man that succeeds you and also the name of every person wedded, christened or buried. It is interesting to record that at the very beginning of the sixteenth century a noted local man of royal blood, Reginald Pole, (born at Stourton Castle) was deeply concerned with the Religious life of that period.

He was responsible as Cardinal Fole in Queen Mary's reign for an order to the early clergy that the names also of the god-parents at Baptisms should also be inserted in the Register. This was omitted by the local churchwardens but the loyal and royal first orders were carried out as the following extracts from our own well-preserved registers show. We can assume that the earlier Church officers or clergy even anticipated and kept such orders which have continued to this day and generation.

In the fly-leaf of Kinver's first Parish Register, 1560-1598—"This Register Booke for Kinfare made the.....day of March in the year of our Lord 1598, at the charge of the.....pshe. These, Humphrey Vincent and Humphrey Ketley being the Church wardens in which Booke is truly all that is in the olde register Booke from the year of our Lord God 1560 to this present year of our Lord God 1598."

Then follow for some years short and sometimes curious entries with reference to the life and death of our early Kinver inhabitants varying in many respects in "written and spelin" and although the churchwardens were responsible for its safe keeping in the Parish Chest the Vicar probably would make the entries (in their presence) week by week on Sundays.

So the Law and its intention was carried out for two or three centuries, as far as we know, with no proof that our early officials failed to record and preserve for our own benefit, and oftentimes for legal and moral rights of generations of Kinver people.

Some peculiar names appear (but unheard of today) and others whose part in the village and church life whether humble or important years and years ago have even now descendants among us, carrying on both their good name and work; an example to be proud of.

There are two types or kinds of old Books relating both to Church and Parish (and still in safe keeping—keeping safe)—The Church Registers, The Parish Registers. These books which being compiled or made and of course under different conditions contain some peculiar references as regards names and sometimes nick-names, cause of death, and trades followed; or some trait of character or place of residence or status in parish. Of course this would depend on the whim or fancy of the writer. It would be brief and badly spelt and often reflected the true life and character or habits of the departed. They were referred to as Honest, Old, Poor, Good, an Apprentice or Esquire; A Stranger or Soldier, a Good-wife; or born out of wedlock; or tragic causes of death or method of burial and proof if necessary of Kinver Health Record is found in many references to longevity, many reaching well over a hundred, one woman a widow 108 and old Parr of Kinver 127 and several entries "Mr. So-and-so, wonderfully old."

It was during the fourteenth century that surnames as we know them became popular or in vogue and nearly all Christian names had a Bible origin and those appearing in very early rolls or deeds took or adopted names from parentage estates or some personal feature, profession or trade.

The PARISH REGISTERS are different in as much that they show the very early methods of administration of parish affairs and the general and domestic life as affected by Taxation, Education and Religious Influences on Kinver people.

Accounts were kept by a clerk appointed by a gathering of parishioners, generally at the Church or (if convenient) at the Local and the Church Wardens who rarely held office for above one year, and often against their own will and judgment, presented accounts for both Church and Parish so very closely linked or interwoven and of course influenced control on nearly all Parochial affairs and Kinver public opinion.

This early group of parishioners were known as the Parish Vestry and appointed some of the officers for Church Administration but at some periods of Kinver history parish affairs were partly controlled by the early Court Leet officials for better or worse by ancient manorial rights, privileges and penalties, vested in the authority or customs then exercised by Law within Kinver Manor. This authority fell into disuse last century but the records or rolls or scrolls are privately owned. The Church Magazine says that up to the last century it was the duty and within the power of the Church vestry duly appointed to raise funds by local or parish rates for Church Repairs and Maintenance and other expenses incurred in the Parish services or Poor Relief, etc., etc., and these do appear in the Church Wardens Registers as appointed and approved year by year.

Some of the earliest Church Wardens names are: J. Moseley, H. Longmore, W. Worrall, T. Hillman, J. Veal, P. Southall, W. Lyrill, J. Croke and H. Bate.

REGISTER RECORDS.

1583 Were buried this year R. Bate, Wm. Lerill (names of two men from Compton who are described as Esquires) also Katherine Elunt.

1596 Widow Wakelam, a poor stranger, was buried.

1597 Be it remembered but one wedding in this year of our Lord, Edward Comber and Agnes Robinson.

Early in 1600 it is recorded that "members of old Kinver families were either baptised, married or buried Whorwoods, Brindleys, Holmes, Bird, Comber, Moseley, Guest, Homfray, Waldron, Foley, Webb, Benbow, Potter, Taylor, Clews, Brettle, Darby, Clyner, Timins, Alsop, Watkins, Hancox and unusual names of Laxloby, Coppam, Bigahs, Normcott, Lydiatt, Domber, Willot and Buwland.

1621 Only one wedding at St. Peter's, Robert Johnson and Jane Benbowe.

1635 Thos. Parr died, a member of a family known for longevity.

1640 Robert Woodman a poor stranger was buried and E. Evans and Jane Barlow married by sp. license.

1649 W. Kimberley schoolmaster and minister was buried.

- 1653 Croxy of Halesowen was found drowned on November 3rd.
 1656 A female infant of Mary Allerton, a travelling woman from Cheshire, was born but not baptised here.
 1661 Rd. Whittle alias Nick-nack was buried two days before Christmas.
 1674 A poor cripple boy came here with a constable's pass but died and was buried.
 1674 The same month Margaret Jones was stabbed to death.
 1675 Sir Edward Williams and Lady Elizabeth Williams of Bentley Hall were married by sp. license.
 1678 Edward Bradley was the first that was buried in linen according to the Act of Parliament.
 1682 Elizabeth Lyne was buried (without a linen burial) she was forfeit for the parish poor.
 1684 George Russell and Margaret Vincent, both wonderful old, were buried.
 1688 Margaret Cooke was buried in linen but paid ye forfeit.
 1689 Sergeant Lamber on his march to Ireland was buried with an Affidavit.
 1691 Nazareth, a poor boy, died of an affliction.
 1692 John Buser alias Cavilier buried, also William Hutt, carpenter of Ye Forge.
 1695 Edward Dunn starved in ye great February snow.
 1697 Elinor Powell, widow, age above 100 years.
 1698 Een Fry, journeyman clothier, and John Grove, clothier, who left £20 for ye poor.
 1701 Wm. Baylis, honest but poor, from Halfcote and John Cook, a mercer, buried.
 1703 Norman York whom God preserved in ye great snow from being stifled was unfortunately drowned in the state (?) Stour.
 1706 Wm. Tertman unfortunately killed with a pistol.

Curious Entries

- 1731 Memorandum that I signified to the C.W. that the Rev. W. J. Hillman, John Brindley, Thos. Aucliffe, Moses Roberts, now buried without affidavit of their being buried in woolen by a Note under hand, Paul White.
 1731 Memo to the Overseer John Hodgetts that 8 people were buried without affidavit.
 1735 W. Foley and R. Foley, Esq. of Stourton and Prestwood.
 1737 Memo that Thos. Hughes the Constable was ill, dead and buried.
 1757 In the next ten years is a record of five clergymen being buried at St. Peter's—the Rev. R. Bates, Rev. J. Comber Raybould, Rev. W. Yates, Rev. John Worrall, Rev. B. Yates. In different handwriting the next ten years reference is made to residences of local people and whether they were baptised, married or buried, and if local or stranger, and each name appears as Grazebrook, Talbot, Waldron, Perry, Littleton, Reeves, Mosely, Homphrey, Hollins, Dean, Chamberlain, Clynes and Foley. The Records are continued to this day with isolated exceptions in our parish Church Registers a fine tribute to Ancient and Modern Kinver Churchmen.

Another type of book—the Parish Registers of Kinfare—appear about 1700 when the early C.W. and officials were responsible for a wide range of Administration and Taxation in local Church and Parish affairs. For instance a fly-leaf entry in one book, July 22nd, 1740—210 years ago.

"At a Parish Vestry Meeting held at the Workhouse Kinfare this day it is agreed to allow John Bate one guinea a year to keep Accounts of the workhouse of the said parish and also what certificates and Bonds are to be given and to fill up all Parish indentures and also to make up the Parish Loan Book. Witness our hands

Shadrach Crump	} Churchwardens	Wm. Tomlin	} Overseers
Richard Hollins		John Tilley	

John Green, Thos. Waldron, John Timmins, Wm. Horton, Sam Crane, Rd. Preston, John Eate."

The ratepayers who passed the Accounts at the 1741 meeting were
 Moses Harper } Churchwardens John Pate } Overseers
 Thos. Worrall } John Bird }
 Rev. W. Yates, Curate; Ed. Waldron, Rd. Hollins, and John Churchyard.

Then follows, year by year, interesting Accounts and Quaint personal records of Events, Meetings, Types of Work and Wages, Parish Levies and Church Repairs, etc., etc. The Clerk was one of the few men who were appointed annually. He was granted fourpence for each parish meeting called whether it was at Church, Workhouse, Stewponey, Whittington, The White Harte or any other Public. The Eadle, Isaac Fryer, was a man of many and varied jobs—Town Crier, Bellringer, Gravedigger, and knobbler, seven days a week for £1 4s. 6d, for thirteen weeks.

The incoming C.W. and overseers personally (?) signed out some official Accounts.

"Nov. 21, 1751—

At a Vestry Meeting held this day at the Workhouse it was agreed that Dr. Meredith Evans be appointed to take care of all paupers within the Parish of Kinfare or any that become so through accident for the sum of four guineas per year for the period of seven years providing he do reside within the parish. To be paid at the year's end on demand. As witness our hands Paul White, Vicar; Messrs. Dean and Watkins, Church wardens; Humphrey Bate, Overseer and 20 other burgesses.

Other peculiar Entries in Parish Registers—

- 1743 Paid to T. Worrall, Squire Foley's Agent, 10/- for churchyard rent.
 1744 Ringing bells 6 men 13 weeks 6/- Sparrows 2/6 Moles 2/6 Fox heads 5/-.
 1745 Taking Smith Dugar and Molly Jones for Warrant to Justices at Enville.
 1747 Church Roof and Wall Repairs 18/- Mending Clock and Bell wheels.
 1760 Meeting at Whittington and Workhouse about Apprentices and choosen Hospital boys 1/-.
 1770 Removing Clock Dial for Ale 1/- Masons replacing it 1/6.
 1780 Heavy Expenses for Grammar School and Parish House Repairs 6£.
 1790 Going with Sergeant Corbett and Clerk for Runaways and Apprentices 2/6.

Then for the next half century follow many unusual items in different handwriting and spelling and in reference to Accounts say "Disburst by me." "Owe to the Parish" and "Giving up of levies" so much; and one or two quaint entries—"Bringing down the Parish Chest from Church 1/-; Taking it back after examination at the White Harte 2/-; Special call for the levies at Iverley; Visit to 7 Stars by warrant for rates; Menden, Lengthen, Strenthen and Gilten the Cock on the Church Steeple; Entertaining 4 bishops after a Confirmation Service 3/-; The beedle crying the notices in our hamlets; The Special Bell ringing at National News, Loyal and Royal Birthdays, etc.; Meeting the Justices at Himley, Enville, Stewponey, Stourton,"—and used to cost the Parish 1/6.

Other items were: "Relief for poor Woman and three children; a Soldier travelling with a Pass 1/-; Relief for half a widow's rent 9d.; Giving away the Brindley Bread Weekly; Paid for Coach to Walsall 6/-; 12 months contract for oyle and clock repairs 8/-; Transcript of Register 12/-; Menden the Awli 1/4; Moen the Churchyard grass 8d. for Ale; Bell ropes 6/-; 4 spent when a Parish doctor, Mr. Fox, was appointed; Sp. meeting of vestry at Wolverley Bridge swearing the Peace against So and so; Attendance at Church while the Locks were off for repairs; Visit to Lord Stamford for Warrant by G. Moyl, by J. Dolman; Work done at the Grammar School by Mr. Taylor of Check hill 12/-; Mr. Moore menden the Usher's Desk and Children's Forms; Washing and mending Surplices, Mrs. Fryer 2/6; and a letter to Kidder about the Bells; Spent in Ale 1/6 when the Cavalry and Soldiers came to Kinver.

Two Sp. vestry meeting to appoint new trustees set out apprentices dealing with vagrants under the Act of Parliament, also many intruders in our parish having no settlement; also lease the workhouse by deed for twenty

one years ; Cry the warnings about evil doers and arrange for men at a shilling per day for seven days to make the Cliff and Quarry Hill passable after ye great storm and to provide the Village Constable with an extra pair of handcuffs costing half-a-crown."

THE CHURCHYARD

If approached from North East or West is difficult of access, but the lovely view is well worth the effort whether you travel up from the village via Church Hill and through the rocks and sheltered or shaded by trees, or the easier road through the fields and the Compa. The stiff climb to the North from the Acre is best left to the juveniles. There is no short cut or underground passage from village to Church. The Churchyard is, or was, terraced, overlooking from the South the original Vicarage and Church cottages and has been extended two or three times and the West side new extension by the generous gift of Major Webb is in nice surroundings and is likely to be enriched and beautified at its approach by the gift of handsome memorial gates.

The Old Churchyard of course shews many signs of age and decay, with its many neglected graves of ancient Kinver workers and worshippers, but still there are many fine tombs and stones erected to the memories of Kinver's great men of old and if we care to meditate in sacred ground or within the Church we see evidence of early clergy with marvellous service records ; Revs. Newey, Bird, White, Waldron, Raybould, Foley, Fox, Wharton, Hodgson & Slipper ; buried among their former parishioners and worshippers.

Of a past generation of men and women, however humble their office or station, who left no record of their work or efforts for others on stone or paper, I notice the exception in one case where a grave is overmounted with a cast-iron Heading record, and some 16th and 17th century graves stones of familiar names are still discernible and among the curious epitaphs is : "Fast asleep 5ft. deep All by my own direction, Let no one then disturb my sleep untill the Resurrection."

There are numerous instances of Kinver people dying of old age, well over a hundred years, according to memorials within and without the Church.

It is traditionally reported that Archery was indulged or practised within the grounds as an old royal decree issued then expected young Kinver people to become proficient. Also that Cromwell's men when in our district in those troublesome times, came and destroyed the ancient stained glass window of the Chancel from within the Church. A former Vicar's writing support this view as a large quantity of coloured glass was found outside the East window. Villagers still point out the grooves and curves in the stone fabric of the Church where the soldiers are reputed to have sharpened their weapons. Be that as it may, it is true that the surface of the stone has (in many other places besides) encouraged hundreds of young people to disfigure it by cutting their names or initials and dates.

The fifteenth century Church Tower (referred to elsewhere) strengthened in 1925 (?) ; the Watch Tower of olden days, dominates the area or picture. It is recorded (that posterity many know) that when an alarm or occasion arose it would be used as a beacon or warning and the curfew would be heard and in times of danger or national rejoicing ye gt bell or the smaller peal of three could be heard near and far. But now the peaceful solitude is only broken by the chiming of our two-faced clock of the seventeenth century, renovated last century, or the joyful peal of our present eight bells. The crowning beauty of our Churchyard is situate on the North West, overlooking the village in the valley below. It is really a Peace Memorial known for all time we hope as a "Garden of Memory" to the Kinver men who made the supreme sacrifice. It is set in the peaceful surroundings of our former generations and nicely laid out with flowers and shrubs ; and a plain white stone adds to the sacred dignity of God's Acre from which can be seen a wide expanse of unspoilt landscape, some beauty portions of three Counties, to which our Bishop, Dr. Woods, paid tribute at the 1950 Dedication.

KINVER CLERGY

It is unfortunate that a complete list of previous Clergy is not available. Many old Churches have records published by the Staffs. Parish Registers Society. But St. Peter's is unfortunate in this respect, but some sixteenth and seventeenth century names do appear in the Staffs. Historical Collections. Many generations of Kinver people have been influenced spiritually and educationally by the Clergy of Old Kinver. Even today some people remember with pride and affection their old Vicar.

1068 The Priests or.....in charge at K..... at Doomsday are officially unknown.

This list is obtained from varied sources and is open for correction:

1255	Leo the Farson.	1649	Wm. Kimberley, Minister and Schoolmaster.
1264	Walter the Chaplain.	1652	Rev. S. Smith.
1326	Walter de Kinfare.	1655	Roger Kimberley, B.A., Minister and Schoolmaster.
1330	John the Clerk.	1662	Rev. Thos. Morton, ejected.
1335	and 1349 John de Idshale or Presheale.	1664	During the stormy period of Church History, Jonathan Newey was Curate and Vicar for 54 years and is thus recorded as a good and brave little man.
1361	John de Lutteley and Roger de Clone.	1676	A. Thornburgh.
1364	Simon de Preston.	1741	W. Yates, Curate and Vicar.
1380	Nicholas de Iynggho-Grendon Priest.	1743	Richard Bate, Minister.
	Also this living for nearly two centuries was in the hands of the Abbot of Bordesley who would recommend the Clergy until the Dissolution 1538.	1746-1776	Paul White, Curate and Vicar for over 30 years.
1425	Thomas Gobbard, Chaplain.	1759	Rev. John Comber Raybould, a Local Vicar.
1425	Robert Langley, Chaplain.	1764	Rev. John Worrall, a Local Vicar.
1511	Thomas Rondell, Priest and First Grammar School master.	1774-1783	Rev. J. Fox, Curate and Vicar.
1553	Richard Blockley, Vicar when Eccl. Valuation was declared.	1779	Rev. Edward Hill.
1563	John Cooke, Curate.	1781	Rev. G. Lewis.
1570	Richard Mansell.	1786	Rev. H. Downing.
1577	Frank Symkys.	1782-1786	Rev. H. Davies.
1593-1610	Wm. Selborne, M.A.	1795-1828	Rev. J. Davies during the first quarter of this century.
1595	J. Jordan, a local vicar.	1803	Rev. James Stokes.
1620	Edward Jones, M.A.	1810	Rev. Thos. Homfrey.
1624	Gerald Whorwoode, Incumbent.	1820	Rev. James Taylor.
1625	Richard Blockley.	1817-1826	Rev. T. Houseman, Curate and Vicar.
1646	Rev. John Cross.		

But during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries great changes came both to our Church and Country and our people have witnessed and benefited by real progress in status, religious education and industry and although there have been, and will be, counter attractions to our Religion and Worship in Church, the past services of St. Peter's clergy recorded here are examples of spiritual influence and guidance and include many men who gave long and devoted service to Church and Parish.

In 1833 The Rev. Geo. Wharton became Vicar when the first organ was installed with grand services and soloists from Birmingham to sing "The Messiah" and Schubert. The Collection raised £51 0s. 2d. according to the board in the vestry. He then in 1850 built the National School for the poor, providing the site out of glebe land.

In Church the Hon. Mrs. Foley gave the Altar Book "with the Altar Cloth" as Mr. Wharton wrote in it. In her memory, part of the East Window is stained. This was also done in Mr. Wharton's time.

The following quotation from a local newspaper (which we owe to the kindness of Alderman H. E. Palfrey, of Stourbridge) shews how Mr. Wharton cared for the parish.

"The National School, Kinver, has been licensed by the Bishop of Lichfield for public worship. It is capable of accommodating 400 persons; and every Sunday evening there is a very crowded congregation, chiefly of those who have no accommodation in the parish church. On Sunday the 15th inst. (November 1853) after a sermon by the Rev. G. Wells, M.A., head master of the Grammar School, Stourbridge, the sum of £9 14s. 9½d. was collected towards the expense of lighting the rooms, etc., including donations of a sovereign each from W. Foster, Esq., J. M. Woodyatt, Esq. and Mrs. Hancock; and half a sovereign from J. P. Bennit, Esq."

Four years later in 1857 the Church was enlarged by the addition of the North Aisle, seating 185 people according to the architect's plans.

He died in 1867 and was succeeded by another great man, a native of Kinver, the Rev. John Hodgson. Within three years the vicarage was built and in successive stages under Sir Gilbert Scott—then the leading ecclesiastical architect in England—he restored the Church at a cost of some £3,000.

He strove to improve the benefice, raised money for the re-purchase of tithes, secured a grant from Queen Anne's Bounty and at his death left £1,000 to the benefice in trust with the Leathersellers Company.

In its obituary notice of him the "County Express" of the time said:

"Mr. Hodgson led a very active life. Trouble counted as nothing if he could perform a good service and his delight was to be of help to others. He was chairman of the Kinver Grammar School, chairman of the Kinver School Board, sat on the Seisdon Board of Guardians, Rural District Council and the Parish Council. He was Vice-President and warm friend of the Stewponey Becher Club, a Fellow of the Geological Society, of the Worcester Historical Society and various antiquarian societies. He was also a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries. He was a friend of the Rev. Baring Gould who used to visit him at Kinver, as a result of which he wrote the local tale 'Bladys of the Stewponey'."

It is said that the hymn "Now the day is over" was written in the Vicarage garden. He is still affectionately remembered. Papers of his, preserved at the Salt Library, Stafford, have been of vital help in the preparation of this book.

He was succeeded by the Rev. T. A. Cooper Slipper (1901-1934). Under him the Chancel was restored—the plaster being removed from the roof and the choir stalls erected—as a memorial to Mr. Hodgson and the fabric of the tower strengthened. Shortly after the first World War the young people with their own hands erected the ex-army hut (on a site kindly provided by Mr. Cooper-Slipper) that has proved so invaluable. Two bells were added to the peal and the present magnificent organ installed.

After his death there was an interregnum of some months until the Rev. J. A. Mercer (1935-1943) became Vicar. At once spiritual and social activities were quickened. A Parochial Church Council was created in accordance with the Enabling Act. For a time a lady worker helped with the young. A successful Sale of Work together with £300 from the legacy of Mrs. Martha Whittle enabled the inner porch and screens against draughts to be erected. The organ was completed with the large pedal stop on the screen across the South Aisle, when in 1939 the War switched all good works to War Effort.

In 1943 he exchanged livings with the Vicar of Wolstanton, the Rev. J. C. West, M.A., B.D. He was instituted on April 4th, 1943 and in his first week the tremendous gales of April 7th and 8th did great damage to the Church roof and revealed the need for thorough restoration as soon as possible. As soon therefore as the War Memorial Scheme had been completed the Restoration Fund Appeal was launched and has been well begun. He is zealous to guide us, a friend and vicar, and all branches of our Church benefit as a result. I personally value his co-operation in compiling this "Church Guide." He inspires our Church Life and with the Restoration Fund Appeal he will succeed with your co-operation and prayers.

ECCELESIASTICAL HISTORY

HISTORY books tell us that under the Romans the Christian Era is supposed to have commenced when England was divided up into five provinces. Then, when under further invasion and occupation the country was again divided up into kingdoms and Mercia was founded by CRIDA, 586 A.D.,—ten years before St. Augustine arrived—and included a large portion of Mid-England, some of which had embraced the Christian Faith, the example being set and followed by some of our early rulers whose kingdom or sphere of influence and power was decided by battle, annexation or on accession. It was during the stormy period of Danes versus Saxons that both England (as we know it) and Christianity became established but its progress unfortunately remained in dispute for some centuries.

Before the changing or final boundaries were defined on any map or scroll both Kinver Edge and Kinver Forest would be "here" and its geographical position decided its original or early name places described in 736 as The Wood called CYNIBRE and in 964 CYNEFARE and in Domesday Records, 1068, as CHENEVARE and in later centuries as KINFARE.

One of the earliest references to the Gospel or spread of the Christian Faith and Work in the Middle Anglia was the appointment of Diuma about 656 as first Bishop of the widely scattered Mercia. He wandered about as a Missionary for a period, having no cathedral, and is credited in Diocesan Histories or Registers as being the founder of the Mercian Church and that long line of bishops which for centuries afterwards settled in and established the Diocese of Lichfield and Coventry. This was a stormy period of our history and our Kings and rulers quarrelled not only with their enemies, but their subjects too, who often rebelled, and unhappily a few of the rulers (and many of the ruled) had not then accepted Christianity but as time passed the people and the Anglo-Saxon Churches became united and the Church of England (as we know it) became established. Then in 669 A.D. the revered St. Chad became Bishop of Lichfield and the Mercian kingdom became defined and divided up into five dioceses and then onwards our own Lichfield Diocese appears in Church History and instead of our early clergy and Bishops living in monastic communities they became resident in different areas where early Churches were erected by Royal and Loyal grants of the friends in Position or Possession in Service or Conquest having donated land, buildings or money for its maintenance, established and supported many Churches (some locally) for the spiritual, educational and moral benefit of their own household staff, tenants and retainers, and the few local people, and so by degrees these estates, areas or holdings became the Parish and our early Parochial system became established, and those early Church builders who supplied and supported those Churches had the right too of the selection of their spiritual advisers. Thus the system of Private Patronage in Ecclesiastical districts was established by the early administrations of the Church, an example set up and followed later by our civil administration.

Some of our early Kings and Rulers gave or encouraged Church building in Mercia and the example was followed in the Midlands down the ages by local people and Kinver we hope proved no exception as History unfolds.

A record of the eighth century says that Offa, the Mercian king, gave a tenth part of his personal belongings to the early Church, an example and record of tithes voluntarily given for Church support. Success or progress for a short period reigned among the early Anglo-Saxon rulers and Churches and a few Christian laws were established as a result of devout work among famous Christian clergy and the dignity and status of Lichfield was established with royal approval and the country became united and known as England which for a thousand years since we proudly claim as our Birthright.

The early Church, too, played an important part in the progress of the country and Mercia in particular as some of our Bishops had great influence in both Church and State. The spheres of spiritual authority became defined by some early royal appointments and Grants of land and money enabled the Church to establish religious houses or buildings in wider areas for

the spread of the Christian Faith and for better control or administration and the Royal rulers gave away vast estates for service, or the hope of service, to some supporters or followers of doubtful loyalty as the revenues and ranks of nobility were so easily altered in their own lifetime. Lordships and Earldoms were created and Manorial "rights and wrongs" were established and early codes of law were introduced and the Church of England as we know it today came under the spiritual guidance of a fine type of man who as early Bishops were pioneers in the Christian Faith in difficult times and as the Country became counties and further divided up into vast estates of doubtful and very often disputed ownership. Yet to the credit of many owners in pre-conquest times (and many more since) built or endowed or encouraged Churches or religious houses and as Domesday book shews had control over the lives of our forebears in Mercia. Yet for many generations the histories of the Midlands contain in truth and tradition fine records of men in the Church for their work and worth and many of the early local churches, including Kinver, can claim religious guidance and control from within the Diocese or See of Lichfield now responsible for over three hundred benefices and for upwards of a thousand years over 110 bishops have maintained a continuity of sacred office from St. Chad down to our present respected bishop, Dr. Woods (according to the Diocesan Registers).

The benefice of Kinver Church often appeared to be in dispute, as late in the thirteenth century, in 1293 A.D. Edward the First asked John Fitz-Philip concerning the advowson of our Church and again 18 Edward II—1325 concerning the Rectory. But in 1335 Edward the Third, by grace of God King of England and true patron presents Thos. De Peshale with the benefice. Further endowments of Kinver Rectory were effected by the ravages of war and the pestilence known as the Black Plague and the English Church appeared to be dominated by the Pope in presentations of benefices, three in twenty years, 1349-1369, and the monasteries in Mercia at that period (some poor, some rich) were looking for some increase in revenues and early Diocesan records shew that the Abbot of Bordesley Abbey appropriated or received the benefice and revenues of Kinver Church according to ecclesiastical records. This received the approval of Robert, Bishop of Lichfield, and Coventry, and assented to by the Prior and Chapter and appears in the Patent Rolls of 1380 and the right of presentation of chaplains, etc., was their prerogative for nearly two hundred years until the Dissolution of monasteries, 1534, with the exception of the St. Mary's Chapel or Chantry addition in 1471 by Sir John Hampton and the Grammar School endowment of 1511.

A reference to the troublous times at Kinver Church appears in the Diocesan History of Lichfield says according to Bishop Butler's Register some old appropriations were challenged and in 1451 (an Abbot of Bordesley, I expect) is called upon to prove his title to the Rectory of Kynfare. Another early fourteenth century record says that the Chaplains then in Kinver were appointed by the Abbot of Bordesley and named Nicholas de Iygho alia Grendon. Robert Longley, Thos. Gibbard and afterwards some of Kinver clergy are described as Parsons, Priests, Clerks, Ministers, Rectors, etc.

The great upheavals in the Church in the sixteenth century when local Priories and Monasteries were suppressed by Royal Decrees of 1534, supposed to be issued against certain practices but, in some cases, an excuse for endowments of colleges. This, unfortunately, resulted in so many Churches being robbed and pillaged of their Revenues and Treasures. The commission set up to look into this loss of Church property too often resulted in further spoilation and confiscation. The order of the day seemed to be rob the Church to benefit the Royal Exchequer, which led to so very many abuses.

An inventory of the above period showing the ornaments then possessed by Kinver Church in 1552, and reprinted from "Historical Collections of Staffs."

First, one Chalice of Silver with a Paten, one suit of Vestments of Blue Satin (Priest's Robes used at Holy Communion), one cape of Blue Velvet (a Vestment worn in processions), one suit of Vestments of Black Silk lacking a Cope, one Cope of Dun Velvet, one pair of Vestments of Green Damask,

one pair of Vestments of White Damask, one pair of Vestments of Blue Satin of Bruges; the Corporas Cases (to contain the Communion Linen); three Altar Cloths, three Altar Frontals; one of Red Satin, another Painted, the third of White Cloth. Three Towels (for laying along the Altar Rail), one Cross of Copper and Gilt, one Pux of Brass (a Box to contain Communion for the Sick), Three Bells.

This list proves and gives some idea of the beauty and value of the ornaments with which the very early worshippers of St. Peter's, Kinver, endowed it.

An old Church document says that during the stormy period and reign of Henry the Eighth he did by Act of Parliament become possessed of what was Church property at the Dissolution and the Revenues of Kinver and its benefice as well as its manorial rights were in dispute and we read that one Babyngton, or Bobbington, got hold of both Kinver Benefice and the Manor, but later it came in 1543 by Royal Grant to Sir William Whorwood, of Stourton Castle, who appeared to be a favourite at Court.

"Grant of Kinver Rectory by Henry VIII—1554.

35th Henry VIII Grant to William Whorwood, Attorney General of (inter alias) the Rectory and Church of Kynvare, otherwise called Kynfare, with the Members and Appurtenances, in our County of Stafford to the then late Monastery of Bordesley, in our County of Worcester, theretofore pertaining or belonging or being parcel of the possessions or profits of the late Monastery of Bordesley, and then or late in the Tenure, Demise or occupation of a certain Roland Bobyngton, Esq., or his Assignes and all manner of Glebes, Tithes, Observations, Jurists, etc., to the Rectory and Church of Kynvare belonging and the reversion and wh.....(?) Rectory, with the Appurtenances and the Glebes, Emoluments and other the premises to the Rectory pertaining were then of the clear yearly value of £22 1s. 4d. sterling. To hold unto the said William Whorwood, his Heirs and Assignes for ever. To be holden of the Crown in Capite by Military Service (viz.:) the 20th part of one Knight's fee, rendering yearly 44-2 sterling. Witness ourselves at Westminster on 7th day July, 1543, by brief under our private seal."

We read that Church and religious life were at a very low ebb, although maintained in spite of its revenues being in some private hands and some in dispute.

A Certificate of its value (or a portion of it) was issued in 1535 known as the John Perrott foundation, 37 Henry VIII, Valor Ecclesiasticus of Kynvar Chantry. The successive—or some of the succeeding owners—were not always keen to ensure the early and permanent endowments of our old Church and of course religious progress suffered. Some of them to their credit provided both men and money for the Church or Religious and Educational instruction and some of them left an indelible mark of progress on some branch of History of County or Country. Some difficulty arose with reference to Tithes and Church revenue, so much so that early in 1600 a group of local good churchmen—12 in number—subscribed £560 to purchase back some permanent endowment for both status of our Church and security of its future clergy. A 1624 St. Peter's record says that a Gerard Whorwoode was its incumbent and in the next few years, or seven years later, a Lecturer or local clergyman requiring a house was presented with a parsonage bought by local people in 1631. Efforts were also made—later successfully—by some of our early Clergy to recover some of the early gifts or grants as intended by some of the donors—"Kinver men," who, having succeeded in business, left annuities or benefactions which to this day and generation some Kinver people, both old and young, enjoy. See the Table of Benefactions shown in the Church.

The history of Kinver itself, as well as its Church, was undergoing changes during the Commonwealth period. Loyalties were too often divided and the effect of civil war reached even our own parish boundaries and Royalty

are reputed again to have been in our Kinver area. "Graphic and interesting details of local Kinver history in peace and war are fortunately published in the book on Stourton Castle and Kinver Forest by the late George Grazebrook, Esq." Some early Church records show that a new type of good men played a progressive part in the administration of Kinver Parish, its Church and also its industrial progress and Religious Education. The Foley family held the manorial rights and the Church appointments at this changeable period, when the right of presentation became a legal dispute but settled on appeal to the House of Lords to local Kinver trustees, thirteen being appointed. This previously vexed question of patronage is for all time now safe and settled as the prerogative of the Lichfield Diocesan Board of Patronage.

The Church not only as a building or place of worship suffered and overcame many local difficulties but during the next century, the period of both Restoration of Church and Realm, measures of legislation brought about some changes within and without the Church. These are dealt with or recorded in English Church History books. The general advance made in the life of the people both in education and status was reflected in our own local people's efforts in many branches, although peace and progress sometimes may have appeared opposite. But the work of St. Peter's, the Church on the hill, still went forward. Clergymen came and went, some with long and honourable service records. Difficulties in Church discipline and maintenance were then and still are being overcome.

Interest in and for the Church was considered by local people (not the Law) but their Duty, and generations of Kinver people attended their Church and to the credit of Kinver as an hamlet, village, or town, or as a local community, it has produced men and women willing to co-operate in Christian worship; and now that fortunately persecution is past and any barriers removed by good will and prayer it can continue to spread the Christian Faith. Kinver Church in common with others was a pioneer in early parochial administration (as referred to elsewhere). The officials in charge as well as in power were known as the Vestry and old Parish records do not show that they came in conflict with the Baron or Court Leet officials, although often meeting under the same roof. Both groups of local men served Kinver wisely and well as per few available records. The one has been superseded by official administrative authority and the other—the old Vestry—has also had its sphere of influence or power revised.

But it appears to me right now to pay a tribute to that army of Church workers and officials (early St. Peter's worshippers) and not wishing this humble effort to be just a catalogue of names and dates but a desire to interest readers in the past history of Kinver Church and its future sacred security.

1050-1951

