

The Proceedings of the Society during the year 1920.

*By the courtesy of the Proprietors of the local Press we are able
to insert the following accounts :*

IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF OLD CROME.

In view of the Centenary to be celebrated in Norwich next year the Archæological Society devoted some attention during Friday, June 11th, to relics and places connected with John, or "Old," Crome. Lent for inspection by Mr. R. J. Colman, there was laid on the table of the Council Chamber—Crome's palette, one of his letters written from Paris to his wife, and the indenture (dated 1783) by which he was apprenticed to Francis Whistler, house, coach, and sign painter, of Norwich. The afternoon was spent by the members in making a tour of those riverside churches and parishes wherein the memorials of Crome's life and associations are chiefly to be sought. In the course of this pilgrimage Mr. Leonard Bolingbroke read a sketch of the painter's career, with sundry references to his contemporaries of the Norwich School, and incidentally he produced a bill in respect of drawing lessons which Crome had given to the children of one Sparshall, a wine and spirit merchant. The items set forth related to chalk, pencils, sketchbooks, paper, rubber, and so forth, and ended with the modest charge of one guinea for a half-year's teaching—total, £1 19s. 9d. Crome, who was anything but a teetotaller, seems to have incurred responsibilities of his own towards Sparshall, who returned the bill with the following written at the foot of it:—"My bill, £6 17s.; less £1 19s. 9d.—£4 17s. 3d." Opposite the last-named amount appeared the words:—"Paid, John Crome."

The itinerary of the afternoon was mainly in charge of Mr. W. R. Rudd, who started with the party from the finely-restored church of St. Mary at Coslany. Here it was that John Crome was married on October 2nd, 1792, to Phoeby Bearney, or Berney, an event quickly

followed, on October 3rd, 1793, by the marriage of Robert Ladbroke, to her sister, Mary Berney. Here was John Sell Cotman baptised on June 9th, 1782; and the Rev. E. T. Daniell, a well-known connoisseur of his day, and himself an artist of no little repute, officiated there in 1834. The next halting place of the archaeologists was the church of St. George of Colegate, where Crome lies buried and where a tablet to his memory appears in the south transept. Across the road to the eastward of the church stands an ancient flint-faced house, which in Crome's time was the residence of Justice Wiggett, an opulent silk manufacturer, and one of Crome's earliest patrons. The site of the now demolished house in which Crome lived for many years, and where he died on April 22nd, 1821, and the site also of the modest dwelling in which Crome's widow ended her days were likewise visited; and then the party came to the "Harvey" houses in Colegate Street—typical, as Mr. Rudd remarked, of those "fine mansions and lordly masters" immortalised by Borrow. At the south-west corner of the quaint flint buildings bordering on two sides of St. Clement's Church stood the warehouse of James Vincent, silk manufacturer, and father of that George Vincent who was perhaps Crome's most talented pupil. At the church of St. George of Tombland the Rev. W. F. Crewe produced the register recording that "John, son of John and Elizabeth Crome," was born on December 22nd, 1768, and was baptized only three days later.

Mr. Rudd, in the course of his paper, took occasion to make some remarks well worth putting on record as to the social conditions of Norwich during the Crome era, and the social status of Crome himself therein. During the years of John Crome's boyhood, he said, our ancient city was still guarded by mediæval walls of which the gates were closed at curfew. Its narrow streets and lanes were still adorned by many fine examples of Tudor domestic architecture, long since destroyed, as well as by those venerable fanes of which happily the greater number still remain. Amid these relics of the past stood the majestic Jacobean and Georgian mansions of the civic aristocracy. Many have marvelled that Norwich alone of all English cities should have been the birthplace of a distinctive school of pictorial art. A wide view of history makes it evident that periods of art have coincided with the crests of general development. Where we have no other chronicle it is safe to argue that the birth of a school of art implies the existence of a period of culture of which it was the outcome. At the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and even earlier, the Walloon and Flemish colonies in Norwich and the citizens generally had been strengthened and uplifted by the advent of refugees, comprising the intellectual aristocracy of France, then the most cultured nation of the world. These families for many years profoundly influenced and elevated the tone of our civic society. Mr. Rudd went on to quote the testimonies of Macaulay, Borrow, and William Taylor, in support of this generalisation. "John Crome

and John Crome, jun.," appeared in the list of guests invited to the wedding of Samuel Hoare and Louisa Gurney at the Friends' Meeting House, Tasburgh, in 1806. The handwriting was that of educated men. It was easy to understand that John Crome, jun., should have been invited to this important function, but unless John Crome the elder were other than the common, ignorant man of tradition it was not easy to explain his presence as guest.

And then as to the public-house. During the eighteenth century and even much later the "Tavern" and the "Taverner" held a different position in social life from what is now the case. In an interesting article on St. John Maddermarket, contributed by Mr. Leonard Bolingbroke to the most recent publication of the Archaeological Society, it was mentioned that "at the Hole in the Wall Tavern (of that parish) there met weekly at the end of the eighteenth century a number of well-known literary characters, such as Dr. Frank Sayers, William Taylor, John Pitchford, and others." In Cherry Lane there stands a public-house on the site of one in which assembled weekly during the early nineteenth century more than a dozen of the principal textile manufacturers of that day, including the Harveys, the Bolingbrokes, the Willets, Ives, Springfield, Bateman, and Martineau. It was called the Dirty Shirt Club, because the meetings were held on Saturday night. In the early time of his old and valued friend, Mr. Louis Willett, who was a large employer of hand-loom weavers, as had been his family for generations before him, the greater number of these men could neither read nor write. Indeed there was indirect evidence to justify us in thinking of Crome as a man of some education. It had been usual to depict Crome's early life as passed amid squalid and sordid surroundings, and to talk of the obscure pothouse place of his birth, and of the status of his father as a journeyman weaver and publican. John Crome, the elder, was not a well-to-do man, but he was certainly not illiterate. It was fair to surmise that he was descended from a family of substantial Norwich citizens who had seen better days. There was a John Crome, weaver, of Norwich, in the time of Henry VII.; a John Crome, Sheriff of Norwich in 1500; and a widow, Alice Crome—who was buried in St. George of Colegate Church in 1516—who gave seven almshouses, "the seventh to be let to pay for the repairs of the other six."

The main interest of the itinerary attached to memories of Old Crome, but a visit of antiquaries to so many old churches necessarily called for other considerations. At St. Mary at Coslany, the Vicar, the Rev. J. H. Griffiths, delivered an admirable address on the history of that wonderfully beautiful and interesting church, described its archaic features, and told of the finds that had attended its reparation. At most of the churches the clergy produced their communion plate and registers. Of these latter the gem was found at St. George of Tombland. The volume containing record of the

birth and baptism of Crome is beautifully written upon parchment, and hardly an erasure or a correction is discoverable in a period of half a century.

TOUR OF THE CHURCHES.

The excursion arranged on July 22nd, 1920, by the Norfolk and Norwich Archæological Society proved highly popular, and was attended by nearly 120 members and friends. The programme included visits to many churches in East Norfolk, whose chief claims to notice were admirably explained.

The first church visited was that at Worstead. STORIES OF THE VICAR, the Rev. C. W. Kershaw, read a paper WORSTEAD describing its principal features. Remarking that CHURCH. Worstead was at one time the chief local centre of the woollen manufactories of East Anglia, he

said the work of re-building, or rather of the gradual erection of a new church, began with the chancel in 1379, a clean sweep having been made of all older work. It seemed likely that the work finished with the western bay of the nave and the west tower about 1400. The front panelling of the gallery, beautifully carved and painted, had, the Vicar was told, Flemish characteristics. Immediately below was an English inscription in black letters: "This work was made in the year of God 1501, at the proper cost of the cantell of the church called the batchellers lyte; it God preserve with all the benefactors of the same now and ever. Amen. Then were husbandes, Christofer Rant and Jeffery Dey." Cantell, it had been stated, was an equivalent for candle, and there was a general rate on the bachelors or young men of the parish towards maintaining a special candle or light, and that the surplus funds were for erecting that gallery. Christopher Rant and Jeffery Dey were husbands, *i.e.*, wardens of the Bachelors' Guild at that time. The rood screen had been one of special importance and of singular beauty in colouring and painting. Unhappily it had been tampered with during the last century. There was a drawing of it in the Dawson Turner collection, which had been copied in the House of Lords. The panel of the original Man of Sorrows had, however, been changed into the crucified boy, Saint William of Norwich. Many other interesting things were explained by the Vicar, among them, that forty brasses were stolen from the Church when the workmen, engaged in taking casts of the screen for the House of Lords, had gone to their breakfast.

At Barton Turf Church the Vicar, the Rev. J. WHIPPING DOGS Gough Poole, welcomed the archæologists, and OUT OF explained that thirty-one years ago the Royal THE CHURCH. Archæological Society came to see the church, which was built before 1387. Having described

the main characteristics of the beautiful old church, the Vicar said the screen was painted some thought by Italians and some by others. A slab in the aisle was connected with a Colonel Venner, a mad fanatic, who was executed in 1661 for insurrection, and whose granddaughter married a Professor of Divinity, who afterwards became Archbishop of Canterbury. The old church expenses book went back to 1629. It mentioned quest men, corresponding to sidesmen or sinners' men. In 1638 there was an entry about whipping the dogs out of church. Money had been left for that purpose. In 1642 was an entry of £18 for powder. That was at the beginning of the Civil War. There were a good many entries of ringing the bells, but the only time they were rung, as far as he could make out, said the Vicar was on the 5th of November.

At Tunstead Church the Rev. C. Dean states that behind the altar was one thing that made REMARKABLE the church unique in Norfolk, and perhaps in CHURCH. the whole country, namely, the raised stone platform, nearly 3 ft. 9 ins. wide and 7 ft. high. There were seven steps leading up to it. Some people thought the platform was for miracle plays, and others for the exhibition of relics. The great blot on the whole church was the blank east wall. Where the east windows should appear was a sheet of cracked plaster. That disfigurement went back to 1771. An old parish clerk had stated that the churchwardens thought it best to take the windows out to prevent further destruction of glass by the village children. There was reason to believe that the windows were still in the wall, blocked up and plastered over.

After luncheon at the Hill House Hotel, HAPPISBURGH Happisburgh, the archaeologists inspected Happis- CHURCH. burgh Church, where Mr. Rudd, in a short account of it, described it as typical and one of the finest of all the Norfolk churches. It was easily, he said, amongst the first twelve, for its size, the magnificence of its tower, and its position. Last year in the Lynn district they saw finer churches of more ornate style. The reason for that was that it was the centre of the richest part of England during the time of the great revival of church building in the 14th century, and had, as far as Norfolk is concerned, wonderful examples of church architecture. Happisburgh Church, however, in its severe simplicity, had a great dignity which was lacking in some of the others, and he thought in regard to pureness of design it compared very favourably with some which were more noteworthy. The church had been restored. Mr. Rudd remarked that when in their prime the churches were the home of the industrial and social life of the villages, and each village, in the days when the churches were built, had its village industry, and each industry its guild. All the business of the guild was done within the walls of the

church. The villager looked upon the church not merely as a place to go to on a Sunday to worship, but as the great centre of business. Happisburgh Church had been for many generations one of the great beacons of that coast. It was always thought that the steeple was made so high to enable a beacon to be placed on the top in order to guide mariners in ancient times. That appeared, however, to be doubtful, but the church was a great landmark for many generations, and happily continued to be such. It was suggested that the image of the Virgin and Child in a niche over the porch was the only one existing in Norfolk. Doubts were expressed, however, as to whether it belonged originally to the church.

Mr. W. R. Rudd gave an interesting account of
 HICKLING the Priory at Hickling from notes supplied by
 PRIORY. Mr. Leonard Bolingbroke. It was regarded as one
 of the minor priories in Norfolk and had only ten
 religious. It was generally considered to be a rather poor
 religious house. It was established in 1185. The Priory, when it
 was built, was surrounded by fen, and was only approached by a
 causeway, very much like St. Benet's, and was quite isolated from
 the world. "These people," said Mr. Rudd, "were hard set to get
 food and vestment, and the rest of it, and one can understand how
 pathetic it was when they exclaimed that they could not find
 to warm themselves in the winter time." The ruins of the Priory
 were gradually dissolving, and the only window which remained in
 1835 was taken down and now formed the porch at a farmhouse.
 Two coffins had been found, in one of which, broken open by a
 labourer, was found an entire skeleton, 6 ft. 4 ins. long. The
 scattered bones were collected and deposited in Catfield Church,
 and the sculptured coffin was regarded as one of the most perfect
 specimens. Coins of Queen Elizabeth had been found on the Priory
 lands. One interesting thing about the Priory was that although it
 was poor it had to pay so much to the Abbey of St. Benet's.
 Sometimes they were hardly able to pay these moneys, and prayed
 for further grace to find it. There were at the Priory probably a
 prior and nine or ten canons. The Vicarage was founded in the
 reign of Edward the First.

The Vicar of Hickling, the Rev. A. A. T. Crosse,
 HICKLING in an interesting paper on the church, which was of
 CHURCH. the early 14th century, mentioned the altar tomb,
 said to be that of Sir William Wodehouse, Vice-
 Admiral of the Fleet in the time of Edward VI. On it was cut the
 letters "ROVNDHEADE," and date 1645, and the Vicar enquired
 whether the archaeologists thought it was simply the vandalism of
 some rough village boy or whether it indicated the date when the
 chancel was knocked down and the image of the saint taken away
 from a niche over the front door. The Vicar mentioned the restora-
 tion work done during the last century. Before that time, he said,

there was a good west gallery, an oak screen, ornamental square pews, and a three-decker pulpit with sounding board, and an hour-glass stand. Where were those things to-day? He was frequently asked about the hour-glass, but what he would like to know was where was the screen? Mr. Crosse spoke scornfully of pitch-pine having been substituted for things that had disappeared, and making the church a sort of ecclesiastical palace of pitch-pine. A floriated cross, representing the top of a tomb, found in the middle aisle in 1876, had a Latin inscription, which, said the Vicar, no one had been able to translate.

The excursionists next visited Ingham Old Hall where they were received by Mr. and Mrs. OLD HALL Robert Gurney, at whose kind invitation they AND CHURCH. were entertained to tea. A vote of thanks was accorded to the host and hostess on the proposition of Mr. Walter.

Mr. Gurney, in a descriptive account of his residence, said he thought it was built by the second Sir Miles Stapleton about 1350. All that remained of the original house was the east wing—the old dining hall. He thought it was that because on the north side was a small chapel. "It doesn't look like a chapel now," said Mr. Gurney, "because it is turned into a scullery, I am sorry to say. If on going round the house you think I have spoiled it, perhaps you will remember that I have got to live in it." He explained that if he had done nothing to it it might have fallen down. "It was a brewhouse when I took it over, so I have not desecrated the chapel. In the will of Sir Miles Stapleton, he mentions the chapel, and of having left some of his vestments to the priory. If you go into my kitchen and pass through the chapel you will see the stone chapel windows on either side of the sink, and on the right something unique in domestic architecture, a hagioscope, or 'squint,' with two lights. All the rest of the house is 17th century. The face is modern." Mr. Gurney also described how the Jacobean fireplace had been discovered.

Having inspected the ruins of the old Priory, the visitors were much interested in Ingham Church, particularly in the effigies on the tomb of Sir Oliver de Ingham (father-in-law of Sir Miles Stapleton). Mr. Gurney said that a hunting scene had been at the back, but was now gone. Effigies of Sir Roger de Bois (a connexion of the Stapletons) and Margaret, his wife, also aroused much interest, notably the accuracy with which the knight's armour and chain mail were done. The effigy of Sir Oliver de Ingham was said to be co-eval with the chancel and the greater part of the church. The question of restoring the screen was under consideration. The tower, said Mr. Gurney, was of much later date than the rest of the church.

CHURCH PLATE. The President, Mr. J. H. Walter, an acknowledged expert on church plate, pronounced the paten at Tunstead Church to have been made in Norwich in 1568. The communion cup, which, he said, was the smallest he had ever seen, was made at Norwich by Thomas Havers, between 1643 and 1680. It is only four inches high and is only two inches across.

At Happisburgh Church the paten, Mr. Walter declared to be of pre-Reformation manufacture. In his opinion the flange of the paten was made in 1504, and the centre at the beginning of the 15th century, with the vernicle in the centre. At Hickling the communion cup was Norwich, 1567.

At the luncheon the President made an appeal on behalf of the fund for the restoration of Westminster Abbey, which resulted in subscriptions from the Archaeological Society and their friends amounting to £8 16s. 6d.

A MID-NORFOLK EXCURSION.

A general meeting of the Norfolk and Norwich Archæological Society on September 9th, 1920, took the form of an excursion into the centre of the county. Favoured with the best of weather a numerous company set out from the Norwich Guildhall Plain, and journeyed by road to Hingham Church, where a halt was made. The party subsequently journeyed to Morley Old Hall, an interesting old residence in the Elizabethan style, and afterwards made for Wymondham, where the fine old church was inspected.

ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH, HINGHAM. St. Andrew's Church, Hingham, is an edifice of rough flints with freestone dressings. It consists of a spacious chancel, nave with clerestory, north and south aisles, north vestry, south porch, and a western embattled tower. The main arcade, according to Mr. T. Hugh Bryant, is a fine example of 14th century work, with five clerestory windows of two lights on either side, and carved crowned heads, &c., at the intersection of the main arches. The nave is separated from the aisles by six finely pointed arches, resting on quartrefoil columns. The east window is a mixture of geometrical and flowing tracery. The tower contains a clock and eight bells. The church was erected by the Rector, Remigius de Hethersete, with the assistance of John le Marischall, Marshall of Ireland, the patron, between 1328 and 1359, in the Early Decorated style, upon the site of a Norman erection. During last century several restorations and additions are recorded. In 1813-14 John, first Lord Wodehouse, filled the east chancel window with stained glass, purchased from a nunnery in the Netherlands. The chancel roof was put on in

1837, and also during the incumbency of the Hon. and Rev. W. Wodehouse (1811-1870) he erected a plain wainscot pulpit, which was later removed. He also put some choir stalls in the chancel made of knotted oak from Kimberley Park; these were removed in 1887. Some mural paintings, discovered during the restoration in 1855, represent the murder of Thomas à Becket. The original roofs of the church were probably destroyed by fire. The roof of the nave bears the date 1664 on one of the hammer beams. Of the windows, the east window of the chancel is Perpendicular, and of seven lights, 36 ft. high and 18 ft. wide. Though its arch, mouldings, and jambs are original, the present flamboyant stonework was introduced to fit the stained glass, which is of German manufacture, dating back to about 1500. A small portion of the glass, which could not be included in this window, is now in Kimberley Church. Blomefield says in the east window of Trinity Chapel are the arms of Lord Morley—argent, on a chevron gules, between three lions' head erased sable, three bezants, said to have been erected by the maidens of Hingham. In the chancel are remains of a sedilia for three priests. All traces of the rood and parclose screens have now disappeared. The church has a fine altar frontal of Rococo work, date about 1770.

The church plate consists of a silver chalice dated 1706, and weighing $14\frac{3}{4}$ oz., and a silver cover for the same, weighing $7\frac{1}{2}$ oz. There is also another chalice, a white metal plate, large brass dish, and a brass flagon for the font.

The tower is of five stages and has beautiful base moulding. The date 1663 still remains on the east side of the parapet. Philip Wodehouse was Rector in 1777, the Hon. William Wodehouse in 1811, and again in 1828. The present Rector is the Rev. Canon Arthur Charles Wodehouse Upcher, who has held the living since 1887.

It is interesting to record that there is a town of Hingham in Massachusetts, U.S.A. Peter Hobart, of Hingham, England, was the first minister of its first church. A new church was consecrated in Hingham, Mass., in 1883, when the inhabitants of Hingham, Norfolk, sent them a chair and lectern and a silver set of communion plate. Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, was descended from Samuel Lincoln, of Hingham, Norfolk, who died at Hingham, Mass. There is in the Norfolk Hingham Church to-day a bust of the great President, erected by many citizens of the United States, together with a plate bearing the inscription:—

“In this parish for many generations lived the Lincolns, ancestors of the American Abraham Lincoln. To him, greatest of that lineage, many citizens of the United States have erected this memorial, in the hope that for all ages between that land and this land and all lands there shall be

“Malice toward none,
With charity for all.”

Owing to an unavoidable delay in leaving Hingham it was feared the party would not be able to make the journey to

MORLEY Morley, and the period of waiting was occupied by
 OLD HALL. Mr. W. R. Rudd gathering the company round him
 on Hingham Fairland and reading to them the

notes he had prepared on Morley Old Hall. When the cars again got going time was however found to visit Morley, where the party were received by Mr. and Mrs. J. Warren, who conducted them over the Old Hall, now a farmhouse.

Morley Old Hall, standing in Morley St. Peter, near Wymondham, is a fine specimen of architecture in the Elizabethan style, with centre and two wings, surrounded by a deep moat, and was formerly the seat of the Sedleys. It contains a fine oak wainscotted bedroom in which Queen Elizabeth is said to have slept, also a powder closet, which fashionable ladies of old used for the adornment of their hair.

On Wymondham being reached the party had tea
 CHURCH OF in the Vicarage Garden, kindly arranged by the
 ST. MARY AND Rev. S. Martin Jones and a committee of ladies.
 ST. THOMAS, Subsequently the church was inspected, where an
 WYMONDHAM. address detailing its history was delivered by the
 Vicar, with whom was Mr. J. B. Pomeroy and

Mr. R. V. Reyner.

The history of St. Mary and St. Thomas, Wymondham, begins with the Priory or Abbey Church. About 1130 William d'Albini pulled down the old Saxon church and erected a cruciform building on its site. The monastic buildings were situated on the south side of the church. A dispute arose, and subsequently the monks agreed with the parishioners to divide the church, they taking the chancel, transepts, central tower, and south aisle to themselves, giving the inhabitants the nave and north aisle, which arrangements continued until the Dissolution. In 1376 the lantern tower became decayed, and the monks built the present octagon tower. Constant feuds continued between the monks and the townspeople until the Dissolution. Little now remains of the old monastery and monastic church excepting the gable of the chapter house. The plan of the transept is clearly marked out, and part of the north-west pier of the intersection remains.

The present parish church consists of nave, with triforium and clerestory, north and south aisles, vestry, north porch, a square western tower, and an octagonal one at the east end. Mr. Bryant says internally the church is the finest specimen of Norman architecture, excepting Norwich and Ely Cathedrals, in East Anglia. It presents a noble arcade rising over massive square piers. Brandon says the roof of the nave (erected 1440) is most beautiful. The hammer-beams are well carved into figures of angels with expanding wings. The roof over the north aisle is a curious variety of hammer-beams. The sides of the roof are divided into compartments by

three purlins and an intermediate principal, and are enriched with foliated panels. These tracery panels are about an inch thick. The octagonal font, which is Perpendicular in style, has in panels the symbols of the Evangelists and four angels bearing shields. On the south side of the altar is an elaborate sedilia of terra-cotta, which consists of three tabernacled arches, completely filling the Norman arch. Numerous memorials and heraldry remain in the church.

For many years the church had been falling into decay, but through the exertions of the late Vicar, the Rev. the Hon. Archibald Parker, and the munificence of Mrs. Willett, widow of the late G. W. Willett of Brighton, and daughter of a former Vicar, and her family, who undertook to defray half the expense, estimated at £25,000, the restoration of the building was proceeded with so far as funds would allow. The north porch occupies the western bay of the aisle. It has a groined roof and a fine doorway. In the porch are remains of a clustered column.

Robert Kett, the tanner, who headed the rising in Norfolk in 1549, was a native of Wymondham and a member of an ancient and wealthy family. His brother William was hanged at Wymondham, and his remains were hung up on the great west tower of the church. It is interesting to note that one of Robert Kett's descendants was engaged on the recent work of restoration.
