

Account of Purley on Thames

The King's England

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The King's England By Arthur Mee

The book was published as 'Berkshire - Alfred's own County' by Hodder and Stoughton in 1939 as one of a series of County volumes covering all of England. Purley's entry starts on page 143.

It was reprinted in 1947 with somewhat different text. Purley's entry.

The Church by the River

Purley. All about us here are the dark woods of Purley Park, shadowing a sombre and beautiful reach of the Thames. Village, great house and church are all apart, the church buried in trees by the river. On the 17th century tower are the arms of the Bolingbrokes (note 2) who had possessions here, and within, though it is all much rebuilt, is a Norman arch which once led into the chancel. The north doorway is Norman too, and so is the splendid font, enriched with arches and a man's head.

Remembered on these walls are a parson who lost his life in crossing the river, and Edith Sherwood of the China Inland Mission, who was killed at Chekiung. From another age comes a sculptured group by Joseph Nollekens in memory of one who died in the Bahamas (note 1), and older still is the sleeping figure of a young mother with her little one.

She is Anne Hyde, who died in 1632, in the days when the great house was known as Hyde Hall. One of its owners in the next century was a director of the ill-fated South Sea Company.

The Church by the River (Reprint)

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Notes

1 - died in Jamaica

2 - Arms of Oliver, Lord Grandison.

3 - she died at the manor house next to the church

