The Proceedings of the Society during the year 1923.

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

The Annual Meeting was held in the Council Chamber of the Guildhall, Norwich (by the kind permission of the Lord Mayor and Corporation), on May 31st, 1923, when the Annual Report up to the date of the meeting was read. The report was printed in part iii., vol. xxi., of the Society's papers.

Following the annual meeting, a large number of members, including Mr. Walter Rye, took part in an excursion by motor charabancs to Framingham Earl Church, Langley Abbey, Claxton Castle, and Crown Point, where, at the invitation of Mr. and Mrs. Colman, the company took tea. The excursionists left Orford Hill about two o'clock, and on arrival at Framingham Earl they first heard an interesting paper read in the Mission Room by the Rector (the Rev. A. E. Alston) on the history and architectural features of the Church. Afterwards, they visited the Church itself and inspected the many points of interest.

FRAMINGHAM EARL CHURCH.

In the course of his paper Mr. Alston said: I believe that it is recognised to-day that pre-Conquest remains are more numerous in this county than had formerly been allowed, and I make bold to claim that such remains are to be found in this Church. Besides the circular ports in the chancel and the lost windows of the nave, I would refer to the diameter of the north and south walls as indicating early date. This is 2 ft. 6 in., which I am told is a common pre-Conquest measurement. The west wall is 3 ft. 4 in., and it is suggested that this was thickened when the tower was added in the 12th century. The additional thickness above the roof is perhaps shewn in Ladbrooke's drawing of the exterior. Other changes and improvements of that century were the two Norman doorways and the chancel arch, the latter doubtless much wider than the original, which probably had no cut stone or ornament. The original quoining of large flints exists in the western angles; in a 12th-century building, I imagine, these would have been in cut stone. And whereas the tower windows were splayed only on the inside, those of the Church were doubly splayed. The old Church of Framingham Pigot, destroyed before 1860, was a building of very early character, and might have been described as a twin of Framingham Earl before the Norman additions to the latter. The theory of twin churches in the two Framinghams before the Conquest is discounted by the statement of Domesday, that in Framingham there is one church. If this is literally true, then I would claim that that one church is Framingham Earl. But not only is Domesday erratic in its enumeration of churches, but I think it is a fact that the parishes in this part of the county are all ancient and all small. Several, indeed, have been enlarged by the absorption of a neighbouring parish, the church of which was demolished centuries ago; but if we could go backward in time and visit the country in the latter days of the Saxon period, we should probably find a cluster of small parishes and small churches, all of much the same size. In the 12th century a tower was added to Framingham Earl, and the west wall was thickened internally to receive it. Cut stone was imported and new doorways and chancel arch were inserted. The chancel was lengthened, and the external pilasters or flat buttresses belong to this work. Later on, one of the four lateral ports was cut down into a lancet, and the east window was perhaps of that form, as in old Framingham Pigot. In the 14th century we have a further lengthening of the chancel—a join may be seen in the north wall without. The new east wall had stone quoins and a two-light window, and to the same period belong the piscina niche and the remaining one of a pair of stone brackets which probably served to hold the supports of the Lenten veil. In the late 15th century a large two-light window was inserted in the south wall of the nave, in place of an early round-headed one, and perhaps another in the chancel where is now a recess, convenient for books. Opposite to the last-named is another recess, now used as a locker. This was the "low side" or shuttered window, and was blocked by the restorers. The niche in the north wall of the nave has doubtless been mutilated, and I know not what purpose it served, but a similar niche in the corresponding position was discovered at Barsham, near Beccles, some years ago. The little niche in the angle, also mutilated, was probably designed for the use to which it is now put. The statuette, the gift of a neighbour, is a copy of the famous St. George of Dijon, which formed part of the travelling "chapel" of the Dukes of Burgundy.

I have next to no plate or furniture to show you. There is the little Elizabethan cup and paten, the former having the Norwich mark. The pulpit I rescued from the restorers of Sotterley, near Beccles. In the floor of the nave is a brass strip indicating the sepulture of Henry Buntyng. Every other floor memorial was displaced at the restoration. You will notice the two ancient medallions, presumably of 14th-century date—St. Margaret of Antioch in the north window of the nave, and St. Catharine in the tower. These were cast-offs from a neighbouring "restoration," and are not likely to be returned. The glass in the chancel was put in before my day, and was much admired at the time. It is by Ward & Hughes. That in the south windows of the nave is by Mr. F. C. Eden, whose work is not unknown in Norwich. Of two bells existing in 6 Edward VI. one was taken by the Commissioners "for his Highness's use." There were two, however, when Blomefield wrote, and the clapper of one of them was found under the floor some years ago. The surviving bell is thought to be by Thomas Potter, of Norwich, who flourished in 1404. The inscription runs: "Fons Envangelii (*sic*) fac nos Cherubyn Sociari," an address which seems to indicate that this was the "Gabriel" or angelus bell. Let me end with a reference to the late Dr. Rigby, the well-known Norwich physician, traveller, and agriculturist, whose body, with those of his wife and the four infants of a single birth, lies in the churchyard here. To Dr. Rigby is due most of the beauty of the place, though we are glad that he did not "restore" the Church. If he benefited excessively by the enclosure of the common lands, he at least improved and adorned his acquisition. As his tombstone tells us, his best monument is to be seen in the trees and woods around. Before his time this must have been a bleak and windswept tract of country, largely heath and waste. The Church stands on the edge of the one-time "Porland Heth," which ran into no less than five parishes. There is still near by an old cottage, in a little ("lowside") window of which, next the fireplace, a light used to be set of nights to guide the wayfarer between the Church and the comparatively solid road, and to save him from being bogged. The pathway across the heath was obliterated at the enclosure; it is shown in Faden's map, turning and twisting as it avoids the unsafe marshy places. It was a continuation of Stoke Long Lane, and ran into another lane, still called "Burgate." One would like to think that all this was a branch of the Iknield system, ending at Haddiscoe.

LANGLEY ABBEY.

From Framingham the party drove to Langley, where they spent some time rambling about the site of the old Abbey and inspecting such remains as there are. At this stage an interesting paper was read by Mr. Basil Cozens-Hardy on the story of the Abbey.

In the course of this he said: The ruins of the Abbey were excavated a little over a year ago by Mr. Elliston Erwood, on behalf of the British Archæological Association, and his paper, giving an account of the Conventual buildings and their old inhabitants, will appear in the forthcoming issue of the Society's publication.[1] Langley Abbey was one of the three Premonstratensian houses in Norfolk, the other two being West Dereham and Wendling, each of which suffered decay and demolition even more grievously than these buildings. The Premonstratensians, called the White Canons, to distinguish them from the Augustinians or Black Canons, came originally from Prémontré in Picardy. Like the Cistercians, who have been called the "Quakers of Monachism," they sought abodes far from the madding crowd. Langley itself was the child of Alnwick Abbey, and in turn the father of Wendling. All houses of this Order were called abbeys, though of course the Abbot of Langley was a far inferior person to the Prior, say, of Norwich or Walsingham. It was founded in 1195 by Sir Robert Fitz Roger, who was lord of Langley, and had a few years previously held the office of Sheriff of Norfolk and Suffolk. From the outset it seems to have been comparatively well endowed. Its patrons were wealthy, and many titled folk chose its precinct as their last resting place. In 1291 its annual income was £178 or between £3,000 and £4,000 a year at present values, but out of this provision had to be made for the maintenance of an Abbot and fifteen Canons, the upkeep of the Abbey properties, and the ever increasing demands of hospitality. Furthermore, the income was derived from properties in no less than seventy-five parishes, some of which lay in Suffolk, and distance, the absence of any real roads, payment in kind and the lenient landlordism which they practised, all contributed to make the income variable in amount and irregular in receipt. A man of religion was not necessarily a man of business, and saintly abbots often proved to be slack administrators. Langley, like all institutions—past and present—had its ups and downs, both financially and morally. We hear of aged and incompetent abbots, of misappropriated funds collected for the Crusades, of too great indulgence in night hunts and fishing, of sins committed and duties unperformed. But unluckily we see only one side of the picture. The visitations by a bishop, or an appointed visitor, the records of which are still with us, seem to have had as their object rather the discovery of what was wrong than the praise of what was right. Much waywardness, ranging from the merest foible to really heinous sins, are often disclosed, though not infrequently the charge seems to be the invention of some backbiting brother or disappointed hind. They serve "to point a moral or adorn a tale," but let us not miss the other side of the picture.

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[1] See *Norf. Arch.*, vol. xxi., p. 175.

During the 340 years of its existence there must have lived and died within these walls men of blameless character and ceaseless work—visiting the sick, teaching the unlearned, relieving the poor, ministering as parish priests in the neighbouring villages of Chedgrave, Limpenhoe, Thrigby, and Loddon. These, it is true, left no names behind them. "The evil that men do lives after them, the good is oft interred with their bones."

This Abbey produced no historian like Matthew Paris, or administrator like Abbot Samson. Sober mediocrity was its characteristic, and though during the last fifty years of its existence, in common with all monasteries, it became the prey of those hastening ills which attack old institutions, which have served their purpose, its record—indeed the record of all houses of the Premonstratensian Order—was distinctly above the average. It was classed among the smaller abbeys which were the first to suffer suppression in 1536. By this date its numbers had dwindled from fifteen to six, and of these only one expressed a wish to continue in religion. It must for some years have been patent to these Canons that they would ere long have to seek fresh fields and pastures new. The Abbot received a pension of about £200 a year at present values. The Commissioners who visited the Abbey just before the break up reported, in fine contrast to some of the neighbouring houses, that the Canons were "of gode name." Carrow Abbey, or more strictly Carrow Priory, the other monastic institution we pass to-day, may be classed with it as the Commissioners there made a return that it was "of very good name by report of the countrey." Monachism had become out of date, and, however much we may deplore the method and the ulterior object of the dissolution, is it not the verdict of history that politically and incidentally spiritually, the advisers of Henry VIII. were right in the long run? The site was granted to John Berney, a member of the well-known family of that ilk, and the flints and the free stone once brought from near Peterborough and Reigate became the quarry of the builder.

CLAXTON CASTLE.

On leaving Langley the return journey to Norwich was begun, but at Claxton a halt was made to inspect the interesting remains of Claxton Castle. These stand close to the Hall, the residence to-day of Mr. J. S. Pyke, who was at home to welcome the visitors. An outline of the history of the Castle was given by Mr. Walter R. Rudd, who said that it would be difficult to find a more out-of-the-way secluded village than is Claxton of to-day. Claxton Manor House, a snug dwelling of "best Victorian Tudor style," was tacked on to the remaining portion of a once spacious Elizabethan mansion. Nearly parallel to the facade runs a massive wall 130 feet long with fine bastions. These walls and bastions formed part of the south face of the Castle. Careful examination of the ground tended to prove the foundations of the original castellated mansion and its dependencies must have enclosed a space of at least two acres. William de Kerdeston had license to castellate his manor house at Claxton in 1333. Through all the varied vicissitudes of civil wars and dynastic changes for some 250 years—from the Sir Roger de Kerdeston of 1199 to the Sir Thomas de Kerdiston of 1450—this family held, each generation from father to son "until God's finger touch'd him and he slept," the Manor of Claxton. Blomefield states that upon the death of this Sir Thomas de Kerdiston it was decided he died not possessed of Claxton and other manors, and that William de la Pole, Marquis of Suffolk, and Alice his wife, were the heirs, so that Elizabeth, the daughter and heiress of Sir Thomas, was deprived of her inheritance. It appears this lady married Sir Terry Robsart, son of Sir John Robsart, Knight of the Garter. From Lady Elizabeth Robsart was descended the present Lord Orford, and through her he claimed the barony of Kerdeston. Upon the attainder of Edmund de la Pole, Earl of Suffolk, Claxton passed to Thomas Howard, Earl of Surrey. On the death of Anne, Duchess of Norfolk, this lordship was granted to Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk. The Castle was several times mentioned in the *Paston Letters*, and it was a local tradition that Anne of Cleves, wife of Henry VIII., owned and lived at Claxton. In the 5th Philip and Mary it was held by Charles Throgmorton, who conveyed to Sir Thomas Gawdy, Knight, Judge of the Common Pleas. Probably at that time the Castle was "ruinated," and the Tudor mansion built.

Art Treasures of Crown Point.

From Claxton the party drove direct to Crown Point, where an enjoyable hour or more was spent. Mr. and Mrs. Colman receiving the visitors on arrival, and tea was served in the conservatory and billiard room. Afterwards the company were taken over the house to view the magnificent collection of paintings, mainly by the Norwich School of Artists, and to inspect many other features of interest. In order to allow of opportunity for close study of the art treasures the company was divided into three groups, to which Mr. Colman, Mr. Arthur Batchelor, and Mr. Frank Leney acted as guides. Before leaving, Mr. and Mrs. Colman were very cordially thanked by Mr. J. H. Walter for their hospitality and kindness, and Mr. Colman in reply referred to the great pleasure it had been to Mrs. Colman and himself to receive the company.

The party then returned to the city, which was reached just after seven o'clock. The general arrangements for the trip were carried out by the Excursion Secretary, Mr. Basil Cozens-Hardy.

On July 5th an afternoon excursion took place to South Norfolk, the main body of members and their friends leaving All Saints' Green, Norwich, in chars-à-bancs, at 1.15 p.m., to be joined shortly afterwards by the President and others, in private motors.

Wilby Hall.

It was a perfect summer day, the warm sunshine being tempered by a slight breeze generated by the movement of the chars-à-bancs.

The first halt was made some miles the other side of Attleborough, at Wilby Hall, a charming old early 17th-century residence, the architectural features of which were described in an interesting paper by Mr. B. Cozens-Hardy, He said the Society inspected this picturesque and sequestered old hall first in 1888, and we visit it now by kind permission of Sir Hugh Beevor, the owner, and Mr. Brasnett, the occupier. Of documentary history relating to it there is but little. The Manor of Wilby Hall belonged in the 15th and 16th centuries to the Cursons, a family well known in Norwich, Lynn, Letheringsett, and Belaugh, and not unconnected, I believe, with the Curzons of Kedleston. The structure, which was their Manor House, we do not see to-day, though no doubt it occupied this site, because the moat, part of which still exists on the south side of the house, must date from an earlier period than the present building. May I ask, parenthetically, what was the object of these moats? Glance at a one-inch Ordnance Map, and you will see literally hundreds of moats dotted about in every part of the county, particularly in South Norfolk; indeed, I say there are more parishes with them than without. When were they mostly made, was it for defence or drainage or both, or was it simply the case of the small owner copying the large defensive moat of some baronial hall? The Hall before us was built between 1600 and 1620. I imagine the pediment moulding decoration above the windows indicates a style prevailing round about 1600. It is to be seen on the Manor House at Bracondale, dated 1578; the Rose and Crown, Wisbech, dated, I believe, 1600; Morley Old Hall, about the same date as this; and Kirstead Hall, dated 1614. I believe this special ornament, and the style of these halls generally, was almost peculiar to these parts. The presence of good clay, coupled with Flemish influences, made Norfolk a pioneer in brickwork, just as it had been the master of flintwork. The property passed from the Cursons to the important family of Lovell of Harling, who owned up to 1627 at least, and the generally accepted view is that this building is the work of one of the Lovells. But the family whose name is most associated with the mansion is that of Wilton, haling from Topcroft. Robert Wilton was living here in 1641, as a letter addressed to him here which I acquired a few days ago, quite by accident, is dated in that year. It is pretty certain that this house was then in existence, as Robert was an ardent Royalist—"a faithful patriot and a true lover of his country" is the description on his grave—and I very much doubt if he had not acquired a suitable residence whether ordinary prudence would have permitted him to embark on extensive building operations when the times were so uncertain. The only actual date on the building that I am aware of is one scratched on a pane of glass in the attic window, "Elizabeth Windham, 1649." Robert Wilton, however, assured to posterity some evidence of his ownership. He married three times, and seems to have manifested a preference for his second and third choices, as he altered or added to the porch by placing on top on each side the arms of his second and third wives, whose maiden names were Susannah Drury of Besthorpe, and Bridget Mead of Lofts, in Essex. They both lie buried in the church. It may be that the first wife, who died in 1635, never lived in this house, though there is a memorial to her in the Church. From the Wiltons the property passed to the Hares, and subsequently to the Beevors. Forty years ago the occupier was Mr. Samuel Colman, one of the eleven brothers, who formed the famous cricket team. Above the door are the Latin words, "Nisi dominus ædificet" "Unless the Lord shall build." The oak doors and the oak and deal panelling throughout the house should be noticed. In one room, at least, I fancy I detected the panelling still papered or plastered over. The staircases are well worthy of note, and are, I assume, the original ones. The large outside chimney and the formation of the fireplace in the main room suggest that behind the modern work there is an old open fireplace with an ingle-nook. I should welcome professional opinion on that point. As to the scratching on the glass of Elizabeth Windham's name, it is a pity that the other glass inscription no longer survives. It was in almost illegible Latin, scratched perhaps by the diamond ring of the disconsolate Elizabeth. Translated, it runs:—"Alas! how can I tune my lute to a broken heart." It may be her lover had been killed in the Civil War. Anyway, thereby hangs our unknown tale. Dame Fashion has left her mark on the interior. When the powdering of the hair was the mark of respectability it was apparently a problem how to avoid powdering one's dress or coat as well. In the main bedroom there is a capacious cupboard, the door of which is pierced by a large round hole. Apparently what happened was that the willing victim went inside the cupboard and thrust her head through the hole pillory-wise, whereupon the domestic proceeded to administer the powder. I suppose history will repeat itself and the fashion will return.

Prince F. Duleep Singh, referring to the scratching on the glass with a diamond, said he made it out to be Windham, but it was generally supposed to be Wilton, because the Wilton family lived there. It was dated 1649, the year in which Charles I. was beheaded, and was the month January or June. He hoped it was

January because that was the month Charles I. was decapitated. Elizabeth was supposed to be a Royalist lady, sad at the King's death, but if the month, as most people made out was June, her grief probably had nothing to do with the King's fate.

Sir Hugh Beevor, the owner of Wilby Hall, who was present to receive the visitors, showed them over the Hall.

A short time was allowed for an examination of Wilby Church. No description of it was given except a statement by Mr. B. Cozens-Hardy that, although it was said to be restored, the reverse was the case, and it was in all its simplicity. A mural painting of St. Christopher attracted attention.

EAST HARLING CHURCH.

The Church of SS. Peter and Paul at East Harling was next visited. An elaborate description of it was given by the Rector, Rev. Baseley Hales Grigson, B.A., in a paper which he had read before the Society on a previous visit in June, 1910, extracts from which are appended:—On the occasion of the visit paid by the Norfolk and Norwich Archæological Society to East Harling in August, 1888, the late Rector of Diss, Canon Manning, describing the Church, said the first object to attract attention is the graceful flêche on the tower, from which the well-known architect, Mr. Street, obtained his design for the spire of St. Peter Mancroft, Norwich. There are few churches in the district presenting so many attractions to the archæologist and architect as this. Its noble proportions, its various styles, its fine remains of painted glass, its beautiful screens, and a glorious series of monuments of its old lords, combine to make a variety of interest rarely to be met with. The Church was rebuilt on the site of an older one, and there are but few fragments of early date in the present building. A figure and cross over the south porch may be Early English. Of the Decorated period, the remains are extensive, including nearly all the fine tower, from the base upwards, the west door and window over it, part of the external walls of the nave and chancel, the south doorway, and a window in the south wall of the chancel. All the other windows, including the east window, the pillars, the clerestory of the nave and the beautiful roof, are Perpendicular. The painted glass is of the 15th century. On the north side of the chancel is the very elaborate monument of Sir William Chamberlain and his wife, consisting of a high panelled tomb under an arch or canopy. Of the chancel rood-screen there are some fine remains. At the east end of the south aisle is the Herling or Chantry Chapel, divided from the aisle by a beautiful parclose screen of Perpendicular date. Another screen on the nave side is interesting from its earlier character. This chapel contains some monuments of great interest. Dr. Jessopp directed attention to a chamber in the North or Jesus Chapel, and said it was probably the sleeping place of one of the canons whose duty it was to watch over the relics, plate, etc., belonging to the Church. There was formerly a gospel lectern, which stood in the chancel, and was something like an ark in shape wth holes in the sides. Unfortunately this disappeared at the restoration of the Church some forty years ago, but a drawing of it remains in the Society's records.

Originally there were three Harlings, or Herlings, as the name was formerly spelt, East, Middle, and West. The site of the Middle Herling Church is still to be seen in the present West Harling Park. The origin of the name Herling is not given in Blomefield's *History of Norfolk*, but we can trace the parish of East Harling back to the time of Edward the Confessor, 1041-1046, in whose reign it consisted of one manor belonging to Ketel, a Dane. There was hardly any ploughed land, most of it being waste ground, valuable for sporting purposes. Ketel held with his manor house two carucates of land, that is, as much as two teams could plough in a year. In the reign of William the Conqueror, 1066-1087, there was, we find from *Domesday Book*, a church with four acres of land belonging to it. The whole parish was then two miles long and two miles broad, and came into the possession of the Earl Warren: this wealthy nobleman, as feudal lord, leased the property to the Bigots of Felbrigg, and from them it passed to the Bournes of Long Stratton. One of Nicholas Bourne's daughters married a certain Sir Thomas Jenny, and a Margaret Jenny married John de Herling, who died and was buried at East Harling in 1392. The Herlings were living here previous to this date, but only became concerned in the Manor in 1350, owing to this marriage with Margaret Jenny. Sir John de Herling, Knight, her son, married Cecily Mortimer, a member of another wealthy family, and their son, Sir Robert Herling, Knight, married Joan or Jane, the rich heiress of the Gonvile family.

THE HARLING GHOST.

A reference was made to the Harling Ghost Story, and in the course of his paper the Rector said that "John Lovell, who inherited the Harling property many years ago, married twice, first Emma, daughter of Everard Buckworth of Wisbech, and second, Dionisia, daughter of Edmund Skipwyth of Fordham, in this county, and was Lord of the Manor in 1641. By his first wife he had three children, two of whom, Ann and Charles, died without issue. The property passed to his son Gregory, but this Gregory, whose name lingereth still, was a queer individual, and did all he could to ruin the estate, being malicious against his half-brother, John Lovell, the son by his father's second marriage. Blomefield says he let the Manor House almost down, and late in life married his servant, on purpose to keep his half-brother out of the estate, for her life, he having power to make such an arrangement."

"This marriage gave rise to the Harling Ghost Story. The servant maid bore her husband a son, and tradition says that the mother and babe were drowned in the moat close to the old Hall. The story goes that the mother, not liking her husband's society, used nightly to take solitary walks with her babe in her arms, and that one night she was watched, and was pushed, together with her babe, over a plank-bridge into the moat. It is said the murderer was never discovered, but it was secretly supposed that he was bribed to commit the crime by the half-brother, John Lovell, already referred to, who thereby hoped to secure his succession to the Harling Estate. It may, however, be fairly assumed that John Lovell had no complicity in the crime, for Gregory Lovell left a personal estate of above £6,000 to Sir John Buckworth and Mr. Borret of Griston, his executors, who generously handed over all the evidences and whatever belonged to the estate to John Lovell, and this they would hardly have done had they believed him to have been concerned in the murder. Of course, mother and babe are supposed to haunt the spot! John Lovell, it appears, found he could not afford to keep up the estate which his half-brother Gregory had done his best to encumber, and prevailed upon his son John, who was living at New Buckenham in 1736, to join with him in the sale. After having been in the Lovell family for 200 years, the Manor, Advowson, Hall, and lands were purchased by Thomas Wright, Esq., who had spent a considerable time in India, and had probably made a fortune there."

The Rector gave interesting details of various members of the Herling family, and of some tombs in the Church. After describing, in detail, the ancient glass in the east window, reference was made to six miserere stalls in the chancel, four with the original seats underneath which are various coats of arms. The Registers of the Church, dating from 1544, are in fair preservation. The older Church plate, said the Rector, had disappeared.

On behalf of the Society the President (Mr. J. H. Walter) thanked the Rector for his paper.

BLO' NORTON HALL.

The tour was then continued to Blo' Norton Hall,[1] where the archæologists took tea with Prince Frederick Duleep Singh, which was served on the lawn. A cordial vote of thanks for his hospitality was passed to His Highness, on the proposition of the President, and the Prince, in acknowledgment, expressed the delight it gave him to welcome his friends, especially his archæological friends.

Here a brief business meeting of the Society was held. Several new members were enrolled. Sympathetic reference was made to the impaired eyesight of the Assistant Secretary (Mr. Johnson).

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[1] For description of Blo' Norton Hall see *Norf. Arch.*, vol. xviii., p. 211.

After tea the company were shown over the Prince's interesting 16th-century house, which he has carefully and artistically preserved. The various treasures he has collected were examined with keen enjoyment. These include valuable paintings of political and other celebrities, masterpieces by Vandyck, rare miniatures, sporting pictures, curios, quaint old jewellery, and many other interesting things. Many had a look at the ghost room. It was understood that someone had hanged himself in the house in ancient days, and that his ghost returned to the room which the man had occupied. An assurance was given by the present occupant of the bedroom that it was as it looked, extremely comfortable, and that no ghost disturbed his slumbers. The visitors also strolled in the charming gardens.

SOUTH LOPHAM CHURCH.

The final call was made at South Lopham Church. Originally it was intended to visit Bressingham Church, but this is in the hands of the builders.

An interesting account of the history and the principal points of interest concerning the Church was given by Mr. Cecil Upcher. The village of Lopham, said Mr. Upcher, has apparently never changed the spelling of its name, for in *Domesday* it is written the same. In the Confessor's time (1042), Lopham was two distinct towns, Lopham Magna now North Lopham, and Lopham Parva now South Lopham. The Church of South Lopham was probably built by the Saxon people, a portion of which Church it is thought by experts exists to this day. The portion I refer to is the north wall of the nave, its date being put at 1020. In this north wall is a little round window, which has its wooden frame still existing, similar to that which we saw on our last excursion at Framingham Earl Church. There are small holes round this wooden frame, and Canon Manning suggests that they were for threading cords or osiers through, across and across, to keep out the birds and weather, one wonders how much light would come through the centre round hole if the platting of these osiers was carried out thoroughly enough to do what was intended. There was probably a series of these round windows along both north and south walls at this level, and on the north they may be there still—blocked up—but on the south, of course, they would disappear when the south wall was removed for the later aisles and arcades. At the coming of William the Conqueror the Saxon lords were deprived by him of their lands and manors, and he distributed them amongst his nobles. Lopham was given to Roger Bygot, Earl of Norfolk, who died in 1107, and was buried in the Abbey of Thetford, which he built. His son William gave the Church of Lopham to the monks of Thetford in the time of Henry I. (1100-1135). The architectural features of the tower are consistent with the work of this period, so that its probable date is 1110, and the monks of Thetford in all likelihood had much to do with the building of it. This tower is a grand example of Norman architecture, and Canon Manning, in a paper which he read in this Church, says of it: "It must be admitted to be the most important building of the kind in the neighbourhood, or indeed in the county, for omitting the Cathedral tower I know of no other superior to it." Nicholas de Horton was rector from 1361 to 1380, and during this period (according to Blomefield) "he built the chancel and south aisle." To build the latter he must have pulled down the south wall and erected the nave arcade. The clustered pillars of this arcade and the tracery and mouldings of the aisle windows are typical of the styles prevalent in the latter part of the reign of Edward III. The font also appears to be of the same date, but the cover is Renaissance work and quite interesting. In the south wall of the chancel, just east of the tower, is a low side window, to explain which there are any number of theories put forward, and anyone who wishes to go into the question will find a very thorough description of them in Bond's *English Church Architecture*. I will only mention one theory which seems the most likely, that "when during the Mass the words 'Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus,' were reached, and again at the Elevation of the Host, the shutter was opened, and a handbell was rung, so that anyone in the neighbourhood of the church, hearing the bell, might spiritually partake of the Communion."

In conclusion, Mr. Upcher mentioned what are known as the wonders of Lopham. Blomefield says there are three wonders, but I was informed the other day by a local inhabitant that there are seven. The first is the Church. The second the self-grown stile, which is a tree grown in the form of a stile, this, I believe no longer exists. The third is the ox-foot stone, which is a stone on which is the impression of an ox's foot, and in *Blomefield* you will find the fable of it. The fourth is called Lopham Ford, at which place the Ouse (Little) and the Waveney have their rise; the former running westward to Thetford and Lynn, the latter eastward to Yarmouth, both forming the boundary to Norfolk and Suffolk. Of the fifth and sixth wonders there are no trace. The seventh, it is said, is the greatest wonder of them all, namely, "the people of Lopham."

END OF THE LINEN WEAVERS.

Mr. W. R. Rudd, inquired on behalf of the Society, whether the linen-weaving industry was still alive in Lopham. It was practically the oldest industry in Norfolk. When the Society last came to Lopham the looms were still to be seen at work. The looms themselves, and the havels and slayes were unique.

The Rector (Rev. C. J. Eastwood) announced regretfully that all the looms were now silent. The industry had ceased, and he did not suppose the looms would ever be started again In one house in Lopham one old lady had kept intact the looms which had been used by her ancestors.

The Rector explained to some of the archæologists that linen weaving was done not to be sold in shops, but for sale direct to Royalty and the aristocracy. Those who took it by road on the way from Lopham to London were supposed to enjoy many a tipple, leaving, the Rector said, as much beer on the floor of the wayside inns as they had consumed.

The Rector and Mr. Upcher were thanked for their services.

The visitors then started on the return journey to Norwich, which was reached about 8.30 p.m., after a delightful and profitable tour, the arrangements for which were carried out under the competent direction of Mr. B. Cozens-Hardy, Hon. Excursion Secretary of the Society.

On September 6th a whole-day excursion took place to West Norfolk. In the unavoidable absence of the President, his place was taken by Mr. R. F. E. Ferrier, F.S.A.

RAYNHAM HALL

The first stop was at Raynham Hall, the seat of the Marquis Townshend. Here the archæologists were received by Mr. James Durham, F.S.A., and Lady Agnes Durham, who took them round and pointed out various features of interest. A visit was also made to Raynham Church, where there are several monuments and brasses of the Townshend family, and also to the old Hall, near the lake, where the Townshends lived before the present mansion was built.

Mr. Durham (one of the trustees of the Townshend estates) read the following interesting paper on Raynham Hall:—"It is very sweet to look into the fair and open face of Heaven," so sang the immortal Keats, and it may be that some 300 years ago Sir Roger Townshend thought in the same manner, as, standing at the gates of his old home, down by the Wensum Stream, he surveyed the rising land in front of him, and determined to build the beautiful house of Raynham which stands yet in undiminished lustre.

"There is every reason to believe," says Sir Arthur Stretton in his delightful book, *The English Interior*, "that Inigo Jones was at work at Raynham Hall between 1630 and 1636 (the year Sir Roger Townshend died), and in the series of rooms there his handling of a house of moderate size—because it is practically contained in a rectangle of 124 feet by 86 feet—can be very well studied." Miss Jourdain, in her extremely able article in the *Agricultural Review* for July, 1923, describes the western entrance front as being a typical elevation of the mid-seventeenth century, in which the curved gable ends are a feature. She also specially notes the magnificent entrance doorway as being of unusual height and refinement and goes on to say "the scroll carving in the space between the capitals of the columns that flank the doorway is delicate in execution, and in excellent preservation, as is the cartouche within the broken pediment, on which are carved the arms of Townshend quartering Vere."

Sir Roger Townshend married Mary, daughter and heiress of Lord Vere of Tilbury, and a most interesting portrait of this lady hangs at the Hall. The building of Raynham was completed in 1636, and for the following hundred years little is known of the internal decoration of the house. The next mention of importance is from a diary of Lord Oxford, who, in the course of a tour through Norfolk in 1732, came to Raynham as the guest of Charles, second Viscount Townshend, the famous statesman and colleague of Walpole.

Lord Oxford writes: "The rooms are fitted up by Mr. Kent, and consequently there is a great deal of gilding, and very clumsy overcharged chimney pieces to the great waste of fine marble." He consents, however, to admire the marble hall, in which there is no gilding, and the fine ceiling in which the garter, arms, and supporters of Lord Townshend are prominent, modelled in high relief. The dining-room is considered a very successful instance of Kent's decoration, though here again Lord Oxford finds fault. "Kent," he writes, "has parted the dining-room to make a sort of buffet, by the arch of Severus, surely a most preposterous thing to introduce a building in a room, which was designed to stand in the street." All critics, however, are not of Lord Oxford's opinion.

Queen Anne's room is of interest with the red brocaded bed, and the royal arms in rich embroidery, also the Queen's travelling trunk, which she left as a gift.

On the first floor is the Belisarius room, so called from the full-length picture of the blind Roman general, by Salvator Rosa, presented to the second Viscount Townshend by Frederick William, King of Prussia, in recognition of his services while on diplomatic missions from King George I. This picture, unfortunately, no longer hangs at Raynham.

With the exception of the very ornamental frieze in the marble hall, the ceiling of the Belisarius room is the only authentic work of Inigo Jones in the interior of the house, and to again quote Miss Jourdain, "it is the most perfect example left of his method of treating plaster." Of the exterior of the house it is frequently said that Inigo Jones created a finer front on the eastern side than on the west or main entrance. It is, however, very probable that the stone centre may have been modified during the 18th century alterations.

Before his death in 1738, the second Viscount had completed the building of a large wing on the northern side, in which is a great kitchen, and a long series of halls, still rooms, and offices, From here a short walk leads to the stable yards, where hidden away on the river bank is yet to be seen part of the walls and windows of the ancient manor, where many Townshends lived and died before Sir Roger reared the stately Hall we see to-day.

Beeston-next-Mileham Church.

From Raynham the visitors went to Beeston-next-Mileham Church, an informing account of which was given by Dr. Drummond. It has remained in an unrestored state, with the remains of screens and old oaken pews and pew ends. There is a good deal of work of the Decorated period about the Church. Just inside the north aisle, attached to the roof, is a small ploughshare which formed a fine on alienation or death, of copyhold property. There is also a fine font cover. The Church needs restoration in the proper sense, and Dr. Drummond mentioned a fund for this purpose, to which several members of the Archæological Society contributed. It was generally felt that one of the first steps to be taken was to remove the ivy on the exterior, the damaging effects of which are well understood. Dr. Dukinfield Astley also addressed the party.

After lunch in Great Dunham Rectory grounds, by the kind permission of the Rev. E. C. S. Upcher, the party inspected the fine old Late Saxon Church of Great Dunham. Both this Church and that at Beeston were included in the itinerary of the British Institute of Archæology who visited Norwich and Norfolk in July.

Great Dunham Church.

In the course of an admirable paper on Great Dunham Church, the Rev. J. F. Williams (formerly Rector of Beechamwell, and now Rector of Bucklesham, Suffolk) said that fortunately—and it was this that gave Dunham Church its rank among the classic churches of England—so much of the original structure remained that, working on a comparative method, with a little imagination and not a great deal of conjecture, it was not difficult to get a very fair idea of what the Church looked like when it was first built. With regard to the tower, it practically remained to-day as it was built 900 years or so ago. At the invitation of Mr. Williams many ascended the tower, and some actually climbed on to the leads, and from the top of the Church had a delightful view of the surrounding country. Great Dunham originally, said Mr. Williams, had not only one church but two. One was St. Mary's and the other St. Andrew's, but to this day he believed nobody really knew which was which. The other church was said to have stood across the road, somewhere in the rectory grounds.

Dr. Astley, in a brief address, remarked that it had been the fashion to try to put the Saxon churches as early as possible, but he quite agreed with the view that this was really a Late Saxon church, dated not very long before the Norman Conquest.

A ROMAN VILLA.

Next the Roman villa at Gaytonthorpe was visited, the remains of which were described by Mr. E. M. Beloe, of King's Lynn. Its existence, he said, had been known for some considerable time. "The site occupied the highest point of the very slightly undulated ground of the neighbourhood, and thus commanded a good view all round. It was also quite near a flowing stream. The villa of Grimston, which the late Major R. E. Ball, under the auspices of the Norfolk and Norwich Archæological Society, excavated in the year 1906, was similarly situated. It was not, however, until last year that any digging in an archæological sense took place at Gaytonthorpe. It was then discovered that a hole had been dug to bury a dead horse most unfortunately in the middle of the Roman pavement, thereby spoiling the central part of it beyond hope of recovery. About twelve months ago the late Mr. Charlton began the excavations, and got about half way through his work when his sudden and lamentable death brought it to a standstill for that year. In the spring of the present year Mr. Donald Atkinson, of Manchester University, an authority on Roman Britain, stepped into the breach, and made it a labour of love on his part to finish the work, as they now saw it, with the foundations and hypocaust and tesselated pavement laid bare. The photographers, plan-makers and artists could now, for a brief time, have full play. As was done at Grimston, so at Gaytonthorpe, in order to preserve the foundations from frost in winter and thieves in summer, it was imperative that they should again be covered up, but not all—the tesselated pavement, or what was left of it, would remain exposed to view. The thanks of the Society, and indeed of all those who were interested in such things were due to Mr. Henry Birkbeck for the pains he had taken to render this possible. It was suggested that the pavement should be sent to the county museum, as was done with the Silchester finds, now in Reading Museum; but after all it seemed a pity to move such relics from their original position. At any rate, in this case, the owner decided not to do so, and instead of covering them up again with the soil he had built a picturesque and substantial shelter over them, which would protect them for many years to come." Mr. Beloe went on to say that he was entirely indebted to Mr. Donold Atkinson for the following notes on the villa, and for the photographs of the various objects found. Mr. H. L. Bradfer-Lawrence had made a plan, and he himself hoped one day to make a satisfactory drawing of the pavement. Mr. Atkinson dated the villa at the middle of the 2nd century, the reason being that the fragments of pottery found on the site were late 2nd-century work. Fragments of three sorts of pottery had been found: (1) The red Samian ware, named from the island of Samos, for at one time it was thought that Samos was its place of origin, but it was now known to have been made on the Rhine and in the South and Central France, for the kilns had been found there. Both sorts were turned out on a colossal scale. (2) Castor ware, made in Britain at Castor, near Peterborough. This was made of white clay covered with brown, the pattern on it being applied before being baked. (3) Rhenish (or Cologne) ware, decorated as the Castor was, but much finer and thinner, with metallic lustre. There were also remains of glass bottles.

It was by the remains of the pottery, rather than the coins, that the date was fixed. Even this guide was not a sure one. For instance, it was almost certain that Brancaster was not used as a fort until the end of the 3rd century, yet late 2nd-century pottery was also found at Brancaster. The two main types of Roman villas were known as the "Court Yard" type and the "Corridor" type; but they merged into one another, and there at Gaytonthorpe they had a developed example of the corridor type, with corridors both at the front and back of it—that was, on the east and west sides. The northern half of the excavations shew the site of the original villa. The southern half, built at a slightly different angle, which must have inspired the Addison villa architects, was the added part, and at the spot where the later work joins on, the outside plaster-work of the original villa was preserved by the newer wall; this could now be plainly seen. As to the heating, only the two extreme north rooms of the original villa were heated, and these by one furnace or hypocaust. The hot air found its way in the cavity under the floors, so built for this purpose. The remains of the charcoal were there at the present day. If the other rooms were heated, braziers were used. There were plenty of remains of flue tiles scattered about, and also of the roofing tiles of the usual pattern.

Nothing remains in England of any Roman villa except the foundations, but it was unlikely that there was any staircase or second storey to any of them. No staircases had really been discovered. The walls of flint, faced with rubble, were not strong enough for such weight, and the tiled roof must have been fairly heavy, as was shewn by the scattered remains of the tiles now dug up. The windows, probably high up, were glazed, and the panes were big, nearly a foot long, and probably fixed in with iron, as star-shaped pieces of iron had been found. Small fragments of window glass were also left. They were dull on one side, and the reason for this was that in the making of the sheets the molten glass was run on stone, and when cool the under-surface presented a frosted appearance. Iron hinges and iron nails, probably for the doors, had also been found. Three coins only had been discovered, all of the Gallic Emperors, between 268 and 273 A.D. One of them was the younger Tertricus, and another might be Victorinus. The rubbish heap had oyster shells, mussels, cockles, and whelks, and the bones of horse, ox, sheep, deer, and boar. The walls of this villa were plastered, with geometrical coloured designs, painted over in red and yellow, and there was a little indication of ornamentation by floral designs. The tesselated pavement was interesting, but could not be compared with many others. It had no representations of classical myths, nor of birds, beasts, or fishes, but followed stereotyped patterns. Experts differed as to whether the builder put the pavement down, or whether it was done by an itinerant workman. In the two complete compartments left, the octagonal, star-shaped design occurred at Silchester, and the diamond-shaped design immediately below it was doubtless found elsewhere.

The effective classical design of the twisted rope-work or "guilloche" surrounded these designs. This rope-work was common in North Africa, Italy, and France, and really, therefore, was not inspired by Celtic art. It may, on the contrary, have inspired it. On the south part of the room was a rim of guilloche, the pattern of which shewed six ropes intertwined. The little squares forming the pattern were of three colours—yellow or white, blue and red. In one place small pieces of glass were worked into it. The small objects found were very scanty, but among them were three keys, one being found near the entrance; also a brooch and a bronze bracelet, a set of lady's toilet appliances, consisting of tweezers, ear-picks, and back scratchers. At the time of building of this villa there was profound peace for two hundred years. After the rising of Boadicea the inhabitants were completely subjugated, and it was not until 200 A.D. that the Saxons came and bothered this land. There were only about one hundred civil officials for all Britain, and there were, as they knew, a great number of villas, though only two had so far been found in Norfolk. It was certain, therefore, that all the villas were not Roman. Some of them, and probably this one, were built for and inhabited by the native rulers, and the conditions here were not unlike those in Gaul, where the villas were much bigger than those in Britain. In the 3rd and 4th century they were inhabited by natives, who formed the aristocracy. The same conditions, on a smaller scale, existed here.

WESTACRE PRIORY.

The visitors were the guests at tea of Mr. Henry Birkbeck and Major H. A. Birkbeck, after which a pleasant time was spent among the ruins of Westacre Priory.

Mr. Bradfer-Lawrence of North Wootton, King's Lynn, in the course of a paper, said that unfortunately the ruins were now so fragmentary and the traces of the buildings so scattered, that it was difficult to assert anything definite. The Priory appeared to have been erected on a similar plan to that of the adjoining Cluniac Priory at Castleacre. The gate-house leading out of the town into the outward court, or site of the Priory, was still standing. Over the centre of the arch were three shields carved in stone: Quarterly, in the first and fourth gules, a fess, between the six cross crosslets, or Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick; in the second and third, cheque, or, and azure, a chevron, ermine, Tarquin, Earl of Warwick; and in an escutcheon of pretence it appeared that this gate-house, which was of stone, was built by Guy de Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, who married Alice, sister and heir to Robert, Lord Tony, who died in 1315. The area covered by the monastic buildings, and contained within the Priory walls was certainly not less than 20 acres. The old fish ponds could still be seen, and were still so called.

"I have," said Mr. Bradfer-Lawrence, "purposely refrained from making any reference to Mr. Walter Rye's discovery that Thomas à Becket is a Westacre man, as doubtless a full account thereof will soon be published by Mr. Rye."

Referring to the Hamlet of Custhorp, the speaker said: "Many people think the history of Custhorp, if it could be gleaned, would be more interesting than Westacre. As far as I have been able to ascertain from the ancient title deeds relating to Westacre, in the possession of Mr. Birkbeck, it does not seem ever to have been a place of importance, apart from Thomas à Becket's Chapel. In the time of Elizabeth it consisted of two messuages and about 300 acres of land in 163 separate parcels. Some of the field and place-names are extremely interesting and reminiscent of Norman days and Crusader owners.

The party arrived at Norwich about 8 o'clock, after spending a most interesting and enjoyable day.

The arrangements were made by Mr. B. Cozens-Hardy, Hon. Excursion Secretary of the Society.