

## EXCURSIONS, 1940.

## 1st EXCURSION—22ND MAY.

## TUTBURY AND ROLLESTON.

The party assembled in Tutbury Church, Mr. F. Williamson, F.R.Hist.S., being the organiser and expositor for the day.

Mr. Williamson opened by pointing out that Tutbury as a place-name combined a personal name with "borough," and had nothing to do with the "Toots" or look-outs familiar in the guide books. At the Conquest it was allocated to Hugh d'Avranches, "The Wolf," in 1070 created Earl of Chester when Henry de Ferrars succeeded. Henry and his wife founded the Priory, but this was not mentioned in the Domesday record for Tutbury, but a reference in the same records for Marston-on-Dove and Doveridge showed its existence and possession of those manors. Any buildings of the priory and its church of this period had not survived, and he concluded what remained were of c. 1170. At the Dissolution of the monasteries Sir William Cavendish acquired the site and buildings, destroying the latter and with the material building himself a mansion there. The famous ornate west front, with its noble doorway of which the second of the seven orders was alabaster, probably its earliest use in ecclesiastic work, and the equally beautiful surmounting window were pointed out, as well as the south doorway with its quaint boars' hunt on the lintel. The "restorations" (1829, 1867-8 and 1936-7) were noted, the latter being by a member of the society, Mr. T. H. Thorpe, F.R.I.B.A., who by removing the old raised flooring of 1829 has restored the fine dignity of the splendid piers.

Mr. W. H. Walton pointed out that there were traces at the end of the south aisle of the old transepts of the crossing and that Sir William St. John Hope, F.S.A., and Mr. John Bilson, F.S.A., at the visit of the Royal Archaeological Institute in 1914, judging by style alone, had given dates of c. 1125 for the earliest work surviving presumably responds from this transept, with c. 1150-60 for the western portion. Sir William had also considered it a good example of a divided church, the eastern portion exclusively devoted to the priory, the nave—which survived in consequence—to the parishioners.

General Meynell thanked Mr. Williamson for his detailed study and after a brief glance round the exterior in the rain the company adjourned to the castle, where, under cover, preceding tea, Mr. Williamson gave a brief history of Norman castle building, mainly earthenbanks, timber and protecting ditches, and the present remains. He traced the building through the lordship of the first two Henrys to the Robert, son of Robert the first Earl of Derby, who offended Henry II by supporting his rebel son Prince Henry and so temporarily lost Tutbury, which the King destroyed, no doubt still a structure of timber and earthwork. Probably under John the second William rebuilt it (after its return to the family) and so it remained until lost by the last earl Robert with almost all his possessions and title in 1266, when they were conferred on the King's second son Edmund Crouchback. His son lost them again (1322) and they remained derelict until rebuilt by John O'Gaunt in 1361 as a palace for his second wife, whom he claimed to be rightful Queen of Spain. The great gateway is said to be his work (surfaced only on a late Norman predecessor) and the tower and hall—really nearly a century later. Mary Stewart's incarceration here (1569-72 and 1585) were described and the Royalist occupation (1642-46).

Mr. Walton believed the "Classic" front of what is now the farm was of Charles I days.

After tea a return was made by Rolleston, a fine church (beautifully restored), with Rolleston and Mosley monuments, including an incised slab (1407) and some old glass. It was visited specially for an early very worn cross of the Wheel Head type frequent in Irish, Scottish and Welsh regions, but rare in essential England. Variouslly dated from the 10th to 12th century, most of the shaft missing, it probably stood eight or nine feet high originally. It was found forming part of the porch floor at nearby Tatenhall church. Mr. Walton told what little was known of it. Here ended an interesting excursion rather damped by the rain.

#### 2ND EXCURSION—7TH SEPTEMBER.

##### DETHICK AND WIRKSWORTH.

The second and last excursion of the season was organised by the Rev. W. M. Leeke, and his admirable arrangements were much appreciated.

The church and hall at Dethick were first visited, followed by an examination of the fragmentary bridge-chapel at Cromford and the church and barmoot hall at Wirksworth. The drive out amid the river and richly timbered hill scenery of the Low Peak gave a delightful prelude to the interesting antiquarian studies.

At Dethick the company was received by the Provost-Emeritus, the Very Rev. H. Ham, who gave an exceptionally fresh and detailed address embodying some of his own examinations of original MSS. on the families, history and structures of hall and church, most widely known as the home of the prime mover in the abortive Babington plot to replace Queen Elizabeth by Mary Stewart.

Dethick, said Canon Ham, was an ancient manor in the parish of Ashover which comes into the light of history in 1228, when the de Dethick of the day obtained permission to appoint a chaplain to celebrate the holy offices and

shortly after, say 1230, it is assumed the chapel was erected. Now this was not a chapel-of-ease for Ashover, but the private chapel of the de Dethick manor, and so it remained until 1903, though unsuccessful claims were made for its subordination to Ashover in the 18th century. Documents state it was "founded" in 1279, which is assumed to be the date of completion of the endowment. Shortly before 1431 Geoffrey de Dethick died, his only son and heir having previously perished in battle and the manor passed by his heiress and daughter to her husband, Thomas Babington, of a Notts. family. From him followed Sir Anthony Babington, who died in 1544, the great grandfather of the more famous—or notorious—Anthony of the Babington conspiracy. This elder Anthony built the graceful tower of the chapel or church which bears the date 1532, and at the same time very materially reconditioned the whole structure, raising the walls a stage higher with clerestory lights and inserting contemporary windows in the lower walling. The body is a simple aisleless parallelogram, with no structural separation of chancel and nave, and a plain three-light east window, c. 1300, and surviving lancet windows presumably from the original building. There were a piscina and aumbry, doorways north and south, the former now built up, and the tower arch is very narrow to allow for the newel stairs. Externally this tower bears a girdle of shields bearing the family connections and the punning rebus of the family name: baboon (on a) tun—or barrel.

The younger Anthony was born about 1560, was well educated, a devout Romanist, handsome, courtly and a scholar. He had been a page to Mary Stewart at Sheffield and, as is well known, initiated the plot for her release and the assassination of Elizabeth, for which, with others, he was executed with great barbarity in 1586. He realised the danger of his undertaking and willed his property in advance to a younger brother, a spendthrift, who later had to dispose of his holdings, by which they passed to

Wendesley Blackwall, Esq. There must have been, however, some personal property confiscated by the sovereign, for the speaker had found in documents possessed by the present lord of the manor, Mr. Marsden-Smedley, that parcels of land in Dethick Close and Lea had been bestowed by Elizabeth on Sir Walter Raleigh.

The Blackwalls broke the manor into severalties which shortly after the mid-seventeenth century were acquired by Samuel Hallows of a Dronfield family, who a little later married the heiress of Glapwell, and with the Hallows, Dethick remained into Victorian times.

Summing up, the Provost-Emeritus said the family histories might be roughly comprised in three periods of two centuries each from 1228, de Dethicks, Babingtons (Blackwalls) and Hallows with a Victorian and present day appendix during which in 1903 the present owner, Mr. Marsden-Smedley, had in conjunction with the local families brought about the joint parish of Dethick Lea and Holloway, now locally served by the beautiful little church.

The picturesque structural group of the old hall and "offices" of which the great hall fireplace and chimney, probably late fifteenth century, survive was described and the company then conducted over it by Mr. Marsden-Smedley, after which the bridge-chapel at Cromford was visited under Mr. Percy Currey, who gave what little of its history is known from Edward VI's time—the bell without clapper, the cruet—1703 heraldic glass in windows; 1744, turned into dwelling houses; 1796, dismantled, 1903, dwelling again on site.

And so to Wirksworth, where Mr. Tudor in great detail told the story of the church and manor from the early 8th century onward and finally at the Barmoot Hall showed the original Leadminers' Dish and described it, for details of which interested readers are referred to his articles in the Derbyshire Archaeological Society's *Journal* for 1937, No. LVIII, pp. 95-106. This brought a pleasant day's proceedings to a close.