

LANTERN LECTURE.

In order to make the work and aims of the Society more widely known throughout the county it was decided to have a set of lantern slides prepared illustrative of various types of our historical monuments, and to exhibit them in free lectures anywhere in the county. To defray the cost of preparing these slides contributions were sought from members of the Society, and it is gratifying to record that no member who was asked to subscribe failed to do so.

The subscriptions were as follows:—

	£	s.	d.
Allen, S.	2	2	0
Barlow, Sir Thos.	1	1	0
Bernard, Lieut.-Col. F. T. H.	2	2	0
Berry, J.	1	1	0
Disraeli, Coningsby	10	0	0
Hazell, R.	2	2	0
Owen, O. Morgan	2	2	0
Roberts, Sir James	5	0	0
Roberts, W. L. L.	1	1	0
Roscoe, E. S.	3	0	0
Shorter, Clement K.	2	2	0
Stewart-Liberty, I.	5	0	0
Viney, O.	1	1	0
Weller, G.	5	5	0

£42 19 0

The disbursements were:—

	£	s.	d.
Chapman, R. & H., of Buckingham, photographers	32	3	0
Davis & Hill, for slide-box	1	5	0
Advertising and Printing (part)	6	9	9

39 17 9

Balance towards printing and other
incidental charges not yet
ascertained, but estimated at £6 3 1 3

£42 19 0

In addition travelling and other expenses connected with the preparation and exhibition of the slides, to the extent of over £25, were borne by the lecturer, and the sum of £1:2:0 (the net proceeds of a collection made at the Winslow lecture) was handed to the lecturer.

Between 60 and 70 slides were prepared, chiefly from subjects in the western and northern portions of the county. The County Education Committee very kindly placed their organisation at the disposal of the Society, by giving notice in their official publication of the Society's offer to exhibit the slides, by making their schools available for the lecture, and, above all, by providing a lantern where one was not locally available.

The slides have been exhibited at the following places:—

Aylesbury,	The Lee,
Ballinger,	Little Kingshill,
Beaconsfield,	Little Missenden,
Bletchley,	Maids Moreton,
Buckingham,	Nash,
Chesham,	Newton Blossomville,
Cuddington,	Stoke Mandeville,
Ellesborough,	Stony Stratford,
Great Missenden,	Waddesdon,
Haddenham,	Wendover,
High Wycombe,	Whitchurch,
Horn Hill, Chalfont St.	Wing.
Peter,	Winslow.

Whilst the attendance at these lectures has been very good, and considerable interest has been displayed, the accession of new members in consequence of appeals made at the lectures has been moderate. At the same time a good deal of publicity has been gained for the Society, and the exhibition of the slides has had the effect of spreading knowledge of the antiquities of our county.

The question of continuing these lectures by securing slides of monuments in the middle and southern portions of the county depends entirely upon the measure of support forthcoming.

ANNUAL EXCURSION.

The Summer Excursion of the Society took place on Wednesday, 2nd July, 1924, starting from Bletchley Station.

The first stop was made at Simpson Church. The church is cruciform, chancel, nave, transepts, central tower, and south porch. The tower is all that is left of a 13th century church which was nearly destroyed in the 14th century, and replaced by the existing building, the chancel was then lengthened and widened, the transepts were widened towards the east, and the nave widened and extended. The windows in the transepts have good reticulated tracery, and that on the south is particularly pleasing when viewed from the Walton Road, the large west window is perpendicular, the porch is 15th century.

The Society was here in 1872, and the "Records," Vol. IV., p. 159, says "the church is in a very dilapidated condition, but steps are being taken to restore it, and the lay impropiator has offered to rebuild the chancel." This was done in January, 1874, by Mr. Augustus Brown, Major Hanmer, of Stockgrove, renewing at his expense the ceiling, tiling, etc., and providing oak altar and choir seats. The transepts were restored at the expense of Miss Bidwell, sister of the rector.

In the autumn of 1904, the church was re-opened after extensive re-edification, the removal of much plaster revealed a squint in the south transept, and a small square low opening in the north and south walls of the transepts. The flat ceiling in the nave was also removed, formerly it cut off the perpendicular tracery in the head of the west window, which had been filled up with plaster and painted black on the exterior. The ceiling also cut off the apex of the central tower arch and concealed the Royal Arms which were painted on the wall above it and the doorway leading to the ringing chamber. The Queen Anne Royal Arms were preserved by the intercession of an armorial student. It was then suggested that access to the ringing floor should be by means of a ladder in the north transept to a new doorway in the tower wall over the transept arch, but this idea was abandoned, common sense and good counsel prevailed, the wood stairway, from the rood loft stairs in the north wall, to the doorway over the tower arch was constructed and forms an unusual and not unpleasing feature at the north-east corner of the nave.

In the north transept is the 13th century font, plain round bowl, cylindrical stem, lead lined, and perforated. This was turned out of the nave and replaced by a modern stone affair, a quite needless procedure. Here is also the second oldest churchyard tombstone in this county, that to William Gale, 1638.

Recently a stained glass east window and carved oak reredos with mosaic panel were installed, the work of Powell and Sons.

Milton Keynes was next visited, the party was received by Rev. G. H. Field, rector. The church of All Saints was visited

for the first time by the Society. The late 12th century chancel arch is all that remains of an earlier building, with that exception, the whole church is 14th century. Viewed on the outside from the south-east, the buttresses, with the niche, crocketed pinnacles, bold reticulated tracery of the windows, and fine porch cannot easily be equalled by village churches. The porch, with the three-light trefoiled ogee side openings, and the hanging tracery of the inner doorway, with ball flower ornament, etc., is of rare beauty. Other noticeable details are the sedilia, and the low side-windows in the north chapel, in which is a richly ornamented canopied piscina, and here are preserved about three dozen 14th century encaustic tiles, several showing the Beauchamp arms, a fess between six crosslets; also the octagonal 15th century font. For many years this stood in the churchyard and was used as a flower pot, and its base deep sunk in an overgrowth of grass and weeds, until the present Rector restored it to the church. The tower is placed at the N.E. end of the nave and opens into it by a two-centered arch, the east capital having dog-tooth, and the west, ball flower ornament. Some years ago this tower was struck by lightning during Sunday morning service, while the Rector, the late Hon. W. S. Fiennes, was reading the Litany. The bells jangled, the building shook, and much confusion was caused in the congregation, children and others screaming. "A fulgure et tempestate, libera nos Domine." It was again struck about eight years ago, and the tiles of the pavement in the S.W. corner still bear the marks.

The chained bible of 1613, the brass to Adam Babyngton, 1427, and many other details must be left undescribed in this account. The churchyard is worth notice, formerly, much overgrown (churchyard soil is very rich) especially at the east end; some clearance has been made during the last few years, the path to the church is bordered by 30 clipped and trimmed yews, from 8 to 12 feet high, their conical or spherical forms being from 20 to 30 feet in circumference. There is also a large chestnut tree, with a girth of ten feet at four feet from the ground, and a very fine specimen of the *Pyrus Aria* or white-beam tree, thought to be the only one in this part of the county.

The oldest tombstone here is dated 1694, but was probably either restored years ago, if not even put up, for it has gilt letters on a black surface.

The next stop was at Broughton Church, where the Rector, Rev. E. J. Harper, received the party.

St. Lawrence, Broughton, is a small church of few parts, chancel, nave, tower, porch, with nothing remarkable architecturally. The two chained books Erasmus, his Paraphrase, and Jewel, his Apology, the stairs to the rood loft in the N.E. wall of nave, and other details were noted, and particular attention was directed towards the extensive and well preserved mural paintings. When the church was under repair in 1848, the removal of plaster revealed these paintings, and certain records at Lincoln state that in 1673 Thomas Duncombe left, by will, funds to paint and whitewash. Guided by this knowledge the obliterating material was removed with much care.

On the north wall over the doorway is the "Doom," the archangel with the trumpet is in the centre, the recording angel is weighing a soul, and the B.V.M. is influencing the balance by pressure of her hand and rosary: on the left are the gates of paradise, and in the right lower corner are the jaws of death, armed with teeth, vomiting flames, and consuming figures of the lost.

Over the south door is a life size George and Dragon, the upper border of this painting is destroyed but the rest is quite vivid, the saint is in armour, with red cross on his breast, his white horse is "courant," and his lance is transfixing a dragon writhing and emitting flames. Cleodelinda's head is gone, but the rest of her is quite pretty and charming. Eastward of the last is a painting of St. Eloy, the patron of farriers, with blacksmith's tools, and a man on horseback, also a figure of Queen Helena (mother of Constantine), with the TAU cross. Mr. C. E. Keyser says there was a guild of farriers at Broughton, hence this picture of St. Eloy.

The painting on the north wall is of very great interest. The central figure is our Lady of Pity, with the body of Christ; around this are figures of men, each holding some part of the body, e.g., a foot, heart, bone, etc. At the foot of the painting are two men quarrelling over a game of backgammon. The symbolism of this painting has been discussed ever since its re-discovery, the various conjectures of experts need not be detailed as Dr. Montague James, Provost of Eton, in March, 1922, settled the question.

The Provost writes, "It represents the injury done to the Body of Christ by those who swear by God's wounds, God's bones, etc., a common mediæval habit. . . . The figures represent the young swells of the period, holding the parts by which they swear."

Time and exposure having dimmed the colours and affected the cohesion of the matrix, it was decided to take preservative measures. This has recently been done by competent authority. The paintings have been treated by a special process which penetrates the plaster and strengthens and makes it damp resisting. The work has cost about £30, and appears to be quite satisfactory. The yolks of 200 eggs were required for the treatment, the operator thinking to get his eggs cheaper in Broughton than in London, decided to compound his mixture on the spot, only to find that all the eggs in Broughton had gone to London.

In the churchyard is a bronze sundial, date 1657, set on a small 18th century font. There is a headstone to Ann West, widow, died in 1794, age 67, "who kept the White Horse Inn in this town, a many years with great reputation. A good woman is better than rubes (sic)."

By the kind permission of Miss Marjorie Farrar, Chicheley Hall was again visited by the Society. The last occasion was on 15th July, 1869 (see Records, Vol. IV., p. 47), when the annual meeting was held here. The house was built in 1702, and it is described as a "favourable specimen of the debased style of classical architecture. . . . A huge square mass of red brick, with stone facings and flat roof." The chief entrance

not being in use, the visitors, after passing over the petrified kidneys of the spacious coach and stable yard, entered at the side, and in the large well-lighted central hall listened to Mr. F. W. Bull give an account of the Chester family and Chicheley. The ceiling of the hall is painted by Verrio (died 1707), this must have been about the last of his works. Here are the portraits of Sir Edward and Lady Bagot, and Sir John and Lady Chester. The portraits of Charles I. and Charles II. (after Van Dyck and Kneller) are very good. On the spacious grand stairs is some Beauvais Tapestry, and in one room some Mortlake Tapestry. At the top of the house is the library, the walls are lined with large panels between fluted pilasters, these panels open by means of a curious chisel-shaped key in a tricky manner, and disclose bookshelves behind. There are no books here now. Where are the treasures exhibited in 1869?

Chicheley Church, St. Lawrence, is a picturesque irregular building, chancel, 18th century; central tower, 15th century; nave, 12th century; north aisle, 14th century; clerestory and south porch, 16th century, with the usual mutilations, restorations, and churchwardenisms of times less remote. The sepulchral memorials are very interesting. The brass on east wall of aisle shows a skeleton in a shroud, with the Cave arms. The mural monument to Antony Cave, 1576, is an enriched sarcophagus with emaciated figure of a corpse and certain pagan embellishments.

By the path to the porch is a yew tree, at four feet from the ground its girth is 93 inches, the umbrage is about 150 feet, and the peripheral extremities of the longer boughs are supported by several vertical poles; probably it is more than 300 years old.

Lathbury Church has been visited on at least two previous occasions, in 1869 and 1908. The Rev. H. H. Bartrum received the party on this occasion, and kindly read an excellent paper on his church.

Originally an early 12th century church, the south arcade is the chief remaining portion of that date, the capital of the central column, carved with monsters, is illustrated in the Records, Vol. IV., p. 43, and closely resembles similar work at Newton Longville and Whaddon. Consisting of chancel, clerestoried nave, with aisles, west tower, and porch, by far the larger part of the church is 14th century. Formerly there were extensive mural paintings, portions of which remain in more or less faded condition. Fortunately, some years ago, when they were less faded, drawings and photographs were made.

Over the chancel arch was the "Doom," over the north arcade the happiness of the blessed, and on the south, the misery of the lost, the weighing of souls, the seven sacraments, baptism, burial, the story of Cain, etc., are also depicted.

Lathbury Park House, near by, is alleged to be connected with the Church by an underground passage. There are also remains of fish ponds, unnoticed by the Historical Monument Commission.

Finally, the party was hospitably entertained at the Rectory to tea, and expressed appreciation and thanks for their kindness to the Rector and Mrs. Bartrum.

ANNUAL MEETING.

The Annual Meeting followed lunch, which was served before Chicheley was visited at "The Swan," Newport Pagnell; the chair was taken by Major Coningsby Disraeli, and he was supported by the following members of the Council: Mr. James Berry, Captain Stewart-Liberty, Colonel J. Wyness, Major Flower, Rev. R. Bale, and Mr. J. O. Manton. The question of raising the annual subscription was discussed, and it was decided to make no alteration at present, but improve the Society's revenue by adding to the number of members. The honorary officers were re-elected, and the names of Mr. E. S. Roscoe and Mr. C. O. Skilbeck were added to those upon the Council.