



Transactions
OF THE
Cambridgeshire and
. . . Huntingdonshire
Archæological Society

(FOUNDED A.D. 1900)

VOLUME III. PART II.
[ISSUED TO SUBSCRIBERS FOR 1909]

EDITED BY THE REV. W. M. NOBLE, B.A.

Clp

PRINTED FOR THE SOCIETY BY
G. H. TYNDALL, THE MINSTER PRESS

1909

PRICE (NON-MEMBERS) FIVE SHILLINGS

PROCEEDINGS
OF
The Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire
Archæological Society

(Continued from page 32).

On the 30th June and 1st July, 1908, the Architectural and Archæological Society of the Counties of Lincoln and Nottingham paid a two days visit to Huntingdon and its neighbourhood, and courteously invited our Members to join them.

On the first day, starting from their headquarters at the George Hotel, the first place visited was Godmanchester Church (St. Mary), where the Rev. A. F. Sutton (Hon. Sec. of the visiting Society and organizer of the Excursion) read some notes upon the Church, which is chiefly of Perpendicular date, although it contains several portions of the earlier E.E. church.

Parts of the chancel and the east and west walls of the nave are E.E.; the chancel arch itself appears to have been rebuilt, probably in order to raise and widen it, in the Decorated period, for although the bases of the responds and the arch stones appear to be E.E., the responds themselves with their caps are Decorated, and yet again in the gable above are parts of two E.E. windows which still retain considerable remains of painted decoration.

The caps of the tower arch are carved with stiff E.E. foliage.

Against the south-west corner of the nave, outside, may be seen a fragment of the E.E. west window of the south aisle, but the present Perpendicular west window of that aisle has Decorated inner jambs and arch, and similar inner jambs and arches appear in the north and west walls of the north aisle. An early door of somewhat uncertain date, although probably E.E., may still be seen in the north wall of the chancel, but blocked up, and almost hidden by the modern vestry. The rest of the Church (except the tower and spire) is Perpendicular; the nave arcades are lofty and are surmounted by a good clerestory, and the aisle windows are large three-lights with transoms.

The Church has north and south porches, both with a parvise over them; that on the north is small and poor, but that on the south is larger and has canopied niches and remains of wall arcading. In this porch is now preserved the ancient font which was turned out of the Church some fifty years ago but has lately been recovered.

The tower (and spire) is one of an interesting group of towers which this County possesses; at first sight they appear to be fine specimens of the Perpendicular period but upon examination they are seen to be of the seventeenth century. The date of this example, 1623, is carved upon a panel over the west door, and the Records of the Borough prove it to have been built of stone

brought from Ramsey Abbey, Huntingdon Priory and Hinchingsbrooke Nunnery; Fox, the Historian of Godmanchester, thinks that the west doorway came from Ramsey complete, but this appears to be very doubtful, as the workmanship is obviously of the date 1623. There are some interesting chancel stalls with carved misereres, the subjects of which include the fleur-de-lis (the Borough crest); the monogram S.W.; the fox and goose; and the hare in the midst of a rising sun, a reference to the tradition that a hare was the first to bring tidings of the rising of the sun on Easter day, hence the Germans and others use a hare, or 'hare-sun' very much as we do the Easter-egg.

There is also a good example of a wooden almsbox with chain attached, inscribed: "He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will He repay him again" (Prov. xix, 17). This interesting almsbox was stolen about fifty years ago, but was thrown by the thief into a horse-pond, from which it was fortunately recovered although sadly damaged. On one of the buttresses on the south side of the chancel is a very interesting mediæval sundial carved in stone; it is circular, and the divisions of the dial are formed by a kind of tracery pattern.

The stairs to the rood loft are on the south side, and form a rather quaint feature outside. The screen is modern, by Bodley; and there is some good modern stained glass in the church.

Godmanchester, which is supposed to be the site of the Roman station Durolipons, is a very ancient Borough and possesses charters from many monarchs from King John downwards.

The next Church visited was Offord Cluny (All Saints), which although small has some interesting features. The north arcade has three E.E. arches on circular columns with fairly good moulded caps and bases; the south arcade is much plainer and probably Decorated, but rather poor. The clerestory is Perpendicular, and the roof is of similar date, with carved figures at the feet of the principals.

The aisles are Perpendicular of very simple character, and both have plain oak roofs. The chancel is modern, of brick, and unworthy of the Church, but the chancel arch is plain E.E. The tower is Perpendicular of simple but good design; it has a good west door with spandrels enclosed within a square label moulding, above which is a Perpendicular three-light. The belfry windows are two-lights, and the tower is finished with an embattled parapet having large and bold grotesque gargoyles in the centre of each side. The buttresses at the angles of the tower are well designed. The south aisle has some good buttresses and gargoyles; and both here and in the north wall some earlier worked stones have been built in, but they are of no great interest.

Offord D'Arcy (St. Peter), the next Church visited, is full of interesting features. The chancel is E.E. and windows of this period still remain in the north and south walls, but the east window is a Perpendicular three-light. On the south side is a good trefoil headed piscina with two basins, one a quatrefoil the

other circular; and over the apex of this is another trefoil opening giving access to a wooden shelf forming the top of the piscina, and over which, in its turn, there is a wooden top.

The north arcade of the nave is good plain Norman, on square piers and responds; the eastern arch is very small and has been much modernised. The south arcade is of very good Decorated work, with plain arches resting upon clustered columns with well moulded caps and bases.

The windows of the north aisle are Perpendicular, but those of the south aisle are flowing Decorated two-lights, and the easternmost window in the south wall has a piscina formed in its eastern jamb, and sedilia of two graded seats in its sill; the piscina has an octofoil basin, and the arch is supported by a fossil marble shaft.

There is a good ball-flower cornice below the parapet of the south aisle; and the south porch has a good gable cross.

The west tower is late Decorated, but it is surmounted by a Perpendicular spire of later date and poorer character than is usual in this county.

There are two brasses, one to Sir Lawrence Pabenharn and his two wives, torn from its stone and much mutilated; the other, also mutilated but restored to its stone after years of wanderings, commemorates Dr. William Taylard, a former Rector.

A memorial slab, carved in low relief, depicting a civilian and his wife, probably of early fifteenth century date, has been fixed against the north wall: this stone formerly rested on a high tomb under an arch in the south wall of the south aisle, but was removed to the floor of the tower at a restoration in the eighteenth century, and more recently to its present position.

A fragment of a very pretty early Decorated oak screen, at one time in the north aisle, has now been fixed under the tower arch.

From Offord D'Arcy the party proceeded to Great Paxton, where the Church dedicated to the Holy Trinity, is one of the most interesting in the County. As this Church has been fully described in our pages upon a former occasion,¹ we cannot devote much space to it now, suffice it to say that Mr. St. John Hope fully confirmed the views, previously expressed, that the church while showing signs of Saxon workmanship was yet of late date and in fact post-Conquest.

The next two Churches visited, Eynesbury and St. Neots, have both been described before,¹ and we will pass them over, together with the Luncheon at the Cross Keys Hotel, and proceed at once to describe the next Church visited, viz. Little Paxton.

This Church, dedicated to St. James, has been very largely rebuilt; the nave arcade is composed of E.E. stones, but put together very badly in the early part of the nineteenth century, and the north wall entirely rebuilt at the same time contains some interesting Norman fragments built in at its base. The south door is an interesting specimen of rude Norman work, and has a curious tympanum; and the chancel arch is of similar workmanship, but the arch itself has been rebuilt to a pointed form.

1. See The Transactions, Vol. II, pp. 17 to 54, and 170 and 171.

The chancel is very interesting; the windows are very late Decorated and Perpendicular, but the walls are clearly Norman, the jambs and arches of the windows in both the east and south walls being plainly visible.

The tower is of rather plain Perpendicular work and has been much mutilated, but it has bold gurgoyles at its angles.

There is a tradition that the north side of the nave was knocked down during Oliver Cromwell's rebellion, when after the skirmish at St. Neots the rebels pursued the King's troops to Boughton, about a mile and a half away across the fields, and the latter occupied this Church in order to block the road.

From the Church the party proceeded to the Hall, kindly thrown open to them by the late Mr. Sweeting. The house is said to have been built by Bishop Reynolds of Lincoln, for his son, and his arms impaling those of the See of Lincoln are over the dining room chimney piece. It was evidently originally a red brick house of two stories with bold overhanging eaves, and an attic-story above with dormer windows; to this a later red brick front has been added, cutting off the eaves and carried up with a cornice and parapet, and two lead rain-water heads of this front bear the date 1738, which looks as if Reynolds reconstructed an older house and did not really build it.

There is a fine oak staircase, the walls of which, together with those of the hall and dining room are all cased in panelling which appears to be of the date 1738.

The next Church visited was Southoe (St. Leonard), which has a chancel, nave with two aisles, south porch, and tower at the west end of the north aisle. The chancel windows are E.E., but the shallow buttresses of both the north and south walls look as if they might be Norman. The east window is a poor Perpendicular five-light. The north arcade of the nave is Perpendicular, and the south arcade is E.E., all the windows of the clerestory and aisles are Perpendicular, and so is the west doorway of the nave, which has the initials I. B. in the spandrels outside. The masonry of the north aisle is particularly good, and the cornice below the embattled parapet has the following letters carved in the form of pateræ in a hollow moulding: T. R. O. S. F. I. F. E.

The south doorway is an unusually rich specimen of Norman work, with carved jamb shafts and caps, and a carved tympanum.

The tower is of red brick and comparatively modern, and there is a good deal of red brick also in the clerestory. The Church was considerably restored in 1859, when some of this red brick was probably introduced, but parts of it are earlier.

There is a plain sanctus-bell cot on the east gable of the nave.

The next Church visited was Buckden (St. Mary), which has been described before.¹ Since the Society's former visit to Buckden, the miserable eighteenth century plaster has been removed from the walls of the nave, aisles and tower, and the stonework has been pointed. Several interesting features have been brought to light, viz. a mutilated fragment of a good piscina

1. See The Transactions, Vol. II., pp. 166 to 168.

in the south-east corner of the north aisle, and another in the south wall of the south aisle; several stones with E.E. mouldings in various parts of the walls; and numerous interesting changes in the masonry, especially in the tower, the junction of the nave and tower, and at the top of the clerestory. This removal of the plaster (or perhaps we should more correctly say the pointing of the walls) was very adversely criticised by our visitors, and a rather heated argument ensued for most of the Huntingdonshire men thought that the plaster could well be dispensed with. Whatever one's personal opinions may be upon this point, and certainly we fully agree that ancient plaster should not be removed, it does seem that when poor and disfiguring eighteenth century plaster has been removed from the walls it might reasonably be left to the option of the guardians of any individual church to replaster or to point the walls as seems to them best; and considering that modern plaster put upon the walls can have no archæological value, and that it will hide any evidence of change of masonry that may exist, it would almost appear that there is less likelihood of doing harm by pointing the walls than by plastering them. What, for instance, would not an archæologist give to see the masonry of the arcade walls at Great Paxton? What an insight into the history of the church might it not give! and yet this is hidden (apparently permanently) by an expanse of featureless and uninteresting modern plaster; surely discretion is wanted upon this point as upon all others!

We may take this opportunity of recording that during the present year the old high pews have been replaced by modern oak seats¹ with nicely carved poppy-heads to the ends, and that the floor has been relaid, new wrought iron lamp standards introduced, and the font has been removed and set up, upon a new stem and base (the old being of poor nineteenth century design), in the tower. During these alterations the old floor level, three inches below the present floor, was discovered, but unfortunately it was not possible to adopt it in the new work; no remains of the old flooring tiles existed, but simply the indications at the bases of the piers.

The last Church visited was Brampton (St. Mary), which has also been described before.² Here, by the kindness of the Rev. H. S. Budge, tea was served on the Rectory lawn; and the party then made their way back to Huntingdon.

In the evening the Annual Dinner was held at the George Hotel, after which the Ven. Archdeacon Vesey read an interesting paper upon Old Huntingdon, and Mr. St. John Hope read an account of the discoveries lately made at Temple Bruerne.

On the second day the two Churches of All Saints, and St. Mary, Huntingdon, were first visited. All Saints is a rather late Perpendicular Church, the nave arcades having depressed four-centred arches on clustered columns, with late but good details.

The south aisle is large and has very elegant Perpendicular

1. From designs by Mr. S. Inskip Ladds, A.R.I.B.A.—(Ed.).
2. See *The Transactions*, Vol. II, pp. 1 to 16, and 166.

windows, good buttresses with rich niches and crocketed pinnacles, and the walls below the windows enriched on the inside with wall panelling in stone. The tower, at the west end of the north aisle, has a low E.E. arch on the south standing on a circular column and a very prettily carved respond bracket. But the upper part of the tower is of much later date, chiefly of red brick but with stone embattled parapet and pinnacles.

The Church has been much restored; the chancel and north aisle in 1859, when the vestry and organ chamber were built, and the south aisle in 1861, under the direction of Sir Gilbert Scott; the Rev. F. G. Vesey (now Archdeacon of Huntingdon) being then Rector.

St. Mary's Church is largely of E.E. date, the south arcade being especially interesting, having good moulded arches on varied columns, one being very prettily clustered. Most of the windows are Perpendicular insertions, and the roofs are modern but there are a few old timbers in that over the nave.

The Church is recorded to have fallen down in 1607, and to have been rebuilt in 1608-1620, but probably the damage done was not so extensive as the words would seem to imply.

The tower is a good specimen of late Decorated work, and at one time has had wall arcading on the north and south sides; the buttresses are well designed, and terminate in bold pinnacles above the parapet, the whole producing a very pleasing effect.

The Church was restored in 1869 and in 1876, on the latter occasion under Sir A. W. Blomfield. We have touched lightly on these two churches at Huntingdon because they are worthy of a much more detailed description than we have now room for, and we prefer, therefore, to leave them for the future.

Having seen also the Hospital of St. John¹ and the unusually fine mediæval bridge, the party proceeded to Hinchingbrooke House.¹

The next place visited was Wyton Church (All Saints), which, although it has been almost entirely rebuilt, still retains an E.E. arcade of four bays, having clustered columns with good caps and bases, and well moulded arches, while the north door has some good early ironwork. The Church was rebuilt in 1846 and again restored in 1866; the tower which was previously of wood was rebuilt in brick in the former year and the three stone gargoyles now built into the north aisle wall belong to this tower; in 1866, it was again rebuilt, this time in stone, but it is so small that there is no room to hang the bells properly and they cannot be rung.

St. Ives (All Saints) the next Church visited is finely situated on the north bank of the Ouse; it is chiefly of Perpendicular date and has an elegant tower and spire at the west end. Some small portions of the thirteenth century Church remain, and the east window of the south aisle is a fine Decorated five-light.²

The site of St. Ives Priory is at the opposite end of the town,

1. The Hospital of St. John is described in the Transactions, Vol. I, p. 419; and Hinchingbrooke House in Vol. II, pp. 165 and 166.

2. For a detailed description of St. Ives Church see The Transactions, Vol. I, pp. 100-104.

but only a barn and a dove-cot now remain. The Priory Church was built by Ædnoth, Abbot of Ramsey, circa 1016, and it, together with the other buildings of the Priory, was burnt in 1207, the Church being re-dedicated, after rebuilding, in 1238. In the Cartulary of Ramsey Abbey, throughout the entire mediæval period, there is a constant reference to the *parish* Church of St. Ives, sometimes in a very marked manner, and we cannot but think that this, especially in view of the relative situations of the parish Church and the Priory, proves conclusively that there were two churches and not only one as has been sometimes thought. And this is still further confirmed by the fact that the Incumbent is a Vicar; Domesday Book seems to mention two churches at St. Ives (no doubt St. Ives and one of the Hursts), and the probability is that the Church was in existence even before the manor was given to Ramsey Abbey, and almost certainly before St. Ives Priory was founded. No doubt the Priory Church was destroyed at the Dissolution of the Monasteries.

After paying a hasty visit to the ancient bridge with its fragment of a bridge chapel (dedicated to St. Leodgarius) the party adjourned to the Golden Lion Hotel for Luncheon, after which they proceeded to Warboys, passing on the way the curious old stone locally known as the Abbot's Chair; it is in the form of a rude arm-chair, and stands in the grass on the side of the road. Probably it is the stone that marked the meeting place of the Hundred Court, but it is hardly large enough ever to have been used as a "chair."

The Churches of Warboys and Bury have both been fully described in our pages already,¹ and we must not stop to describe them again.

The last place visited was Ramsey, and here the party visited first the Parish Church, and secondly Ramsey Abbey, and for an excellent description of the former the reader is referred to Rev. R. Black's paper in the first Volume of our Transactions.²

The Church is a very fine specimen of the Transitional period, with a well elevated sanctuary. The windows are chiefly insertions of Decorated and Perpendicular date, and the tower is a patch-work erection built in 1671 with stones from the Abbey, but presenting a bold and sturdy appearance, much better than might be expected from its date.

After partaking of tea on the vicarge lawn, by kind invitation of the Rev. and Mrs. Pawley-Smith, the party made their way to the Abbey.

Of the monastic buildings considerable portions remain incorporated into Lord de Ramsey's mansion, notably the fine E.E. crypt or undercroft of the Refectory, and the outer walls and buttresses of the Refectory itself which rise to a considerable height at the east end of the house. The building of this Refectory was begun in the time of Abbot Hugh de Sulgrave, (1254-1267), and it was first used in 1276, in the time of Abbot

1. See The Transactions, Vol. I, pp. 309-318, 403-418, 420 and 423.
2. Transactions, Vol. I, pp. 319-326; also pp. 421-423.

William de Gurmecester, (1267-1285). All the walls of the crypt are enriched with wall arcading of well moulded trefoiled arches on circular shafts with good caps and bases, but now much mutilated. This Abbot, William de Gurmecester, also built the Abbot's Hall, and a gate in the west side of the court.

What are thought to be the foundations of the south wall of the south aisle of the Abbey Church, were found a few years ago just on the line of the south edge of the garden path, which runs on the south side of the house, at its western end. The Ramsey Cartulary gives an interesting description of the building of this Church which had a central tower on four arches, and another tower (which contained the bells) at the west end; the foundations were laid in 969, and the church was consecrated in 974. But between 980 and 991 the principal tower cracked from top to bottom, owing to insufficient foundations, and had to be taken down and rebuilt, and the restored church was re-consecrated in 991. Abbot Reginald (1114-1130), began to build a new Church, into which the convent went after seven years, i.e., 1123. Abbot Walter, in the last year of King Stephen's reign, again rebuilt the great tower of the Church.

Abbot Simon de Eye (1316-1342), commenced to rebuild the Presbytery of the Church in 1330, and was buried in the new building on the left side of the altar; probably the "*three great Buttresses in the Este ende of the Chauncell and of the north side,*" which the Bursar of Trinity College, Cambridge, purchased in 1555, were part of Simon de Eye's work.

The stones of this once great Abbey were used, after the Dissolution of the Monasteries, to build the Colleges of Gonville and Caius, King's, and Trinity at Cambridge; and the towers of the parish Churches of Ramsey and Godmanchester, while the miserere stalls, now in Over Church, are also said to have come from here. In the present house, however, is still preserved the monumental effigy of the founder, Duke Ailwyn.

At the Dissolution the Abbey became the property of the Cromwells who converted it into a residence, and it passed by sale from their family to Colonel Silas Titus, and upon the death of his daughter and heiress it was purchased, in 1730, by Mr. Coulson Fellows, ancestor of the present owner, Lord de Ramsey.

The modern parts of the house were built, from designs by Blore, in 1839, which date is on the north front.

The Abbey gateway is a pretty and rather rich specimen of Perpendicular architecture.

Amongst those who attended this excursion were, of the visiting Society: Revs. A. F. Sutton, R. S. G. Cole, A. Pulteney, J. A. Penny, J. Dolphin, K. Kirk and Canon Madan; Messrs. W. H. St. John Hope, W. H. M. Ellis; Mrs Mansel Sympson, Miss Nash and Miss Hutton. Of our Society: Revs. A. G. Cane, J. G. Cheshire, G. E. Sharland, W. M. Noble, A. C. T. James; Messrs. S. Inskip Ladds, E. L. Watts, W. Emery, C. Whympier; Mrs. Sharland, Miss May Ladds, and others.

Contents of Part 2, Vol. 3

Papers

	PAGE
I. GREAT STAUGHTON, TOWNSHIP, CHURCH, &c., by <i>Rev. H. G. Watson</i>	33
II. WISBECH PARISH CHURCH, by <i>F. Burdett Ward,</i> <i>Esq., M.S.A.</i>	43
III. INCUMBENTS OF THE COUNTY OF HUNTINGDON, by <i>Rev. W. M. Noble</i>	50
IV. PROCEEDINGS OF THE SOCIETY, by <i>S. Inskip Ladds,</i> <i>Esq., A.R.I.B.A.</i>	57