



The Quarterly Journal

OF THE

Berks Archaeological and Architectural Society.



Excursions of the Society.

DURING the Summer Session the Society has made four Excursions. The first to London was described in our last Journal. The second to Oxford took place on July 25th. About fifty members were present. The programme was an exceedingly full one, and the party were fortunate in having Archdeacon Palmer to describe Christ Church and the Cathedral, and Mr. J. H. Parker to conduct them through the remainder of the Colleges with the exception of Oriel, which was described by the Secretary. After visiting Christ Church the party went to Merton College, which Mr. Parker described as the beginning of Oxford and the University. He gave an interesting account of Walter de Merton, the founder, and the subsequent history of the College. At Oriel College the Society was entertained to luncheon by the Provost, and after luncheon the Secretary gave a history of the College from its foundation in 1324, and enumerated many of the famous men who were associated with Oriel. After visiting the Radcliffe Library and taking a bird's-eye view of the city from the roof, the party visited All Souls, Magdalen, and New College, each of which was graphically described by Mr. Parker. The Society was entertained to tea by the Oxford Architectural Society in the Hall of Trinity College, and then returned to Reading.

The third Excursion of the Season took place on August 15th, when the interesting Churches of Ruscombe, Waltham-St.-Lawrence, Shottesbrook, and White Waltham were visited. The Vicar of Ruscombe, the Rev. J. Henley, and the Librarian described the first-mentioned Church, some portion of which was probably erected in the XIIth century. The Rev. G. Neville, Vicar of Waltham-St.-Lawrence, gave an account of his church, which has been carefully restored, and Mr. Ravenscroft read an exceedingly interesting paper on the history and architecture of Shottesbrook Church. Tea was served at the Village Inn, and after visiting White Waltham and hearing from Mr. Guilding an account of Thomas Hearne, the party returned to Reading.

The fourth Excursion took place on Saturday, September 26th, when Binfield and Warfield were visited. The unfavourable weather and the Oxford Diocesan Conference prevented many from attending. The Librarian gave a description of the different points of interest connected with the church and village, and enumerated several of the illustrious names connected with Binfield. Warfield Church was ably described by the Vicar, the Rev. B. C. Littlewood. An account of this church is contained in the transactions of the Society. It is an extremely interesting church, a fine specimen of the decorated style of architecture. The Church House adjoins the church, and contains an ancient iron chest in which are numerous church documents and a churchwardens' account book dating from 1589. A collection of interesting historical curiosities connected with the later Stuarts was exhibited at the Vicarage, where the Society were kindly entertained to tea by the Vicar and Mrs. Littlewood.

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SEVERAL other Archæological Excursions have been made by learned Societies in our County during the Summer. The British Association for the Advancement of Science met at Oxford in August, and several members visited Silchester, and the exhibition of Silchester relics in the Reading Museum. The Hampshire Field Club also made a similar excursion, when Dr. Stevens described again the various objects he knows so well and has so carefully arranged and classified. The Newbury Field Club held a successful gathering on July 24th, and visited Wittenham and Dorchester; and the Maidenhead and Taplow Field Club and Thames Valley Antiquarian Society journeyed to Wallingford, and inasmuch as the

arrangements were made by Mr. Rutland it is unnecessary to state that they were in every way successful. The Rev. J. E. Field and Mr. Hedges were the conductors of the party, who visited the Castle, St. Leonard's Church, and other places of interest.

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WE have to record the sad and sudden death of Mr. J. Mowat, Fellow and Bursar of Pembroke College, Oxford, whose valuable notes on the Berkshire Domesday were commenced in our last Journal. He was devotedly attached to the study of Archæology and History, and was engaged in making excavations on the site of Roman wall just before his untimely death. One of his last acts was to send to the Editor his MS. of Berkshire Notes, which will be continued in our next Journal.

WAFERING IRONS.—Mr. Walter Money, F.S.A., recently exhibited a pair of wafering irons at a meeting of the Society of Antiquaries, which he had obtained from a blacksmith's shop in Newbury. These were used for impressing the wafers, or gift cakes, provided for Mothering or Mid-Lent Sunday. These offerings at the altars were in their origin voluntary, and became Church property. At length the parish priests compounded with the Church at a certain sum, and these voluntary donations of the people have become the dues now known as Easter offerings, which are still presented to the incumbents of many parishes. It was a general custom for youths and maidens to visit their mothers with a present of wafering cakes on this day, and this was called "going a mothering" (cf. Herrick's Poem). This ancient custom survives in Hampshire, and the wafers are still made by a family named Baverstock at Chilbolton.

NEWBURY.—Mr. Walter Money exhibited before the Society of Antiquaries part of a pilgrim's satchell, or wallet, dredged from the river Kennet at Newbury, of the xiv. century. It is a flat bronze bar, bearing the sacred monogram and the legend AVE MARIA | GACIA PLE^m | A DOMINU | TECUM.

WINCHESTER AND THE CHANNEL ISLANDS.—Mr. Kershaw, F.S.A., Librarian at Lambeth Palace, sends us an interesting paper, read before the British Archæological Association, on the above subject, and refers to the territorial changes of the different dioceses, alluding to the far-extending sway of Lincoln, and the inclusion of Berks in that of Salisbury. He states that "in Sarum diocese was once a bishopric called Ramsbury, and the bishops were called *Episcopi Sunningensis*, and had an estate at Sonning in Berks, and quite recently the Prelate of Salisbury had a residence there. This little See of Ramsbury (within the larger one of Sarum) included, in the 10th century, such portions of Wilts and Berks as were at that time in the territory of the West Saxons; and during the 160 years' existence of this unique Wiltshire episcopate it numbered among its Bishops three who afterwards became Archbishops of Canterbury, viz.: Odo, Siric, and Elfric."