# The Proceedings of the Society during the year 1922.

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

On February 3rd, 1922, Mr. F. C. Elliston Erwood gave a lecture at the Public Library on his excavations at Langley Abbey. It is unnecessary to print a report here as this number contains a full and detailed paper by him upon the same subject.

On February 24th, Mr. Leonard G. Bolingbroke, Honorary Treasurer, lectured to members of the Society on "A Perambulation in the Cathedral Precinct."

Mr. Bolingbroke, in the course of his lecture, which was illustrated by numerous slides of a most interesting character, described most of the buildings and greens within the precinct, and related their history, going so far back as the days of Queen Elizabeth. Referring to No. 2, The Close, he said the almonry of the Priory was formerly there and in capitular times this building formed the workhouse of the precinct. In 1703 the workhouse and adjoining stable were in the occupation of Richard Warffe, victualler and porter of the gate. The building was used as an inn, under the sign of the Gatehouse Inn, and appeared to have been rather a thorn in the flesh of the Dean and Chapter in the early 18th century, as it proved too attractive a rendezvous for both minor canons and lay clerks. During the evening the inn was often the place of meeting of a Catch club. He possessed a manuscript book of songs which were probably sung at these meetings of the club, the members of which he only could hope were confined to the male sex. The Catch Club later changed its name to the Norwich Glee Club, and still later to the Cathedral Club or Harmonic Society, of which the Gatehouse Inn was then

the very respectable headquarters. The Harmonic Society was established in May, 1874, and of its original members eleven were in orders. The monthly gatherings of this club were attended by the elite of the city, including sometimes two or three prebendaries. The late Mr. James Valentine Cox, an almost life-long member of the Cathedral choir, had stated that he had a vivid recollection of the bountiful supply of delicious veal cutlets, boiled sausages, and mashed potatoes, with which he and other Cathedral choir boys were regaled after the concerts. The Gatehouse and its inn had other musical associations, for in 1801 the room over the Gateway was hired by the famous Hall Concert Society, and continued in their use till 1815, while in 1828 the Choristers' School and their organ were established there. Still later in the '70's was formed the Gatehouse Choir, so called because their practices were held there.

Speaking of a piece of land now occupied by Nos. 7 to 12, The Close, houses and their gardens, all late 18th-century erections, Mr. Bolingbroke said that prior to 1564 here stood the Church of St. Mary in the Marsh, with its churchyard north and south, and its parsonage house on its western side. The Church was desecrated in 1564, and the services were for a time held in the aisle of St. John in the Cathedral, and later in St. Luke's Chapel, where they are still held. Blomefield mentioned that the Church was pulled down by Dr. Gascoigne, who bought it of the Dean and Chapter for £80, but the parsonage house was only pulled down when the present houses were built. No. 11, The Close, was in 1783 in the occupation of Thomas Garland, the Cathedral organist. Probably the best day's work Garland ever did was when he picked up a little lad, one Zachariah Buck, who was singing to himself in the street, and carried him off to be choir boy in the Cathedral, and afterwards its most distinguished organist. He wondered whether Thomas Garland was related to John Garland "tayler" in the Lower Close, who in 1738 advertised in *Crossgrove's News*, "that he makes in the best and newest manner gowns and cassocks for the Reverend the clergy, and whoever will make trial shall have every Thing done to their satisfaction."

To the east of Singleton's Tenement is a piece of garden ground known as Browne's Meadow, which in February, 1670, was leased for 21 years to Sir Thomas Browne. Sir John Evelyn, who visited Sir Thomas Browne, wrote, "His whole house and garden being a paradise and cabinet of rarities and that of the best collection especially medals, books, plants, and natural things." Sir Thomas could hardly have had a very large garden attached to his house near the Haymarket, so he (Mr. Bolingbroke) liked to think that Browne and Evelyn must have visited the garden in the Close when Sir Thomas led Evelyn "to see all the remarkable places of

this ancient city, being one of the largest, and certainly after London, one of the noblest of England for its venerable cathedral, number of stately churches, cleanness of the streets, and buildings of flints." Sir Thomas manifested his interest in the Cathedral by subscribing £5 towards its repair in 1661, and wrote a most interesting and valuable record of the monuments in the Church in 1680. The meadow, shortly after the death of Sir Thomas, was hired by Dr. Prideaux, Prebendary, and afterwards Dean of Norwich, who, after Sir Thomas, was probably the best known man of letters in Norwich in the 17th century. Prideaux was said to have had no sense of humour, but there was a trace of humour in the letter which he wrote to his friend John Ellis announcing his approaching marriage :—"I have hearkened to proposals that have been made to me of marriage, and because they are such as are very advantageous, I have already got soe far as ye sealeing of articles whereby I have secured to myselfe £3000, but after ye death of ye father and mother, whose only child ye gentlewoman is, I believe there will be at least £1500 more. I little thought I should ever come to this, but abundance of motives have overpowered me, and therefore I have yielded to the circumstanses of my present condition, which would neither be convenient nor comfortable without this resolution."

Until comparatively modern times the Ferry House was an inn that extended somewhat further west than it does to-day. In drawings by John Thirtle and others of the early 19th century we had records of an old gabled house which stood on the precinct side of the Ferry House flush with the road. At that time the house was commonly called "Sandling's Ferry," but later it became known as Pull's Ferry, John Pull being the last of the ferrymen who kept it as a public-house. The view of the ferry house and monastic water gate from across the river was probably the most frequently sketched scene in Norwich. From some of these pictures it was seen that the tower on the north side of the water gate was considerably higher than at present, and that above the water gate itself were one or two chambers with a tiled roof over them, which were only taken down in the time of Dean Goulbourn. As music was associated with the Ethelbert gateway and its inn, so it was also associated with the water gate and the adjoining public-house. Towards the close of the 18th century, and during the early years of the 19th, a band of wind instrumentalists were wont during the summer months to assemble in a barge on Thursdays and pass the afternoons upon the river, playing as they sailed. The barge was called the Apollo and was "a source of much gratification to its numerous visitors and the attendant parties who followed in other boats to listen to the music." The practices for the performances were held at the ferry, and a Mr. Daniel Clark, a gentleman who lived for many

years in the Close and was the owner of the Apollo, was always known as admiral of this river flotilla, a position he held for more than half a century, dying in 1827 at the age of 82.

From the river beneath the water gate in mediæval times ran a canal or wide ditch extending along what is now the ferry road as far as the lower square, made presumably as a means of water transit for the conveyance of stone for the work of the Cathedral. In 1712 complaint was made by the city authorities that the river suffered by the non-cleansing of this canal, but the representatives of the Chapter alleged that the river "rather would be damaged by it being cleansed, for then all the silt of the Close would be washed into the river whereas now a great part of it is stopped and sticks among the weeds of the said grown-up ditch." He did not know the exact date at which the ditch was filled in and done away with, but Philip Browne in his *History of Norwich*, dated 1814, declared "the ditch was existing about thirty years ago, but is now filled up."

Early in the last century the Close was patrolled at night by four watchmen. They wore light-coloured duffel coats and had a watch-box between them, now preserved in the Cathedral Museum. Another custom of the night which was peculiar to the precinct and prevalent until about twenty years ago, was that every Christmas Eve the city bellman entered, bell in hand, and visited the various houses. To quote the words of that estimable character, William Childerhouse, last but one of the city bellmen, "I give about three touches with my small bell under the windows of the Lord Bishop, the Dean, and the best of the worthy dwellers, wishing them a very happy Christmas and prosperous New Year. Then I recite the carol." On Boxing Day the dwellers were expected to give the bellman a shilling in exchange for a copy of his yearly verses.

Dealing with the brewery in the Close, first mention of which he found in a lease dated the third year of Edward VI., Mr. Bolingbroke said an ale-house existed on the premises in 1567, and concerning it Dr. George Gardiner, then a prebendary and afterwards Dean, reputed:—"The brew-house which might be let for £12 or £13 6s. 8d. by year, is made nothing of at this day in comparison, but permitted to be a tippling-house without all order of law, where unto all evil and naughty persons and such as in the city are not suffered by the magistrates do resort." The Commissioners to whom the matter was referred reported:—"We find that there is a tippling-house within the Close wherein is very much evil rule used. The party that keepeth the same not licensed according to law." In 1596 the Bishop of Norwich required that: "The many ale-houses now used in the liberty of the said church should be by the said Dean and Chapter so farr forth as in them lay, be put down." That the Bishop's words

had some effect appeared evident because when in December, 1604, Symon Mosse, one of the Cathedral singing men, erected an ale-house without licence within the precinct, the Dean and Chapter required him to suppress it, and he, refusing to do so, and using "unfitting words and unbeseeming" in Chapter, was accordingly removed from his place. On his subsequent submission, however, he was allowed to retain his office.

No. 50 was, perhaps, the most picturesque house in the whole Close. In 1664 it was leased to the Corporation of Norwich with other property, and remained under lease to them for more than 200 years. From 1792 to 1817 it formed the residence of Dr. Frank Sayers, poet, essayist, and antiquary. Dr. Sayers became the foremost literary man in Norwich at a time when the city was celebrated for its literary, artistic, and scientific society. Many well-known men such as John Opie, Robert Southey, and Sir James Mackintosh must have visited Sayers in this old house.

Mr. Bolingbroke, in conclusion, said the houses of which he had spoken were for the most part erected after the dissolution of the monastery, but there still remained a number which in early times formed a portion of the old monastic buildings, and it would be interesting to trace at some future time how these old buildings were adapted by the Dean and Chapter as dwelling-houses for themselves, their officials and servants, and for private residents, or were put to other capitular uses.

## Annual Meeting at Norwich.

The Annual Meeting of the Society was held at the Guildhall, Norwich, on Thursday, June 15th, when, in addition to the transaction of the usual business of the Society, the prizes given by the Society and Prince Frederick Duleep Singh, M.V.O., were presented to the successful competitors in the School Essays Competition.

School Essays on Norwich.

Mr. J. H. F. Walter, the President, who was in the chair, congratulated the successful candidates on the excellent work they had done. He stated that the scheme was first suggested in 1919, but was not definitely arranged until 1920. The essays were to be on some local historical or archæological subject, and three examples on each subject contributed by any school were to be selected for final adjudication. The essays to be guaranteed by the principals of the schools concerned, as having been written in school from unaided memory under due supervision. The subjects were:—for boys and girls at primary schools, "Old Norwich"; for boys and girls over 16 at secondary schools, "Norwich in the time of Crome"; for boys and girls under 16 at secondary schools, "The Guildhall." For primary

schools there were received 22 papers from girls and nine from boys; from secondary schools there were sent in three from boys over 16, and three from boys under 16; and from girls over 16 only one, and three from girls under 16; a total in all of 41 essays. The scrutators unanimously considered the "proficiency" average of the competing essays very satisfactory (with the exception of the division for girls above 16), and as shewing considerable originality of thought and expression combined with evident keen interest in the various subjects.

The prize winners were: secondary schools, boys over 16, A. R. Clapham, City of Norwich School; boys under 16, E. Mason, City of Norwich School; girls over 16, not awarded; girls under 16, Vera Lamb, Convent of Notre Dame, Surrey Street. Primary schools: 1st prize, boys, J. L. Simons, Thorpe Hamlet School; 2nd prize, boys, S. Frost, Thorpe Hamlet School; 1st prize, girls, Phyllis Abbs, College Girls' School; 2nd prize, girls, Dorothy Harrison, Thorpe Hamlet School.

Essays deserving special mention:—Helen Brown, Thorpe Hamlet Girls' School; Coralie Gooda, Thorpe Hamlet Girls' School; Janet Thompson, Nelson Street Girls' School; Beatrix Crumpton, St. Mark's Girls' School; Beatrix Howard, Convent of Notre Dame; Ernest F. Dain, City of Norwich School.

Medallion given by H.H. Prince Frederick Duleep Singh was awarded to Phyllis Abbs.

The President, before presenting the prizes, said he was sorry that Prince Frederick Duleep Singh was unavoidably absent. Mr. Walter remarked that Miss Abbs' paper was considered a long way in front of all the others. It was an exceedingly pretty paper, it was nicely written, and it was nicely decorated with capital letters. To each of the successful competitors the President addressed a few words of congratulation, and expressed the hope that they would keep up their love for old Norwich and archæology. They were as yet young, but as they got older the better would be their liking for old things. To Miss Abbs he stated that there were very few people in the county who had one of the medallions given by Prince Frederick Duleep Singh. He (the President) was a little bit jealous as he had one himself.

The Annual Report and Accounts were then presented and passed.

THE LATE REV. E. C. HOPPER.

The President remarked that since the Report was prepared they had to lament the death of an old friend, the Rev. E. C. Hopper. He was shocked on his return from Belgium and Holland to receive a letter from Mrs. Hopper announcing that her husband had passed away. He supposed there were few people with whom he (the President) had been more intimately associated since he had been President, and for years before, than the late Mr. Hopper. Both had the same hobby and both went

about annoying various clergymen in different parts of the county and asking to see their Church plate. They were always received in the most cordial and kindly fashion, and he hoped that both had done a certain amount of good work in cataloguing the old Church plate in the diocese. It was needless to say that there was a very pleasant little rivalry between them. If Mr. Hopper found a piece of Lynn plate that he (Mr. Walter) had missed or had not seen, he wrote and told him, and the same thing happened if he (Mr. Walter) found a piece. They had worked very happily together, and he should like to ask the Society to send a letter of condolence to Mrs Hopper in her bereavement. He really could not think who would fill Mr. Hopper's place. The week he died he had made arrangements to take another deanery and go through the Church plate. Proceeding, the President said they ought to be proud of having such public-spirited members as Mr. L. G. Bolingbroke, who had presented Strangers' Hall to the Corporation of Norwich, and Sir Eustace Gurney for his gift of the Lazar House to the city. He should also like to say how much they as a society owed the directors of the *Norfolk News* Company for the very handsome way they received a letter from him on behalf of the Society and for all that they had done to preserve and restore Suckling House. He moved the adoption of the Report.

This was seconded by Mr. L. G. Bolingbroke and agreed to.

Presentation to Mr. W. R. Rudd.

The President said it was with mixed feelings that he rose to offer a little token of their gratitude to their retiring Excursion Secretary. It was a pleasure to be the mouth-piece of the members in making a presentation to Mr. Rudd, and it was also a source of regret that he was leaving them and giving up what he had done wonderfully well in connexion with the excursions. He could not say that he particularly envied Mr. Cozens-Hardy, because on excursions people got left behind. Mr. Rudd had done the work remarkably well, and they were exceedingly grateful to him. They were particularly grateful to him for the excellent manner in which he had carried out the excursions, and on behalf of the members he had much pleasure in asking his acceptance of a handsome Monteith bowl, a copy of a bowl which was made in 1680. The inscription on the base was, "Presented to W. R. Rudd, Esq., by members of the Norfolk and Norwich Archæological Society, in grateful recognition of his services as Excursion Secretary, 1911—1922."

The proceedings concluded with the usual votes of thanks.

### Reception at Drayton Hall.

During the afternoon the President and Mrs. Walter held a reception at Drayton Hall, about one hundred members of the

Society attending. Mr. Walter has for long been regarded as one of the leading possessors of Nelson relics in the kingdom, and all his life he has been a keen collector of antique silver, Staffordshire pottery, and other interesting treasures. The result is that Drayton Hall has become the home of one of the most wonderful private collections in the country, and it was therefore with the greatest pleasure that the members of the Society accepted the invitation to spend a few hours viewing articles of almost priceless value, and in many cases unique. The Drayton Hall treasures include, beside the Nelson relics, the rare silver spoons and homely looking Staffordshire pottery, a grand collection of engravings, fine examples of antique furniture, delicate bone and coloured split straw work done by French prisoners of war in England during the Napoleonic wars, Morland engravings, and valuable glass.

Of course, it was impossible for Mr. Walter to conduct the large party personally round the Hall and explain to them the beauty and rarity of the contents of his veritable stone house. In this he was assisted by Colonel F. Walter, Mr. Rossi, Mrs. Cyril Walter, Mr. F. Leney, and Miss G. V. Barnard; and the visitors, under the able guidance of their host and his volunteer assistants, were able to view at their leisure one collection after another. Perhaps the chief attractions were the Nelson relics and the collection of antique spoons. Amongst the former is a pastel of Nelson by a German artist named Schund in the year 1801, and which bears the wording, "Nelson, the English admiral, painted from life at Dresden." Two Copenhagen sauceboats, given by Lloyd's Coffee House in 1801 to the great admiral, and a bedroom candlestick, engraved "N. and B.", also find places in the collection. A copy of *The Times* of January 9th, 1806, in which appears an account of the funeral of the national hero, and the sailing orders given on board the Victory by Lord Nelson on the 10th of October, 1805, a few days before the Battle of Trafalgar, are other carefully preserved treasures, whilst the sword which Nelson had in his right hand when he lost his arm at Teneriffe has an honoured place in the collection. This weapon bears the inscription, "Presented by Captain Suckling, commanding H.M.S. Triumph, to Horatio Nelson, midshipman." It was for this sword that Nelson asked when he came round after receiving his terrible wound. Gold medals for the Battles of Trafalgar and the Nile are proudly displayed, as is also a sextant given to Nelson by his uncle, Captain Suckling. A badge which there is every reason to believe was worn by a mourner at Nelson's funeral is shewn close to a little vinaigrette given to Lady Hamilton by Nelson at Christmas, 1804, and also a little box given by Nelson to Lady Hamilton and engraved "Dear Emma, from N. and B." Other articles in the collection are

a miniature surrounded by pearls and emeralds, and believed to be a portrait of Lady Hamilton, and an etui which belonged to Lady Hamilton.

The articles of Norwich plate, which are regarded as unique, consist of a tiger war jug, two tumbler cups, a tankard, four beakers, and a bleeding bowl, the last named being at one time the property of John Worrall, a master barber surgeon of Norwich about 1690. Mr. Walter's collection of antique spoons numbers just 214 and dates from about 1400 to 1700. Amongst them is a master spoon of Henry VII. (1492) and several wonderful sets of apostle spoons. There are also acorn topped, spear topped, seal topped, and hind foot spoons. A wonderful seal topped spoon, on which Mr. Walter places great store, bears the inscription, "William Walter, born November 20th, 1647." It may be mentioned that the spoons are mainly the work of Norwich, Sherbourne, Exeter, Coventry, York, Lincoln, and Leicester silversmiths.

The magnificent array of Staffordshire pottery also came in for a great deal of close inspection. At no other house in England is such a great variety of this delightful old ware to be seen, and visitors paused long before the well-filled cabinets with their well-stocked shelves of cottages, castles, churches, statuettes, dogs, &c. Articles which quickly caught the eye were representations of Stanfield Hall, Potash Farm, and the Red Barn at Polstead, all of which have been associated with thrilling local crimes. Several rooms at Drayton Hall are almost entirely pictured with portraits of Lord Nelson, scenes of the various sea fights in which he took part, and plans of his victorious battles, and it is needless to say that guests took the greatest interest in everything appertaining to our greatest sea warrior. It is impossible to enumerate a tithe of the wonderful array of articles to which the attention of the members was directed, but mention must be made of the delicacy of the work of the French prisoners of war.

Before leaving the company was entertained to tea by the President and Mrs. Walter.

### Ramble in the Ranworth District.

An afternoon excursion took place on July 27th in the Ranworth district. About a hundred of the members attended under the leadership of the Society's President, Mr. J. H. F. Walter. Calls were made at South Burlingham Church, South Walsham Church, Ranworth Church, and Ranworth Old Hall, and after tea was taken at South Walsham Hall, by courtesy of Sir Bartle and Lady Frere. This was the first outing organised under the new excursion secretaryship of Mr. Basil Cozens-Hardy. The time-table was closely observed, its working being all the more efficient

because the whistle signal hitherto employed had been superseded by a blast from a boy scout bugler.

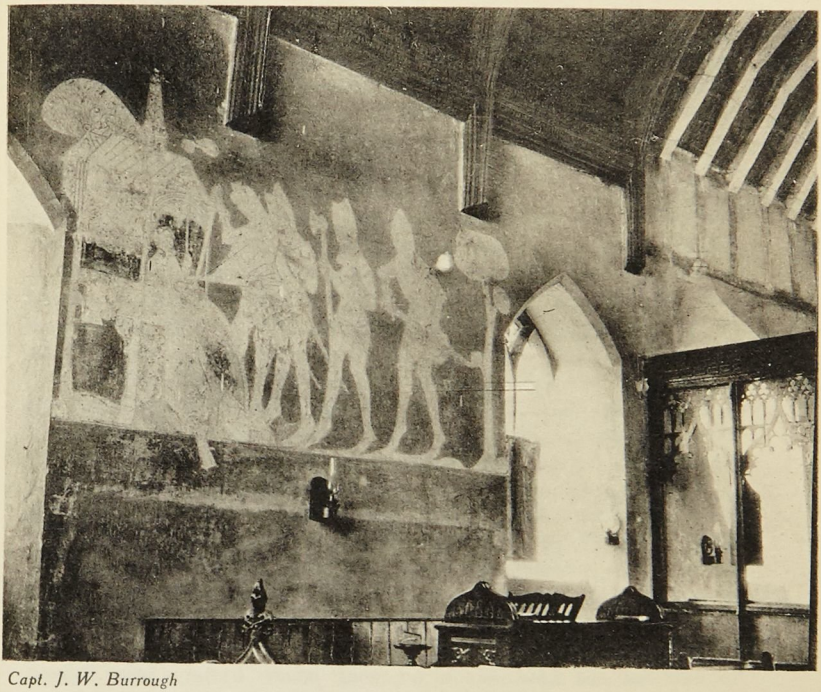
SOUTH BURLINGHAM CHURCH.

South Burlingham Church, dedicated to St. Edmund, is a small edifice of flint, with stone dressing and a thatched roof. The prevailing style is Norman. The pulpit, of the 15th century, is panelled, and is ornamented with painted flowers and stars, tracery, and a cresting. The other antiquities include an hour-glass stand and some frescoes. One of these, of the late 14th century, portrays the killing of Thomas à Becket. The rood screen is of the 15th century. The register dates from the year 1566.

Mr. B. Cozens-Hardy, in the course of a paper, spoke of the mural paintings as the most interesting objects in the Church. Opposite the entrance was the figure of St. Christopher, rather dim and difficult to recognise. On the south chancel wall was the most remarkable mural painting in the county. It was discovered in 1856 during repair work. It represented the assassination of Thomas à Becket. Becket, vested for Mass, was shewn kneeling before the altar, on which was a chalice. A cross-bearer was holding a processional cross. The Archbishop's hands were joined in prayer, though historians relate as a fact that he died defending himself. His mitre was on the ground. The first knight was stabbing him; the second striking him with his sword; the third, whose engraved shield proved him to be Reginald Fitz Urse, held an axe; whilst the fourth knight was drawing his sword. The murder was committed in 1170, but the armour depicted was of the period of Richard II., about 1380, which might therefore be said to be the approximate date of the painting. A somewhat similar painting was in 1861 discovered in Eaton Church, Norwich. The vandal restorers of that period soon had it plastered over.

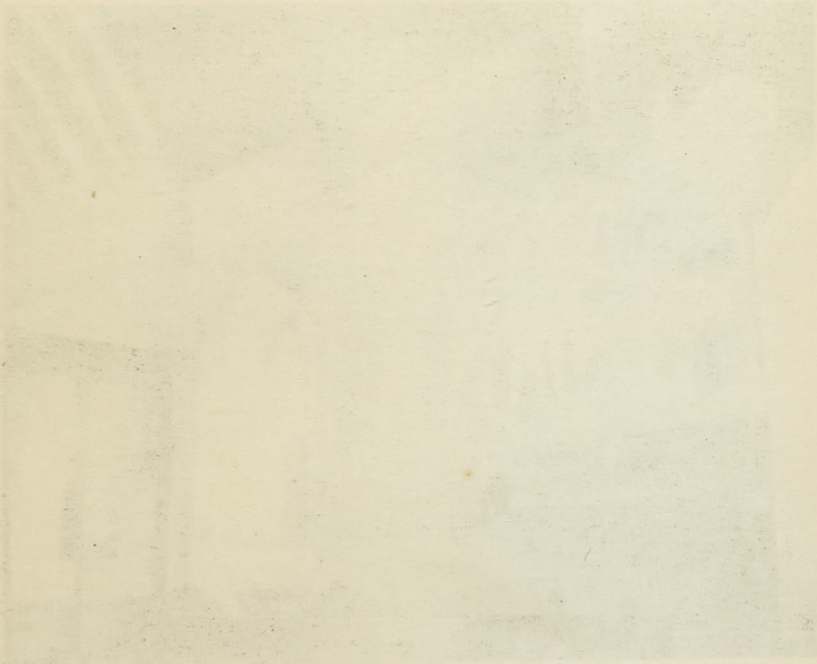
SOUTH WALSHAM CHURCHES.

In the absence of the Rector, who was away from home, Mr. J. E. T. Pollard read a paper on the antiquities of South Walsham Churches, those of St. Laurence and St. Mary. The former was built in the second half of the 15th century and the early part of the 16th, and suffered disastrously from fire in 1827. The Church of St. Mary was built in the Perpendicular style. The sculpture on a handsome south porch, with a parvise above it, deserved notice. Over the apex of the arch was a canopied niche containing a representation of the Holy Trinity. In the spandril of the arch on the western side was a figure of the Virgin Mary, probably intended to denote the Annunciation. On the eastern side was a representation of St. Michael. From wills proved at Norwich it appeared that the Church was built in the early part of the 15th century. As the porch would be the last



*Capt. J. W. Burrough*

Mural Painting of the Murder of
THOMAS À BECKET
in SOUTH BURLINGHAM CHURCH



part of the Church to be built, it appeared that St. Mary's was some years older than St. Laurence's. The screen, though poor when compared with Ranworth and many others, was interesting, more particularly as it was one of the few screens which contained the original doors. The inscription read "Orate pro animabus Johannis Galt et uxorem ejus" on one side, and on the other "The giver he have idone peynting this perke,"—perke being Old English for rood screen. The oldest register shewed that the Solemn League and Covenant which had been entered in it had had the page or pages cut out, but some marks or names of signatories remained. In the floor of the nave, near the screen, was the lid of a stone coffin. For many years down to 1911 it was placed wrong side up. In that year it was turned over by Mr. Ranken, the Rector. Two stone coffin lids formed the steps into the Church, and the remains of other lids had been found and lay in the Church. These were all, no doubt, in the original Norman Church, as stone coffins were first used in England in the Norman period, and ceased to be used by the reign of Edward I. When the stone was first turned over there were found under it traces of a wooden coffin and some human bones. It had been surmised that the stone was turned over in the Commonwealth period to hide the cross—crosses being regarded by the Puritans as objects of superstition. It was not known who were placed in the stone coffins, but as only persons of wealth could afford them, they no doubt held the remains of some great family, possibly even an Abbot of St. Benet's, as the Abbey held the rectory and patronage in Norman times.

In some comments on the Church plate, the President said he had never before seen in one church two pieces marked respectively with the orb and the cross and the sun in splendour, both of which signs are believed to have been the marks of Peter Petersen.

Ranworth Church.

At Ranworth Church, which is one of the most frequented resorts of antiquaries in the Eastern Counties and which has been often described, the main points of interest were indicated by the Vicar, the Rev. W. W. M. Cleaver.

Ranworth Old Hall.

Acknowledging himself largely indebted to a paper read by Mr. F. Danby Palmer when the Yarmouth Branch of the Society visited Ranworth in 1891, Mr. B. Cozens-Hardy discussed Ranworth Old Hall. This building, he said, no doubt occupied the site of a much older and larger building. It was built about 1600, he went on, and appears originally to have had two wings, part of one of which still remains, and these with a gatehouse formed an E-shaped building (it has been suggested as a compliment to Queen Elizabeth). The style was called the Elizabethan style of the Tudor

period. The gateway shews the moulded brick which had been introduced for ornamental building by Trevigi and Holteris. The building to the west of the surviving wing, now used as barns, have first-floor mullioned windows, and were used no doubt at one time for residental purposes. I should like to have some information about their date and their relation to the main building. In the adjoining field to the west there are some curious remains said to be a chapel, but now used as a cart "shud." Members will please inspect it and form their own views about this building. Human bones have in recent times been found in the adjacent osier car, which some say was a burial ground belonging to the Priory. May they not be the resting-place of some river marauders, who roamed these parts in the troublous Middle Ages and met their death in an attack on this house ?

A few sentences about the ownership of this place. In Norman times it belonged to the Bigots, Earls of Norfolk, and later on in the Tudor period to the family of Holditch. It was probably a Henry Holditch, who as lord of the manor built the Elizabethan house. Eventually the Manor came by marriage into the hands of the Sidleys, thence to the Kerrisons, and it now belongs to Mr. John Cator.

It would indeed be surprising if so isolated a mansion as this, lying near misty swamps and away from the road, was not the subject of traditions and ghost stories. The villagers still believe that they sometimes see ghostly forms flitting at dusk through the trees near the building. Money is said to be buried near the old gateway, placed there by St. Benet's monks to escape Henry VIII.'s rapacious hands. Some little while ago a man digging in the garden hard-by came upon a brick culvert, probably part of the old drainage arrangements, and of course it lent colour to the old belief that a tunnel existed between here and the Abbey! But the most famous story connected with the building is that which tells of the melancholy end of Colonel Sidley in 1770. Sidley was a somewhat wild character, given to excess both in what he did and what he consumed. Eventually he was removed from the Commission of the Peace because of his wild and illegal freaks. He and his boon companions were having a great feast to drink out the Old Year and drink in the New. But Sidley appeared in the full panoply of the hunt, with boots and spurs and boisterous spirits. At midnight he was summoned by a servant to the front door, where a solitary horseman awaited him. He ordered his horse, appropriately named Black Jezebel, and set off cloakless with the stranger into the dark, despite the protests of his servant, who grasped the stranger's hand as he went. "Who rides with me requires no cloak," cried the horseman. A clap of thunder awaked the

guests from their surprise. They rushed to the courtyard, and saw the colonel with his hounds, which had broken loose, rush madly towards the broad, and there disappear. As they vanished the church bell tolled. Sidley was never seen again in the flesh, though one month after these events his servant met what appeared to be the colonel in the adjoining field, and the spirit form supplied him with sufficient money to keep him in comfort for the rest of his life. He declined to disclose any further details of the ghostly interview. For some years the Hall remained untenanted and unaltered, and the spider, weevil, and sparrow did their work of destruction. The house was haunted. But apart from this there was difficulty about the title to the estate. Eventually, in 1777, it was sold by the colonel's creditors to Mr. John Kerrison, in whose family it remained until recent years. But no one would live in that part of the house which the boisterous colonel frequented, and Mr. Kerrison had to demolish the eastern wing.

It is difficult to say how much of this tradition is pure fiction, and how much is plain fact. Anyway, I give it to you for what it is worth, because this building without the colonel might be as uninteresting as Hamlet without the ghost.

## Visit to the Binham District.

On August 31st a whole-day expedition took place in the Blakeney and Cley district. The Society was headed by its President, Mr. J. H. F. Walter, and Mr. Basil Cozens-Hardy, as Excursion Secretary, had charge of the general arrangements. The forenoon was occupied by visits to Great Snoring Rectory and Church and Binham Priory. After lunch, which was taken at Blakeney White Horse, calls were made at the Churches of Blakeney and Cley-next-the-Sea. Before the party left on the return journey, Mr. and Mrs. Cozens-Hardy received them at afternoon tea at Glavenside, Letheringsett.

In the morning the weather was gloriously fine. At Binham, however, rain began to fall smartly, and a heavier downpour set in before Norwich was reached. This was the only blemish on one of the most informing and successful excursions that the Society has organised for many years.

Great Snoring Rectory.

The Rectory of Great Snoring is a beautiful house, built in moulded brickwork of the time of Henry VIII. It has manorial associations with the Shelton family, whose name is symbolised in weather-worn terra cotta decorations on the southern front by the rebus shell and tun. The Rector, the Rev. P. Greeves, who made the necessary explanations, mentioned

amid much applause, that he had received an American offer for a fine old oaken door of the Tudor period and had not accepted it.

GREAT SNORING ST. MARY CHURCH.

Mr. Greeves also served as guide among the features of Great Snoring Church, dedicated to St. Mary. On the altar platform is a brass to the memory of Sir Ralph Shelton (1483) and his wife, the armorial bearings having been enamelled. These effigies have been engraved by John Sell Cotman.

BINHAM PRIORY.

At the famous Priory of Binham, the Rector, the Rev. F. A. Hannam, gave a short address, setting forth its history and pointing to its principal features of archæological interest. The subject has been so amply treated in the Society's transactions and elsewhere, that it can hardly be necessary here to make a recapitulation of it. The Rev. W. H. Finlayson, Rector of Letheringsett, explained the reparations achieved by a Committee, which, having been formed in 1902, raised and judiciously expended a sum of £1,300.

BLAKENEY CHURCH.

There is no parish church in all Norfolk which is generally accounted finer in situation or more beautiful in its proportions than the Church of Blakeney. In the unavoidable absence of the Rector, Canon Gordon Roe, a paper was read by Mr. John Page, B.A., A.R.I.B.A. The chancel is the earliest work remaining, for it is of the 13th century. There seems to be no doubt that the small turret, which, in contrast to the western tower, makes such a conspicuous and unusual feature of the edifice, was used as a lantern tower to guide mariners into the Port of Blakeney, and the chamber over the chancel vault was no doubt used by the monks in connexion with this light. Although there must have been a turret here in the 13th century, the present turret is of the same period as the nave, namely, 15th century, though the turret stairs may be original work. The following passages from Mr. Page's paper will be of interest as bearing on the general history of Blakeney and its environs:—

Blakeney, or, as it has sometimes been called, Snitterley, was a beruite to the King's Manor of Holt. It is said that a large portion of Snitterley, low-lying lands, together with an ancient church, were overwhelmed by the sea in early mediæval times, and that the inhabitants retreated to the higher ground called "Bleak Eye" or "Black Eye," and there they afterwards built a new church. To bear out the supposition that there were two towns the following fact is interesting:—In 1358 a statute was passed relating to the sale of fish at Snitterley, "there being a great fair at Blakeney." The latter name is first mentioned in the reign of Edward III. The following facts of history are interesting:—In 1223 Henry III. granted a market in Snitterley

to Peter de Mealton. In 1297 the Convent of Carrow laid in a stock of 186 cod purchased here. This port was of considerable importance in the 13th and following centuries, and was frequented by German merchants. In 1285 an action was brought by German merchants against Thomas Burgeys and others for seizing and taking by force a vessel loaded with cloth and other merchandise and driven ashore, the value being £14,000. In 1310 Edward II. charged the town with one warship, to be sent to Dublin to transport the forces raised there to Scotland, and the next year sent to this town and Yarmouth, Lynn, Holkham, and Burnham to provide ships to be sent to Scotland. In the reign of Richard II. the mariners of Blakeney, Cley, and Cromer were exempt from serving in the King's Navy, and could not be impressed. In 1347 Blakeney sent two vessels and 38 men to the Siege of Calais. Some 700 years ago the beach did not extend beyond Cley, and the sea flowed up to the hills, and it is thought that vessels were built in the valleys of the "Friars' Hills." Blakeney people have always been of an independent nature, for in the time of Elizabeth it appears the people of Blakeney, Cley, and Wiveton refused to meet the request to the towns of Lynn and Blakeney to provide two vessels of war (State papers, 1588). Blakeney people refused to furnish a ship. In 1292 the Carmelite, or White Friars, founded a house at Blakeney. This order of monks was instituted in 1160 and arrived at Lynn from the Holy Land in 1240, where they settled, and in 1241 they founded a house at Burnham Norton, where ruins still exist. They also established themselves at Norwich and Yarmouth. In 1292 John Stormer, Richard Stormer, Thomas Tholer, and other copyhold tenants of the Manor gave about 13½ acres of land whereon to build a church and convent for Friars of the Carmelite Order. Sir William Roos, who lived, it is believed, at Wiveton Hall, and Lady Maud, his wife, née de Vaux, were early patrons, and gave 100 marks towards building the church and convent, which was completed in 1321. There were 18 friars. It is said the house was consecrated by friars from Cley, who came in procession, carrying a picture of the Virgin Mary before them. The friars came from the Holy Land, their dress was white, made of coarse woollen stuff. They employed their time in tilling the land, and they built the north wall to protect their crops. The convent contained two cells underground, in which the friars who transgressed the rules were confined. It is said there was a subterranean passage to Wiveton Hall, and also to the Guildhall. A few years ago a passage was discovered, but from the size it was most probably a drain. The monks built a small chapel on the Eye, in which they blessed the fishing boats, and on the wall outside was a small box in which the fishermen put pennies when successful. John de Baconsthorpe, called the Subtle Doctor, was educated here and

afterwards went to Oxford and thence to Paris, where he distinguished himself. He died in London 1346. The Guildhall of Blakeney is situated under the Mariners' Hill, near the quay, and is of 14th century work. The present Hall consists of a single chamber, roofed in with brick vaulting, with stone octagonal pins down the centre and stone corbels taking the abutments of the brick ribs to the walls. The old window openings on the east side are bricked up, and there are niche recessess under these windows and in the west wall. There is a well-moulded stone arched entrance door at the north end, and in the south-east angle is a recess from which it is supposed the subterranean passage started. One of the most interesting features is the plaster on the walls, which shews signs of having been modelled with rose ornament and birds and beasts. The Guildhall sadly needs restoration, as the walls and vaulting are saturated. It is hoped the Parish Council, in which body the ownership is invested, will take the matter in hand and then this interesting Hall may be turned to some use, and so be preserved for posterity.

CLEY CHURCH.

At the fine Church of Cley-next-the-Sea Mr. Basil Cozens-Hardy read a paper. He said:— We know nothing about Cley prior to the Conquest, though we may well surmise that the mouth of a convenient little river like the Glaven was not without a fishing population from the earliest times. Cley figures in Domesday Book, but only as a hamlet of Holt. The child, however, soon outgrew the parent. The Norman Conquest gave East Anglia a strong nexus with the more advanced Continent. Trade followed the Norman flag, and Norfolk produced what the Low Counties wanted. Fortunate was the coast town which had a good anchorage. Let me here digress for a moment to direct your attention to the coast line, because on its variation hangs the whole history of these small parts, and, indirectly, of this Church itself.

VARIATION OF THE COAST LINE.

Dr. Jessopp expresses the view that, whereas the beach line distance from here to Cromer is now only 12 miles, in the early middle ages it must have been nearer 20. A glance at the coast line on the map, or say, from Blakeney Church, will at once suggest that many centuries ago the actual beach must have been where the uplands now begin, the steep north flank of Blakeney and Cley being once sea cliffs. The survival of the phrase, "Bay of Solthouse," which appears on an old grave stone here, seems to lend colour to this view, as anciently there must have been a very considerable embayment in the coast there. But in pre-Conquest days the sea had been gnawing away, slowly but surely, the cliffs in a westerly direction. The soil which once formed the fair fields of vanished Shipden may quite well now be

reposing in Blakeney point. The sea, however, in its westerly drive was confronted by a small, but important obstacle in the silt-laden water of the River Glaven, and the effect of the interaction of these two forces appears to me to have been that the cliff erosion stopped at Weybourne, and between Weybourne and the Glaven delta were deposited the eroded cliffs of Sheringham and Cromer. As time went on, there was a severe, though unequal, contest between the Glaven, to maintain an unimpeded exit to the ocean, and the sea to deposit along the coast the product of its erosion. At last Neptune proved too strong for the Glaven; its direct access to the sea was blocked, and it had to discharge its water four miles further west round Blakeney Point. But it was this diversion of its stream which gave the district an anchorage and secured its trade.

Of late years shoals have shifted and currents have changed, and the protective belt of sand and shingle is being eaten away by the storms from the north-west; and the sea, which many years ago gave Cley its prosperity, has now proved its bane. Nearly all the earlier records about Cley relate to its shipping and its trade. In the days when warfare was the recreation of kings, a militant monarch was faced with difficulties of transport and commissariat. He had neither a regular fleet nor tinned beef. These ports helped to supply the want. In 1322 Blakeney, Wyveton, Cley, and Salthouse had to furnish three warships between them to Edward II. In 1351, according to the Black Prince's register, the bailiff of the same ports was ordered to have in readiness 1,200 talcod—salt fish—for a voyage overseas. Between 1300 and 1350 Cley was at the acme of its prosperity. Wool and barley left this port in quantities for the Lowlands, and the Cley men of this period probably knew Ypres and Flanders as well as many of those Cley men whose names are recorded in honour at the east of the north aisle.

I now approach the heart of my subject, the Parish Church of Cley, its parsons, and its people. The Church authorities of the time would have been less than human if they had not sought to excite the generosity of their flock and divert to Church uses some of the large but no doubt well-earned profit of Cley merchants. Judging by the results, the laity were not unmindful of their responsibilities. We do not know the date of the foundation of this Church, but we do know that Sir John de Vaux, a considerable property owner, died in 1278 possessed of the advowson of Holt and Cley. There must therefore have been an actual church here at that date. Indeed the late Mr. Micklethwaite puts the date of the present tower, or part of it at least, and of the north aisle wall at about 1250. The desire to have a church worthy of its importance inspired the inhabitants of Cley largely to rebuild the old church, and in about 1330 the work in the

Decorated style was commenced, beginning with the chancel and proceeding westwards. The plan projected was cruciform, and operations appear to have continued until the transepts and nave were completed up to the roof, practically as far as the west end. But then there was a sudden interruption. Now tradition, when there is nothing to gain by invention or exaggeration, often contains the seeds of truth, and tradition says that the Black Death stopped further building. Perhaps the architect himself may have fallen a victim to the scourge. The 16th and 17th centuries are the most interesting period of Cley history, partly owing to the more extensive survival of records, and partly because the older order was giving place to the new, a big transition in ideas and ideals. John Wyat, the Rector at the time of the breach with Rome, seems to have accepted the new allegiance without demur. It may be he welcomed it. Any way, there is this to his credit: in 1534 he persuaded Lord Roos, the Duke of Rutland, the patron, to give a house and a close adjoining the churchyard for a rectory, and 140 years later this was still known as the "new parsonage," the old one, which was near the old tithe barn on the Holt Road, having fallen long since into decay. When in Edward VI.'s reign the Commissioners came round to investigate the disposal of those Church goods which offended the dominant sentiment, they found a considerable quantity of valuable ornaments and vestments, which were all ordered to be sold, excepting "one payre of chalice and one bell." "The Lord of Roteland" took "by the consent of the towne" the one bell in the steeple and three other bells, as the perquisites of his patronage.

After this the Church fell into decay. The benefice appears to have been farmed out. The monasteries had been the chief sinners in this respect—they may have been the originators of the practice. It became a fairly common custom for the patron to let out a living at a fixed annual sum to a layman, who thus became responsible for the maintenace of the services, and in most cases the farmer got the spiritual duties done as cheaply as possible and neglected the repair of the chancel. At Cley, the squire, named Ralph Symonds, whose grandfather's brass still survives, was the farmer of the living, and he put in one Andleser, the Rector of Wood Dalling, to do duty. Listen to some of the complaints at the Archdeacon's Court which was held periodically at Holt.

1563—"The window of the chancel is so dilapidated that birds, namely, an owl, befoul the church—the fault of the rector. The chancel is in great ruin—the fault of Master Symonds, the farmer."

Andleser was summoned to appear, but made default. The Archdeacon accordingly excommunicated him—a curious plight for

a rector. However, he was present at the next court, and was absolved on a promise to do repairs. Such work as he did must have been mere patchwork, for a few years later the following complaint is lodged:—

> "The chancel is verie ruinous for want of covering, glazing, and thacking. The parsonage chymney is ruinous. The church very filthilie arrayed by reason of the decaye of the chancel—the pulpit indecent and uncomelie. The steeple wanteth covering with leade."

Andleser's successor was Vincent Goodwin, about whom we have some information. In 1570 he was appointed by the Yarmouth Corporation, with the Bishop's approval, preacher at St. Nicholas. The reformers adopted the practice of early prayer at 5 a.m. Whether this was too early an hour for Goodwin—he may not have had much encouragement from the attendance of the Mayor and Corporation—or whether he lost favour with the Bishop for his puritan leanings, for he was one of the sixty-five Norfolk clergy who protested against Whitgift's articles, is not known. At any rate, his engagement at Yarmouth was terminated in 1582, and he found a resting place here on the presentation of the Heydon family, who shared his ecclesiastical views. He did not live in the Rectory. It had become too dilapidated, but he acquired the adjoining house, which was then still called the "Guildhouse of St. Margaret." In 1598 it was reported to the Archdeacon's Court:—"There wanteth a register book in parchment." Goodwin forthwith proceeded to make good the deficiency.

CURIOSITIES IN THE REGISTER.

The register illustrates well the history of registers. In 1537, I think, Thomas Cromwell ordered parochial clergy to keep registers. For one reason or another it was found sixty years later that most were kept on paper. Accordingly an ordinance was issued in 1598 ordering parchment registers. Goodwin, you will see, copied out the entries of the past sixty years on to the vellum in his small neat handwriting. There are one or two further quaint and interesting complaints in the Archdeacon's Court during Goodwin's incumbency and that of his son, who succeeded him:—

1601—"We present Alice Shorten, the wife of John Shorten, not onli because she have abused the Minister, Mr. Goodwin with most shameful and reproachful words, but also blasphemed his doctrine saying he doth no good in the towne, but what he hard on the week daie doth upon the Sondaie babble it in the church."

1601—"Also we present Simon the Scottishman to use surgerie without a lawful licence upon his own confession."

1605—Joseph Langlie is reported "for fetching sand with a wheelbarrow and otherwise profaning the Saboth day with bodily labour very offensively."

Also the wife of Nicholas Fleming is reported "for a carrier of tales and a sower of discord and discension amongst her honest neighbours to the scandal of the town."

1616—Thomas Boult is reported "for playing unlawful games on Sundays, i.e., did plaie at scale bones."

1639—James Hause, sen., for sleeping at church.

About this date there was a bitter dispute in the neighbourhood, which must have stirred the inhabitants to deep indignation. It was this wise: Sir Henry Calthorpe, of Cockthorpe, being possibly attracted by the success of the recent drainage operations, conducted at Salthouse and elsewhere by a Dutchman named Vanhæsduck, determined to reclaim the Blakeney and Cley marshes. In so doing he made a bank across the channel a little north of the road along which we have just come. Hitherto the tide had flowed up the valley to Wiveton, now the new bank entirely cut Wiveton off from the sea, and the channel itself lacking the strong ebb and flow began quickly to silt up. They summoned an Admiral's Court and an inquiry was held. Then they called a Court of the Port of Cley, Blakeney, and Wiveton, and in the Court Book you will see the entry of the proceedings. But all this availing nothing, and being unable in those days to ventilate their grievance in the columns of a sympathetic daily journal, they determined to approach the source of all justice—H.M. the King in Council, and incidentally to get the ear of William Laud, the man behind the throne. A petition was prepared and duly presented by Sir Thomas Windham and Sir J. Palgrave. It told how in one year the trade of the port was greatly diminished. The import of coal and the export of corn was halved—the porters were unemployed and labour troubles were rife. And the King's custom duties were lamentably small. To strengthen their case they attached signed depositions by small people at Wiveton. One complains that the poor used to get their coal delivered practically to their doors by water. Now porterage makes it too dear, and though the winter was mild, many fences were pulled down for fuel. Another, a lodging or innkeeper, complains that before the erection of the bank she used to make seven or eight beds for strangers in one night, now she makes not one in one night. The petition succeeded, the bank was removed, and Wiveton had access to the sea until 1822, when an Inclosure took place. Cley apparently passed through the Commonwealth period without much ado. Richard Allison, the Rector, conformed to the prevailing order of things, and died

three years before the Restoration, and lies buried, I think, beneath the choir stalls. On his grave he is described as pastor of Cley, the usual Puritan designation.

FAMOUS ADMIRALS.

Time does not permit more than a reference to that brave Commonwealth admiral, Sir Christopher Myngs. Born in the adjoining parish of Salthouse—the son of a hoyman's daughter—he must have known and played in the creeks and channels of Cley. If you have Pepys' Diary handy when you get home read again his entry for 1st June, 1666, and see if you are not proud of this Norfolk man. I close with the mention of Sir Cloudesley Shovell. Several parishes, including Cley, have claimed this illustrious sailor as their son. He was baptised at Cockthorpe in 1650. His mother, however, was a Cley woman, and he owned land at Cley. The Court Book will shew his admission to a piece of arid land then, as now, called "Nomans Friend." It was a lucky thing, perhaps, that he choose the sea as a profession, rather than farming his own land.

Cley has had many sturdy sons "nursed into greatness by storm and by sea." I like to think that the old cannon, which now stand upright in the ground in Cley Street and on Wiveton Green, were once the trusty weapons of these staunch old mariners.

Mr. Walter Rye devoted lengthy consideration to the famous and much-debated arms on the arch of Cley. A very curious thing, he said, occurs twice in these heraldic shields. In two instances the man's coat has been relegated to the woman's side of the shield; in other words, the woman impales the man, and not vice versa. How this occurred I will leave others to explain. The only thing I can suggest is that the architect sketched the coat on thin paper, and the mason, being ignorant of heraldry, cut the coat from the reverse. Or possibly the mason had had given him as his pattern a quarry of armorial glass, and ignorantly copied the wrong side. The last coat, which was omitted by Blomefield altogether, and consequently by all subsequent writers depending on his work, gives, to my mind, a clue to the identity of the two crowned heads which have been variously guessed to represent Edward I. and Isabella and Edward III. and Philippa (Bryant), but which seem to be Richard II. and the Good Queen Anne of Bohemia. The male head is not at all like our preconceived ideas of what the warrior Edward I. would have looked like, for it has long hair and a forked beard just as Richard II. is shewn on his monument at Westminster; and the female head is coiffed just as Queen Anne's head is on the same monument. The date of the architecture is, moreover, clearly too late for either Edward I. and Queen Eleanor, as has lately been suggested, or for Edward III. and Queen Philippa as suggested by Bryant in

his *History of Holt*, 1902. It remains to be seen whether the Good Queen Anne's device of an ostrich holding a piece of iron in its mouth still remains in the Church. Why Richard II. and his wife should take a special interest in Cley has yet to be shewn. His wife had a grant for life of Cawston and Burgh, but the Royal house at the latter place was then dilapidated, and it is not likely she ever lived there. She also had a grant for life of the Hundreds of North Greenhoe, Smithdon, and North and South Erpingham, and of Wighton. Her only recorded visit to Norfolk was in 1383, when she made a progress with the King and visited the rich Abbeys of Bury, Thetford, Norwich, and elsewhere, and was received at Norwich with great pomp.