

## *The Hermitage (St. Mary's Chapel) Tory*



This Chapel now called St. Mary's Tory stands on the hill overlooking the town.

The earliest authentic account is that of John Leland, Chaplain to Henry VIII, who in 1553 wrote "There is a cheppelle on the highest place of the town as I entered." He entered on the North and there is no other Chapel on that side. The name Tory probably derives from the Anglo Saxon word "Tor" which signifies a high hill.

John Aubrey writing about 1670 in his history of North Wilts says "on the top of the North Hill is the finest Hermitage I have seen in England with several rooms and a very neat chapel."

In the early part of the 18th century the building was converted into a cloth factory but it fell into disuse about a hundred years later. The ruins were bought by Mr. T. B. Saunders in 1869. Though only the east side was standing, he at once set about restoration and in 1871 the Chapel was again used as a place of worship.