

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

Cambridge Antiquarian Society,

22 OCTOBER, 1894, TO 29 MAY, 1895,

WITH

Communications

MADE TO THE SOCIETY.

No. XXXVII.

BEING No. 1 OF THE NINTH VOLUME.

(THIRD VOLUME OF THE NEW SERIES.)



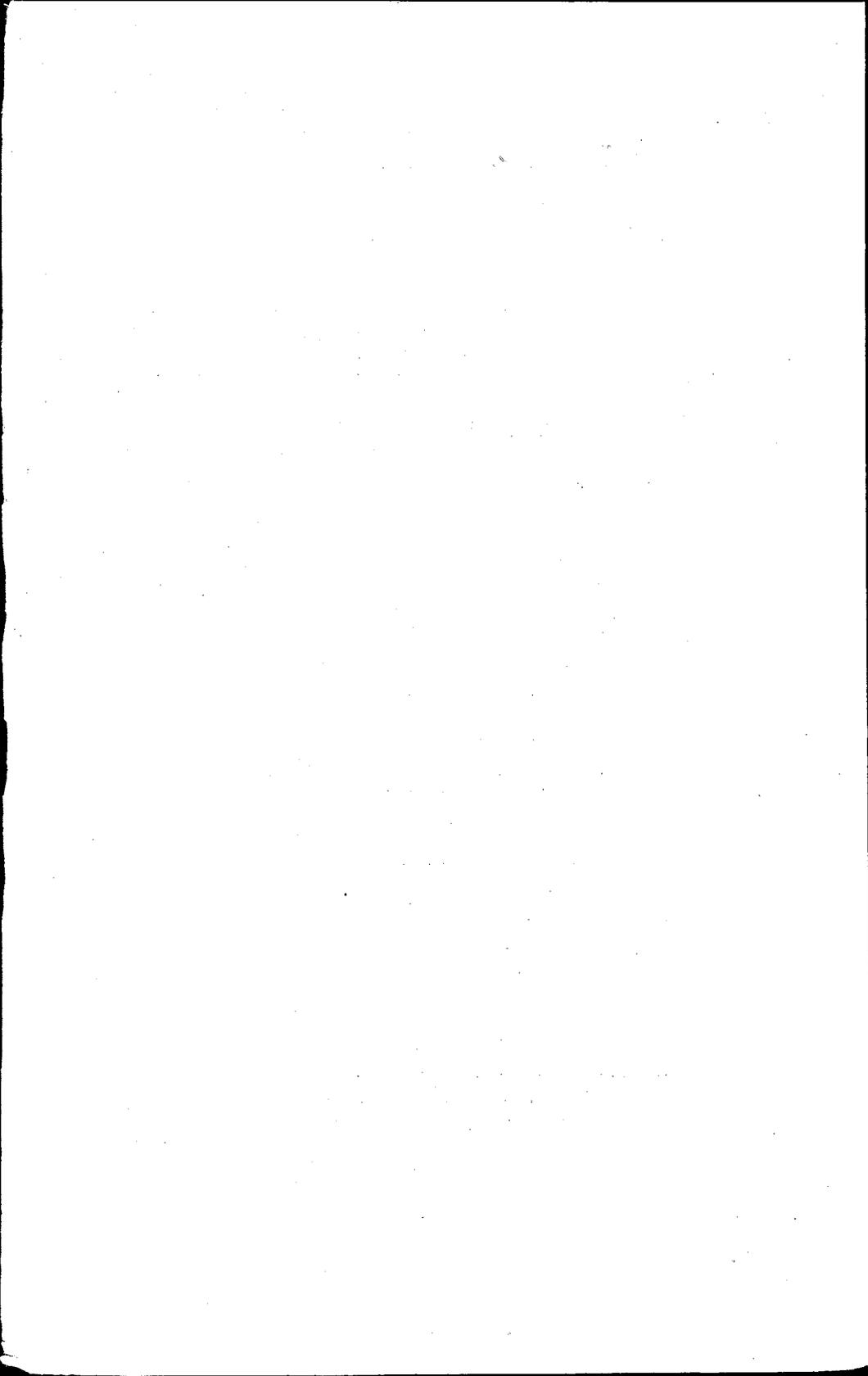
Cambridge:

DEIGHTON, BELL & CO.; MACMILLAN & BOWES.

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1896.

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piece, bearing a coat of arms (*quarterly, first and fourth a fleur-de-lys, second and third bendy of six*) and the motto AVE MARIA GRACIA in Lombardic letters: a coachman's button; perhaps eighteenth century: and a cellar of port-wine!—the latter singular item being a part of the private store of certain convivial authorities of St John's College, who were wont to retire to this field to consume this beverage early in the present century; so at least I have been informed, and I understand that the generation which remembers the field used for such practices is not entirely extinct.

The Secretary, Mr T. D. ATKINSON, made the following communication:

ON A BRIDGE OVER THE KING'S DITCH.

As the King's Ditch was gradually filled up, now at one place then at another, the water which flowed down it was carried off by a brick culvert built in the bed of the ditch. As the water which was formerly turned into the ditch has been entirely or almost entirely diverted, this culvert is generally nearly dry, but it still exists, and thus marks the course of the ditch. Where the ditch was already crossed by a bridge it would, of course, be unnecessary to fill it up, and the archway of the bridge would serve for the conveyance of the water. Such a bridge existed at the point where Jesus Lane, called in old times 'Nuns' Lane,' crossed the ditch. It is shewn in Lyne's map made in 1574, and it is mentioned in the accounts of the Town Treasurers for the year 1489—90, in which the following item occurs: "*Pro operatione Thome Pott in le vought sub venella voc. le Nunnes lane vij.s.*"¹

This bridge was discovered on 15th October, 1894, during the rebuilding of the Friends' Meeting House at the corner of Jesus Lane and Park Street.

The width of the bridge from side to side is 32 feet, answering to the width of Jesus Lane, and the span is 4 ft. 6 ins. The

¹ See a letter by Mr Arthur Gray in the *Cambridge Chronicle* of 26 Oct. 1894.

arch is semicircular and rises 2 ft. 3 ins. It springs from walls 2 ft. 9 ins. high, so that the total height from the top of the accumulation of mud under the bridge to the crown of the arch is about 5 feet. This mud appears to be about one foot deep with a hard bed of some other material below it. The soffit of the crown of the arch is about 3 ft. 6 ins. below the level of Jesus Lane. The walls from which the arch springs are of freestone (not clunch), 1 ft. 9 ins. thick; that on the west side and perhaps the other also, being backed with concrete to form an abutment. They are very well built, in regular courses of ashlar about one foot high; the stones are long, carefully squared, and laid with fine beds and joints. These walls continue for the whole width of the bridge. The courses are interrupted by two straight joints at distances of 3 ft. and 9 ft. 9 ins. respectively from the south side. The latter of these breaks occurs at the point where the axis of the arch makes a slight bend. I did not notice any bend at the other joint. The straight joints occur in both walls; I believe that they continued round the arch, but of this I am not quite certain¹. The levels of the courses are kept for the whole length of the walls, they do not alter at the straight joints. These latter would appear to have been formed simply as an easy way of making the bend in the direction of the axis of the arch. The arch is semicircular, about 14 ins. deep and of six voussoirs, the masonry being of similar character to that of the walls. It has been broken through in one place on the west side (near the north end), where a sewer running down Jesus Lane empties into the space under the bridge. The arch is slightly broken away at the south end; at the north end the stonework stops 4 ft. 6 ins. short of the end of the stone walls, and the arch is continued in brickwork. The space over the arch, visible at the south end, is filled with concrete or rubble masonry, but stones appear to be roughly placed as voussoirs to form a relieving arch.

¹ I must apologize for the want of precision in my observations. My excuse must be that they were made under some difficulties in a sort of sewer.

The brick culvert which continues approximately in the line of the arch of the bridge, runs in a northerly direction under Park Street, and in a southerly direction under the grounds of Sidney Sussex College towards the corner of King Street and Hobson Street, from which point it runs under Hobson Street towards the Post-office. In the section under Sidney Sussex gardens the bottom of the culvert is about 2 feet above the level of the mud under the bridge. The whole culvert is built of brick, in English bond, the bottom flat, the walls vertical, and the arch semicircular; the width is about 2 feet and the height about 4 feet. At the junction of the brick culvert and the bridge there remain the stumps of two posts which evidently formed part of a sluice gate. Several sluices with lifting doors are shewn by Loggan in the various ditches connected with the King's Ditch, and were no doubt for the purpose of emptying and flushing the ditches. The culvert under Park Street has been altered at its junction with the bridge since its first construction, and was some time since partly destroyed, its place being supplied by a brick barrel drain at a lower level.

Further exploration is necessary before we can judge of the real character of this bridge. The small span of the arch (4 ft. 6 ins.) would seem to indicate either that there was another and wider arch beyond this one, or that part of the bridge was made to draw up, or that the present bridge was built at some time after the ditch had been abandoned as a defence, and when all that was required was an arch sufficiently wide to allow free passage for the water.

WEDNESDAY, *January 30*, 1895.

W. M. FAWCETT, M.A., F.S.A., President, in the Chair.

A General Meeting was held, by kind permission of the Master, in the Hall of Jesus College.

The Secretary, Mr T. D. ATKINSON, made a communication :
On the Conventual Buildings of the Priory of St Rhadegund.
This communication will appear in a separate octavo publication.

The members were afterwards conducted over the Chapel, and the positions of other monastic buildings were pointed out. The party was then hospitably entertained at tea in the Lodge by Mrs Morgan. The President proposed a vote of thanks to the Master and Fellows of the College and to Mrs Morgan. This was carried unanimously, and concluded the proceedings.

MONDAY, *February 18*, 1895.

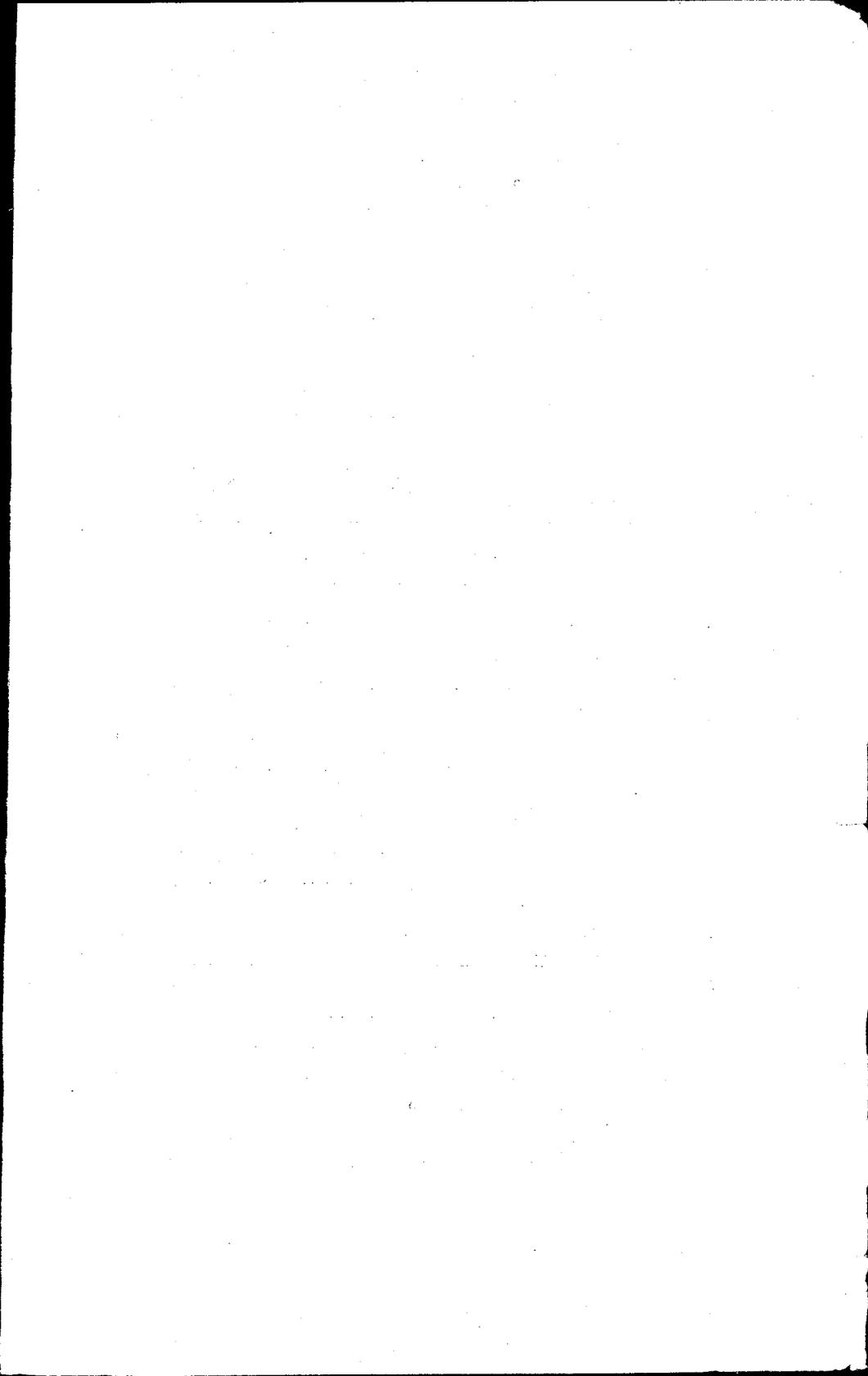
W. M. FAWCETT, M.A., F.S.A., President, in the Chair.

The election of the following members was announced.
Walter Gardiner, M.A., F.R.S., Clare College, Rev. Thomas Alexander Lacey, Madingley Rectory, Rev. Edmund Gill Swain, M.A., King's College, Karl Hermann Breul, M.A., King's College, Rev. Henry James Carter, M.A., Duxford Rectory, Mrs Francis Marshall, 20, Brookside, Hugh John Marshall, B.A., Corpus College, Rev. Salisbury James Murray Price, St Ives, Rev. Henry Paine Stokes, LL.M., St Paul's Vicarage.

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