

# The Proceedings of the Society during the year 1929.

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

The Annual Meeting of the Society was held  
ANNUAL at the Norwich Guildhall on Thursday, 4th July,  
MEETING. 1929, when the chair was taken by Mr. R. F. E.  
Ferrier, F.S.A.

Arising out of the minutes, the Chairman said he had much pleasure in announcing that Mrs. Hood, the Hon. Editor of their Transactions, had kindly consented to carry on. The Annual Report, which appears elsewhere in these Proceedings, was read by the Hon. General Secretary, Mr. B. Cozens-Hardy.

The Financial Statement, which is printed elsewhere, was presented by the Hon. Treasurer, Mr. Ernest A. Kent.

The Chairman, in moving the adoption of the Report and Balance Sheet, referred to the loss the Society had suffered by the death of some of its members, especially Mr. Walter Rye. He thought the Hon. Secretary had dealt with the late Mr. Rye's character in a very true way. No man could be found anywhere who had done more archæological work for the county than Mr. Walter Rye, and he feared it would be a very long time before any other man could be found to take his place so far as the quantity of work carried out was concerned.

The Chairman referred to the excavations at Caistor as a matter of national importance, and paid a tribute to Mr. Atkinson, who, without reward, was supervising the work.

Dealing with records, Mr. Ferrier said they were anxious to bring themselves into line with other large archæological societies in order to investigate and print important records relating to the county. They had had some meetings, but active progress was somewhat retarded by the enormous amount of work which had to be undertaken in the preliminary stages of the Caistor Camp excavations. He could not help saying that their sincere thanks were due to Mr. Cozens-Hardy for the amount of labour he had put into getting the Camp excavations started. He was really the prime mover from the first, and the way he devoted himself to the work—going down every two or three days, and even digging—was most praiseworthy.

Coming to the question of subscriptions, the Chairman said, as they knew, the subscription was 10s. They altered that a year or two ago by enabling the wife of a member, if she did not take a copy of the "Transactions," to pay 5s. This lost the Society some revenue, and the Committee, after fully discussing the point, had decided to recommend a resolution increasing the subscription to 12s. 6d., and in the case of the wife of a member to 7s. 6d. That would apply to future entrants.

Furthermore, they recommended that the compounding of a subscription be effected by payment of the sum that was left, after deducting from £10 one shilling for every year of the age of the member. These sums would be invested, and only the interest used in connexion with the Society.

Major Evans-Lombe seconded, and the Report was adopted.

Mr. Barclay proposed the re-election of Mr. Ferrier as President, saying he had carried out his duties excellently and had taken very keen interest in the work of the Society. Mr. J. Cator seconded, and the motion was cordially adopted.

The Vice-Presidents were all re-elected, as were also the honorary officers, the latter including the Hon. Treasurer, Mr. E. A. Kent; Hon. General Secretary, Mr. B. Cozens-Hardy; Hon. Editor, Mrs. Ivo Hood; Hon. Auditor, Mr. F. H. Barclay. The following members of the Committee, who retired by rotation, were again elected:—Mr. H. L. Bradfer-Lawrence, F.S.A., Rev. R. W. Maitland, Mr. A. Robinson, Mr. Cecil Upcher, Rev. E. C. S. Upcher, and Mr. S. J. Wearing.

The rules were also modified so as to provide for the new method of providing for payment of subscriptions, including the point as to compounding as outlined by the President, and fifteen new members of the Society were elected.

Mr. B. Cozens-Hardy read a letter from Mr. Thos. Matthews, of Sporle, stating that Newton-by-Castleacre church tower (Saxon) had been re-roofed and restored by opening out the original lights with their central shafts, under the advice of Sir Charles Nicholson and Mr. Brown, as a memorial to his brother, a doctor, who died in Whitehall Court, the sum of £575 having been subscribed by his many friends. Mr. Cozens-Hardy mentioned that this matter had been before the Bishop's Advisory Committee and approved by the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings.

The proceedings closed with thanks to the Mayor and Corporation for the use of the Council Chamber.

In the afternoon, in addition to visiting Caistor, an excursion was made to Bedingham and Shelton. After a drenching morning the weather began to clear almost as soon as the excursion started. The party was divided into two sections, converging eventually at



Caistor Hall for tea. Only about two-thirds of those expected took part in the excursion.

Much interest was taken in the ancient church

BEDINGHAM at Bedingham.

CHURCH.

The Dean of Norwich, Dr. D. H. S. Cranage, pointed out that probably it was an early aisleless church, of which the tower might be the only remains. There was no evidence to fix the date, even within half a century, but it might well be 11th century. It was quite clear that the chancel was greatly extended towards the end of the 12th century. This was evidenced by Norman buttresses at the east end and the priest's doorway, with dog-tooth ornament, a very charming example of the transition from Norman to Early English architecture. There was a doorway of the same character north of the nave, which clearly must have been moved when the aisle was built. One hundred years later a large east window was inserted; also the charming two-light window in the south wall of the chancel. This latter window was combined in a most unusual manner with sedilia below, and piscina and credence table. In the second quarter of the 14th century a large reconstruction took place. A new chancel arch was erected, and north and south aisles to the nave. Clerestories of both nave and chancel dated from a later part of the Perpendicular period. The screen was a very beautiful one of the 15th century, but there was no evidence of a rood loft.

The Vicar, the Rev. F. Lee, also gave some interesting details of the principal features of the Church. In the chancel, he said, was buried the heart of a man believed to be one of the Brews of the parish who died overseas and willed his heart to be buried in Bedingham Church.

Mr. Stanley J. Wearing, F.R.I.B.A., drew attention to the wall monuments in the chancel, which were of unusual interest. "Not only were they very good examples of the monumental masons' craft," he said, "but they were executed by Norwich men. I ought perhaps to qualify the remark that they were executed by Norwich men. These, like many others, have the mason's name cut on them, but it would be interesting to know precisely how much of the actual design and carving was done by them. I believe that the exceptionally fine marble mantelpieces frequently seen in houses of the 18th and early 19th centuries were very largely imported from abroad, and it is quite possible that these wall monuments had a similar origin. Whether this is so or not I cannot say, but I do not hesitate to say that in their shape, detail of mouldings, and enrichment they are of a very high order. The one on the south side is by Thomas Rawlings. This man was a stonemason by trade. He sent in a design for the Octagon Chapel at Norwich, did the stone over the entrance at the Great Hospital, built a porch to St. Andrew's Hall (afterwards pulled



down), and was the author of a book entitled 'Familiar Dialogues on Architecture.' Other wall monuments by him can be seen in the Cathedral, St. Giles and St. Andrew's Churches, also at the Octagon Chapel, all of them being of unusual merit. One of the two on the north side is by De Carle. I have not come across any other wall monuments by this man, but I have found frequent references to De Carle and Dowsing, bricklayers in Norwich at this time, and have no doubt that the designer is one of this family. The lettering on this memorial illustrates a point one often sees on these memorials. Space was left by those who first erected them for additions at a later date, but when this was done, although only a few years elapsed and they had excellent lettering to copy, they entirely missed the spirit of it, and only succeeded in attaining a very poor similarity. When you pass out of the Church notice the headstones immediately to the east of the porch. There are a number together dating from the early 19th century, of good shape, very delicately carved, and so well preserved that they might well have been cut but a few years ago. At the top of one of these appears a somewhat crudely carved altar tomb, and nearby there is one of this type of grave monuments. These altar tombs are to be seen in somewhat isolated instances in Norfolk, and are very similar to, although not so highly developed, and enriched as are those which abound in Gloucestershire. Slightly away from the above mentioned is another headstone with an unusual but particularly pleasing shaped top. What better source of inspiration could be sought for headstones to-day than these 18th and early 19th century ones, and what better material to work them in? Age only improves their appearance, a remark that can never apply to the prevailing fashion of white marble."

In an interesting account of Shelton Church, SHELTON Mr. Cecil Upcher said that the rather unusual CHURCH. facing material of the Church—brick—which gave it such a warm look, pleased him more than any he had seen. The tower apparently belonged to an earlier church, but the remainder of the Church was commenced by Sir Ralph Shelton towards the end of the 15th century.

"Ralph was born in 1430 and was the son of John Shelton, who died three months after his son's birth; he was brought up under the care of his grandmother, Katherine, wife of William Shelton, as his mother re-married soon after his birth. Besides the nave of the Church he also built Shelton Hall, which was moated and embattled and had five courtyards within the walls, a portion of which walls still remains. These lie about a mile east of us. It is also thought he built the Manor House at Snoring Magna. Ralph was knighted in 1485, became High Sheriff of Norfolk in 1487, and married Margaret, daughter of Robert Clare,



of Ormesby, and a niece of Justice Paston. He died before Shelton Church was completed, and in his will, dated 1497, occurs the following charge:—

“Item, I will and require my executors, as they will answer before God, that they perform and make up completely the Church of Shelton in masonry, tymber, iron, and leede according to the form as I have begunne it, in as shorte a tyme as it conveniently may be done of my owne goods, if God dispose that I may not see the performance of the same.”

His executors evidently did not entirely carry out these orders, as the unfinished state of the porch shows.

The tower was very similar in type to many others in East Anglia, and from its general proportion one could not help thinking that the original church to which it belonged was not so lofty as the present one.

The proportion of the tower to the nave of so many of our East Anglian churches always appears to me very similar, whether on a large or small scale, and when you get one like this with the tower only about a third higher than the nave you feel something is not quite right, or perhaps it would be safer to say not quite what one is used to. The nave is a very fine example of the brickwork of the period, with a liberal use of freestone for the angles, windows, &c. The clerestory is entirely faced with stone. The general colour effect of the whole is most pleasing. There is a range of nine clerestory windows on either side, which are separated externally by small pillars; the alternate ones were probably originally intended to be carried above the eaves as pinnacles.

On the north was the turret of the rood loft stairs, which had only recently been opened up.

What was perhaps the most striking external feature of the Church—the south porch—was never completed internally. The vaulting terminated abruptly a few feet from its caps, and the parvise above was never formed, though it was obviously intended that it should be, as a passage had been formed on the west side leading from the tower staircase, the doorway from which could be seen in the porch high up. The way this passage was formed externally is rather ingenious, and was arched over the window with a very flat arch.”

Describing the interior of the Church, Mr. Upcher said that probably the first thing that struck one was its apparent loftiness, a result gained mainly, he thought, from its narrow width. The nave was only 14 ft. wide, and the height (35 ft.) would certainly not appear lofty if the nave was from 20 ft. to 30 ft. wide.

The original roof had gone; tradition said for the purpose of covering a tithe barn elsewhere.



"The tombs on either side of the altar under the arcading are the Shelton family, that on the north, I believe, was Sir Ralph's, and evidently was intended to have an elaborate canopy of stone, the beginnings of which can only be seen. The names and arms on this one and another in the north aisle have been put on, I believe, comparatively recently, and their accuracy is questionable.

"The tomb at the east end of the south aisle has effigies of Sir Robert Houghton, his son and two wives. I believe the date is 1623, anyway it is obviously Jacobean, which style dates from 1603 to 1625 approximately. Notice the ancient painted glass in the three easternmost windows. Various members of the Shelton family appear in it—Sir Ralph and his wife in the upper portion of the central window, and his son John, who married Anne, daughter of Sir William Boleyn, of Blickling. She was aunt to Queen Anne Boleyn and governess to the Princess Mary (and it was a thankless and most difficult position to fill)."

The parties converged at Caistor Hall, in the grounds of which the Rev. J. W. Corbould-Warren allowed tea to be served. Subsequently the archaeologists inspected the Caistor excavations, an interesting account of which was given by the excavator, Mr. Donald Atkinson, M.A., of Manchester University.

Mr. Atkinson, in the course of some general remarks about the character of the site, explained  
 CAISTOR EXCAVATIONS. that owing to the weather the edges of the trenches were slippery and treacherous. He advised the visitors to keep back, otherwise the whole thing would collapse. Some of the remains, he said, were extremely fragile, and if they walked on them nothing would be left in some cases but the photographs. Caistor in Roman times was a civil town. There was never any military occupation there at all as far as was known. Probably, although there was no further evidence of it, it had been a British settlement before, but at any rate some time between 50 and 100 A.D. the Romans came and laid the town out in the ordinary provincial Roman fashion with streets crossing at right angles. The whole area was a good deal larger than that enclosed within the walls. They built walls around the central part of the town, and no doubt the rest was abandoned. A knowledge of the area of the town was arrived at from the air photographs taken last year.

"What we have done," said Mr. Atkinson, "is to stake out one of the rectangular areas in the town bounded by the cross streets, and this year we are dealing with that." The area within the streets contained on the east side two temples, side by side, of the same shape and size, and further in that direction were two other buildings, which when they began to excavate them he first thought were three, but now thought were only two. On the west side there were no definite remains. What seemed to be another



street or pathway was running across just to the east, and there were traces of occupation in the early period in the way of small patches of clay which were extremely indefinite. The area in the centre had yielded a good deal of interesting information already, and they hoped eventually to get a good deal more. What seemed to have been the case was that originally there were a number of huts with clay floors and probably quite slight walls, merely timber or wattle and daub. They dated from the first century between 50 and 80. Immediately on top of these were found remains of two cement or concrete floors, which were parts of a wattle and daub building and were a more substantial construction dating from the end of the first century and going on to the middle of the second. Lying on the debris of one of these concrete floors six coins had been found, one Domitian, four Trajan, one Sabina (wife of Hadrian), most of them being in use from 120 to 140. There was an interval after that floor was destroyed, during which one of the pits was dug, dating about 200, so that during that period at the end of the second century there seemed to have been a time when there were no substantial buildings on that part of the site. Later, but still in the third century, buildings with masonry walls were constructed. One was a fairly large house; the other was a long rectangular building, the walls of which were fragmentary. Neither the exact size nor the purpose for which it was used was at all certain. These were the kind of things they were beginning to find out. The dates were tentative, and they did not know yet what was the cause of the destruction of the buildings in the three periods they had recognised. Obviously it was necessary to excavate a good deal more before they could arrive at any conclusion with any certainty about it.

Mr. Atkinson then escorted the members on a tour of inspection and explained to them in closer detail what the excavations had so far revealed.

Before he left to catch a train for London Mr. Atkinson was warmly thanked on behalf of the members by the President. Mr. Atkinson, said Mr. Ferrier, takes nothing from us in the shape of money, except what he expends, and we are deeply grateful to him for the great kindness he has shown and the time he has given. He is entirely responsible in producing such satisfactory results. Those were only two acres out of 35 which represented the town, and they were hopeful they might be able to continue year after year to take on further operations and so excavate ultimately the whole of the town. The expenses with regard to the present work came to £400 or £500, but further excavations would not be so expensive, because certain things we have bought can be used again. The 35 acres would mean seventeen separate excavations, which would necessitate a very large sum of money and take fifteen to twenty years. He hoped they would be able



to continue the work so that Norfolk would have a record of the town which represented an enormous amount of interest to those who lived in the county.

A description of Caistor Old Hall (permission to see which was given by the Hon. Francis CAISTOR OLD HALL. Crossley) was given by the President. It contained, he said, a very fine Jacobean staircase, which goes quite to the top of the house. The fireplaces in the hall and drawing-room were formerly blocked up, but were reopened about the time Mr. Cecil Gurney became tenant. The Pettus arms were on the entrance doorway, and the date, 1612, and there was another date, 1647, on the gable over the porch. Mr. Gurney had said there was a story that the stone archway to the porch came from Rackheath Hall, which the Pettus family also owned, but probably the top storey of the porch building was added after the rest was built. The house, or rather the one on the same site, in 1444, belonged to John Yelverton, who married Margaret Morley, the daughter of Ellen Morley, the late owner. His son, William Yelverton, married Anne Paston, daughter of Sir John Paston and Margaret, his wife. John Yelverton and his wife, in 1480, returning from a wedding in the Calthorpe family, found their house at Caistor burnt down by the carelessness of the servant maid (mentioned in the *Paston Letters*), so presumably no part of the house was older than 1480. Mr. Ferrier described how the house was sold with Rackheath in 1568 to Thomas Pettus, an Alderman of Norwich, and how it was eventually left to the Rev. John Corbould-Warren. It had not changed hands by purchase since 1568. The proper name was Nether Hall, and it was the head of the Manor of Caistor Netherhall and Merkeshall. The other Manor, Overall, belonged to the Abbey of Bury St. Edmunds.

#### SEPTEMBER EXCURSION.

After a period of twenty-five years the members of the Society on 5th September paid a visit to Thetford, and included in their itinerary a call at Fersfield, to the Rectory of which parish the Norfolk historian, Francis Blomefield, was instituted two hundred years ago, namely, in September, 1729. A party of about 180, thanks to the fine weather, spent a most interesting time in the ancient capital of East Anglia, besides enjoying the journey through one of the most delightful parts of the county.

The journey was made to Fersfield by way of FERSFIELD AND REV. FRANCIS BLOMEFIELD. Tacolnestone, New Buckenham, and Kenninghall, and on arriving there the party was welcomed by the Rector, the Rev. F. J. G. H. Disbrowe, who was formerly Rector of St. Michael-at-Plea, Norwich, and conducted to the Church. Here the



first paper, that on the works of Francis Blomefield, was read by Mr. Frederic Johnson, who remarked that the Norfolk historian was born on July 23rd, 1705; became Rector of Fersfield in 1729; and was buried there in 1752. When one looked round the Church, he said, one regretted to find how little there was to remind one of the historian. The chancel had been rebuilt, he believed, in 1814, and although there were a few small fragments of stained glass remaining there was really nothing else of his period except the font. The seating and the pulpit were all modern. His own memorial tablet still remained, and one also to a relative, but for the many other Blomefield slabs mentioned in his history one looked in vain. Surely one would have thought that the fact of their commemorating Blomefield's own family would have ensured their preservation. Bad things were done in the past, and were done now in spite of the Bishops' Advisory Committees and archæological societies. Mr. Johnson asked the members to think of the difficulties that Blomefield had to face, and of his extraordinary courage and perseverance in overcoming them. Journeys in his day had to be made either by horse and gig or, more probably in his case, on horseback. There were all the dangers of footpads, and the roads were almost impassable in winter time. When one considered that there were over 800 parishes and hamlets mentioned in his history, about all of which he had something to say, one could more easily realise the extent of the work he undertook. Of course it was impossible for him to cover the whole county himself. All that he could do was to do the best he could with his own immediate neighbourhood and leave the rest to helpers. His plan was to send out a series of printed questions, which he hoped would be returned to him fully answered. Some took no notice, and others replied perhaps too fully. In one of his letters in 1733 to Mr. James Drake, of Aylsham, he writes: "Brother Drake—My wife tells me that you have procured a lad that will fit me very well. . . . I want him to write for me and to ride with me about the country, to carry my bags and help me to collect and attend in the nature of a clerk. I hope you will take care he is honest, because I must trust him with papers and collections of other peoples of great value." It had often been said that if one took out of Blomefield all the information that Bishop Tanner and Peter Le Neve and John Kirkpatrick contributed there would be very little left. That was true in a sense. Tanner's notes were almost entirely concerned with the incumbents of livings. Le Neve's notes were largely in skeleton form, rough dates and notes of manorial descents. All these Blomefield had to arrange and summarise and work into shape. Then it must not be forgotten that in Blomefield's day there was no Public Record Office as we now know it. The records



were all scattered about, some in Westminster, some in the Tower, some in a place called Carleton Ride, where they were all jealously guarded by officials, whose mouths watered for fees. Then also there was no British Museum Library with its fine catalogue of books and manuscripts. He was the first to attempt a history of Norfolk and had no one's work to build on. People were accustomed in these days, if they wanted to know about a parish, to turn to *Blomefield's Norfolk*. It was a gigantic undertaking for one man—a magnificent scheme, which, alas! he was not spared to complete. Indeed, had he lived, the work would most certainly have been more perfectly done than his successor, the Rev. Charles Parkin, did it. Blomefield not only had to collect his material and put it into shape, but he decided to print it himself and bought a press, and it was traditionally said to have been set up in a room at the Rectory. His entry book contained copies of many letters showing his troubles and trials at that period. He could not get any type locally, and to judge from the indexes printed in his folio volume, the type must have been of a very mixed character. He engaged a man at £40 a year and fitted his office up with a press, which cost him £7. Then there were delays about the engravings. Blomefield received considerable encouragement from the replies to his circulars and started printing at once, and up to November, 1735, he states that he had spent on the work £216 14s. 2½d., "estimating my own trouble at nothing." In a letter dated November, 1735, he alluded to his study being burnt. It had been asserted that the printing house and press were destroyed, but Blomefield in his letter only referred to his study. The first volume of his history—the folio edition—was printed at the Rectory, but the other volumes were printed at his house in Willow Lane, Norwich. As Blomefield was also Rector of Brockdish, and the Minister at St. Mary's, Coslany, he probably came to Norwich to do the Norwich parishes. All knew that he only got through about three-parts of the second folio volume before he died. He was said to have gone to London to consult some old records and to have caught smallpox. Whether he died in London or at Fersfield he (Mr. Johnson) did not know, but he died on January 16th, 1752, and was buried in the chancel on Saturday evening, January 18th.

On the proposition of the President, Mr. Johnson was heartily thanked for his paper, and the company then, at the invitation of the Rector, visited the Rectory.

Before leaving, Mr. Ferrier said that the members of the Society, to mark their visit to Fersfield on the bicentenary of the induction of Blomefield as Rector of the parish, had decided to present to Mr. Disbrowe a copy of *Bryant's Churches* (Diss Hundred), published under the auspices of the Society, and which contained a full



description not only of the village of Fersfield and the Church, but matters particularly relating to the life of Blomefield.

In accepting the gift, the Rector said he would take every care of the volume, and when he left the parish would see that his successor had it. It would be kept in the church chest and be preserved with the other treasures.

The journey was resumed by way of South

RUSHFORD Lopham and Garboldisham to Rushford, where

COLLEGE. Mr. B. Cozens-Hardy read a paper upon Rushford College. The Society last paid a visit here in

1883, and the history of the College was then very exhaustively dealt with by the Rev. Dr. Bennett, F.S.A. (see *Norf. Arch.*, vol. x., p. 277). By the commencement of the 14th century the fashion of founding monasteries and friaries had died out. In some measure this may have been due to the fact that the laity and secular clergy were apprehensive of the great acquisition of wealth by the monasteries and of their repudiation of any control by the diocesan authorities. They feared an *imperium in imperio*. This College was neither a monastery nor a friary. It was a college of five secular priests, one of whom was the master, living together under explicit regulations. The founder was Edmund Gonville, who built the college buildings and erected or rebuilt the Church, half of which only survives. He was Rector of Terrington in Marshland and Commissioner of the Marshlands, but his chief title to fame is as founder of the Cambridge College which is now known as "Gonville and Caius." The foundation of the Grammar School was in 1500. The chief building was on the south of the Church, where the withered grass shows clearly the site. The school had not a long life, as the College was dissolved in the reign of Henry VIII., and the property was granted to the Earl of Surrey, the poet Earl, who lived on the site of the Norwich Union Life Office and gave his name to Surrey Street. The lead was stripped off the Church and the great hall, and both fell into ruin. For forty years until 1585 the place was derelict. At this date Robert Buxton, who was tenant on the estates of the attainted Duke of Norfolk, the Earl of Surrey's successor in title, restored the nave of the Church, built porches out of odd pieces of stone, and re-roofed part of the college buildings for farm premises. The part we now see was probably the great hall and the fellows' living-room on the first floor. The premises remained in the Buxton family until in recent years they were sold, and now belong to Major Musker, by whose permission, and that of the Rev. and Mrs. W. M. Shepherd, the inspection was made.

The President announced that the House of

A ROLL Commons had appointed a Committee whose  
OF M.P.'s. endeavour would be to prepare a list of all  
Members of Parliament from the 13th century



to the present time. Mr. Arthur Campling, of Seething, had been asked and had agreed to undertake the work in Norfolk, and he was thereupon appointed correspondent for the county.

Mr. A. M. Samuel, M.P., said the matter came before him when he was Financial Secretary to the Treasury, and was looked into at the instigation of Colonel Wedgwood. He had discussed it with the then Prime Minister, Mr. Baldwin. Public money would be used for the purpose, much local work would be necessary, and the House of Commons Committee would be most grateful for local help in the research.

The company, after luncheon, made their way THETFORD. to Thetford, where they were received in the Castle Meadow by the Mayor (Mrs. L. E. Bidwell)—who was wearing her robes of office—and was accompanied by the Mayoress (Miss Bidwell), the Town Clerk (Mr. G. R. Blaydon)—wearing his gown—Mr. J. G. Brown (Chairman of the Museum Committee), and Mr. H. Dixon Hewitt (Curator of the Museum).

In welcoming the assembly, the Mayor said she was particularly proud to be the first lady occupying the office of Mayor of their ancient borough on the occasion of the present pilgrimage. Their presence there that day was evidence of their belief in the prehistoric wealth of Thetford. Speaking purely from a civic point of view, it might interest some of them to learn that Thetford claimed to have been the capital of the Iceni, which makes it a seat of local government for practically 2000 years, and that under the Saxons it was undoubtedly the principal town of the eastern part of the heptarchy. Theodorus, Archbishop of Canterbury, held a synod at Thetford in 672; it was an episcopal see in 1070, and was mentioned in *Domesday Book*. The town was governed by a *præpositus* from the time of the Conqueror until Richard I., when this office ceased, and the town was governed by a Bailiff, Coroner, and Mayor. John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster and Lord of Thetford, however, altered this, and transferred the superior power to the Mayor. Privileges were granted the town by Edward I., Henry I., VII., and VIII., and Edward VI., and Queen Elizabeth granted their existing charter. Although the youngest Norfolk borough in age of charter, it is the oldest by prescription, and has elected a Mayor since 1272. The site of their present Guildhall has been dedicated to public use for nearly 600 years, the first Guildhall having been erected in 1337 by the Guild or College of St. Mary. Numerous East Anglian Kings had their seats at Thetford. Concluding, her Worship said, "To the ancient capital of East Anglia I heartily bid you welcome."

The Rev. H. Tyrrell Green, giving some CASTLE HILL. historical facts relating to Thetford, opened by quoting Bloomfield, the Suffolk poet, who wrote of Thetford:—



"Where of old rich abbeys smile  
In all the pomp of Gothic taste,  
By fond tradition proudly styled  
The mighty city of the East."

Up to the 13th century, continued Mr. Green, much of the town was in Suffolk, and Roman remains were only found on the south of the river. The eastern part of the town was known for centuries as Bailey End, bailey being the outmost part of the precinct of a castle. A charter of Henry II. mentions mill, land, and mead by the Castle Hill, and an entry in the roll for 1172-3 reads as follows:—"And for the custody of the Castle of Thetford from Palm Sunday until fifteen days after Whitsuntide before it was pulled down, 72s." This clearly indicated that there was at Thetford a Norman castle or fortress, which was destroyed, dismantled, or pulled down. The dominion of Thetford at this time belonged to the Crown, and the fortress was probably dismantled to prevent it falling into the hands of the rebellious Earls. In the Bailey End formerly stood the Chapter or College of the Guild of St. Mary, and the Patent Rolls showed that on 23rd September, 1392, the Mayor and commonality of Thetford had licence to buy property, to find a chaplain to celebrate divine service at the Chapel of St. Mary "in le Baillye." The seal of the Corporation of Thetford bears a castle which is not very dissimilar in appearance from the castles figured in the Bayeux tapestry as erected by the Norman Conquerors. The seal depicted by Blomefield contains in the border a crescent and star suggesting a connexion in its origin with the Crusaders. A similar emblem appears on the seal of the House of Canons of the Holy Sepulchre at Thetford, founded by the ardent Crusader, the third Earl Warren, and it is said that he gave the first seal, which is now in the Museum. With regard to the Castle Hill, this is the largest and best preserved earthwork of its kind in East Anglia. Its vertical height is 81 feet, the circumference at the base 1000 feet, and the east to the west length of the ramparts is 840 feet. Most mounds with basecourts are considered to have been constructed by the Normans, and the conclusion come to with regard to the Thetford Castle Hill is that it was thrown up by the Normans soon after the Conquest in order to overawe the citizens of their ancient borough.

After an inspection of the hill, the party  
THE CLUNIAC adjourned to the Cluniac Priory. Here a paper  
PRIORY. was read on the Priory by the Hon. Secretary.

The Society, he said, last visited these ruins on 3rd September, 1904. The history of the buildings, so far as it is ascertainable, has been written by the first Secretary of the Society, Mr. Henry Harrod, eighty years ago. He then carried out some excavations, the first of their kind in the county, and



the result of his work appears in Harrod's *Castles and Convents of Norfolk*. During the 430 years of its existence there is very little known about the history of the buildings. For half this period, however, it was what is known as an alien priory, that is, it acknowledged no supremacy in ecclesiastical matters other than that of mother house at Cluni; consequently whenever this country was at war with France, and that was not infrequently, the revenues of the monastery were seized by the Crown as being enemy property. In the days of its prosperity it housed a prior and seventeen monks, besides numerous servitors and dependents. By the Cluniac rule they were to feed eighteen poor persons daily, besides pilgrims. Compared with Castleacre, it contained more monks and had a greater income. At the Suppression it was found to have an income of £312 per annum, which is about equivalent to £5000 a year at present rates. There still survives the fine gateway on the north; part of what is believed to be Prior's lodgings on the west, in which are two fine Norman doors, part of the refectory forming the southern range of the claustral buildings. Cluniacs, unlike Cistercians, ornamented their buildings very richly, as one sees at Castleacre. If these ruins were dug out there would, no doubt, be discovered a great quantity of beautifully carved stone. Much of it however, it is said, adorns the rockeries of Thetford residents.

After inspection of the ruins, the party divided into two sections; part viewed the Corporation regalia and the portrait gallery at the Guildhall, bequeathed to the town by the late Prince Frederick Duleep Singh, F.S.A. Amongst the latter were hung three particularly fine drawings by John Sell Cotman, all signed and dated 1818. One was "The Danes' Mount," the property of the Corporation, and the other two—one the interior of a barn at the Nunnery, and the other a Norman doorway in the north wall of St. Mary's Church, were loaned by Mr. W. A. Brooke. The other section of the party inspected the Museum and the exhibits therein.

Four things in the Court-room at Thetford, it was observed, interested Norwich very much more than Thetford, and it was thought that it would be a good thing if the Norwich Corporation could exchange for them some exhibits which are of more interest to Thetford than to the city. One is a portrait of R. Mendham, whose name is associated with the Town Clerkship of Norwich; another a most interesting portrait of Robert Ladbroke, the painter; the third a portrait of John Sell Cotman, by A. Clint; and the fourth is a James I. period equestrian portrait of Symonds (a Norfolk man) with a hawk on his wrist and views of Norwich Castle and Cathedral in the distance. These pictures are included in the Duleep Singh bequest. There are also among other interesting Harvey portraits, one of Saville Onley, who was M.P.



for Norwich. There is also a portrait of Mrs. Kerrison, whose name is associated with the Harveys.

At the request of Mr. Cozens-Hardy, Mr. Arthur Michael Samuel gave a brief talk on maces, and also described the regalia at the Town Hall. He remarked that during the last few years he had spent a great deal of his time close to a mace of some kind or another. He recalled the fact that

among the maces at Norwich (of which city he had been Lord Mayor) was one of the most interesting in the country, that city's crystal mace, which was 400 years old, and probably more. During the last eleven years he had lived almost within touching distance of the mace in the House of Commons. The mace was the emblem of sovereign power. The large mace at Thetford was of conventional pattern, of the post-Restoration form which one saw in the House of Commons and in municipalities. It was not a mace of the original form. The mace in the House of Commons was very much like the Thetford mace; they might almost be brothers. Neither was hall-marked, although there was complete evidence of date of origin. As a matter of fact, post-Restoration maces were, one might say, held upside down, with the big bulb at the top and the small one at the bottom. About two years ago he was discussing with Sir Lionel Earle the designs of a mace for the new Parliament in Ulster, and carried on correspondence with the late Mr. Walter and the late Mr. Rudd. They found that maces designed after the Restoration had reversed the original idea of a mace. Mr. Samuel remarked that he had never before handled maces similar to the two small ones in the possession of the Thetford Corporation, which were fashioned after the manner of battle-axes, and as such were emblems of power. It appeared that they had been sent to Bury St. Edmunds in Elizabethan days, or later, to be silvered and that a bottom end had been placed upon them, with the result that anyone now handling them would really hold them by the battle-axe head instead of by the other end, as was intended when they were first made. With regard to the crystal mace at Norwich, his view was that the coronet top was probably taken from a figure of the Madonna at the dissolution of the monasteries and mounted on a crystal stick. He thought it was Flemish-Burgundian in design and origin, dating somewhere about the period of Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy. Mr. Samuel appealed to all citizens who had held office in municipalities to endeavour to add to the regalia of their towns, and remarked that the goldsmiths of the present day were quite as capable of turning out wonderful handwork as their predecessors were centuries ago.