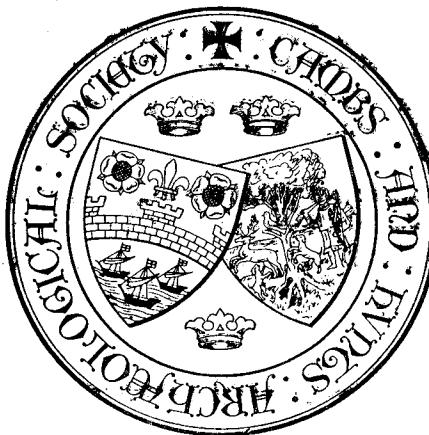


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EDITED BY THE REV. E. H. VIGERS, M.A.
RECTOR OF ABBOTS RIPTON WITH LITTLE STUKELEY, HUNTS.

Fig

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EARITH HERMITAGE (HADDENHAM PARISH).

BY S. INSKIP LADDS.

Until recently a large square house stood near the eastern end of Earith bridge, on the corner site bounded on the north by the road to Haddenham and on the west by the road to Willingham.

This house was known as Hermitage House; it was apparently of early 19th century date, and had thin walls, sash windows, and a generally poor appearance, but it was locally credited with underground passages and such tales as frequently attach to old buildings.

In July, 1939, this house was pulled down and its site absorbed in road improvements. It was then found that under a part of the house there was a cellar of much more ancient date. This cellar was about 14 feet long by 11 feet wide, but the northern end had, perhaps, been cut off, for the wall there was not bonded to the side walls. The side walls were of stone and obviously of mediæval date. In the east wall were the inner jambs of a window. The floor was about 6 ft. 8 ins. below the wooden floor of the house above.

The front or northern end and the western side were very near to the approaches to the bridge, and here the ground had been raised considerably, but towards the S.E. it was very much lower, and little, if anything, above the water in the river, and, doubtless, what had become a cellar was originally a building standing above ground.

It is not unreasonable to think that we have here a part, and possibly the greater part, of the Hermit's cell.

Although the modern house has been pulled down, the ancient cellar has not been destroyed but has been filled up and is now buried beneath the ground.