

ent story, and I must return to Ashbury's village hall.

It is due to the enterprise of the present incumbent, the Rev. Edward Glanville Mortimer, who was formerly Vicar of St. Paul's, at Swindon, that Ashbury now possesses one of the most picturesque halls in the country.

The visitor to Ashbury is at once attracted by the Church of Our Lady of the Vale, which can have no equal in regard to the mixed styles of the exterior.

It is on the way to the church that one encounters the village hall, which is conspicuous through its roof with a

outside introductions, and these have been designed to tone with the 16th century exterior.

The cost of the project is £900, and so far about £700 has been subscribed.

The hall will be opened by the Countess of Craven on Wednesday, 15 April.

The premises include a main hall, complete with platform and gallery, a kitchen, dressing-rooms, and a men's club-room.

The Vicar of Ashbury is a son of the late Rev. E. Mortimer, of Little Somerford. He went to Clifton College, and his first curacy was at Christ Church,

## Death of Former Tradesman and Councillor.

The death took place in a Swindon nursing home on Sunday of Mr. William John Austin, aged 69, of "Everest," Ermin-street, Blunsdon, a former well-known public man of that village, in which for generations his family carried on the business of wheelwright, undertaker, etc., but which was closed down when Mr. Austin retired some years ago.

Mr. Austin was at one time a member of the Blunsdon Parish Council, and was on the committee of the Highworth Flower Show.

A lifelong churchman, Mr. Austin was formerly a sidesman at St. Leonard's Church, Blunsdon, but had not taken an active part in church affairs of late owing to failing health. He was also an Oddfellow and in his younger days was a footballer and cyclist of local repute.

The late Mr. Austin was a widower, but there are two sons—Mr. Ray Austin, a member of the staff of Lloyds Bank at Swindon, and Mr. Frank Austin, who is in the scholastic profession at Faringdon.

The funeral took place yesterday, at St. Leonard's Church. A simple service was conducted by the Rev. L. A. Knight, who spoke in appreciation of a lifelong Churchman who had rendered good service as a sidesman and in other capacities. The mourners were Mr. and Mrs. Frank Austin (son and daughter-in-law), Mr. and Mrs. Ray Austin (son and daughter-in-law), Mr. and Mrs. W. Gardiner, of Stroud (brother-in-law and sister-in-law), Mr. Joseph Gardiner, of Stroud (brother-in-law), Mr. and Mrs. F. Pates, of Weymouth (brother-in-law and sister-in-law), Mr. F. Shaylor, of Stroud (cousin), Mr. F. Pates, of Weymouth, Mr. L. Martin, Mr. E. Martin and Mr. A. Martin (nephews), Mrs. P. Godwin (niece), Mr. F. Gerrard (nephew), Mr. S. Cuss, Mr. Andrew Harford, Mr. R. H. Robson, Mr. and Mrs. Knibbs, Mrs. Evans, Mr. A. Pearce, Mrs. Goldstein, Miss Lewis, Mrs. Dance, and many others. The floral tributes were as follows: In loving memory of dear father, from Ray and Peggy; With love, from Jimmy, Daphne and David; To dear Dad, with fondest love, from Frank, Ethel and family; In loving memory, from sister Emily and family; In affectionate remembrance, from Willie, Nellie, Doris and Urmston; With deepest sympathy, from Mr. and Mrs. G. Martin and family; Ever at rest—from all at Weymouth; In remembrance of Mr. Austin, from all at Aynho; With sincere sympathy, from The Limes; With deepest sympathy, from Mr. and Mrs. J. H. R. Skyrme, Mr. and Mrs. Goldstein and Mr. and Mrs. F. Dennis; With sincerest sympathy, Mrs. A. D. Titley; With deepest sympathy, Mr. and Mrs. Dance and Mr. and Mrs. Aubrey; To a dear old pal, from Mr. and Mrs. S. Cuss; Fred and Mary; Mrs. and Miss Flower and Mrs. Purdy.

## THE CHURCH OF ST. MARY THE VIRGIN.

delightful new thatch of straw. The most casual visitor would appreciate the attractive design of the new hall, but his appreciation would change to admiration when he learned that a veritable transformation had been achieved.

What is now a commodious and well-equipped hall was formerly a block of derelict cottages, so tumble-down that they were condemned by the Faringdon Rural District Council. These cottages were of 16th century origin, and their suggested demolition attracted the attention of the Society for the protection of Ancient Buildings. It

Swindon. He was there from 1914 to 1916, and then went to St. John's, Frome. He was appointed Vicar of Hullavington in 1921, and Vicar of St. Paul's, Swindon, five years later. He married Miss Dorothy Pitt, daughter of Dr. C. W. Pitt, of Malmesbury.

The Vicarage of Ashbury is sheltered by the Berkshire hills, and commands a panorama of the Vale of the White Horse extending to the Cotswolds.

In the Vicarage gardens are stones believed to be relics of the burial-place of a British chieftain. These stones form part of the Ashbury "barrow." Near to the Vicarage runs the Ridgeway, which was used by the worshippers of old on their journeys to Avebury Temple.

The Church of Ashbury is, architecturally, of a heterogeneous character. There is a Norman south doorway, with elaborate "dog-tooth" mouldings; and in the south-west nave are remains of a Norman arch. The main fabric of the tower is Early English, with a lancet window. The chancel and the two transepts are of the Decorated period, and the central

arches are Perpendicular.

In the west end of the north aisle is a domestic fireplace and a priests' cell, probably used by the visiting priests when Ashbury parish embraced Uffington. The smoke from the fire place was emitted from the mouth of a gargoyle known as "The Devil's Head."

The interior includes a memorial chapel to St. Hubert, the Patron saint of hunting, which was given in 1926 as a memorial to Evelyn Countess of

## SWINDON BROTHERHOOD.

"If we use our imagination and study the characters of our fellow-travellers, we shall find the journey on the road of life less monotonous," said Mr. L. Mattick, when he addressed Swindon Brotherhood last Sunday.