

The St. Peter's font represents the Tree of Life. The support of it is the stem of the tree, a serpent with an apple in his mouth twines around it, and on each side stand figures of Adam and Eve, these figures are about one-third the height of the font.

The bowl is carved with foliage and fruit, as is also the cover, both together representing the head of an apple tree.

The cover is suspended from a pulley by a rope, the weight being in the form of an angel, who appears to be floating above the font.

The present modern font in St. Peter's in the East was, I believe, erected about the year 1856 ; but, a portion of the original Norman font, probably of the same date as the carving of the south porch, is still preserved in the window of the south porch. It was circular in form, and carved with figures of the apostles, and ornamented with the distinctive Norman zigzag pattern.

St. James the Less, with his Fuller's club, may still be traced on the fragment.

An engraving of the Norman font is given in one of the early volumes of the *Archæologia*.

---

## Proceedings of Societies.

---

BERKS ARCHÆOLOGICAL SOCIETY.—An afternoon Meeting was held in the Abbey Gate, Reading, on July 1st, under the chairmanship of Mr. Charles Smith, Vice-President, and was attended by the Rev. J. M. Guilding (Hon. Treasurer), the Rev. P. H. Ditchfield (Hon. Secretary), the Revs. Alan Cheales, T. Flook and J. J. Goadby, Mrs. C. Smith and Miss Smith, Miss Pigott, the Misses Jackson, Mrs. Suffield, Miss Dowsett, Miss Righton, Miss Bird, Miss Strong, Miss Williams, Mr. W. M. Childs, Miss Pollard, Mrs. Ryan, Mr. Ernest Wright (Assistant Secretary), &c. Formal business having been transacted, the Chairman said that, the Queen being their Patron, it was thought desirable that the Society should send an address to Her Majesty, and called on Mr. Ditchfield to read the draft which he had prepared.—The Rev. P. H. Ditchfield read the address, and moved a resolution to the effect that it be

suitably engrossed, signed by the President, and forwarded to the Queen.—The Rev. A. Cheales seconded the resolution, which, after a few words from the Chairman in support, was carried unanimously.—The address was in the following terms :—

To the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty.

May it please your Majesty,—We, the Members of the Berks Archaeological Society, which your Majesty has honoured with your patronage, specially founded nearly 60 years ago for the study of the historical associations of the Royal County of Berks, feel it our duty to convey to your Majesty an expression of loyal attachment to your person and fervent congratulations upon your attaining the 60th year of your reign, a period which has never been equalled in the annals of England by any of your Majesty's predecessors. From the days of King Alfred Berkshire has been the home of many English Monarchs, and has shared in the joys and sorrows of the Royal House; its inhabitants have ever shown their loyalty and attachment to the Throne of England. As students of English history, and especially of the records of the Royal County, we rejoice to think that after the lapse of eight centuries since Berkshire became a Royal residence, the English Monarchy was never more firmly established in the affections of the English people. We desire to record our thankfulness to Almighty God that your Majesty has been so long permitted by His Providence to reign over us, whose wise rule has been the source of so many blessings to your subjects. During your Majesty's reign, in addition to the vast material progress of our country, the expansion of the Empire, the growth of trade and commerce, the spread of education, and the diminution of crime, there has been great progress of wisdom and knowledge, and especially in the Department of History and Archæology, with which study we are more especially concerned. The encouragement which your Majesty is ever pleased to give to all literary undertakings, and the interest you have manifested in all historical research, have greatly assisted us in our work. We pray that your Majesty's reign may be prolonged by the Providence of God for many years to come, and that every blessing and happiness may be yours in the home of your Majesty's ancient and illustrious House.

(Signed)

GEORGE RUSSELL, *President.*

P. H. DITCHFIELD, *Hon. Secretary.*

J. M. GUILDING, *Hon. Treasurer.*

Owing to the heat of the afternoon, an adjournment was then made to the garden of St. Lawrence's Vicarage, adjoining the Abbey Gate, and here Mr. W. M. Childs, Lecturer on History and Literature at the University Extension College, Reading, gave a Paper—or rather an address with notes—on “England under Five Queens Regnant.” He dealt very ably with the principles of the constitutional monarchy, and carefully analysed the careers, as they bore on constitutional politics, of the five English Queens who had sat on the Throne in their own right—Mary Tudor, Elizabeth, Mary the second, Anne, and Victoria. In conclusion, Mr. Childs contrasted

the characters and statecraft of Elizabeth and the present monarch. A vote of thanks to Mr. Childs was heartily passed on the proposition of the Rev. J. M. Guilding, seconded by the Rev. J. J. Goadby. Afterwards the party took afternoon tea in the Vicarage garden.

The following reply to the Address of the Berks Society has been received from the Home Secretary :—

WHITEHALL,

*4th October, 1897.*

SIR,

I have had the honour to lay before the Queen the loyal and dutiful Address of the Berkshire Archæological Society on the occasion of the Sixtieth Year of Her Reign, and I have to inform you that Her Majesty was pleased to receive the same very graciously.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient Servant,

Sir George Russell, Bart., M.P.,

M. RIDLEY.

Milstead Manor, Sittingbourne.

\* \*

On account of various reasons the excursion to Chequers Court and Hampden House, arranged for the end of July, had to be abandoned. On September 29th, the Society will unite with the Reading Literary and Scientific Society, and visit Silchester.

\* \*

NEWBURY FIELD CLUB.—This Club visited Padworth, Upton Court, Bramley, Silchester, and Aldermaston, on July 26th, and in spite of the heavy storm had a most successful excursion. It was organised by the secretary, Mr. G. J. Watts, and the party was fortunate in having Mr. Keyser to describe several of the places visited. The first halt was made at Padworth, which possesses one of the most beautiful little Norman Churches in the country. It is dedicated either to St. John the Baptist or St. Nicholas (it is not certain which), and was restored in 1890. Little is known of the history of the place, but what there was concentrated round three families. The earliest records of the Lords of the Manor were of the Courdray family, 1475, but probably they held it much earlier. Their tenure obliged them to supply a sailor to manage the ropes of the vessel in which the Queen of England for the time being went to Normandy each year, and therefore the mural painting of St. Nicholas, which had been discovered might have some connection with this tenure. The Brightwells were the next family to succeed to the manor, and they were followed in 1700 by the Griffith family,

a lady which brought it to the Darbys, the latter combining the name Darby-Griffith, which had been so long and honourably known in the parish. Nothing was known as to when the Church was built. The chancel arch was a fine specimen of Norman work, and was not later than the year 1120. The carving on the capitals of the arch was also very elaborate. The two doorways were very fine for a small country church. The west window was of Norman date, and the east window had been discovered during the restoration. There could be seen a fine painting of the Crucifixion over the east window, and no less than five consecration crosses were plainly visible. In ancient days, when building a church, it was customary to place three of these crosses on each wall of the edifice. The roof had been well restored in wagon design, and the piscina was also a good specimen. The original altar slab is also preserved here, and some interesting tiles are to be found in the chancel floor. The style of architecture in this church, as in many other country churches, was no doubt largely influenced by the building of Reading Abbey, which was proceeding at about the same period. There are numerous commemorative brasses to the Darby-Griffith family, and in the eastern lights are stained-glass windows to the Rev. W. Butler, who was for ten years Vicar of Padworth, and died in 1890; his widow, who died in the same year, a few months later; the Rev. C. J. Butler, who died in 1873; Lucinda Louisa and Fanny Isabella, daughters of George Darby-Griffith, who died, the former in 1841, in Ceylon, and the latter two years subsequently, at Naples.

The exceedingly interesting old house, Ufton Court, which not so long ago was literally fallen into ruins, was next visited, by the courtesy of Captain and Miss Sharp. It exhibits three distinct styles of architecture. The Gothic was shown in the kitchen and buttery, the Elizabethan in the porch, hall, and dining room, while in other portions Queen Anne architecture was visible. The chimneys are an important feature, being nicely placed in the angles of the roof. The triangular leaden shields with the letters "F. P." and the date 1664 are noticeable, the initials being those of Francis Perkins, whose family lived there for many generations. Among the interior curiosities are the lady's bower, above the porch, the priest's room, the numerous hiding places, "bolt-holes," concealed chambers, and the like which abound throughout the house, and which were constructed in the days when the Roman Catholic faith was not tolerated in this country, owing to the persecution to which its adherents were subjected. The whole history of the place has been

so well written by Miss Sharp, in her book, that a repetition of the many attractions which the old house presents seems to be almost uncalled for.

At Bramley, there is a very good example of the small Norman manor house, and the Church dates from the year 1220. The Brocas, of Beaurepeare Park, were the Lords of the Manor of Bramley, and in the Church the Beaurepeare aisle on the south side contains a splendid marble monument, by Banks, of some members of that family in the year 1777. The Church, as the date already mentioned proclaims, is mainly of Norman construction, the nave, chancel and windows all dating from that period. There was formerly a perpendicular window, date Edward IV., in the south wall, but this has now been blocked by the heating apparatus of the Church. Chief interest here centres, however, on the excellent mural paintings, which were discovered in 1874, the earliest date of these being the 13th century. The principal picture is one above the south window, depicting the martyrdom of Thomas á Becket, which has, unfortunately, become somewhat obliterated. There is also a very fine representation of St. Christopher carrying the infant Saviour as he crosses the ford, while his steps are lighted from the bank by a hermit carrying a lantern. The painting is wonderfully distinct after the lapse of so many years. There is also a very fine consecration cross, much more elaborate than those at Padworth. On the east wall of the Church is a mural painting representing St. James the Greater. The screen is a good specimen of carving. The east window is filled with choice stained glass illustrating sacred subjects, and was placed there in honour of the Jubilee of 1887. The aumbrey is still preserved, and the altar rails came from Hexham, Northumberland, while the brass lamps with which the Church is lighted were brought from Italy by the late Rector. In the Brocas Chapel is some beautifully executed Flemish stained glass, placed there in restored form in 1889, in memory of Henry S. Welch Thornton, whose family are now Lords of the Manor. The glass is divided into small squares, on each of which is cleverly depicted some incident from Bible history. Among these may be mentioned St. John in the Isle of Patmos, engaged in writing the Book of Revelation; Gideon and the fleece; David and Goliath; the Coronation of David; Naamon being cured of his leprosy; the Crucifixion; and the Holy Family in Egypt. There are some subjects which still defy the efforts of antiquaries to decide upon their meaning, and the Rector would be glad to receive solutions

from anyone who may feel disposed to visit the Church. There are a number of smaller objects shown in the window, one of which represents St. Martin dividing his cloak with the beggar. The accounts and registers of the Church date back to 1523 and 1580 respectively, and many interesting items are revealed on their perusal. After visiting Silchester, which was described by Mr. Herbert Jones, F.S.A., the party drove to Aldermaston Court, where they were hospitably entertained by Mr. and Mrs. Keyser. Time prevented a full description of the mansion and Church from being given. The latter was a Norman structure, probably of Henry I.'s time, about 1130. About 100 years afterwards the Church was enlarged to the eastward, but no foundation of an apse could be discovered. Later on it was again enlarged to the westward. The chantry chapel, which was built about the year 1290, had a peculiar story attached to it. It was said not to belong to the Church, but to the Lord of the Manor, who might, if he chose, assert his rights, and close it to the parish. It contains a fine monument to some members of the Forster family, and in the opposite window of the Church are some old coats-of-arms, one of which, dating from 1540, commemorates Sir Humphrey Forster, who entertained Henry VIII. at Aldermaston. There is also in the chantry chapel a very good mural painting of St. Christopher, dating from 1320, immediately facing which is a low side window, bearing out the legend that anyone looking through on to the painting would be saved from a violent death on that day. The Church has been beautifully restored by Mr. Keyser, and all its ancient features have been carefully preserved.

---

**CARFAX CONDUIT.**—We refer to the interesting communication of Mr. Money (see p. 75) with regard to this curious memorial of old Oxford. The document was written in 1784, four years before the Conduit was removed from Carfax to its present abode in Nuneham Park. It was erected in 1610. Report states that it is now in a sadly neglected and deplorable condition. It is a great pity that such a familiar and widely known feature of ancient Oxford should be left to fall into ruin and decay. Can nothing be done to save it? Perhaps the civic authorities of Oxford will take some steps in the matter. Carfax Church has gone. Would it not be possible for them now to find room for the conduits, and to restore it to its former position?—THE EDITOR.