STANTON.

To distinguish this from other villages of the same name it has been called Stanton-upon-Hine-Heath. It is as near as possible nine miles from Shrewsbury, from which it stands a little east of north. The river Roden, in summer an inconsiderable stream, though abounding in fine trout, runs through the village, giving motion to two mills, the upper one a most picturesque object, having two undershot waterwheels. The village consists of about a dozen and a half houses, a remarkable old timber house with handsome gables being very conspicuous. The red sandstone rock is very near the surface, and being good building stone, has been much used in the more modern erections. Near what once was the village green stands on an elevated platform, a sun-dial, the pillar is of sandstone, about five feet high. The brass gnomon and plates are perfect. Round the edge are the words—"G. Mason, T. Taylor. ——, MDCCCXXIII." Lower down on the other side of the road leading to the church gate is a spring of water, clear as crystal. In the churchyard are several very fine sycamores, in one of which are very many nails of all sizes and shapes. The notice tree of the parish. On approaching the church one cannot help being struck with its venerable appearance. Two or three very small lancets on the north wall testify to its being *Norman* in character. The north porch is *Elizabethan*, the doorway *Norman*, the wall shows traces of an earlier porch, probably coeval with the door. The church is of one *pace* consisting of nave and chancel only. The tower arch is blocked up by a modern gallery, in which a harmonium leans against a disused barrel organ; this gallery is supported by two iron pillars. Upwards of twenty years ago the contents of the tower were consumed by fire, the bells being destroyed; the fire was caused by the jackdaws having built their nests in the flue, and on fires being lighted in the beginning of winter the flames reached the woodwork, and with great difficulty the body of the church was saved. The six bells are comparatively new, cast from the old metal by C. and G. Mears, London. The four belfry windows are of the *Decorated* style of architecture. The clock, which has a very large face on the side next the village, is dated 1856. The east window in the chancel is *Early English*. It is filled with plain glass. Beneath it is a reredos in which is inscribed the Lord's Prayer, Decalogue, &c., said to have been brought from Hawkstone by Mr. Blackie, a former curate, who had been chaplain there. There are two north lights, deeply splayed lancets. The ceiling of the chancel is barrel shaped, concealing a fine timbered roof, parts of which have been allowed to appear below the ceiling. The communion table and rails are of oak. The South-east window in the chancel is very peculiar, it is *Decorated* and may have been *Pointed*, but the upper part has been cut off by a large stone which passes through the wall. It has two compartments; its companion window on the other side of the priest's door only one. The arch dividing the nave from the chancel is *Pointed* and probably *Early English*. Over this there is a royal coat-of-arms with the date 1808. There is a three-light window in the north wall of the nave, and two large modern ones on the south side. The church is pewed with oak, among which may be seen some carved work which may have formed portions of a rood screen—pattern *linenfold*. Two stout buttresses support the outer corners of the tower, on one of which is this inscription—"THESE. BVTERIES. WERE. | BVILT. ANNO DNI. 1666 | WILLIAM DIDLIKE | THOMAS GROOME | CHURCH WARDENS | IOHN HATTON, SIDMAN.—in which the interlacing of the letters T and H, T and E, and the word SIDMAN are noticeable. Two-fifths of the tower are *Norman*, the remainder *Early English*. The gargoyles are very massive. There are eight pinnacles on the tower. There is a small *Pointed* arch now blocked up on the south side of the tower, about nine feet from the ground. The south doorway, now built up with brick, is *Norman*. The priest's door in the church, now blocked up, was originally *Early English*, and very low, the head has been altered to a square and made higher. There is some herring-bone work observable in the masonry on the south wall of the chancel. On a stone above the east window it is stated that "Andrew Corbet, of Moreton Corbet, Esq., Patron of this church, rebuilt this chancel end in the year of our Lord 1740." The greatest age recorded in the churchyard is that of Thomas Harper of Stanton, who died Jan. 19, 1823, aged 94, but the stones are so covered with lichens that possibly there are others still older. The present clerk of the church is quite a character, he is 83 years old, and has never been absent from church for sixty years except the three Sundays when his "banns were axed," according to village custom. He was born on the morning of New Year's Day, 1799. His father, who was clerk before him for fifty years, died in his 80th year. Concerning a loose brass plate in the vestry on which runs an inscription recording that Elizabeth Browne, daughter of Jonathan Browne, of Sowbatch, died Jan. 6, 1777, aged 92 years, he said that she was first buried in the Dingle near her father's house! "but she came again, and then they took her up and buried her in the church. When the lads used to take the horses to water she used to get up behind them." She was frequently said to be seen sitting on a large stone, and on removing the floor of the nave a few weeks ago to relay it with encaustic tiles the workmen came near to the grave, and some one advised a careful search for the bottle into which it was said her restless spirit had been, with enormous labour, conjured by all the divines of the neighbourhood. On Sunday afternoons during service the old man occasionally falls asleep, and about two months ago he woke up during a pause in the sermon and said out loud, "ah—men:" and people do say that "he be getting past his work." He is, nevertheless, quite hale and hearty, and full of anecdotal reminiscences. John Boydell, publisher and patron of engravers was born in this parish. The register dates from 1600. The inhabitants say that they have heard from their forefathers that when the Church was first projected it was intended to build it in another place, but stones prepared during the day were always removed during the night, and that so constantly that the site had to be changed at last. BONNEAU.

May 15, 1882.

STANTON (June 7, 1882).

Will you be good enough to allow me to correct an inaccuracy into which your correspondent has been led in his notice of our village church? He says our Clerk sleeps during the sermon, and is regarded as past his work. He has been misinformed. There is not a more devout worshipper or attentive listener than the Clerk in our congregation; and for his age I do not think there are many more active men to be found anywhere. I am satisfied with the way he does his work, in which he takes great interest and pleasure. The incident to which your correspondent refers as having taken place here only a few months ago, the Clerk saying "Amen" before the sermon was concluded, is no proof of his incapacity, or that he was sleeping at the time. It is usual for him to say "Amen" at the end of the sermon if it concludes in such a way as to call for it; and on this occasion I must have made an unusually long pause towards the end, and before it was concluded, which led him to think that I had finished. The fault, if fault it was, was mine and not his.

P. GRIMES,
Vicar of Stanton-upon-Hine-Heath.

Stanton Vicarage, June 12, 1882.

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