

EXCURSIONS AND ADDRESSES, 1939.

1ST EXCURSION—24TH MAY.

NEWSTEAD, KELHAM AND SOUTHWELL.

Newstead, a priory of Black or Austin Canons (not monks), founded in 1170 by Henry II, finds much favour in the popular mind for its association (really a short one) with the sixth Lord Byron, the poet, and a long generation later with David Livingstone, missionary and explorer, who wrote a volume of his memoirs here; but for the antiquary its appeal is for its beautiful ruined remains of a thirteenth century structure, much of it embedded in the house and terribly over-restored, but particularly its very fine west front of c. 1280-90. Acquired by the Byrons at the dissolution of the monasteries and finally lost to them under the poet in 1818 (two years after he left England for ever) it was devotedly cared for by its subsequent owners, Col. Wildman and Mr. Webb and his heirs. Finally, in 1931, it was most generously presented to the City of Nottingham by Sir Julius Cahn, and is now with its delightful landscape setting kept probably in better condition than at any time for the past two centuries.

After lunch a really enchanting road journey through rich umbrageous byways and pretty villages and hamlets led to the College for priests of the established church at Kelham, accommodated in an adapted hall built about 1857 to the designs of the late Sir G. G. Scott, R.A. Here is a noble brick church in a pure Byzantine style, the creation of the late Mr. C. C. Thompson, of the firm of Messrs. Currey and Thompson, of Derby. The

company were received by the Rev. Kunnumpurath Simon, who expounded the scheme and details of the spacious structure, a uniform cross (Greek cross) on plan with a mighty dome and beautiful arcaded passage and galleries round the church, which might be described as all central space.

Mr. P. H. Currey, the senior partner of the late designer, also gave an address on the development of the design in Mr. Thompson's mind. A creation austere, almost without decoration, and owing its impressive grandeur to fine proportions alone, it is worthy as a structure to be likened to the great Westminster Cathedral.

Thence the party sped through more lovely byways and pleasant hamlets to Southwell Cathedral and its bishop's palace—too well known as until recently the centre of our own diocese to need detailed description. Its noble Norman nave and great transepts, its fine E.E. choir, its beautiful "decorated" screen, and the unique grace and accomplishment of the foliage carving of its exquisite chapter-house and vestibule only need mentioning to suggest what we have no space to describe.

Tea at the famous Saracen's Head Hotel and well-earned compliments to those who had made the day such a success concluded the day's undertakings.

2ND EXCURSION—1ST JULY.

BREEDON AND ASHBY.

The company assembled in Breedon Church, where they were addressed by Mr. T. E. Routh, well known for his special study of early Anglian ecclesiastical art, particularly its sculptural motives. The church is unique in the extent and to some degree in the character of its early Anglian decoration.

Though seen plainly on its high hill from Derby, it is just within the Leicestershire border, and, the speaker said, according to Professor Hamilton Thompson, the

circular earthwork enclosure suggests the site was sacred even in pagan times. Professor Stenson holds that Bede's reference to Bishop Tatwin (731 A.D.), having been a priest at the monastery of Briudon, in Mercia, can only refer to this site. This religious house is also referred to in the A.S. Chronicle and various charters, and the wonderfully early carvings must be survivals from this structure.

It was no doubt destroyed by the heathen Danes with Repton in 874. It is not shown among Ethelwold's restorations, but was certainly rebuilt or repaired by the settlement as a parish church, and probably so survived until with some other benefactions it was given by Robert Ferrars, first Earl of Derby, in 1144, to the College of Augustine Canons at Nostell, Yorks. A cell of five canons was established here, and probably they built the Norman tower on to the earlier church.

About 1220 they rebuilt the canon's choir and presbytery approximately as surviving with vaulted aisles, inserted a high western arch on the east of the tower and re-used the Norman arch to open a connection with the parishioners' nave, which may have been aisleless. They threw out a kind of south transept or building (no equivalent to the north is known) some distance longer than at present, and later absidal chapels were raised on the east side. In the 15th century the parishioners rebuilt their nave and desired it should possess aisles on both sides. But to the north conventual buildings already existed, so they displaced the whole building by the aisle's breadth to the south, blocking the Norman arch and placing the respond of the northern arcade in the middle of the blocked arch, where it still survives.

On the dissolution of the monasteries this structure came into possession of Francis Shirley, of Staunton Harold (whence the Earls Ferrars), who reserved the

north choir aisle as a family chapel or mortuary—in which are several fine memorials—and gave the remainder to the parish, since their nave was ruinous. This nave was then allowed to decay and finally cleared off the ground.

In the 18th century the south building was shortened, the chapels destroyed, a floor inserted forming an upper room, and a new south front built. A western gallery was made in the interior and a floor in the tower made as an approach to it. The south aisle vault was destroyed and the window tracery altered. Such is the history of the church as it now stands. But inside, and, until recently, outside, also an extensive series of panels and friezes of strange decoration exist, comprising the finest collection of its kind still surviving.

Until about a dozen years or so ago this work was attributed to the twelfth century, and we shared that opinion, but then came Mr. A. W. Clapham, F.S.A., and maintained the remains were of the latter half of the 8th century. After a little hesitation his attribution was generally accepted and their unique value realised.

Mr. Routh showed by detailed examination how the conclusion was arrived at, but space does not allow of our giving these details. The fragments have been preserved by being built into late wallings, in some cases as decoration, but in many merely as building stones, characteristic of the contempt which our mediaeval craftsmen usually had for the work of their predecessors. An example was pointed out where the carved stone had been set in the wall at right-angles and the end cut as a decorated corbel stop for a hood mould. Others probably exist hidden in the walling.

Ashby Church was then visited, a fine building almost entirely of *c.* 1475, with the outer of the double aisles of 1878-80. Built by Lord Hastings, of Richard III fame, it contains a rare finger pillory, some excellent wood carvings, late 17th century, a pilgrim memorial figure

and fine Huntingdon monuments, with some old stained glass and a rare and very valuable collection of communion plate.

The Vicar, Canon H. D. Hanford, M.A., acted as guide.

After tea at the Royal Hotel, the ruins of the castle were visited and explained by the official guide. They are stated to extend from the 12th to the 17th century, but apart from the beautiful 14th century chapel they are essentially the work of Shakespeare's Lord Hastings, from about 1474 onwards . . . Here concluded a delightful and instructive outing, for which special thanks are due to Messrs. Marsden, Routh and Canon Hanford.

3RD EXCURSION—9TH AUGUST.

FORD HALL, BROUGH AND PADLEY CHAPEL.

Ford Hall has fragments of 16th century building, but is mainly of the early 18th century with late Victorian additions, at once a treasure house and a comfortable modern dwelling, placed in an exquisite valley or clough of luxuriant woodland, carved out in the course of the incalculable milleniums from the western spur of Rushup Edge.

Here a company numbering about 70 per cent. of the membership, the most popular assembly for some years, were received by the owners, Mr. and Mrs. F. E. G. Bagshawe, who threw the whole house unreservedly open to the company.

Bagshawes were known in Derbyshire in 1141, foresters in the great Peak Forest first met with at Abney and Hucklow. Bagshawes of the Ridge (nearby) also are early known, and some time later we find them at Norton, where their memorials still survive in the church, as well as in various other parishes of the County.

Having been shown round the exterior of the Hall, noting the various building periods, the company passed

inside where modernisation has concealed the evolution of the structure, converted to a typical modern house of our landed gentry, a rich treasure house; in its contents something of the history of an ancient family active from early days to the present on local, national and even continental history. Here the famous Tutbury horn, a "document" certifying from the days of John-o'-Gaunt to the owners right as Foresters of the Honour of Tutbury to certain appointments of offices, apparently combined with similar functions for the great Peak Forest. Thro' the ages are other relics: fine furniture, precious oriental collections, Chinese lacquer work, etc., for the family evidently comprised distinguished travellers, diplomatic services, as for instance presence at the Court of Marie Theresa, a very considerable collection of portraits from the 17th century onwards, with many other examples of foreign artists, Dutch in particular, fine prints and books and generally a wealth of art that could be grasped fully only by months of study.

The kind hosts specially desired that no formal acknowledgments should be made, so with many personal thanks the company sped on thence to the Roman site of Anavio (Brough, by Hope), where Mr. Cockerton introduced Mr. Ian A. Richmond, the expert in charge of the excavations, whose acquaintance many had made in the previous year. It was explained the visit on this occasion was rather early for results as a week only had been given to the new work, of which an account will appear later in the *Journal*. Suffice it that the south gate foundations and the masonry facing of a clay bank of the later camp (c. 150-60) are laid bare and some similar remains of the north gate. This evidence is so fragmentary as to be intelligible only to the specially interested, due, Mr. Richmond pointed out, to the effective, thorough robbing of all the wrought stone-work for other service by succeeding generations to those of the Roman dominance.

Mr. Cockerton proposed and Mr. Walton seconded a vote of thanks to Mr. Richmond for his lucid exposition of a complicated problem, heartily supported, and an earnest appeal was made for financial support, however individually small, for carrying on the investigations.

After tea at the Marquis of Granby Hotel, a visit was made thence to the very careful and interesting restoration of Padley Chapel, where the Catholic branch of the Fitzherberts—successors of Padleys and Eyres—suffered so severely and so unjustly for their faith. Here were captured, in 1588, two priests, Nicholas Garlick and Robert Ludlam, and very barbarously executed for their faith, and John Fitzherbert put to death for harbouring them. To these martyrs the restored chapel, originally the eastern compartment of the gate-house of this fine 14th century mansion, is now dedicated.

The Very Rev. Monsignor Payne received the company, and the architect, Mr. G. Hadfield, F.R.I.B.A., gave a detailed explanation of the restoration of this surviving building and the plan of the remainder of the hall, demolished *c.* 1650.

A vote of thanks tendered by Mr. Walton to Monsignor Payne, Mr. Hadfield and Miss Harrison, of Hathersage, to whom the local arrangements were largely due, concluded a large and very appreciative excursion, admirably carried through by Mr. J. P. Heathcote.

LECTURE—10TH NOVEMBER.

POST-REFORMATION MONUMENTS, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO DERBYSHIRE.

MRS. ARUNDELL ESDAILE.

The Society, declining to allow war conditions entirely to arrest their activities, arranged a lecture for its members in the lecture hall of the School of Arts and Crafts, by permission of the Education Committee. Mrs. K. A.

Esdaile, author of several works on English monumental sculpture—of which subject she is a leading specialist—gave the address.

The theme, beautifully illustrated, was nominally Post-Reformation monuments, but the speaker, being in the heart of the alabaster region, gave as introduction a fairly detailed account of English mediaeval memorial sculpture.

The deputy chairman, the Very Rev. H. Ham, Provost Emeritus, presided, and said that he and several other local clergy were indebted to Mrs. Esdaile for her generous help in identifying local memorials and their sculptors, particularly those in the cathedral. He emphasised the company's good fortune in obtaining the lecturer's services.

Mrs. Esdaile, addressing the meeting, gratifyingly restricted her subject and illustrations mainly to examples in or near our County, specially eulogising the alabaster craft centred in this region: Chellaston in particular, with references also to Tutbury and Burton. The earliest document known concerning the Chellaston school was an order from the Duke of Lancaster ("John-o'-Gaunt") at Tutbury for a block of alabaster sufficient for a full-sized effigy. Tutbury could supply one only, but blocks for two figures were required. This order dates from 1374.

Mrs. Esdaile's paper is printed in full in preceding pages, and therefore there is no need for a detailed account here. (*The substance of these notes appeared in the columns of the DERBYSHIRE ADVERTISER, whose proprietors the writer thanks for permission to reprint.*

W. H. WALTON.