

The Proceedings of the Society during the year 1912.

Tuesday, April 23rd, 1912.

MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE. Mr. Tingey exhibited a Roman Coin (large, brass) of Antoninus Pius, struck between A.D. 140 and 143, which had been deposited in the Castle Museum by the City Engineer. The coin was recently found when excavations were made in St. Faith's Lane, Norwich, in black, undisturbed soil above the running sand, thought to have been river mud in past ages.

The Rev. W. Hudson, in *Norfolk Archæology*, vol. x., gives an interesting account of this locality, with accompanying plans indicating the site of a supposed dyke.

Wednesday, June 5th.

ANNUAL MEETING. The General Annual Meeting was held in the Council Chamber of the Guildhall. The President addressing the gathering alluded to the deaths of Bishop Sheepshanks, one of the Patrons of the Society, of the Rev. Beauchamp De Chair, late Hon. Editorial Secretary, of Dr. Bately, one of the Committee, and of Mr. G. E. Cokayne, of the College of Heralds. In the name of the Society he thanked Colonel Bulwer for the gift of certain Manuscripts of Norfolk Pedigrees belonging to the late General Bulwer. He mentioned the encouraging position of the Society, pointing out that thirty-five new members had been elected in 1911, and having drawn attention to the fact that it was necessary to find some means for excluding unauthorised outsiders, some of whom might prove undesirable persons, from the excursions of the Society, he suggested that members and their friends should wear some small badge on those occasions by which they could be recognised. In conclusion he stated that he had been invited by Mr. E. M. Beloe, F.S.A., to visit Lynn the following day and there represent the Society on the occasion of the opening of the "Greenland Fishery," which was to be administered on the lines of the "Strangers' Hall," Mr. Leonard Bolingbroke's House in Norwich.



"THE GREENLAND FISHERY," LYNN.

The following *Annual Report* and *Financial Statement* were next read and adopted:—

In presenting our Annual Report of the Norfolk REPORT FOR THE and Norwich Archæological Society for the past YEAR 1911. year, we beg to state that our present membership appears to be 325. We sincerely regret the loss of Bishop Skeepshanks, one of our Patrons, who died on June 3rd, and of the Rev. Beauchamp De Chair, who resigned his position as Editorial Secretary last year owing to continued ill-health and the necessity of having to leave the county. He did not long survive. He died at Crookham, Hants, and is buried there. We have also lost Dr. John Bately, one of the committee, a prominent member of the Great Yarmouth Branch; the Rev. E. J. Alvis, Vicar of East Winch, elected a member in 1875; Mr. J. L. Clemence, of Lowestoft, elected in 1865; Sir Francis Sharp Powell, Bart., of Horton, Bradford, elected in 1865; and Mr. G. E. Cokayne, F.S.A., Clarence King at Arms, elected in 1866. There have been several meetings during 1911. On March 9th Mr. E. Milligen Beloe, F.S.A., gave a lecture on "Seals and Impressions of Seals" at the Castle Museum. On Thursday, May 2nd, the Science Gossip Club courteously invited our gentlemen members to attend a lecture given by His Highness Prince Frederick Duleep Singh on "The Restoration, so called, of Ancient Buildings." The Annual Meeting was held on May 18th with a very enjoyable visit to St. Andrew's, St. Gregory's, and St. Swithin's Churches. Excursions were made to South Elmham Minster, and other places on July 13th, and to Holkham on Sept. 1st, where the Society was most kindly entertained by the Lord-Lieutenant and the Countess of Leicester. Of these events an account has been published in our last annual part, which makes any lengthy reference to them now superfluous. Some of the gold nobles found at Raynham have been acquired by the Castle Museum. The Dean and Chapter have acquired an ancient manuscript, a beautiful illuminated Psalter of the fifteenth century, which includes an interesting marginal note of a solemn service held in 1549, in thanksgiving for the suppression of Kett's Rebellion. From an extract from the city records quoted by Blomefield it appears that the 27th of August was ordained at that time to be "henceforth for ever a day of special thanksgiving for the suppression of Kett's Rebellion." Several of Dr. Jessopp's MSS. and Townshend heirlooms have been acquired by the Norwich Public Library Committee, and Mr. Beloe, F.S.A., has purchased part of the old house at Lynn known as the Greenland Fishery, and thus ensured its preservation. In February of this year the Secretaries of our Society were courteously invited to meet the Trustees of the Great Hospital to confer with them about the present condition of the large brick building situated on the edge of the River Wensum, now known as the "Cow Tower."

We are pleased to say that after a careful inspection a very valuable report was drawn up by our member, Mr. Herbert Green, whose advice was accepted by all those concerned with thanks. As this building may not be well known to many present, it may be stated that it is in a meadow now belonging to the Great Hospital, near Bishop Bridge. In Mr. Tingey's valuable book on the *Records of the City of Norwich*, p. xxxix, we find "The improvements in the finances permitted many works to be undertaken, one of the first of which was the building, or re-building a tower, now known as the Cow Tower, commanding a bend of the river where there was no other artificial defence." This was done in 1399. Again, on p. 315, "And they" (the inhabitants of East Wymer Ward) "shall have the said tower, and Bar Gates and all the walls unto the tower in the water, and the same tower with the dungeon by the Hospital Meadows, on the north-east corner" (to keep in repair). On p. 59 of the *Walls of Norwich*, published by direction of the Lord Mayor and Corporation, we have, "This tower was formerly used as a toll-house (in modern language Custom House) by the Prior and Convent, then as a prison for the jurisdiction of the Cathedral, and was later assigned to the Great Hospital." Volume xviii., part ii., of our Transactions is well in hand as well as the Calendar of Lynn Freemen, but the difficulties of publishing this are considerable. Sall Church, which was under restoration when visited last year, was re-opened on Easter Tuesday by the Dean of Norwich, acting for the Bishop, who was prevented by illness.

At the last Annual General Meeting of the Society there was a wish expressed that the Society should assist Mr. T. Hugh Bryant to complete the publication of his monographs on the churches of Norfolk. On the motion of Prince Frederick Duleep Singh, this matter was referred to a Special Committee, which has held several meetings, and its report, which has been circulated among our members, was unanimously adopted on March 27th. It is proposed that the work be published in the same size and form as our volumes of *Norfolk Archeology*; the churches to be arranged according to Hundreds. As there is no other similar work on the churches of this county, we trust that a sufficient number of subscribers will be found to ensure its success. The Committee has obtained from the "Norwich Mercury" Company leave to reprint volumes already published, thereby ensuring completeness and uniformity. Members willing to subscribe are asked to send their names to Mr. J. E. T. Pollard, who has kindly consented to act as Hon. Secretary to the Special Committee to assist Mr. Bryant.

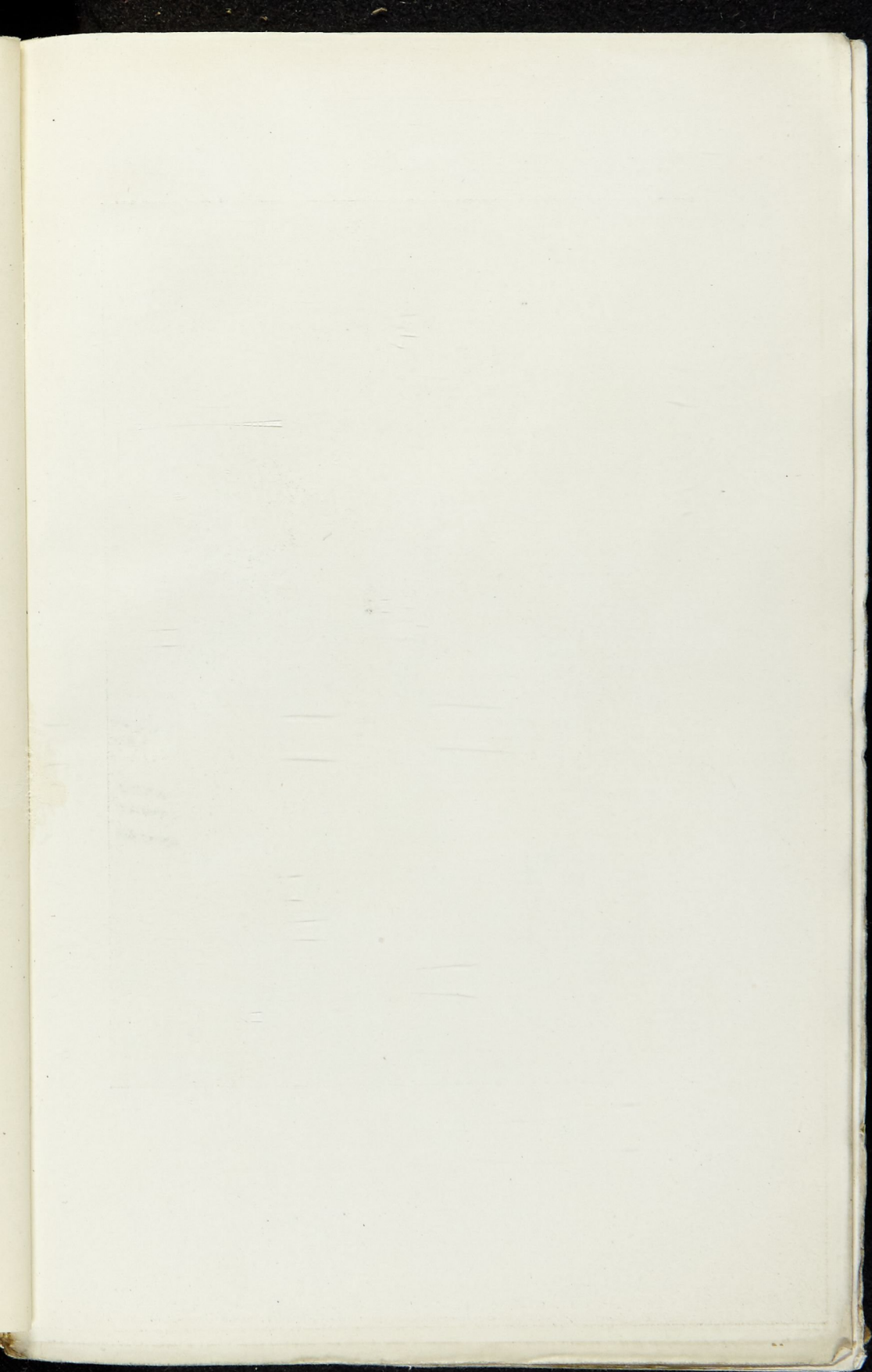
The Members of the Committee who retire by rotation are the Rev. B. J. Armstrong, Sir Peter Eade, Mr. Bosworth Harcourt, Rev. G. H. Holley, and Mr. J. E. T. Pollard. They are eligible for re-election, but Mr. Armstrong has asked to retire from the Committee owing to his difficulty in attending, and one member must be elected in the place of Dr. Bately.

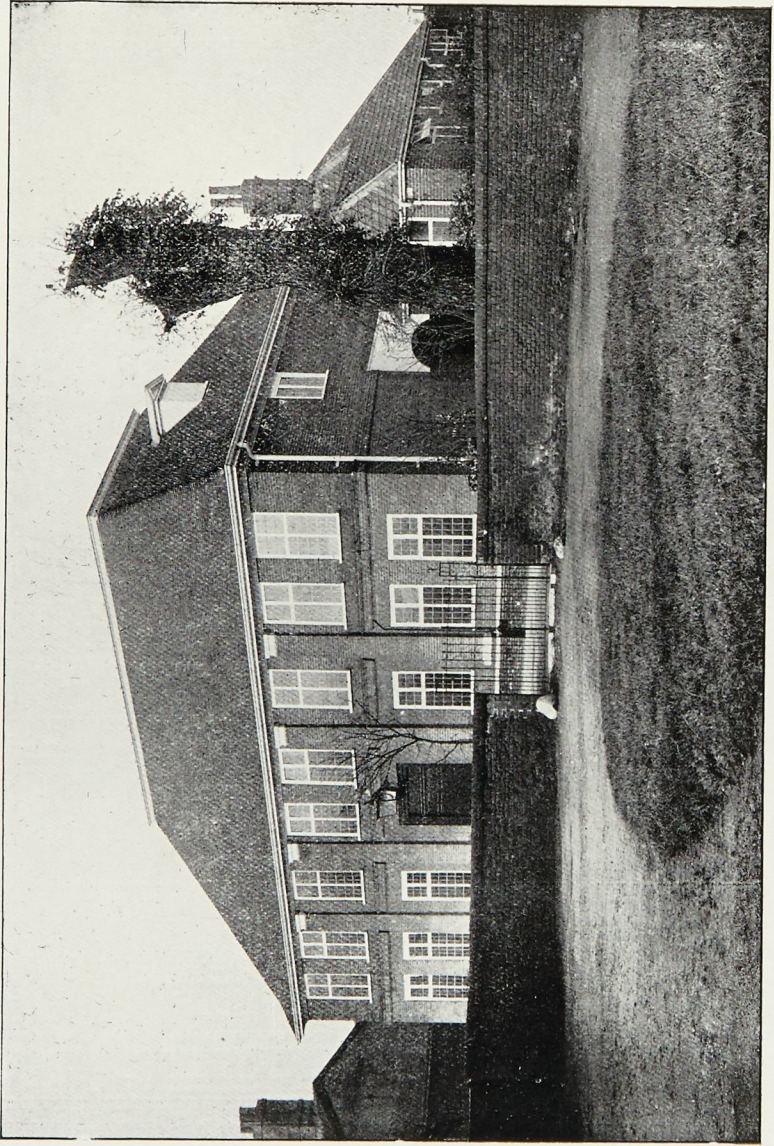
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Dr. **Portfolk and Norwich Archaeological Society.—The Treasurer's Account for the year 1911.**

	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
Balance at Messrs. Barclays' Bank:—						
General Account	34	14	10			
Deposit Account	203	14	7			
			238	9	5	
Subscriptions			102	7	6	
Donation from Mr. J. H. Gurney towards the						
expense of Photographing the Cartulary of				5	0	0
Blackborough Nunnery				4	1	2
Interest on Deposit Account				111	8	8
Messrs. Goose & Son:—						
Printing Part I. of Vol. XVIII. of <i>Norfolk</i>				56	12	0
<i>Archæology</i>				3	8	3
Wrapping and Postage of Publications ...				14	14	3
Stundry Printing, Stationery, and Postage ...				74	14	6
				3	14	7
Illustrations for Publications						
Mr. Donald Macbeth:—Photographs of the						
Cartulary of Blackborough				8	13	9
Expenses of Meetings				15	7	3
Miss Bowles for Typewriting				1	3	4
Postage Stamps and Carriage of Parcels				0	15	0
Insurance				0	9	0
Gratuity to Guildhall Keeper				0	10	0
Subscription to Canterbury and York Society,				1	1	0
1911-12						
Subscription to Congress of Archaeological						
Societies				1	7	6
Norfolk and Norwich Library—Use of Room ...				3	3	0
Assistant Secretary's Salary				12	12	0
Balance at Messrs. Barclays' Bank:—						
General account				18	11	5
Deposit Account				207	15	9
				226	7	2
				£349	18	1

Audited and found correct, 30th October, 1912,
HENRY BRITAIN.





THE FRIENDS' MEETING HOUSE IN THE GILDENCROFT.

The Hon. Excursion Secretary, Mr. Walter R. Rudd, having explained that the funds of the Society were extensively used for defraying the cost of the excursions; it was decided that each person taking part in one should be obliged to have a ticket, for which a charge of one shilling would be made.

With regard to the publication of Mr. Hugh Bryant's *Norfolk Churches*, Mr. J. E. T. Pollard stated that the work would be published in volumes at the price of 7s. each, and that the sum of £125 had been already guaranteed towards the £150 required, but 250 subscribers were necessary to enable the publication to be produced without loss.

The Right Hon. The Earl of Orford was unanimously re-elected President. The remaining officers were also re-elected, as were the retiring members of the Committee, Mr. F. H. Barclay and Mr. R. H. Teesdale being chosen to fill the vacancies in that body.

In the afternoon a visit was first made to the

THE FRIENDS' MEETING HOUSE, where Mr. Walter R. GILDENCROFT Rudd read the following paper:—

MEETING HOUSE. "Les monuments sont les crampons qui unissent une génération à une autre," declared a celebrated author. This pregnant phrase, to me, seems to fitly express the wide bounds of archaeological research. Surely, interest should not wane with the Decorated Gothic era and cease with the Tudor age! Our glorious Cathedral: our renowned churches—of which every good citizen should hold himself trustee—link us with generations of a remote past and their ornate ritual. This Friends' Meeting House, I think, helps us the better to understand an important phase in our national life, as well as the history of a community valued and honored in the annals of Norwich.

Devoid of decorative effect, the building impresses one with a reposeful air of restrained dignity which accords well with the simple faith of those generations of Friends who, believing doctrines and creeds,

"but variant views

Held by mortals of immortal truths,"

here for centuries have adored the universal Creator in their simple manner, testifying the one to the other without priest or pastor. Here long worshipped the saintly Elizabeth Fry. The vivacious Amelia Opie. The justly honored Joseph John Gurney.

Norwich at the close of the seventeenth century, when the chapel was erected, has been described in glowing terms by Lord Macaulay. It then had a population of about 30,000, composed of English, Dutch, Walloons, and French; it was the second town in the kingdom, and, already the chief seat of textile manufactures, it was to see more than half a century of increasing prosperity. William Taylor has recorded that Norwich patterns were exhibited in every principal town from Moscow to Lisboa, Seville, and Naples.

In the midst of such prosperity, Benjamin Bangs, writing in 1679, describes the Norwich Quakers as men of poor estate, journeymen combers, weavers, shoemakers, etc. Yet one family of Quakers, the Gurneys, from those times until the present was to prove an invaluable and important factor in the city.

Through Mr. Eddington's kindness it has been possible to inspect the *Minute Books* of the Society of Friends, which commence in 1670. At that time the members met in a hired room, the original Goat Lane Chapel being opened in 1680. One of the earliest entries relates to the purchase of the Burial Ground in St. Augustine. For a few years, however, part of it appears to have been used as a tenter ground, but some building, which may have been nothing more than a stable for the convenience of "Friends" from the country attending the Goat Lane Chapel, was erected here in 1694. After several years had been consumed in collecting funds, the present Meeting House was opened in February, 1699.

In the Burying Ground ninety-nine Gurneys are interred, and many Birkbecks, including the John Birkbeck of whom Richard Gurney wrote in a letter dated 5th January, 1771, found a few years since at the old "Gurney House" in Magdalen Street:—"At the close of the last year our old firm of J. S. and R. Gurney ended. We begun the new with the firm of Richard and John Gurney and Co. The Co. is my particular friend J. Birkbeck, who has conducted himself with such strict Propriety during a residence of near 16 yrs as to merit the friendship of our whole family." Here also rests Amelia Opie. "A goodly company," and so we leave these worthy "Friends" sleeping their long last sleep in this secluded spot, "retired, yet encompassed by the busy haunts of man."

"Where all the air a solemn stillness holds
Beneath those rugged elms."

The party then proceeded to the Octagon Chapel, of which Mr. G. A. King gave an account. He said: THE OCTAGON CHAPEL. On August 24th, 1662, two Norwich clergymen, being Presbyterians, were compelled, with many others, to resign their livings. One was Dr. John Collinges, a native of Boxted, Essex, and, at the time of the ejection, minister of St. Stephen's Church; the other was Benjamin Snowden, a Norwich man, who held the living of St. Clement. Ten years afterwards, on the proclamation of *Indulgence to Nonconformists*, both these individuals seized the opportunity to obtain licences to teach their co-religionists and, within a short time, they procured a lease from the Corporation of Norwich of part of the Long Granary at the New Hall (now St. Andrew's Hall and its precinct) for purposes of religious worship. The lease was periodically renewed until the *Declaration for Liberty of Conscience* in 1687, when the Presbyterians commenced building a Meeting House of their own. There is an illustration of the Old

Meeting House on Cleer's *Plan of Norwich*. It was enlarged in 1693, but the building could not have held more than 500 persons. Collinges and Snowden were the first ministers, and they worked together. Collinges died in 1690 and is buried in the church of Walcot; Snowden died in 1696 and is buried in St. George Colegate, there being no burial ground attached to the first Meeting House.

The building stood for sixty-six years, and, though nothing of the fabric remains, there are one or two interesting links with the early days, the most valuable being the six silver plates, "The gift of Mr. John Raining" in 1713. There are, besides, the communion table of elm and tablets to the memory of Sarah Petty, who died in 1751; of Benjamin and Sarah Elden, members of the first congregation; and of George Coldham, who died in 1769.*

In 1753 it was determined to pull down the old building at once and to erect a new one, for which octagonal plans were desired. The design of Thomas Ivory was approved and accepted, Dr. John Taylor laying the foundation stone in February, 1754. The building was opened in May, 1756, the cost being £5,174. 15s. 8d., and during its construction the congregation met in the church of St. Mary the Less. Mr. John Taylor says: "The roof is admirable in its contrivance, and the fluted columns are of the Corinthian order. The eye of the critic may be offended by the disfigurement of the columns where the moulding and cornices of the gallery cut into them, but, as the galleries were not to be dispensed with, beauty was sacrificed to utility." John Wesley also speaks of "Dr. Taylor's new Meeting House" as "perhaps the most elegant one in all Europe."

Besides Dr. John Collinges, the roll of the ministers gives the names of Dr. John Taylor, a composer of several hymns of merit. He left Norwich in 1757 to become Divinity Tutor of the Warrington Academy. His colleague, the Rev. Samuel Bourn, was a masterly writer and profound thinker, under whose influence came James E. Smith, afterwards Sir James of the Linnean Society, and Edward Maltby, afterwards Bishop of Durham. The Rev. George Morgan, a regular contributor to the *Analytical Review*. The Rev. R. Alderson, who was called to the Bar and later on became Recorder of Norwich.† Dr. William Enfield, who was instrumental in the foundation of the Norwich Public Library and author of *Enfield's Speaker*. Among his pupils were the future Lord Chief Justice Denman and the Bishop of Durham, already mentioned. The names also of Harriet Martineau, of Dr. Thomas Baker, and of Henry Reeve, M.D., could not be passed over.

The Congregational Church was next visited, and the Minister, the Rev. J. J. Brooker, gave an account of its origin and history. The records, which run back to 1635, supply the reason why our forefathers broke

* The four silver cups bear the date 1785.

† See p. xxx.

away from the National Church as follows:—"The urging of Popish customs in the worship and service of God, the suspending and silencing of divers godly ministers and the preaching of godly men and women by Bishop Wren and his instruments in Norwich, Yarmouth, and other places, caused divers godly people to pass over into Holland to enjoy freedom from superstitious human inventions in God's worship."

Among the refugees was the Rev. William Bridge, who is described as a good scholar and who had been ejected from St. George, Tombland, and while in Holland he ministered to the exiles.

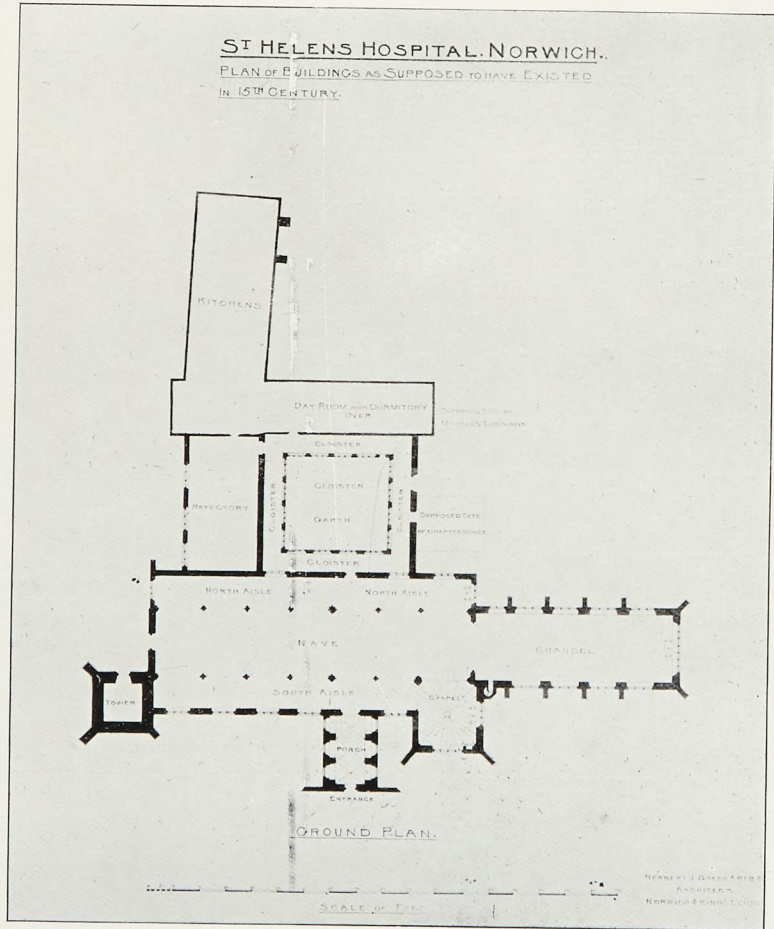
During the Long Parliament the Church at Rotterdam assented to their return to England "with the purpose of gathering into Church fellowship there," but as some were living in Norwich and some in Yarmouth, there was a difficulty in settling the place of meeting. In 1642 it was agreed that church meetings should be at Yarmouth, while in both places societies should be formed.

In 1644 the Church at Norwich was instituted, and three years later it was strong enough to support a minister of its own, the Rev. Timothy Armitage, who died in 1655. He was succeeded by the Rev. Thomas Allen, who continued as pastor for seventeen years and was followed by the Rev. John Cromwell in 1675. Cromwell had been presented to a living in Nottinghamshire by the Lord Protector, but he was ejected in 1662 and imprisoned for some years at Newark; moreover, when in Norwich he was subjected to many annoyances. His chair stands in the vestry and is an interesting relic of bygone days.

At first the Church met in private houses, afterwards in a granary, part of the Black Friars, for which a small rent was paid to the Corporation of Norwich, and then in a house in St. Edmund's Parish, which was fitted up as a chapel. The present building was erected in 1693 and is described by Blomefield in his *History of Norwich*. The chief features remain, but the "handsome brass branch" noticed by Blomefield has been improved away. Some modern improvements have been introduced, such as the organ and electric lighting. The seats have been remodelled, and the presence of tombs and vaults have rendered alterations necessary. Moreover, there was no vestibule in 1693.

The communion cups were presented by Bartholomew Balderston, who bequeathed £1,000 to the Bethel Hospital, and the name of Jarrold was for many years familiar in the church. The Rev. Martyn Finch is buried in the yard at the back of the pulpit. Some years ago a proposal to bring his monumental tablet inside the church was rejected because of its allusion to the painful malady from which he suffered, but that of John Corey, on which the same words occur in Latin, was admitted. Here are also buried John Bateman, Sheriff in 1825, and Dawson Paul, who is interred in the west end; but no name has been more closely associated with the

ST HELENS HOSPITAL, NORWICH.
 PLAN OF BUILDINGS AS SUPPOSED TO HAVE EXISTED
 IN 15TH CENTURY.



Reduced from the Original Plan prepared by H. J. Green, A.R.I.B.A.

church than that of Balls. There are further memorials of the Rev. Samuel Newson, 1768-1810; of the Rev. John Stackhouse, 1690-1707; of the Rev. Thomas Scott, 1709-1746; of the Rev. John Boutet Innes, 1825-1837; of John Hallett and of Robert Hobson.

The day was concluded with an inspection of
 ST. HELEN'S St. Helen's Hospital, round which Sir Peter Eade,
 HOSPITAL. M.D., conducted the visitors. He explained that
 the Hospital was founded by Bishop Suffield in 1249,
 to maintain all the poor and decrepit chaplains in his diocese, besides
 four chaplains celebrating daily for his soul. In addition, thirteen
 poor people were to be lodged there, receiving one meal a day; and
 gifts to wayfarers were not forgotten. In 1253 the Bishop conse-
 crated the chapel, calling the house "Domus Dei," and by his will he
 ordered that his heart should be deposited in a cavity in the wall
 by the high altar. At about this time, too, the meadow called the
 Cow Holm was given by William de Dunwich. By 1310 the bene-
 factations and the revenues having largely expanded, the four chaplains
 were increased to eight, and the number of those obtaining relief
 was augmented. Further gifts of lands and so forth were made to
 the institution, as well as such benefactions as a feast of roast beef
 and plum pudding on Plough Monday, a bean feast in July, a veal
 feast in August, and a goose feast on Michaelmas Day. In accord-
 ance with the will of King Henry VIII., the hospital, which had
 been surrendered, was conveyed to the corporate body of Norwich
 to be a house of relief for poor people, and to be called God's House
 or the House of the Poor in Holmstreet, in which forty poor persons
 were to be maintained.

In 1833 the revenues had risen to £5,885 and were able to support
 100 inmates, all over sixty years of age. In 1858 a scheme was
 approved by the Court of Chancery, vesting the Hospital and the
 greater part of its property in twenty-one trustees, the smaller
 portion being appropriated to the Norwich Grammar and Commercial
 Schools. The qualification for admission now is an age of not less
 than sixty-five years, a residence in Norwich for three years last
 past, and the non-possession of any property amounting in value
 to £12 a year.

The Church. The portion of the building used as a church is a
 central portion of the nave. Mr. Green describes the entire fabric
 as having "seven arcades, all of which were once clustered pillars,
 and above are clerestory windows of good Perpendicular work." Perhaps
 the most striking features are the south transept and the
 chancel. The transept is groined over with stone ribs with bosses
 representing the coronation of the Blessed Virgin and other subjects.
 There are four quaintly carved poppy heads on the front benches,
 representing SS. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and Margaret, and on a
 sunken panel beneath the last are the letters "hec," denoting John
 Hecker, who seated the nave in 1526. Over the principal entrance

is a tablet recording the Royal gift of the house, in a verse familiar to all. The most notable memorial stone is that of John Kirkpatrick, an eminent antiquary and citizen, who died in 1728.

The Cloisters, built by Bishop Lyhart, Prior Mollelt, and others in 1451, are in fair repair. The roof is of wood covered with lead. Over the south-west corner hangs a very old bell, still in use and in excellent preservation and tone. It was possibly once a refectory bell.

An Ancient Cannon, said to have been dug up in the Cow Tower, stands in the hall. It is believed to have been used against the rebels in Kett's Rebellion.

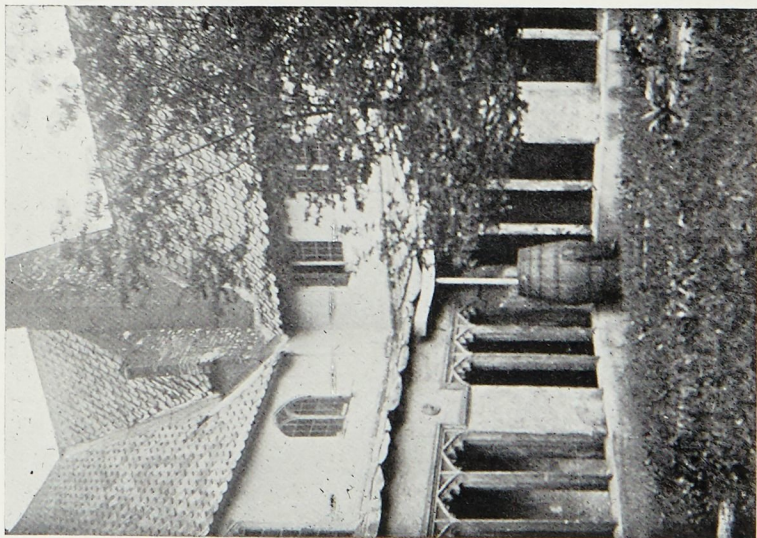
The Birkbeck Hall was erected to the memory of Mr. Henry Birkbeck, who was chairman of the Hospital Trust for twenty years, in 1901-2 by subscription. It stands upon the site of former brewhouses.

The Wards, eight in number, accommodate 162 persons and the requisite attendants or nurses, but there are four other wards for the sick and imbecile. There are also thirty-seven cottages for men who are allowed to take in their wives as housekeepers, and thus there are 200 people receiving the benefits of the institution.

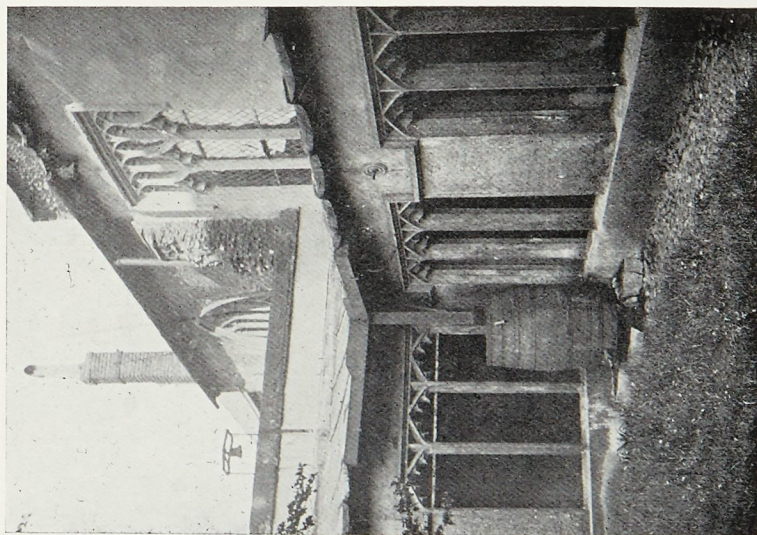
The Swannery in the hospital garden is interesting, both from its antiquity and from being the only place in England where young swans are fatted in such numbers, namely, about seventy every year. One of them is sent annually at Christmas to the King at Sandringham. The cygnets are brought here after the swan-hopping, which consists in officials of the Norwich Corporation and of this Hospital going down the river in August as far as Hardley Cross and, with the river-keepers, cutting the marks of the various owners upon the bills of the young birds.

The Cow Tower stands at the east end of the Holm Meadow, abutting on the river. At one time it may have guarded a passage or ford, but some have expressed doubts whether Blomefield's account of it is correct. It is described by Mr. Arthur Collins in the *Walls of Norwich* as about 50 feet high, having an external diameter of 36 feet and an internal diameter of about 24 feet, the walling being 6 feet thick at the base. There is a staircase turret on the south side, having an external diameter of about 13 or 14 feet, with walling about 2 feet thick. It appears to have been erected in the latter half of the fourteenth century, and Mr. J. C. Tingey believed that it was one of the oldest brick buildings in the kingdom. He (Sir Peter) judged that it was also employed for the protection of the fish in the river for the use of the establishment to which it belonged. The importance of this would be seen, when (as stated by Mr. Rye) salmon were still caught in the Norwich river as late as 1667.

St. Helen's House is notable as having been the residence of Robert Alderson, Recorder of Yarmouth, Ipswich, and of Norwich



NORTH-WEST CORNER.



SOUTH-EAST CORNER.

THE CLOISTER AT ST. HELEN'S HOSPITAL.

from 1826 to 1831. He was the son of a Nonconformist minister at Lowestoft, and the father of Dr. James Alderson, physician of Norwich, and of Baron Sir Edward Hall Alderson. He was also uncle of Mrs. Amelia Opie, and of Sir James Alderson, physician of London, and was grandfather of Georgina, Marchioness of Salisbury. Mrs. Opie, daughter of Dr. James Alderson, was born at 22, Calvert Street, in this city.

St. Helen's Square contains the residence of the Chaplain of the Hospital, who is also Vicar of St. Helen's Parish. In this house are two handsome door mouldings, evidently ecclesiastical in character and of considerable antiquity. Their origin is unknown, but they are clearly not a proper part of the house itself.

Tuesday, July 9th.

FIRST EXCURSION. A most enjoyable excursion on the River Bure to the more interesting sites of the Broad district was made in motor-launches, on which about sixty members and their friends embarked at Wroxham. In the absence of the President and of any of the Vice-Presidents, Mr. J. H. Walter, J.P., took charge of the proceedings for the day.

Arriving at St. Benet's Abbey, Mr. Walter R. Rudd, Hon. Excursion Secretary, gave the information that the first recorded excursion to the Monastery took place in the Whitsuntide of 1469, when the Mayor, Aldermen, and about a hundred citizens of Norwich came there to pay court to the King's mother, who was then staying there. He reminded his hearers that the Abbey was the most ancient and most richly endowed in Norfolk, and the only one in England of which the revenues remain intact, and which are still devoted to a religious purpose, viz., that of providing an income for the Bishop of Norwich; it was, moreover, the only abbey of which the abbots have, for nearly a thousand years, held a seat as Peers of the Realm in Parliament. To-day the Bishop of Norwich sits in the House of Lords, not as Lord Bishop of the Diocese, but as Lord Abbot of St. Benet at Holm.

According to monkish tradition, a certain Suniman built a small monastery here, of which he was the head for fifty years, but the Danes, under Hungar and Hubba, destroyed it in 870. As time went on, the Danes embraced Christianity, and in some cases rebuilt the religious houses which their fathers had destroyed. Thus we are told Wolfric re-built the ruined church here, which had existed some sixty years when King Canut determined to transform it into an abbey.

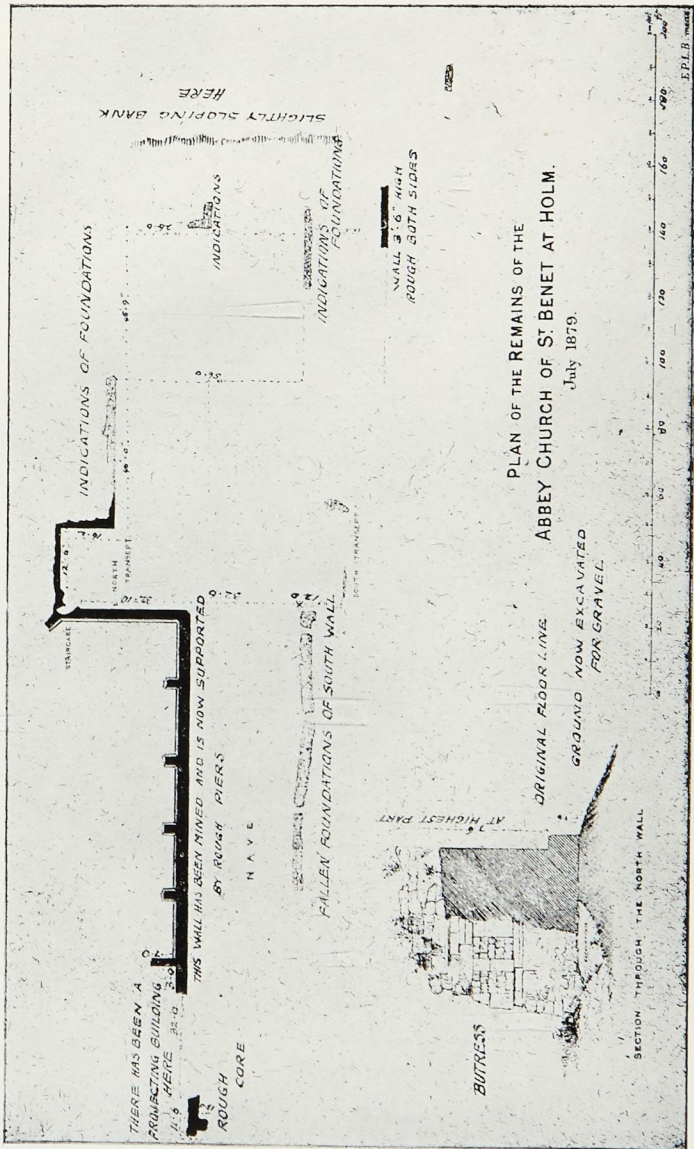
The Abbey was liberally endowed by Canut, and in the Confessor's reign it was one of the richest in England. At this time, Camden states, the Abbey was so fortified that it looked more like a castle

than a cloister. So strong was it, that William the Conqueror was unable to take it until a monk agreed to open a postern gate on condition that he should be made abbot as his reward. William kept his word, but he hanged the newly-made abbot as a traitor. We can picture the Abbey before the Conquest being as Kingsley describes Croyland.

King William did not disturb the Abbey's possessions, and, as time went on, the older structures were replaced by more imposing buildings. About 1152, Abbot Daniel built the hospital of St. James and commenced a new chapter house and cloister, which were finished by his successor. About 1180, Abbot Thomas reconstructed the frater and part of the cloister, the remainder being built from the foundations by the next abbot, who also built the infirmary with its chapel and cloister. The guest hall was built before 1229, and about 1266, Adam de Neatishead began a new presbytery, which appears to have been completed about 1274. The south aisle and the chapel of St. Mary, by the side of the presbytery, were built by Sir John Fastolf in the fifteenth century, and he and his wife, Millicent, were buried in the chapel, under a fine marble tomb.

William of Worcester, one of Sir John's executors, describes these buildings as beautifully constructed of freestone, and vaulted. He also gives the dimensions of the entire church in paces, which appear to equal two feet. His measurements work out thus: extreme length, 300 ft.; breadth of presbytery, 34 ft.; breadth of south aisle, 21 ft.; length of south aisle, 116 ft.; length of north aisle, 136 ft.; breadth of north aisle, 24 ft.; length of choir, 48 ft.

The Gatehouse, dating from the middle of the fourteenth century, is the best preserved fragment remaining. It has a facing of free-stone and flint, the entrance being formed by a boldly-moulded arch, flanked on either side by an octagonal turret. In the spandrels of the arch, on the sinister side, is an armed man with a sword; on the other, the remains of a huge rampant animal. Blomefield considers them to represent St. Benet rescuing a deserting monk from the devil. To the south of the outer entrance there is a fragment of the precinct wall. It is pierced with loopholes within arches, and appears of later date than the gateway. This wall enclosed about eighty-six acres, of which at least ten acres appear to have been covered by the church and the various other buildings. The size suggests numerous denizens. In addition to the Lord Abbot, the Prior, and other high officers, there were over twenty-five monks, besides novices and choristers. There were also gentlemen servants, yeomen servants, boy servants, and grooms; and there is record of a large number of laymen and women admitted into the Monastery in accordance with the custom of the times. The *Episcopal Visitations*, published by Canon Jessopp for the Camden Society, are not discreditable in a serious degree to the house.



By permission of the British Archaeological Association.



LUDHAM CHURCH LOOKING EAST.

King Henry VIII. did not intend to suppress this Abbey, for the Act of 1536 stipulates that the bishops of Norwich were always to be abbots thereof, and were to maintain a small convent of a prior and twelve monks for ever. Bishop Rugg and his successors plundered the place for the adornment of Ludham Hall and Norwich Palace, and it fell utterly to ruin, so that when Bishop Jegon came to the See in 1602. he claimed £3,161 from his predecessor, one item being for "2,000 yards of wall ruined and fallen down." Gradually the ruins, and even the bones from the tombs, were carted away, the former to repair the protective "rands" of the marshes on which the latter were scattered for top dressing.

The next halting place was Ludham Church, where
 LUDHAM the visitors were received by the Rev. G. A. B. Boycott,
 CHURCH. who informed them that he hoped to gain information rather than to impart it. Addressing the gathering, he said: The church, one of the largest and, in some ways, one of the most interesting in East Norfolk, is dedicated to St. Catherine, the virgin martyr of Alexandria, only two other churches in the diocese having a similar denomination. Its present state of excellent repair is due to the care of the Rev. J. J. Willmott. He wished to know the date of the clerestory windows, and whether the wall-posts of the hammer-beam roof were cut short, as they appeared to be, to allow these windows to be inserted. Were the grotesque figures underneath the four Evangelists on the font evil spirits driven out by baptism? There is an ancient chest of the fourteenth century and an alms box, probably pre-Reformation, made from the hollow trunk of a tree, and bound with iron. The bishop's pew remained, and he desired to be told whether the figure of a hand projecting from the south wall of the nave was for the purpose of holding a taper burning before the side altar, or to serve as a guide for the rope of the sanctus bell. The chancel is older than the nave. The chief beauty of the church was the screen, which bore the inscription, "Pray for the soul of John Salmon and Cecily, his wife, that gave forty pounds, and all other benefactors. Made in the year of our Lord God, 1493." The panels were filled with representations of saints. Were they Flemish? The chancel arch is boarded in, and on the boards is a picture of the Crucifixion, and on the other side the Royal arms painted on canvas. The boards and canvas were discovered in the stairway to the rood-loft and were replaced in their present position in 1890.

Returning to the launches, the journey was con-
 RANWORTH tinued to Ranworth, on the opposite side of the river,
 CHURCH. and on reaching the church the party was addressed by the Rev. H. J. Enraght, who compared the present state of the building with that of a comparatively few years since. Over £4,000 had been spent in getting the church into something like order. It had been found necessary to reface the nave and

repave the floor, for not many years ago grass was growing in the nave, and the walls were black with damp. All the fourteenth and fifteenth-century paving tiles which it had been possible to preserve were placed in the chancel together with others obtained from Langley. In the past the church had been despoiled of many beautiful things. The fine old double hammer-beam roof was sold in 1811 by a faculty of the Archdeacon of Norfolk when he was vicar of the parish, the lead was stripped off and sold for nearly £400, and the elaborate font cover, which was there in 1705 and of which this Society published an illustration many years ago,* disappeared about the same time. The proceeds were expended upon a new roof and wooden frames for the windows. The screen, unequalled in England for its paintings, had been whitewashed and thus protected, but it had suffered more from damp and dirt during the last sixty years than previously because, unfortunately, when the whitewash was removed, the roof, in which there were great holes ten or twelve years ago, was not mended. The loft had, most likely, been taken away in Queen Elizabeth's reign. The Illuminated Antiphoner, which had recently been discovered, proved that the present fabric was begun in 1370 and finished in 1420. The foundations of an earlier church had been found in the chancel, and the western arch was of thirteenth-century work. Two-thirds of the east window were bricked up in 1780, and most of the old beams in the chancel still had the bark upon them. The organ has an unusual position, viz., at the west end of the church; the case, all of which was of English workmanship, was one of its most expensive parts.

Mr. Walter read a letter from Mr. John RANWORTH Cator, M.P., expressing regret at his inability ANTIPHONER. to be present and stating his readiness to give £50 to a fund for procuring the Antiphoner above mentioned.

The Rev. H. J. Enraght, with whom we may join in the hope that some day the volume will be fully dealt with, has favoured us with (i.) a History and (ii.) a Description of it adapted to these pages as follows:—

I. *History.* The MS. was bequeathed to the church of Ranworth by William Cobbe in 1478, and was in use in 1538, as proved by an obit entry of that date. The order of Henry VIII. (1541) is shown in the crossing through of the Antiphons for St. Thomas of Canterbury, and the erasion of his name from the Calendar under December 29th. Most probably it was lost to the Church under the order of Edward VI. (1549-50), and its remarkable state of preservation would suggest its subsequent home to have been in some private collection. It was bought at Sotheby's by Messrs. Ellis, of 29, New Bond Street, out of the Huth Collection on November 16th, 1911. The fact of its existence was made known to me in August

* *Norf. Arch.*, vol. v., p. 268.

pri su. p. sūditus iūuitat
 domine. Omnes fructus terre. p


 lunt in iniquitatib; : non est
 nis de celo p̄spicit sup filiu
 si est intelligens aut requiritur
 diuauerunt simul inuiles fa
 faciat homi non est usus ad m

RANWORTH ANTIPHONER.

ILLUMINATED LETTER REPRESENTING DAVID AND A JESTER.

By permission of Messrs. Ellis.

last by Captain Holdich, himself a direct descendant of the family of that name resident in Ranworth from quite early days until the close of the eighteenth century. The MS. was rebound while in the Huth Collection with a strong cover of blue morocco, and to some degree the vellum was cut, but otherwise the inset is exceptionally perfect. It is of large size, measuring $20\frac{3}{4}$ ins. by $15\frac{1}{2}$ ins., and contains 285 leaves.

Date. This is not known exactly, but it is early fifteenth century. It must be some years previous to 1478, and, as the Calendar has no mention of St. Raphael, is earlier than 1443. In this connection it is worthy of note that William Cobbe valued it at 12 marcs, that is £4, which represented a considerable sum in his day.

Connection with Ranworth. Independent of the MS. we have it recorded that Cobbe bequeathed an Antiphoner, and this one contains sufficient internal proof as to its proper home. The words "Church of Ranworth" occur twice over in the margin of the Calendar for October where the date of the Dedication Festival is inserted. The date first entered was, according to the order of Henry VIII., the first Sunday in October, but a second entry states that Bishop Nix, of Norwich, ordered otherwise "throughout the whole Diocese," and fixed October 20th.

Where was the MS. composed? It is possible, judging by the capable men the screen proves to have been available in Ranworth, that it was produced in the parish, but there is just one fact that may go to support the theory that it was the work of some Langley genius. It is this. Ranworth belonged to Langley Abbey, and the subject of the miniature which marks the opening of the seventh or Saturday section of the Psalter in this MS. depicts a cantor's desk, with music either painted or resting on it, around which desk are grouped white habited singers. It will be remembered that the Langley monks as Praemonstratensians wore white. Possibly, therefore, this may mean that the Antiphoner was produced in the Langley Scriptorium.

II. *Description.* The Antiphoner includes the Invitatories, Hymns, Responds, Collects, Psalter, etc., so that together with a Legend (containing the Lessons appointed for Mattins) it would be possible for a parish priest, as has been pointed out, to say all his hours without a Breviary. The following from a will of 1470 shows that the church of Ranworth also possessed a Legend, and one of almost equal value with the Antiphoner:—"John Haylesden, senr., bequeathed 10 marcs, which John Haylesden, junr., owed him, to buy a new Legend."

It will be necessary to only briefly mention the contents of this wonderful volume, referring to the pages more or less illuminated.

A. The first portion has the Antiphons, etc., for use from Advent, throughout the year, also for the Dedication of a church. It includes eight illuminated pages, the initial letter in all but one instance bearing a subject.

- (1) *Advent*. Initial letter D (size, $2\frac{1}{2}$ ins. by $1\frac{3}{4}$ ins.).
- (2) *Nativity*. Letter H ($2\frac{1}{2}$ ins. by $2\frac{1}{4}$ ins.). Virgin, Child, St. Joseph, Shepherds.
- (3) *Epiphany*. Letter I (2 ins. by $1\frac{3}{4}$ ins.). Virgin, Child, Magi crowned, presenting gifts.
- (4) *Ascension*. Letter C ($2\frac{1}{2}$ ins. by $1\frac{3}{4}$ ins.). Virgin and the Apostles grouped round a mountain bearing the footprints of the ascending Lord.
- (5) *Pentecost*. Letter V ($2\frac{3}{4}$ ins. by $2\frac{1}{2}$ ins.). Virgin and Apostles, Dove descending.
- (6) *Trinity*. Letter G ($2\frac{3}{4}$ ins. by 2 ins.). Representation of the Father, enthroned, crowned, Dove, Crucifix.
- (7) *Corpus Christi*. Letter S (3 ins. by $2\frac{1}{2}$ ins.). A beautiful illustration of an English Altar with Celebrant elevating Host, Deacon, Sub-deacon.
- (8) *Dedication of a Church*. Letter O ($2\frac{3}{4}$ ins. by $2\frac{1}{4}$ ins.). A church with procession passing round the exterior, two crosses, bishop's staff.

B. The central portion has the Calendar, Psalter (Liturgical) in full, Canticles, Athanasian Creed, and Litany.

The *Calendar* is interesting, from a Ranworth point of view, in that it contains such valuable evidence. The obit of Robert Felmingham under January 22nd, 1505, is entered in the margin. He was buried by his expressed wish at the screen. The death of Johanna Holdich is also recorded under February 1st, 1538. In addition to the evidence mentioned above as to the Dedication Festival, the Patronal Festival is entered under August 18th: "St. Helen, Queen, mother of Constantine." The Transfiguration and Holy Name have been added for August 6th and 7th.

The *Psalter* has eight pages of illumination, marking the eight sections of the Psalms.

- (1) *Psalms i*. Letter B (4 ins. by 3 ins.). David, crowned and seated under canopy, playing a harp. Four attendants, one of whom is applauding.
- (2) *Psalms xvii*. Letter D ($3\frac{1}{2}$ ins. by $2\frac{1}{2}$ ins.). David, crowned and kneeling. The face of the Almighty in a frill of clouds.
- (3) *Psalms xxvix*. Letter D ($3\frac{1}{2}$ ins. by 3 ins.). David, crowned, kneeling, and holding sceptre.
- (4) *Psalms liii*. Letter D ($2\frac{3}{4}$ ins. by $2\frac{1}{4}$ ins.). David, crowned, enthroned, points with his left hand to a jester, while the "foolish man" dances before him, and raises the hand in mockery of blessing. The face of the Almighty looks down from the usual frill of cloud. (See illustration).
- (5) *Psalms lxxix*. Letter S ($3\frac{1}{4}$ ins. by $2\frac{1}{2}$ ins.). Jonah emerging from the Whale, in an attitude of prayer. The face of the Almighty as before.
- (6) *Psalms lxxxi*. Letter E (3 ins. by $2\frac{1}{2}$ ins.). Group of musicians. (See illustration).



RANWORTH ANTIPHONER.

ILLUMINATED LETTER REPRESENTING A GROUP OF MUSICIANS.

By permission of Messrs. Ellis.

(7) *Psalm xcvi.* Letter C (3 ins. by $2\frac{1}{2}$ ins.). Choir grouped round cantor's desk. Of unusual significance with relation to the Ranworth desk.

(8) *Psalm cx.* Letter D ($3\frac{1}{2}$ ins. by $2\frac{1}{2}$ ins.). The Trinity. The Father, seated, crowned, his hands upraised towards the Son on the right, also crowned, seated, and displaying the wounds in the hands. The Holy Spirit is represented as a Dove. The Father and Son occupy the same sedilia.

C. The third portion contains the Antiphons, etc., Common and Proper for Holy Days, including nine pages more or less illuminated.

The *Commune Sanctorum* has a fine initial letter E ($2\frac{1}{2}$ ins. by 2 ins.).

The *Proprium Sanctorum* has some finely illuminated work.

(1) *Crucifixion of St. Andrew.* Letter A (2 ins. by $2\frac{1}{2}$ ins.).

(2) *Annunciation.* Letter O ($2\frac{1}{2}$ ins. by $1\frac{1}{2}$ ins.). No picture.

(3) *St. John the Baptist.* Letter D (3 ins. by 2 ins.). No picture.

(4) *SS. Peter and Paul.* Letter Q ($2\frac{3}{4}$ ins. by $1\frac{3}{4}$ ins.). No picture.

(5) Large letter S (3 ins. by $2\frac{1}{4}$ ins.). No picture.

(6) *Assumption.* Letter T ($2\frac{1}{2}$ ins. by $2\frac{1}{4}$ ins.). Virgin with four attendant Angels.

(7) *Nativity of the Virgin.* Letter D ($3\frac{1}{4}$ ins. by $2\frac{1}{2}$ ins.). St. Anne, in canopied bedstead. Child, in swaddling, held by nurse.

(8) *All Saints.* Letter S (3 ins. by $2\frac{1}{2}$ ins.). A fine page. The Father with right hand raised in blessing, with the left hand holding the Crucifix between His knees. Angels surrounding above, while in the lower half of the letter, grouped around the Crucifix, which the Father holds, are representatives of Church and State.

The last six pages are of interest in that they contain musical settings arranged for use at the Patronal Festival of St. Helen.

The predominating colours used throughout are blue and pink, while gold leaf plays a very large part, and together with the colours is as fresh as if laid on but recently. The red lettering of the "Pye" mingled with the black notation gives a very pleasing and restful effect.

Thursday, August 8th.

SECOND EXCURSION. The principal excursion of the year was made to Houghton Hall, by the kind invitation of Cora, Countess Strafford, which was ably seconded by the permission accorded by Sir Henry Paston-Bedingfeld to visit Oxborough Hall. The two historic houses are sufficiently distant from one another to again necessitate the employment of motor-cars for accomplishing the journey, a practice which was initiated last year.

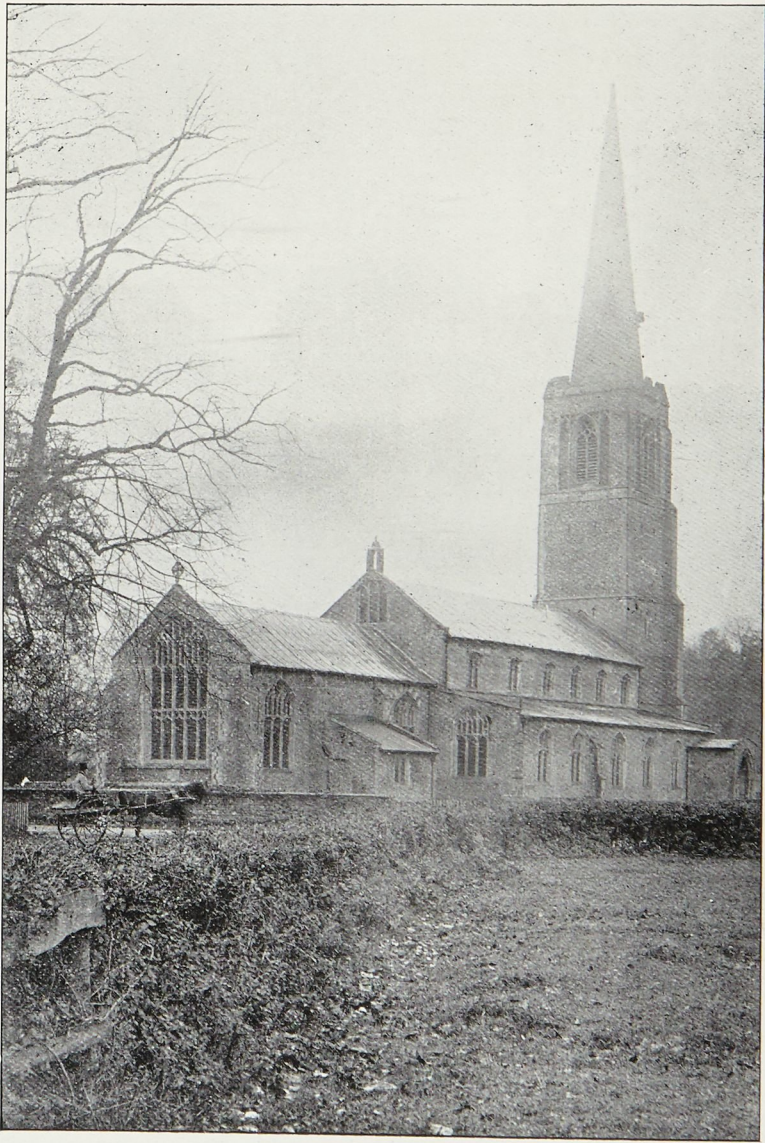
The enhanced price of the tickets thus occasioned does not appear to reduce the number of the members willing to take part in the day's proceedings, for no fewer than 157 members, inclusive of friends, assembled, while the private and hired cars numbered thirty-seven.

The Norwich and Yarmouth contingents of the OXBOROUGH party joined their cars at Thorpe Station and proceeded to Oxborough Church, there meeting such members who had journeyed from Lynn. The Rector, the Rev. Walter Coombe, was unavoidably absent, but he thoughtfully provided the Hon. Excursion Secretary with a book from which a few suitable passages were read. The church of St. John the Evangelist is a fine edifice, its foundation being attributed to the latter part of the thirteenth century. Its square tower carries an octagonal spire which rises to the height of 156 feet, and was re-built in 1877 after having been struck by lightning. The south aisle contains a chapel built in 1573 by the Bedingfelds, whose ancient connexion with the parish is commemorated by several beautiful monuments. A terra-cotta screen, by which this chapel is separated from the aisle, is a fine specimen of Renaissance work (*Norfolk Archaeology*, vol. xiii., p. 343). The ruins of an older parish church are preserved in the rectory grounds. The only portions now remaining are the north and east walls containing an Early English window, and part of a Norman pillar.

Oxborough Hall, surrounded by a broad and deep moat, is very properly regarded as one of the finest and most interesting of all the castellated mansions still remaining. It was built in the latter part of the fifteenth century by Sir Edmund Bedingfeld, who was knighted at the Coronation of Richard III. The entrance is over what was formerly a drawbridge, through an arched gateway, between two lofty octagonal towers.

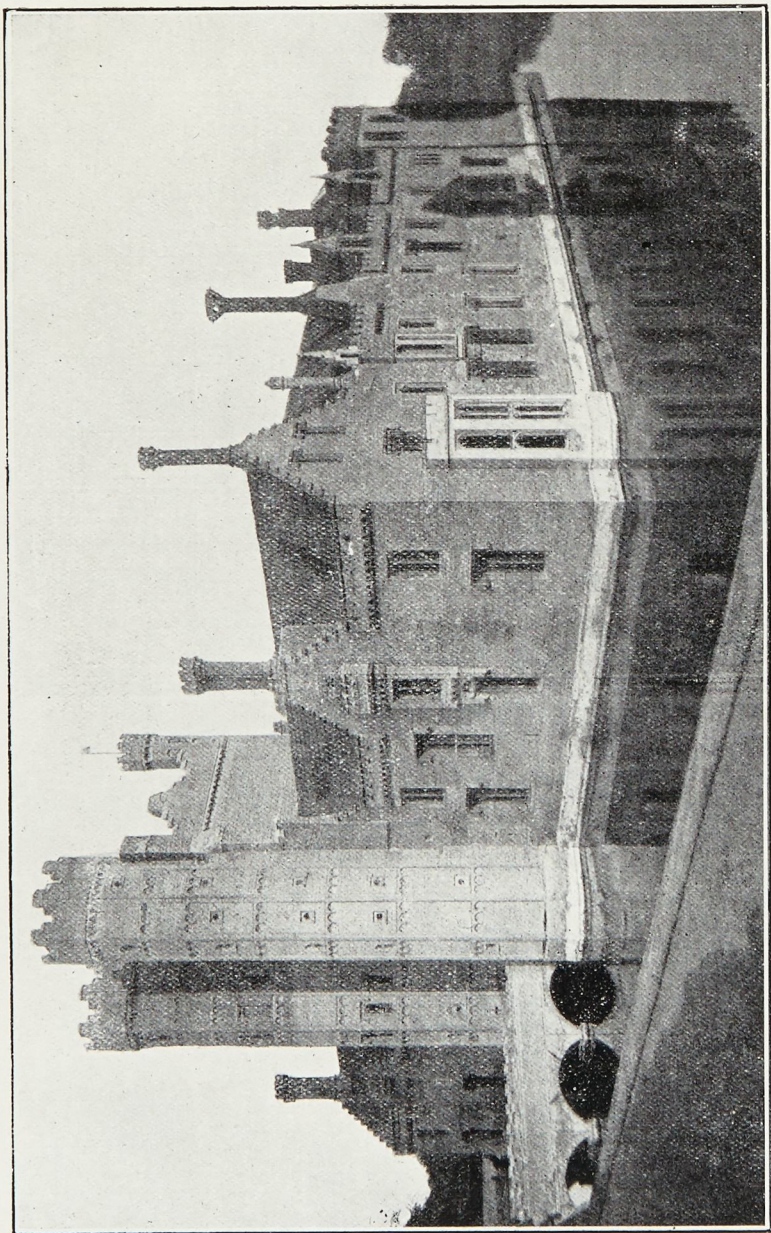
Sir Henry Paston-Bedingfeld received the visitors, and most kindly permitted them to inspect the interior rooms with their numerous interesting contents. Before leaving, Mr. Walter Rye read a paper, in which he excused himself from saying much about the mansion on the ground that a careful account of it had been already printed in *Norfolk Archaeology* (vol. iv., p. 271).

Oxborough was probably on the site of a Roman settlement, and Oxborough may be a corruption of Icenia-burgh, though the station of the Iceni is usually ascribed to Ickborough, many Roman coins and other things have been found here. Only a mile from a navigable river and once possessing a harbour, known as Oxborough Hythe, it must have been an excellent site for the predatory Danes. Certainly a Dane named Turketel held it at the Conquest, and the next village, Gooderstone, seems to bear a Danish name—say Godricstone.



OXBOROUGH CHURCH.

From a photograph by the late W. T. Bensly, LL.D.



OXBOROUGH HALL FROM THE NORTH-WEST.

The Conqueror gave it, with many other manors, to his sister's son, Ralph de Limesy. The chief sub-tenants were a family called de Weylond. Nicholas de Weylond married Julia, daughter and heiress of Robert Burnel, and though only a sub-tenant holding under the Burnels, who were themselves sub-tenants, practically had the village in his hands as resident landlord in 1284, when he had confirmation of a market here. The family rose to some little note outside the parish, a junior member was Judge of the Common Pleas in the reign of Edward I.

The race died out in the main line with Sir John Weylond. His sister, who married Sir John Tudenham, became owner of the place, and its real history begins with that connection. A noble pedigree had been manufactured for the Tudenhams, beginning with Maud de Glanville, said to be the widow of a Roger de Tudenham, in 1210, but as a matter of fact, they had been Norwich citizens from an early date. Their name only meant that they had come from Tuddenham to Norwich, for there never was a family of the name resident at either of the Tuddenhams. Roger de Tudenham, "clericus," a married man, was often Bailiff of the city from 1277 to 1299, and M.P. for the city in 1301 and 1302. His wife was Isabella. This was within the time when religious clerks had wives, but in his case, it seems, "clericus" only meant a lettered man. They were early wool merchants, and one of the best known of the race was John de Todenham, cordwainer of Norwich, who became Sheriff of Norfolk in 1383. Probably he was the same man as Sir John Tudenham who married Margaret Weylond, and, like her, descended from a former lord. His son, Sir Robert Tudenham, married Margaret Herling, who brought her husband East Harling and other manors, and their son, Sir Thomas Tudenham, was the turbulent individual so hated by the Pastons. His practical predatory partnership with John Heydon, and their endeavours to rule the whole of the county, and their oppressions, are matters of history, and may be read at great length in the *Paston Letters*, and from them was probably amassed much of the money with which Oxborough Hall was built. He married Alice, daughter of John Wodehouse, but the match proved an unhappy one and he procured a divorce. Soon after, he appears in the suit of Agnes de la Pole, Countess of Suffolk, daughter and heiress of Thomas Chaucer, now proved conclusively to be the Poet's son. There is a tale that Tudenham and the Countess, being in Norwich, went out one evening towards Lakenham Wood, and that an official forbade their re-entry into the city, thereby giving so much offence that they were ever afterwards its bitterest enemies.

By Tudenham's influence, his cousin, Sir John Clifton, was appointed Governor of Norwich when the King seized the liberties after Gladman's Insurrection. He was ultimately beheaded for treason, and, leaving no child to inherit his ill-gotten gains, his

lands passed to his sister Margaret, wife of Edmund Bedingfeld, who died at Bedingfeld, in Suffolk, in 1451.

The presence of the Bedingfelds in Norfolk previous to this marriage has not been traced. This Edmund is said to have been son of a Thomas de Bedingfeld, and grandson of Sir Thomas de Bedingfeld who married Margaret Bacon. Norris mentions an Edmund Bedingfeld, living 1400 and 1415, as executor to Roger de Wellisham, supposed to have married Margaret Bedingfeld, who is said to have afterwards married Sir Robert Berney of Gunton, and to have died 1416. Her sister, Helena de Bedingfeld, is mentioned in her will, dated 1415.

It is due to the present owners, to point out that Spelman, in his *Icenia*, made a very unfair statement against their ancestor, namely, that the two brothers-in-law, Bedingfeld a Yorkist and Tudenham a Lancastrian, made a mutual compact to help one another in trouble, and, the trouble coming, Bedingfeld broke his faith and begged the estate, leaving Tudenham to be beheaded. As Bedingfeld died ten years before Tudenham was executed there is no need to say more about the story.

To his grandson, Sir Edmund Bedingfeld, who died in 1514, we owe the present building. Was it the influence of his first wife, Alice, daughter of Sir Ralph Shelton, that caused him to erect so splendid a house? The Sheltons are known to have built themselves a magnificent residence, now pulled down, a picture of which may be seen in *Fifty Norfolk Manuscripts* (Rye). On the other hand, his second wife was daughter of Sir John Scot, of Scots Hall, Kent, a fine house, formerly well known. Sir Edmund had been made K.B. on the coronation of Richard III., but kept favour with Henry VII., who is said to have visited him here, probably in 1487, when he made a pilgrimage to Walsingham.

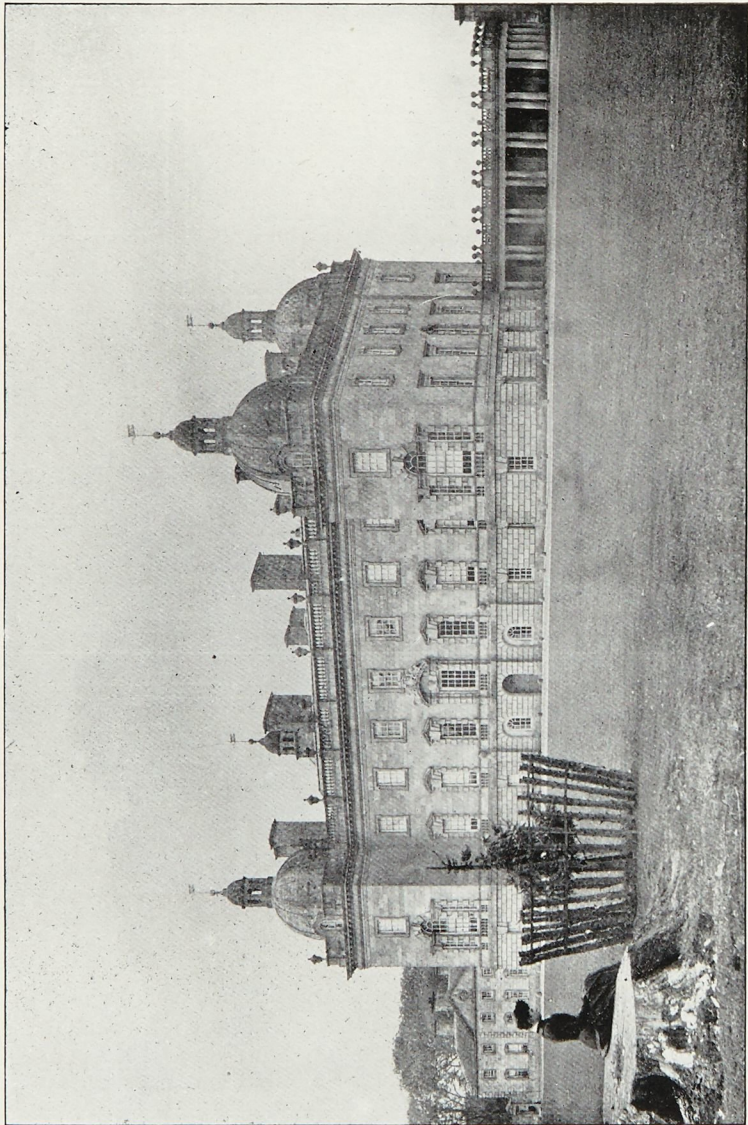
He had a patent from Edward IV. in 1482 to build and embattle the present house, so we know, within a few years, the actual date of its erection, and there is not that doubt which exists about the erection of West Barsham, which he (Mr. Rye) ventured to date about 1508 when this Society inspected it last year. The resemblance to Barsham and also to Hampton Court makes one wonder if one architect should not have the credit of all three. Britton thought that this building much resembled Queens' College, Cambridge.

The Gate House, which was practically the strong-room of the manor—the lineal descendant of the keep of the older castles—was again the chief feature of the building as at Barsham and Hunstanton. Sir Edmund, the builder, was knighted at the battle of Stoke in 1487, died at Calais in 1496 and was buried here. The ground-plan is a square of 170 feet. The great hall was taken down in 1778. Queen Elizabeth visited here in 1578.

It may be that the present family is the only one in Norfolk who can boast of being entitled to bear sixteen quarterings. It is possible, however, the le Stranges of Hunstanton may also be so entitled.



THE GATE HOUSE, OXBOROUGH HALL.



HOUGHTON HALL—EAST FRONT.

From a photograph by the late W. T. Bessy, LL.D.

Lunch having been served at the Assembly Rooms
 CASTLEACRE. in Swaffham, the journey was continued to Castleacre.

The various archæological remains here are sufficient to occupy the visitor for a whole day, but on this occasion there was only sufficient time to allow the party to view the ruins of the Priory. They have been admirably described for the Society by Mr. St. John Hope (vol. xii., p. 105), and the well-informed *Guide to Castleacre*, from which Dr. Dukinfield Astley, the author, read a few pages, is within the reach of all.

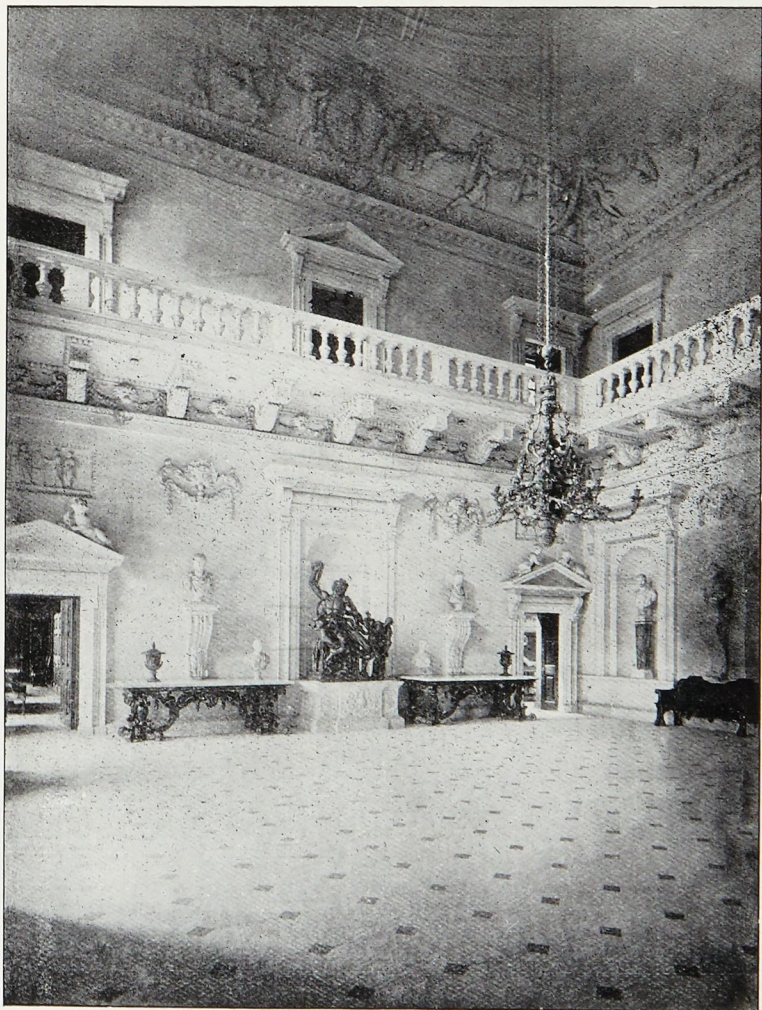
Arriving at Houghton, an account of which has
 HOUGHTON been published in *Norfolk Archæology* (vol. viii., p. 231),
 HALL. the members and their friends were shown over the Hall, which is worthily regarded as the most stately of all the Norfolk mansions. It was begun in 1722 by the famous Sir Robert Walpole, and completed in 1731. It is nobly designed in freestone, with two principal fronts ornamented at each corner with a cupola and lantern. In the middle of the west front are four lofty Ionic columns with an appropriate entablature. The wings are connected with the house by balustraded colonnades. The marble hall is a cube of forty feet, with a gallery running three-fourths of the way round it; and there is a wonderful ceiling and cornice with bas reliefs of Sir Robert Walpole and others on the frieze.

Mr. Leonard G. Bolingbroke, Hon. Treasurer of the Society, read the following paper:—Some of you will doubtless think that an eighteenth-century house is of too recent construction to be visited by the members of an Archæological Society, but let me remind such that the primary objects of our Society are to encourage the study of history and architecture, and an eighteenth-century house, built by a great English statesman, and embellished by him at an enormous cost, surely comes within the purview of history and architecture. Much might be said about the antiquity of the parish of Houghton and of its early connection with the Walpoles, but I propose only to refer to the history of the present mansion and of its earliest owners.

Sir Robert Walpole was born at Houghton in an old house, traces of which have been found in the pleasure grounds of the present house, and one of his ambitions appears to have been to build for himself a great mansion in his native village. The house was commenced in 1722, and completed in 1735. In order to clear the site for the new hall, it was necessary to pull down portions of the old village of Houghton, and it has been often stated, although it must not be taken too seriously, that this fact suggested to Goldsmith the theme of his "Deserted Village." The house was designed by Colin Campbell, but his plans were much improved upon by Thomas Ripley, an architect whom Pope severely criticised. The cost of the house was so enormous that his political opponents were wont

to point to the fact as a corroboration of the charge of corruption which they levelled against Sir Robert. His son Horace, however, says, "He died £40,000 in debt. That was the wealth of a man that had been taxed as the plunderer of his country. Yet with all my admiration of my father, I am just enough to own that was his own fault that he died so poor. He had made Houghton much too magnificent for the moderate estate which he left to support it, and as he never—I repeat it with truth, never—got any money but in the South Sea, and while he was Paymaster, his fondness for his paternal seat and his boundless generosity were too extensive for his fortune." When in the height of his prosperity, Sir Robert Walpole entertained most lavishly at Houghton, and we get a pleasant glimpse of him in a letter written in 1731 by one of his many guests: "I was a fortnight in my tour into the eastern parts of England, and was during that time a week at Houghton. We were generally between twenty and thirty, at two tables, and as much cheerfulness and good nature as I ever saw, where the company was so numerous. . . . Sir Robert does the honour of his house extremely well, and so as to make it perfectly agreeable to everyone who lives with him. . . . During the Duke of Lorraine's being there the consumption both from the larder and cellar was prodigious. They dined in the hall, which was lighted by 130 wax candles, and the saloon with fifty, the whole expense in that article being computed at £15 a night." When in 1742 Sir Robert was driven from office, he retired with the Earldom of Orford to Houghton, where he passed the remaining three years of his life, enjoying his pictures and riding about his estate. "My flatterers here," he said, "are all mutes. The oaks and beeches seem to contend which best shall please the lord of the manor—they cannot deceive; they will not lie."

To Sir Robert Walpole, first Earl of Orford, succeeded his eldest son Robert, who, however, did not long live to enjoy the estates, as he died in 1751. He in turn was succeeded by his son George, the third Earl, a young man of twenty-one. Houghton in his hands fell upon evil days; even the flights of stone steps on the east and west fronts of the house were soon sold to pay their owner's gambling debts. Writes Horace Walpole in 1671: "Here I am at Houghton, and alone in this spot where I have not been for sixteen years. Think what a crowd of reflections. No, Gray and forty churchyards could not furnish so many. . . . Here I am probably for the last time of my life, though not for the last time. Every clock that strikes tells me I am one hour nearer to yonder church—that church into which I have not the courage to enter, where lies the mother on whom I doated and who doated on me. . . . There, too, lies he who founded its greatness. . . . When I had drunk tea I strolled into the garden. . . . In the days when all my soul was tuned to pleasure. . . . I hated Houghton and its solitude. Yet,



THE MARBLE HALL AT HOUGHTON.

From a photograph by the late W. T. Bensly, LL.D.

I loved this garden, as now, with many regrets, I love Houghton—Houghton. I know not what to call it, a monument of grandeur or a ruin. . . . I have chosen to sit in my father's little dressing-room, and am now by his escritoire, where, in the height of his fortune, he used to receive the accounts of his farmers, and deceive himself or us with the thoughts of his economy. How wise a man at once, and how weak. For what has he built Houghton? For his grandson to annihilate or for his son to mourn over?" In 1779 the famous collection of pictures was sold by the spendthrift Earl to the Empress of Russia, and again Horace Walpole mourns their loss. "The pictures of Houghton I hear and I fear are sold. What can I say? I don't like even to think of it. It is the most signal mortification to my idolatry for my father's memory that it could receive. It is stripping the temple of his glory and of his affection." During the last years of his life the third Earl was more or less out of his mind, but he lingered on until 1791, when he was succeeded by his uncle, Horace Walpole, then in his seventy-fifth year. He never, however, took up his residence at the Hall, and appears to have regarded his inheritance of the earldom and the estates as somewhat of a misfortune. "A small estate loaded with debts of which I don't understand the management and am too old to learn, endless conversations with lawyers and packs of letters to read every day and to answer, all this weight of new business is too much for the rag of life that hangs about me. . . . Surely no man at seventy-four. . . . can have the smallest pleasure in being called by a new name."

Six years later Horace Walpole was, as he had foreshadowed, buried in the little church of Houghton, and with him passed away the last descendants of Sir Robert Walpole in the male line, the Houghton Estate passing to the family of Sir Robert Walpole's daughter Mary, who had married the Marquis of Cholmondeley.

The Countess most generously provided tea for her very numerous though grateful visitors, all of whom expressed their great appreciation of her kindness in granting them the opportunity of seeing her residence, which they had so thoroughly enjoyed.

Thus ended an excursion which was a record one, not solely in point of the number taking part in it, but also for the quantity of interest it afforded. Fortunately it was in no way marred by inclement weather.

Wednesday, October 30th.

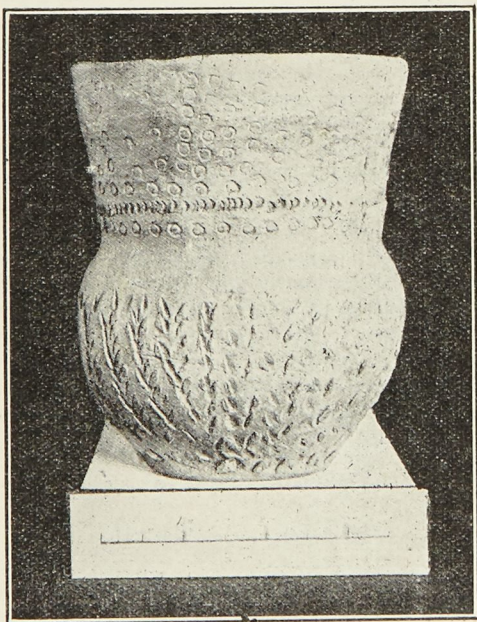
MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE. The Rev. E. C. Hopper exhibited a half-groat of Henry VII., struck at Canterbury, which was found among a heap of stones washed from Starston Bridge during the great storm of August 26th.

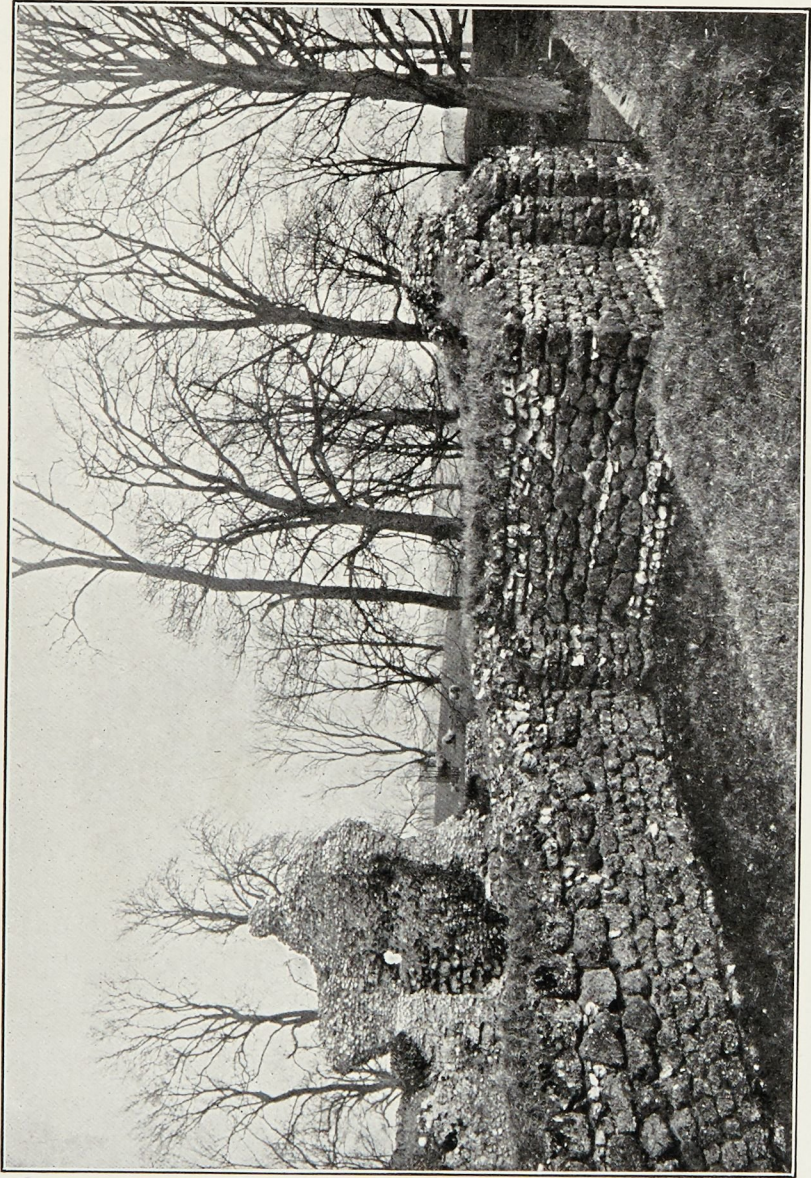
Mr. J. C. Tingey sent information that he had recently inspected the fresco discovered a year or two since on the south wall of Tattersett Church. The colours were very indistinct, but there could be little doubt that the painting represented the Martyrdom of St. Erasmus. The prostrate figure of the sufferer was the most easy to recognise; behind him were three other persons, the one nearest the west end of the church bearing a drawn sword.

Also, that the flood of last August had laid bare the foundations of the Abbey Mill in Damgate, Wymondham, but there did not appear to be anything to see more interesting than the spring of an arch over the stream.

Also, that he had noticed that the four windows at the top of the round tower of Aslacton Church had triangular apexes; they were of two lights divided by a pillar supporting an oblong impost, and, so far as he could remember, they resembled those in the round tower of St. Mary Coslany.

A letter from Mr. Robert Gurney was read reporting that an earthen beaker of the Bronze age had been found by a labourer when digging gravel in a pit close to Ingham Mill. It was in nearly perfect condition and measured about $5\frac{1}{2}$ ins. in height.





NORTH ELMHAM: SOUTH WALL OF SEVENTH-CENTURY CHURCH.