

August, 1775, witnesses Bernard Gery, Elizabeth Adams; she dying he married secondly Rebecca Rolls, daughter of Henry Rolls, draper, of Bicester, who married Rebecca Basely, of Prior's Marston. My mother has a portrait in oils of her maternal grandfather, Bernard Gery Snow, of Southam. It is a face singularly beautiful both in features and sweetness of expression. My mother tells me that by family tradition her maternal grandfather's mother was a Gery, and that his father sold the ancestral acres at the time of the South Sea Bubble. In reference to Gery my people have a piece of silver bearing for crest a stag couchant, which we always associate with the Gery family. Bernard Gery Snow's name occurs in the trial of Captain Donnellan for the poisoning of Sir Theodosius Boughton "as Sir William Wheler's Apothecary." The Snows of Offchurch were cousins to the Snows of Southam. On the Church tower at Offchurch I noticed the name of Snow in connection with an almost obliterated inscription in Latin, surrounding the sun-dial. Near Offchurch there is a Snowford House marked on old Warwickshire maps; was it ever owned by the Snows? The Snow Arms and Crest are: Arms, a lion passant on fess embattled; Crest, a lion passant.—T. CHAMBERLIN TIMS, Little Bourton, near Banbury.

Proceedings of Societies.

BERKS ARCHÆOLOGICAL SOCIETY.—EXCURSION TO GREAT COXWELL, COLESHILL, HIGHWORTH, AND BUSCOT.—The first summer excursion of the Berks Archæological Society took place on Saturday, when a visit was paid to the north-west part of the county and the adjoining district of Wiltshire. The Newbury District Field Club also joined in the excursion. There was a large attendance, the party being over 40 in number. The arrangements were much facilitated by the providing of a special train from Didcot to Faringdon, the cost of which was generously defrayed by the President, Mr. Keyser.

On arriving at Faringdon brakes were in waiting and the party drove to Great Coxwell Church. Here the visitors were received by the Vicar, and Mr. Keyser was invited to give an address.

Mr. C. E. Keyser, in the course of his address on Coxwell Church, said the church was originally one of several chapelries in connection with Great Faringdon. As a structure it belonged to the latter part of the 12th century. The history of the place commenced later. Coxwell was one of the royal demesnes of King John, who granted the manor to the Cistercians, founders of the Abbey of Beaulieu. The church is of stone and consists of chancel, nave, north porch, and a battlemented western tower. The east window of three lancets is flanked on each side by a plain niche, and there is a niche over the Communion Table with a locker on each side. In the south side is a piscina, with a shelf, and a low side window. There is a western gallery, and the remains of a turret leading to the rood loft; at the junction of the chancel and nave is a sanctus bell gable. On the floor are brasses to the Mores family.

The visitors then proceeded to the Great Tithe Barn, which the Rev. P. H. Ditchfield said was one of the finest in England. It was not so large as some others, and was surpassed in size by Cholsey barn, now destroyed, and Tisbury

barn, near Salisbury, was also a serious rival. But they would not find a better preserved barn of its kind. It belonged to the Cistercian Abbey of Beaulieu. Coxwell Manor was given to that Abbey by King John in 1204. The barn was evidently of 14th century construction, and as they drove to Highworth they would see a very similar building of the same kind, though of smaller size. Up to the year 1835 all tithes were paid in kind, e.g., a tenth part of all the crops of grain, fruit, herbs, peas, beans, hay, straw, and wool, was given to the clergy; so that all tithe-owners, abbots, rectors, vicars, and others were obliged to have barns in which to store their produce. Hence in mediæval times there were tithe barns in nearly every parish in England, and these picturesque old buildings played an important part in the agricultural system and mediæval life of our ancestors. Some had single or double transepts, and were divided into nave and aisles by arcades of stone or timber. They saw the immense high towering timbers that supported the roof of this building 152 feet long, 40 feet wide, and 51 feet high, and walls four feet thick. This was not so much a tithe barn as a grange barn. Beaulieu Abbey owned the manor, and farmed it, having a bailiff there who looked after their property. They had seen the brass of John and William Mores in the church. William Mores was described as sometime farmer at Cokyswell, and when the Abbey was dissolved he obtained the manor and farmed it for himself, as his own master. Antiquaries would be interested in the fact that from this family descended Edward Rowe Mores, who projected a history of Berks, but did not progress very far with the work. The manor was purchased from the Mores by Sir Henry Pratt of Coleshill, but the barn and manor house did not descend with the manor, and were sold by Lady George Pratt to her grandson George Pratt Richmond, alias Webb, in 1700, and for 100 years they remained in his family.

After leaving the Great Tithe Barn, Mr. Gerrring permitted a visit to his farm house, an Elizabethan building, in which some tapestry and other articles of interest were shown.

A pleasant drive brought the party to Coleshill House. The mansion is beautifully placed in a fine wooded park from which extensive views are obtained. The beauty of the place is heightened by charmingly laid out gardens, and the mansion has a well-preserved appearance, both in its external and internal features. Coleshill is the seat of the Hon. Duncombe Pleydell Bouverie, who is lord of the manor and sole landowner. With Mrs. Pleydell-Bouverie and other members of the family he received the party.

In the salon a paper was read by the Rev. P. H. Ditchfield, who said the mansion at Coleshill had the proud distinction of being a work of the ripest talents of one of the best of English architects, built by Inigo Jones in 1650, two years before his death. The manor originally belonged to the Edington family, and subsequently was given to the Priory of Bonnes Hommes. After the Dissolution, the Priory was given to Thomas, Lord Seymour, who secretly married Catherine Parr, the last of Henry VIII.'s many wives; he had the custody of the Princess Elizabeth and Lady Jane Grey. He wanted to marry the former, but falling out with Protector Somerset he was beheaded. In 1626 Coleshill was purchased by Sir Henry Pratt, Alderman of London. His son, the second and last baronet, died, and his sister became the heiress, and brought it by marriage to the Pleydell family. She married into the Pleydells of Shrivenham, who had an estate at Shrivenham as early as the reign of Edward I. The younger branch lived here till the time of Queen Elizabeth, when Anthony Pleydell died without issue, and the Shrivenham branch inherited the estate. Thomas Pleydell, who married Sir George Platt's sister, was grandfather of Sir Mark Stuart Pleydell,

baronet, whose only daughter and heiress, Harriett, married the Hon. William Bouverie, Viscount Folkestone and Baron Langford, created Baron Pleydell-Bouverie of Coleshill, and afterwards Earl of Radnor, and thus the names of Pleydell and Bouverie were conjoined, and Coleshill passed to the Earls of Radnor, whose principal seat is Langford Castle, Salisbury. Sir Mark Pleydell lived till 1768, so Coleshill did not pass to the family of the present owner till that date, when Jacob Pleydell-Bouverie, second Earl of Radnor, came into possession on the death of his grandfather. The house is one of the best works of Inigo Jones. One of its great attractions is that it has remained unchanged since it was built, at least as regards the exterior and the principal parts of the interior. The exterior of the manor is simple yet imposing; there is a handsome flight of steps to the entrance doorway, and the windows have bold carvings, and there are several handsome chimneys. The interior is most charming and pleasing, the grand staircase, the niches in the walls, and handsome doors with fine carvings, the double staircase leading to the gallery, with pilasters of unusual form. The most important features of the internal decoration are, perhaps, the ceilings and the lovely mantel-pieces. Mr. Ditchfield concluded with the wish that the sundial in the garden might mark for the noble family now residing there many happy hours.

After visiting the chief apartments of the house and inspecting their contents, the party proceeded to Coleshill Church, part of them going through the grounds and gardens. The visit to the interesting church afforded an opportunity for Mr. Keyser to describe its more salient features, beginning with the Norman portion of the structure and subsequent additions, until now it possesses a chancel, nave of one bay, north aisle, south transept, and an embattled west tower, a fine example of the Perpendicular period. The south transept was originally a chapel built in the latter part of the 15th century by Thomas Pleydell, while the stained window, filled with glass brought from Angiers, was presented by Jacob, second Earl of Radnor, in 1787. The register dates from the year 1559.

A short drive brought the party to Highworth, where luncheon was in readiness at the Saracen's Head Hotel. After which a visit was made to Highworth Church, which proved very interesting, and the Communion plate was set out for inspection by the Vicar. Especially noticeable was the chalice bearing the date of 1534. Of the church itself Mr. Keyser admitted it to be somewhat puzzling, because it had been a good deal restored; but portions showed Transitional Norman work. It had also been the scene of conflict between Royalist and Parliamentary troops. A cannon ball is preserved as being the one which struck the church, the indentation near the west door being plainly discerned.

The next halting-place was Inglesham, a quaint little Norman church, which has been untouched by the hand of the restorer.

Buscot Park was the last place to be visited. The mansion is approached by a long drive through the park. The mansion is of stone, and from the windows are to be seen the lakes, one of about 25 acres, and another of 15. In the house, which is now the residence of Sir Alexander Henderson (Chairman of the Great Central Railway), is a series of pictures by Sir E. Burne-Jones, illustrating the legend of "The Sleeping Beauty," as well as panel paintings by the same artist.

Here tea had been kindly provided, and Sir Alexander and Lady Henderson were heartily thanked for their kind hospitality. The excursion was most successful in every way, and was much enjoyed by all who took part in it.

The society hope to visit Calve and Bowood on August 7th.