

North Creake Abbey.

COMMUNICATED BY

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THE engraving prefixed to this notice, and taken from a photograph by Sawyer, gives a view of the existing remains of the Church of this Abbey, which was one of the objects of a visit by our Society in the summer excursion of 1863. These consist only of the walls of the choir and some side chapels,—the tower, transepts, and nave having been long since demolished. The style of the original building was Early English, of the time of Edward I., but it may be seen from the view that some capitals and mouldings are of later date. The choir communicated on the north side by an arch, of which the mouldings are Early Decorated, with a side chapel or east aisle to the transept; and this again with a larger, the Lady, chapel, by two Early English arches springing from a clustered pier and responds. This contains an Early English piscina, and a low wide arch, which probably spanned a benefactor's tomb. It had an east window of five lights with Decorated mouldings. The first-named aisle-chapel opened into the north transept by two Decorated arches resting on an octagon pier.¹ In the inside, near the north respond, is the vestige of a winding staircase. The

¹ An engraving of this chapel, from a drawing by Cotman, is given in the *Excursions through Norfolk*, vol. i. p. 180, the pond in the foreground being imaginary.



Sawyer. photo

Rel. Eng. Lith^o Co. London E.C.

North Creak Abbey, (Norfolk) 1865.
View looking East. The portions in outline are modern.

east or end wall of the choir is not standing, and the length of the existing walls must have been considerably curtailed since 1738, when Messrs. Buck's view was published, wherein the blank arcades, now consisting of but four or five bays on each side, are represented with seven. The arch on the south side, seen in the engraving, leads into a small chapel or passage which communicated with the monastic buildings. The site of these is occupied by the modern farm-house, and the cloister square has become a garden. An ogee arch, now forming the entrance to the farm-house, was removed from this square. The south transept arches have been walled up, and the double lancet window and trefoil over it, seen in our engraving, are remnants of the demolished buildings inserted in that position at a subsequent period.

If there be any original work as late in date as 1500 remaining, it may be attributed to the munificence of Sir William Calthorpe, Knt., of Burnham Thorpe, who by his will, dated on the last day of May, 1494, and proved on the 26th of November in the same year, gave a legacy to this church in the following words, which are borrowed from a complete copy of the will² furnished, by our industrious member Mr. L'Estrange, to the *East Anglian*:³ "of all whiche lxxiiij^{li} vj^s I wylle y^t my seide sone Gurnay and Walter Aslak haue the disposic'on for makyng of the quer and of the p̄sbiterie at the Abbey of Creyke, and yf any remayne of the same ther not spent then the oūplus to be spente in odyr Repatons vpon the chapell wythin the same place wher the aunccterys of me the seid Sir William lye buried."

The investigation of these hoary remains leads naturally to the contemplation of those fathers of old who there lived and worshipped, of their domestic history and mode of life.

I have given a short account of the original foundation of the abbey and of the manner in which it came into the

² Abstracted in Blomefield, vi., p. 517.

³ *East Anglian*, vol. ii. p. 211.

possession of Christ's College, in the preceding volume of our proceedings.⁴ By the kindness of the Master and Fellows, I am now enabled to add a little more to the information relating to this house contained in Blomefield and in the *Monasticon*. Amongst other MSS. in their possession belonging to Creake Abbey, those which I am about to describe have some degree of interest to the local historian.⁵ One is a roll containing copies of the following charters.

1. A Bull of Pope Gregory,⁶ (the date omitted) ordaining the rule of St. Augustine to be observed by the regular canons established in that place; confirming them in the enjoyment of their possessions, namely, the site of the monastery; the towns of Receresthorpe and Ilveston in the diocese of Lincoln; the houses, lands, and possessions which they had in the diocese of Norwich; the messuage which they had in the city of London, of the gift of Richard de St. John;⁷ and other possessions, with the meadows, vineyards, lands, groves, woods, and pastures, in wood and in plain, in acre and in mill, in ways and in paths, &c. Several privileges and immunities, including that of sanctuary and sepulture, were also granted by this instrument.

2. Letters patent of Walter de Calthorpe, alias Suffield, Bishop of Norwich, dated at Thornham, 12 Kal. Sept., in the 4th year of his pontificate, appropriating to the convent the church of St. Martin of Quarfles (Quarles). He was bishop from 1243 to 1257.

⁴ *Norfolk Archaeology*, vol. vi., p. 314.

⁵ It was in consequence of the attention of the society being called to the state of these walls by the Ven. Rector of North Creake, referred to in our Proceedings, vol. vi. 386, that some of the committee visited the ruins, and this and other photographs were taken. And I have the pleasure of stating that a representation made by the committee, through myself, to the Master and Fellows of Christ's College, received immediate attention, and that steps were taken under the auspices of Mr. Phipson by which the threatened danger has been averted.

⁶ Gregory the Ninth was Pope 1227—1241.

⁷ I find no other mention of this.

3. A confirmation of that act by Symon, Prior of Norwich. Symon de Elmham was prior at that time.

4. A Bull of Pope Alexander, authorising the appropriation of the church of Gatele, the right of presentation to which had been granted to the abbat and canons by Sir Ralph de Gatele.⁸ This is dated 11 Kal. April, in the third year of his pontificate, which commenced 12th Dec., 1254.

5. A charter of Simon de Walton, Bishop of Norwich, confirming the appropriation of the church of Gatele, and ordaining the vicarage. Dated at Northelmham, on Sunday next after the Epiphany, A.D. 1259.

6. Letters patent of Bishop William, confirming to the abbat and canons the church of St. Margaret of Habeton, and a mediety of the church of All Saints of Wreningham, the patronage of which had been granted to them during the vacancy of the see. The date is omitted, but William de Raleigh was appointed Bishop in 1239, previous to which the see had been kept vacant for two years.

7. Letters patent of Ralph de Blumvill, Archdeacon of Norfolk, by virtue of the authority vested in him while the see was vacant, appropriating to the abbat and canons the moiety of the church of Wreningham, of which they had the right of patronage, and which Clement de Stalam, chaplain, sometime held and had resigned into the archdeacon's hands. This was executed A.D. 1237, on the day of St. Firmin, bishop and martyr, in the church of Attelburg.

8. A Deed of Confirmation by John Archbishop of Canterbury, dated at Lambythe, on the Ides of May A.D. 1281, the third of his pontificate, of the appropriations of the churches of St. Elene of Gatele, St. Martin of Quarles, St. Margarete of Habeton, and of the mediety of All Saints of Wreningham.

On the back of this roll is written an extent of all the abbey lands, with the names of the tenants, and descriptions

⁸ Vide *Monasticon*, edit. 1846, pro carta Radulphi de Gatel militis, p. 488.

of their holdings, rents, and services. There is no date to this, but from internal evidence it was earlier than any of the compotus after-mentioned.

From this I extract and translate an entry relating to the area or precincts of the house and church. "And be it known that within the inclosed site of the court of the abbey are contained according to estimation about sixteen acres, and in the east crofts of the said abbey, viz., from the croft sometime of Bartholomew Palle to the division or eastern gate (*ad divisam seu portam orientalem*) of the abbey, are contained about six acres, together with the place of the fairs and pasture, (*nudinarum et pasture*) and in the east croft, on the north part of the division or east gate, (*divisæ seu portæ orientalis*) with the green area and croft of the hospital of St. Bartholomew, are contained about six acres, and in the west croft, on the south part of the west gate or marl-pits,⁹ (*portæ occidentalis seu marler*) are contained two acres, and on the north part about five acres."

In this document Hugh son of Hugh de Medhowe is mentioned as a benefactor of tenements at Rotenbog, Shammar, Gatelond, Erdamerundel, Smalehill, Hilbroghil, Dalegate, &c.

There are also three Cellarer's Rolls, containing accounts of the receipts and expenditure of that officer, in behalf of the community, from Michaelmas to Michaelmas, for the years 4 and 5 Edward III., A.D. 1331-2; 19 and 20 Edward III., A.D. 1345-6; and 34 and 35 Edward III., A.D. 1360-1. The earliest of these has been already printed, with a translation, in the last volume of our Proceedings, pp. 320 et seq.

At the head of the compotus of 1346, is written the name of Robert de Dockeyng, who afterwards became Abbat. During the year to which the latest compotus relates, viz. in 1360-1, when William de Ely, whose account it purports to be, was cellarer, the Abbat Thomas de Brandon died, and

⁹ *Marlers*, Norman French for marl-pits.

was succeeded by John de Ashe, who was admitted on the 21st of Nov., 1360. The expenses of the Abbat going to the Bishop for installation are charged.

From the entries in these accounts, some light may be thrown upon the domestic economy of a small monastery; the habits of its inmates, and, incidentally, on the condition of the people generally, as deduced from the price of provisions and wages of labour.

The revenues of the house were between £130 and £140 a year, of which about £90 were derived from rents of houses and lands let to farm, tithes, payments in lieu of feudal services, and such like. The residue was chiefly from the realisation of the produce of their own demesnes, including the quarterly fairs and the sale of corn and live stock. To which is to be added what are termed *forinseca recepta*, or miscellaneous receipts, such as legacies, pittances, and money for goods sold out of the house. I have already commented on this item of revenue in 1332,¹⁰ and I have now to remark that neither the account of 1346, nor that of 1361, mentions any livery or corrody which forms so large a fraction in 1332. In that of 1361, 6s. 8d. was paid by Lady Calthorp, on account of a legacy from her late Lord;¹ 40s. for the soul of Thomas de Morle;² and 20s. for the soul of W. de Patishull.³ The deceased Abbat's copes were converted into money: a canon named Sir Maurice bought his furred cope, *capa plumalis*,⁴ and William Ely, his choir cope, *capa chori*, each for 3s. 4d.

¹⁰ Vol. vi. p. 324.

¹ Sir William Calthorp, died about 33 Edward III., his lady was Isabella, daughter of John Lord Lovell of Titchmarsh.

² Thomas de Morlee was coroner for the city of Norwich in 1343.

³ A supplemental account gives credit for 13s. 4d. of a legacy of Sir William de Pattishouille.

⁴ In the account of 1332, this word is indisputably, but I believe erroneously, written *pluvialis*, which led me to consider it an out-door cape; perhaps the entry there relates to the purchase of this very cope. (p. 332, n. 2.)

The abbey lands in South Creak were held subject to an annual payment of 20s. a year to Dover Castle Ward; and a payment of 16s. 8d. was also made into the Exchequer, which in the account of 1361 is stated as made to the Sheriff, for a capital message in South Creak, and for suit at the Court at Hegenoth, (Hawleigh,) *quad' parte sectæ in curia de Hagenoth debitæ scaccario current' in Pipa*. During the year 1335-6, the house was engaged in some law proceedings about this property. The cellarer charges his expenses going with Sir Peter de Caltorp to confer with the friars minors about the business,—*cum fratre minore pro negotio de Suthereyk*: another time conferring with Richard de la Rokelee,⁵ and on his return dining at Bircham (*Brecham*); and at divers times for drink there with the lacqueys (*garcionibus*) about the same business. He also charges for a journey to Norwich, to speak to the Rector of Fundenhall about the affairs of the house, and their proceedings against Thomas de Congham; and on another occasion, when the King's Justices Itinerant were at Norwich, to confer with John Hoveton and Thomas Nel, for expediting the matter of Suthereyk; and again on occasion of sealing the instruments and completing the treaty, at an expense of 1s. 5½d. for five days, besides 6d. for wine, to John Hoveton and his fellows, and 2d. for wine for their counsel and ours. Amongst the gifts or rewards in money, is 6d. paid to a certain man of Creyk for his support,—*quia statit pro nobis in agendis*. There is also a gift of 6d. to the servant of Richard Rokeyll, for bringing a letter, and an expenditure of 10s. for jewels bought by the Abbat, and given to the wife of Richard, in *jocalibus emptis de Abbate et datis uxori de la Rochel*. All this looks very much like bribery, but as to the nature or merits of the suit for which the services of Richard de la Rokele were required, in what manner they could be rendered, or how far they were successful, we are left in the dark.

⁵ The family de la Rokele had the Manor of Gatele.

The items of expenditure accounted for in the two later accounts differ little from those in the *comptus* of 1332. I give some of them for comparison.

The household stores for the year 1345-6 were twelve ox carcasses (*carcoys boum*) at 4s. 1½*d.* each, and one at 5s.; eight carcasses of mutton (*carcoys mutilium*) at 8½*d.*, and five at 10½*d.* each. There were also half a last of red herring, bought at "Crowmere" for £1. 13s. 4*d.*, the drying of which cost 1*d.*; six *kempes*⁶ of herring 28s. or 4s. 8*d.* each; one *kempe* 4s. 6*d.*, one barrel of "skonere" herring (*allec^o skonere*)⁷ 6s. 6*d.*; three thousand white herrings (*allecium viridum*) bought at Holkham, 12s. 1½*d.*; four *lenges* and three mullets (*mulvelli*) 2s. 10*d.*, and six score and eight fish not specified, 39s. 8*d.* *Item in exitu boum*, 7*d.*, *pro pedibus et panches*⁸ *undecim boum*, 3s. 6*d.*, *in capitibus et filoz*⁹ *dictorum boum*, 30*d.*; eight lbs. of crabs for salting (*crabbes pro salsantis*) 2*d.*, four pounds of white salt, 19*d.*, &c.

In 1360-1 they laid in fifteen carcasses of oxen at a cost of £4. 13s. 4½*d.*, or 7s. 2¾*d.* apiece, a considerable increase of price. *Item in xj exitibus integris*, xjs. xj*d.*, *in pedibus et panches iij boum*, ijs., *in quindecim capitibus boum cum le filez*, iijs.: 3s. 9*d.* are charged for three sheep bought of William de Iteringham the sacristan, and 11s. 3*d.* for nine bought of Sir Maurice, the *custos ecclesie*, from which it would seem that the brethren had the privilege of doing a little business on their own account. Moreover they laid

⁶ *Kempes allecium*. "The signification of *kempe* as applied to fish is very obscure."—*Promp. Parv.* 270, n. 3. Mr. Way in this note considers the word to apply to size; here it evidently implies capacity.

⁷ *Skonere*. Skanor, Vox Danica—"Et si contigeret, quod absit, quod Alecia non capianter, neq; in Skanor salsantur, &c. *Alec* sometimes signifies a pickle or preparation made from small fish.—Du Cange.

⁸ In the account of 1332 "*exitibus*." It is evident the brethren were partial to tripe and cow-heel.

⁹ *Filoz*, or *filez*. I must leave this word unexplained. An old French word *fil* signified "maladie des bœufs," but that cannot be the meaning here.

in forty-nine large fish from Welles, at 19s. 11d.; six *kempes* of red herring from Holkham, at 27s. 6d.; nineteen barrels of white herring, £4. 2s. 6d.; four mullets, 2s. 8½d.; fifteen hundred of red herrings, 15s. 7d.; eighteen chickens at 1d. each; 6400 eggs at 32s.; forty-six geese at 9s. 11½d., &c.

They appear to have indulged in few luxuries. They spent in 1360 one shilling for wine and 3d. for apples, but that appears to have been on the extraordinary occasion of the abbat's funeral. They occasionally received presents, for I find in 1345-6 two pence and gloves given to one bringing capons and mallards to the abbat and canons from Congham; two knives, value 1½d., given to two girls who brought apples to the abbat; several presents of fish are mentioned; and on one occasion a salmon, for which the porter had 2d.

All the wheat grown upon the land kept in hand was consumed in the house. We arrive at the quantity grown in 1346 by that thrashed, viz., sixty-two quarters at Creak, and two quarters were taken to the granary from Gately. In the same year four bushels of wheat purchased cost 2s. In 1361 the price was 6s. and 6s. 2½d. the quarter. The consumption of malt in 1330-1 was twenty-nine quarters, the price being 6s. 7d. and 7s. 8d. the quarter; and in 1360-1 the quantity bought was twenty-six quarters, at from 4s. 4d. to 4s. 8d. the quarter. The computus of 1345-6 gives no account of any malt purchased. Barley sold in that year at 2s. and 2s. 1d. the quarter; a bushel of undressed barley (*ordei rougher*) for 3d. In 1361 the barley was sold at 3s. 3d. and 3s. 6d. In 1346 oats cost 38s. for twenty-two quarters, a little over 1s. 8¼d. per quarter; and in 1361 from 3s. 4d. to 4s. 4d. the quarter. In 1346 rye sold two bushels for 6½d.; white peas for 2s. 4d. the quarter; a quarter of oatmeal (*avenæ ad farinam*) was bought for 2s. 2d.; three lbs. of hemp seed for 1s. 4d., the latter, I suppose, for sowing; and for the

same purpose in 1361, four bushels of old tares (*vel^o tarys*) at 2s. 6d.

With respect to live stock, the cellarer accounts in 1346, under the class of *averii*, for twenty old and worn-out sheep (crones) sold for 17s. 4d.; four worn-out hoggets (*hogastres*) for 22d., four old cows for 7s., an old horse for 7s., a calf for 1s. 1d., two geese for 7d., a pig for 7½d., nine lambs in summer-time for 1s. 4d.; a horse was sold at Fakenham fair for 13s. 4d., and a colt for 9s. 6d. In the same year the prices for stock (*stauri*) bought, were, for a horse bought at Waterden, 17s. 6½d.; another at Anmere, 24s.; a pig, 20d.; twenty-one lambs, 19s., five more at 1s. each, one at 9d., and for five others 3s. 6d.; for sixty geese, 8s. 9d., for sixteen 2s. 5d., and six more 8d.; for pullets and capons, 11¼d., and for twenty ducks, 1s. 7d.

In 1361 a horse sold for 60s., a mill horse for 3s. 8½d., a grey horse (*equus griseus*) for 30s., and the deceased abbat's small palfrey was disposed of at Fakenham fair for 30s. The purchases in the same year were but few, consisting of one horse bought for £1. 18s. 3d., another (*equus griseus*) £1. 16s. 8d., a third (*equus eductus*) 10s. 1½d., while another cost only 6s. 8d.; three hogget sheep were bought for 3s. 4½d., and a little pig (*porculus*) for stock for 3s.

In 1346 the wool fetched (twenty-six stone) 78s. and a farthing, or about 4s. 1d. per stone; a bull's hide, 2s. 4d., hemp, 6d. per stone, and twelve lbs. of hemp seed 8s. 3½d. In 1361 fifty-one stone of wool sold for £6. 1s. 5d., or only 2s. 5d. the stone; and four stone of lambs' wool at 4s. 4d.

These prices do not materially differ from those of 1331, nor do the wages of labour,¹ which are about 1d. a day. In

¹ Wages had been fixed by Statute 25th Edward III., "De Servientis et Laboribus," which enacts that carters and carriers were to be paid at the rate of 10d. a bushel, and not by the journey or day. A common labourer in time of weeding or haymaking (*en temps de sarcler ou fein faire*) was to have only a 1d. a day, but for mowing grass 5d. per acre, or by the journey 5d.; for reaping

1361 a tyler had 3*d.* for two days' work, his assistant half that. A carpenter had 9*d.* for four days and a half, his partner for seven days, 10½*d.*; another carpenter for eleven days, 1*s.* 2*d.* Harvest work, on the average, was 1*s.* 6*d.* the acre and board. Thrashing was paid at 1*d.* a day and board; by task, at the rate of 2½*d.* the quarter; and the good fathers did not muzzle the ox that trode out their corn; they allowed, besides the money, nine quarters and one bushel *ad mensam*, and seven bushels *pro famulos*. In 1346 twenty pence were paid for the thrashing of twenty quarters of *dragot*⁹, whatever that may be. In a note, however, *s. v.*, "Dragge, mengled corne, (drage, or mestlyon)" in *Prompt. Parv.*, the learned editor refers to Rot. Pip., 1 Edward I., where "dragg" is described as "a mixture of vetches and oats, beans and pease;" and gives two quotations from Tusser, speaking of dredge as commonly grown in the Eastern Counties.

The expenditure of the house seems always to have somewhat exceeded its income; the amount being in 1332, near £160; in 1346, about £147; and in 1361, £140. 7*s.* 0*d.*; the excess in the latter year being reduced to £13.

I add a few glossarial words and phrases not found in the account of 1330-1, and of most of which I can give little or no explanation.

Repairs.

In virgis, prickkes, swethes et hanchons, ij*s.* ix*d.* ob.

In clavis, viz. dornayl, schotnaye et splentnayl circa domos,

&c., per annum, ij*s.* ix*d.* q.

Domum *rottal*'—(A house on wheels?)

wheat in the first week of August 2*d.*, and for the rest of harvest 3*d.* a day, without meat or drink, or any curtesy or allowance, and to find his own tools. Thrashing was to be 2½*d.* per quarter for wheat or *segle*; for *dorge*, (dredge) beans, pease, and oats 1½*d.* Artificers' wages per day were fixed as follows: a master carpenter 3*d.*, others 2*d.*; a master stone mason 4*d.*, other masons 3*d.*, and their servants 1½*d.*; a tyler 3*d.*, his assistant (*son garceon*) 1½*d.*; wages of other workmen were to be fixed by the Justices.

Smith's work.

Duobus *flannas* ferrantibus, per iiij dies, ij^s.

Pro ferrura stottorum et palefridum—(here a *stott* certainly means a horse.)

Cost of ploughs and carts.

Pro tribus cultris magnis pro *rebinatione*² in estate, iiij^s. ij^d.

Pro iiij *horscheppes*, ij^s. In *sacces*—small sacks.

Bazario pro colariis et *atilio*³ emendando—baize for mending collars and gear.

In *atilio* per annum in nundine s̄ci Michi, in *holcis*, *surpons*, et *sterwithes*, xx^d.

In *cleys carocell'*, (or *caractell'*.) In *cleys* emptis in nundino.

Curte carecte—cart shed.

In factura clutes et *weryren* ex proprio ferro.

In uno *frok* pro carecta autumpnale, iiij^d.

Wyndyngbond pro carectis.

Bake-house and Mill-house.

In ij bynd tonhop,—ij bynd fathoþ,—in duobus byndes stophoþ,—una bynd barolhoþ,—ij bynd tunhoþ et piphoþ,—stoppes,—in uno *tempse* (a hair sieve.)

Sundries.

In pectine equino et uno *kepe* pro uno capistro—a curry-comb and a fastening for a bridle.

In *Durets* pro equis, oþ.

In ferrura pedum unius *postenetis*.⁵

In *vertmell'* pro hostio coquine—(a handmill for the guest-house kitchen?)

² *Rebinare*, terram alterâ et repetitâ aratione proscissam tertiâ rursum proscindere.

³ *Attilia*, utensilia, instrumenta rustica—the gear or equipment of a plough or cart.

⁴ Probably the same as in another place entered, “in uno ryng ad capistrum.”

⁵ *Posette*, a pipkin or saucepan, perhaps the same as elsewhere expressed “in fotyng unius olle enee.”

In quatuor tet de *Gerthes*.

In duabus *scutell*?⁶ et uno *troye*.⁷

In tribus *persuris hyronis*.

Fold.

In lxviiij *Talys* pro falda.

In duab; palys ferratis pro *caula*.⁸

Fuel.

In una acra et dimidio et xvij^{tim} rode *falles*⁹ bruarie emptis,
xxvj^s.

Harvestmen.

Solutum diversis messoribus, carectariis, picariis, tassatariis,
vaccariis, vincariis, porcariis, bercariis, &c. — reapers,
carters, pitchers, stackers, binders, cowherds, swineherds,
shepherds.

Presents.

In duobus ducenis cyrothecum *der*,¹ vj^s. viij^d.

In tribus paribus *der* de eodem, x^d.

In duobus ducenis *Gel* et dimidio ducenæ de eodem, iij^s. x^d.

j ducen de *der*, iij^s. vj^d.

In vj paribus cyrothecum furratis cum panno de eodem,
ij^s. viij^d.

⁶ *Scutella*, a kind of dish or platter, a trencher.

⁷ *Trua*, a kind of vessel to receive homely things, a trough, or tray.

⁸ *Caula*, ex caveola, a sheep fold.

⁹ Mr. Raine interprets *fallus* to be “ a measure, or portion of land, less apparently than a rood ”; but I think it means here *bundles* of bruery, or furse: elsewhere we have “ in tribus caractatis de bruare emptis.”

¹ *Der*. This word occurs only in the account of 20 Edward III. The account of 1361 mentions gloves generally at 7*d.* and 7½*d.* the pair, and 2*s.* 2*d.* the dozen. In 1332 gloves were bought at 4*d.* a pair. Those called *der* in 1346 were at a lower price than this. *Der* therefore may be *dere* in the sense of soiled or injured, from the verb “ to dere or hurte. :” (*Prompt. Parv.* 119, n. 1); or what I think more probable it meant deer-skin gloves. What the other articles denominated *Gel* may be, I have no idea, unless the word be really *Tel*, *tela*, a species of web or cloth. (Vol. vi. p. 337.)

But I have been tempted by these archaisms away from Creake Abbey, to which I must return.

It may be in the memory of those of our members who visited these picturesque ruins upon the occasion before adverted to, that in reading a short account of the foundation and dissolution of this monastery, I stated on the authority of the *Monasticon*, that it was considered as dissolved in the 22nd year of King Henry VII. because the last abbat died without a convent to elect another. Some doubt was thrown upon the accuracy of that statement, and it was even said that the deed of surrender under the seals of the abbat and canons was amongst the college archives. I have since satisfied myself that there is no ground for any such doubt, and that the supposititious existence of any such deed of surrender is a mistake. Still I am not in a situation to prove the fact by documentary evidence. Dugdale's information, as quoted in the *Monasticon*, is professed to be derived from "the copy of a bill in Chancery, exhibited on the part of Bishop Nix against Christ's College."—*M.S. in Archivis Eccl. Cath. Norwic.* The deputy registrar has most kindly taken the trouble to search the Chapter records for this copy bill without success. But there is another wholly independent authority for the statement,—Nichols, the historian of Leicestershire. In treating of the manor of Ilston,² or as we have had it in the rentals, Ilveston, he says,—“In 1509, by reason that the abbot survived the convent of Creke who had died of an infectious and epidemical disease, or some other cause, on his death the lordship of Ilston escheated to the king with the rest of their revenues and estates, and was never after restored, of which the inquisition, here briefly abridged, remains amongst the records in the Rolls. [M.S. Chetwynd ex. Rot., 22 Hen. VII. No 284, Leic.]

“Juratores dicunt quod Egidius Skevington, nuper abbas monasterii beate Marie de Pratis juxta Creke, com. Norfolk,

² Vol. ii. p. 551.

seisitus fuit in dominio suo ut de feudo de manerio de Ilstone, co. Leic. & de terris in Thurnby & Bushby in eodem com, ac de curiâ lete in dicto manerio & villis & liberâ warrenâ & aliis libertatibus dict' manerio & villis spectantibus, ut in jure monasterii predict', tent' de rege in capite in purâ eleemosinâ Et ulterius juratores dicunt quod dictus Egidius Skevington nuper abbas sic seisitus existens obiit 12 Decemb. anno 22 regni Hen. VII. absque aliquo conventu commonachorum aut alicujus canonici in dicto monasterio existente; et sic successivè inde totaliter dictum monasterium fuit dissolutum et determinatum pretextu cujus predicta Abbathia et monasterium & omnia maneria messuagia terre & tenementa cum pertinentiis dicte abbathie et monasterio spectantia domini regis nunc ut eschaeta revertent & revertere debent, habend' dicto regi & successoribus suis in perpetuum."

Now I am bound to say that I have searched the Public Record Office for the inquisition referred to by Nichols, and searched in vain. The inquisition made after the death of Giles Skevington is not to be found. The grant made in the same year to the Lady Margaret does not refer to it; and all the escheat rolls of the last years of Henry VII. are wanting. But be it observed, Mr. Nichols did not profess to derive his information from the roll itself, but from "the Chetwynd MSS." I have not had access to these manuscripts, which are in private hands, but there is no doubt of their authenticity; and they are referred to in Erdeswick's *History of Staffordshire* (Dr. Harwood's edit., 1844). A search amongst the records of the Court of Chancery will probably lead to the bill in Chancery, cited in Dugdale, and settle the question, but that I have not yet had time to make. I have thought the singularity of the narrative, and regard to the historical accuracy of Dugdale and Nichols, have justified me in devoting attention thus far to the subject.

One other desideratum I am happily able to supply. The editors of the last edition of the *Monasticon* say that no



seal of this abbey or of any of its abbots has yet occurred to them. Through the kindness of Mr. Robert Ready, of the British Museum, I have obtained an impression of a seal, which, if not a forgery, did undoubtedly belong to this abbey; but unfortunately Mr. Ready is unable to remember from whence he originally took it. There is a sharpness in the impression which gives the idea that it was taken from a matrix, but the obscurity of this small abbey makes a forgery very improbable. It appears to represent the Annunciation of the B. V. M., and the legend is s' ABATIS ET CONVENTVS DE CREK AD CAVSAS. The excellent woodcut here given renders any further description unnecessary.