

PROCEEDINGS

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WITH

Communications

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Monday, 2 March, 1908.

J. W. CLARK, M.A., in the chair.

A paper was read by W. D. CARÖE, M.A.,

ON THE PART OF KING'S HALL LATELY RESTORED
TO TRINITY COLLEGE¹.

Monday, 9 March, 1908.

Dr VENN, President, in the chair.

OPEN MEETING.

Professor HUGHES exhibited and described a number of objects of antiquarian interest, of which the following were the chief:

(a) A collection of potsherds and other objects found in the course of excavations on the south side of Regent Street, near the entrance to Downing College. Professor Hughes pointed out that this site was on the edge of the higher terrace of gravel, where it fell to the lower level of the grounds of Downing College. The pottery ranged through the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries. He called special attention to a small earthenware vessel like a flower-pot saucer, seven and a quarter inches in diameter and one inch in height, having within it three concentric partitions similar to the outside rim. Dr Glaisher had suggested to him that it might be a vessel for feeding chickens, the object of the inside rims being to prevent the chicken from getting into the food or water placed in it for them. When visiting the collection of statues, pottery, etc., brought home from Nemi, in the Alban Hills, by Lord Saville, and now in the museum at Nottingham, Professor Hughes

¹ This paper will appear as a Quarto Publication.

noticed a precisely similar vessel, of which he exhibited a photograph, with the difference that the vessel from Nemi was raised on a stand, which would have made it liable to be upset by any bird perching on the edge of it unless the stand part were buried. These Nemi objects belonged to the ancient cult, for which he would refer the Society to that splendid work, *The Golden Bough*, by Dr Frazer, who had pointed out to him that the care of the sacred chicken formed part of the duties of the priests connected with it.

(b) A portion of a brass plate which was probably once attached to the Almshouses founded by Matthew Stokys, and erected about 1585 in Wall's Lane, now King Street.

It was given to me on May 13, 1896, by Mr Gibson, Governor of H.M. Prison, Cambridge.

The plate appears to have been very roughly torn away from the building and the two ends are broken off. The inscription runs thus, the lacunæ being supplied from the copy of the inscription given in Cooper's *Annals*, Vol. II. p. 509, footnote, in which however the word *Servitori* is an obvious misprint for *Salvatori*.

Matthæus Stokys nuper unus armigerorum bedellorum almæ
Universitatis Cantebrie has ædes Christo Salvatori suo et sex
Pauperibus viduis in perpetuum dicavit die xvij^o mensis
Decembris anno domini 1585. Si quis has ædes in alios usus
Transferre attentet anathema sit a Christo. Amen.

which may be thus rendered :

Matthew Stokes, lately one of the Esquire Bedells of his alma mater
The University of Cambridge, has dedicated these houses to Christ
His Saviour, and for six poor widows in perpetuity, on the 17th
Day of December 1585. If any one should attempt to transfer
These houses to any other uses, let him be accursed by Christ. Amen.

Now, if we enquire what is known of such almshouses, we find in Cooper's *Annals* (Vol. II. pp. 508—510) the following extracts :

"On the 16th of November [1591] died Matthew Stokys, Registrary, and one of the Esquire Bedels of the University. By his will dated the 17th of November, 1590, he gave certain messuages &c., &c.....to his son Matthew Stokys,.....He also gave to the Chancellor, Masters, and Scholars

of the University, all those his three almshouses set, lying, and being in Wall's Lane in Cambridge, upon condition that those houses should always remain almshouses, and be called the University almshouses. In which he willed that six poor unmarried and sole women of good fame (without any child or any other person to be permitted to dwell with them) should be always placed at the appointment of the Vice-Chancellor for the time being, so often as by death or any ill demeanour any room should be void or vacant."

By "unmarried" he must have meant not having a husband living as they are elsewhere called widows. The will goes on as follows: "Every poor woman to have made her abode in the town of Cambridge at least six years before she be placed in any of the said houses, unless she came of his stock and line, and such he willed to be preferred and placed before all other, although she had not continued or been in the said town at any time before.

For the better maintenance of the said three poor houses and their inhabitants, and for other causes, he gave to the Chancellor, Masters and Scholars, and their successors, a tenement called the Chequers, in Chesterton, with the lands thereto belonging, held by lease of Richard Brackin, late of Chesterton, Gent. As also his leases of 54 acres of arable land in Chesterton, and two osier holts with certain banks of the river there..... £20 more was to be accumulated from the rents, with which sum he willed the almshouses 'to be reared with bricke and stonne one flore higher vj or vij foote, and so to be well plaunched, and to have convenient windowes one eche side and to have good and easie staires for ould and impotent folke, remembering that it is dedicated to God.'

This being done, 8*d.* a week was to be given to every of the poor women, towards their meat drink and apparel.....7*d.* a week was also to be paid to each of the poor women."

We see that there were two, father and son, of the name Matthew Stokys and that the almshouses must have been built and endowed by the father who died in 1591. Now we find that the site of his house is known (*Arch. Hist.* III. 133, with references to MSS. Cole XLVIII. 243; Add. MSS. Brit. Mus. 5849), that he was Esquire Bedell and Registrar of King's College from 1570 to 1576 (*Ib.* I. 368) and that he put up a brass in King's

Chapel in memory of his brother John who died 17 July 1559 (see Cooper's *Athenæ Cantabrigienses*, I. 198), and further (*Ib.* 589) that, in the window, M. S., *i.e.* Matthew Stokys Esquire Bedell who died 16 November 1591, is commemorated (see *Ath. Cant.* II. 109). The arms of Stokys are described (p. 588) as Argent on a bend engrailed sable three dolphins embowed or; and (p. 589) the following note occurs: "The crest afterwards used by the family of Stokes, viz. a hand or, habited argent, holding barwise a bedell's staff of the first, is here blended with the arms in a very curious way; the hand and arm occupying the sinister chief, while the staff passes behind the bend palewise, and projects above and below the shield."

These notes may help to identify traces of the old almshouses, the site of which does not appear to be exactly known.

The Rev. H. P. STOKES, L.L.D., has supplied the following notes on Stokys' almshouses.

The income supporting the almshouses, which was derived from some property in Chesterton, having failed, and the three houses being dilapidated; they were (with the consent of the Charity Commissioners), in 1861, ordered to be sold and the proceeds handed over to the Trustees of the St Eligius and St Anthony Almshouses (now) in Panton Street.

The following is from the notice issued by Messrs Wentworth and Son, who sold the property: [in King Street, formerly Wall Street.] "A Substantial Double Messuage or Tenement, with numerous rooms, and small yard at the back, possessing a frontage next King Street (nearly opposite Malcolm Street) of about 40 feet, forming a desirable site for the erection of two respectable houses."

The property varied in depth from 31 to 38 feet. The property was bought by Mr Wm. Attack, builder, for 107 guineas.

Mr Attack pulled the Almshouses down, and erected in their place three houses, *now* numbered

- (King Street) 18. Mr Peak.
- 20. Mrs Smoothy.
- 22. Mrs Bye.

Mr Attack used certain doors, etc., from the Almshouses, in the construction of the new houses.

Mrs Smoothy, who has lived in No. 20 (formerly No. 13) since its re-erection in 1861, remembers the old Almshouses well. The old lady says there were three of them, with windows on each side of the entrance doors, and with in each case a set of rooms downstairs and upstairs—for the six inmates. She does not think "the good and easy stairs" were specially

noticeable. She says, in entering the first house you went down one step, in the second, two steps, and the third, three steps. This sloping of the ground can still be noticed in the back yards. She remembers the brass plate *in situ*.

In the University Registry is a bound volume, giving details of the history of the Trust.

(c) An engraving of some of the old houses on King's Parade.

(d) Two ecclesiastical silver rings, the property of Mr R. F. Green, of Queens' College, on which were depicted (1) the Virgin and Child, (2) St Hubert and the stag.

(e) A bronze spiral finger-ring with beautiful patina, and a fluted paste bead, both found at Hauxton Mill.

(f) Two flat bone discs, three-quarters of an inch in diameter and one-tenth of an inch in thickness, one of them being ornamented with four concentric incised rings. These were two out of a hoard of eighty found in an urn at Mildenhall, Suffolk.

Mr W. B. REDFERN exhibited the following:

A glass wine bottle of the 16th century.

Two finely chased steel tinder pistols.

A pewter-rimmed black jack.

Two very fine examples of tongs for lifting embers for lighting churchwarden pipes.

BARON A. VON HÜGEL, the Curator, exhibited a large number of objects recently added to the Museum, including

Four stone implements from King's Lane.

A Roman urn from Denton, Lincolnshire.

Four decorated Saxon urns from Cambridgeshire.

A rush-light stand from Milton, Cambridgeshire.

Four pieces of ancient Colombian pottery.

An interesting example of 'spear-money' from the Congo.

Two Kasai flasks and four vessels carved in wood.

An example of the Tahitian God "*Oro*" (God of War), and of the Mangaian God, "*Tangia*"; the latter was brought to England by the Rev. John Williams, of the London Missionary Society, and presented to the Museum by the President, Dr Venn.

Miss PARSONS showed a tinder pouch from Thibet.

Mr E. T. ADAMS showed, and described the working of, a ring dial, from which time can be told in any part of the world, provided the solar declination is known.

Dr HADDON produced an interesting collection of amulets from Cairo, Italy and Germany. He also showed a piece of bone in the shape of Thor's Hammer. It is a curious coincidence that the Whitby and Isle of Man fishermen and the Berlin slaughterers wore this amulet next their skin as a charm against danger. The Reverend F. G. Walker stated that five and twenty years ago he had seen the same charm worn by fishermen in Mount's Bay in Cornwall. At that time the Cornish boats used to sail both to the Isle of Man and to Whitby for the summer herring fishing.

The Reverend F. G. WALKER exhibited the following objects :

- (a) An iron boat-hook recently dug up near the river front of Trinity College, and lent by the Junior Bursar, Mr J. W. Capstick. This was of the shape in use about 1750, when, and until about 60 years ago, the barges from Lynn were poled up the 'Backs' from Magdalene Bridge to the Mill Pool by Queens' College.
- (b) Three pairs of gloves belonging to a child of 50 years ago. These were of most beautiful and dainty manufacture.
- (c) An early example of a carpenter's bit and brace from Hyde, Winchester.
- (d) Two broad sheets issued about 1770-80, purporting to be a letter written by our Lord Jesus Christ, signed by the angel Gabriel, guaranteeing health and prosperity to the possessor.

These were found this year in a cottage at Lolworth.

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