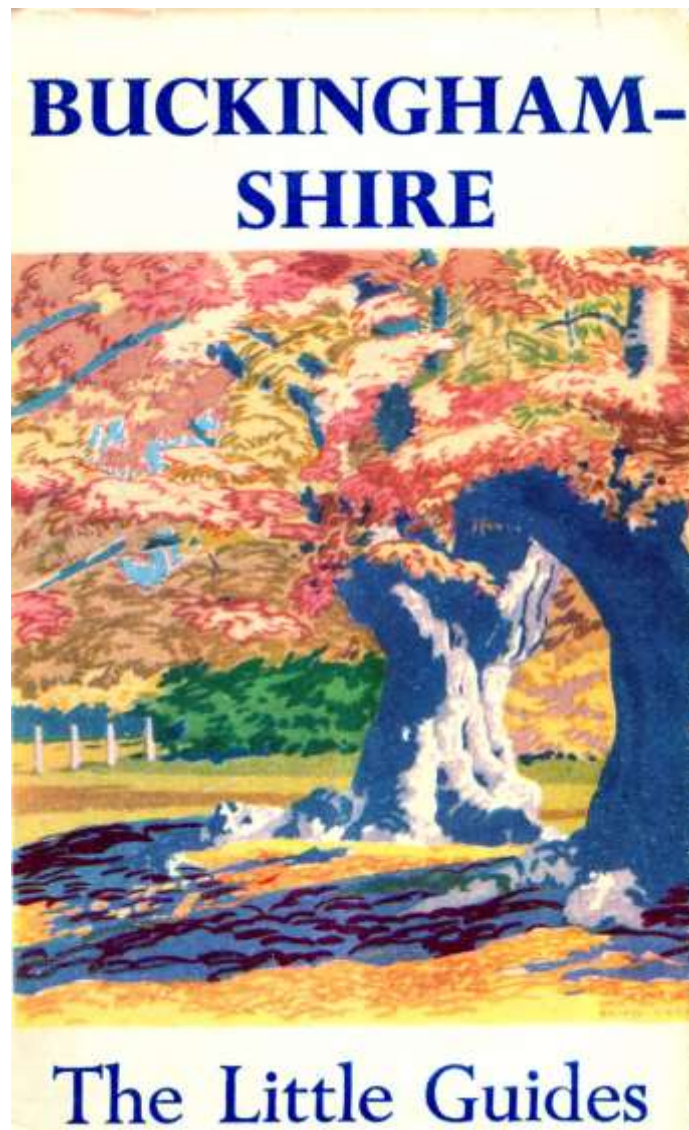


BUCKINGHAMSHIRE THE LITTLE GUIDES BOOK
First published in 1903 revised 1950



DINTON

Dinton lies S. of the main road from Aylesbury to Thame, it is reached through a picturesque avenue of chestnuts.

A charming village shaded by elms through which the distant Chilterns can be seen to the S. across the meadows.

The church adjoins the gabled manor house (16th century) which touches the graveyard on the W. The church as a building shows important signs of each of the periods of English mediaeval architecture.



The S. doorway is the most remarkable piece of Norman work in the country. It has three orders, billet, zigzag and guilloche, and a tympanum showing grotesque monsters eating the fruit off a tree. Below the main face is an inscription in large capital letters, bearing two rhymed hexameters in Latin:

PREMIA PRO MERITIS SI QUIS DESP'ET HABENDA
AUDIAT HIC PRE'EPTA SIBI QUESIT RETINENDA
(He who despairs of guerdon for his pain:
Should listen here what precepts to retain)



On the lintel is the combat between St Michael and Satan. An immense dragon with terrible jaws and large extended tongue is advancing from the W. towards a small-winged figure in the E. corner who holds a cross which is about to thrust down the throat of the serpent. The chancel is EE., the E. window with its three lights widely separated, or, more strictly speaking, the three E. windows, being the most remarkable. There is a good early Dec. S. arcade but no N. aisle: the roof braces rest upon stone pilasters.

The brasses, formerly at W. end of S. aisle, have been rearranged and reset. These are to John Compton (1424) his wife, four sons and seven daughters; another is to William Lee (1486). The brass commemorating Francis Lee (1558) in a gown, is a palimpsest and on the reverse is a fine fragment of a Flemish brass (c. 1370). Other palimpsests are those to Thomas Greneway (1538) in armour, with his wife (headless) and Richard Greneway (1551) and his wife Joan. On the reverses of the Greneway brasses are parts of a figure of a priest c. 1490, as well as portions of a lady's dress (c.1400) and a small armed figure (c. 1460). A late brass commemorates Simon Mayne (1617), his wife, and two children.

In the W. end, S. aisle a cupboard dated 1612 and a late 16th century chest. The fluted and cup shaped font shaped with geometrical ornament round the top, showing influence, of the Aylesbury type. Very fine Jacobean altar table dated 1606, 18th century altar rails in S. aisle. Outside note very good W. doorway (EE) to tower and turret at SE. angle, mass-dial on S. side, and in the churchyard an old cross.



The Manor House, Dinton Hall, adjoining the church, has an impressive row of gables and chimneys and is mainly of the 16th century with later additions.

To NE. of the village, on the Aylesbury road is a ruin called the Castle. It consisted of a tower and two side towers built in 1769 and was erected by Sir John Vanhatten of Dinton Hall as an "eye-catcher".

In the 17th century Dinton belonged to the Mayne family, one of whom, Simon, was one of the regicides; he died in the Tower, but his body is buried in Dinton Church. Members of this family held the manor and resided at the Hall, till 1727, when it was sold to John Vanhatten.