

## The Proceedings of the Bucks Archaeological and Architectural Society,

FOR THE YEAR 1890.

THE Society's Annual Excursion took place on the 22nd of July, the route taken being in the northern part of the county. The general gathering place was Newport Pagnell Railway Station, and thither the members journeyed from all parts.

The first halt was made at Gayhurst House, the residence of Mr. J. W. Carlile, who personally welcomed the members. Directing their attention to a general view of the mansion, he stated that it was built in three different periods, the first being of the Tudor age. It had undergone extensive alterations since the first building was erected, about 1500; indeed, the front now faced another way. Proceeding to the side of the house, the members viewed the indications of the Tudor style, and the probable place where the old gateway stood. In 1704, the place was sold to George Wrighte, Esq., son of the Lord Keeper, Sir Nathan Wrighte. He made extensive alterations and improvements, and also pulled down the old Church adjacent, and built a new one in the Christopher Wren style. Mr. Carlile next pointed out the work executed by the late Lord Carington, including the filling up of the secret chambers. Lord Carington did not care about these places, and had, so Mr. Carlile stated, tons of rubble shot into the open spaces, completely filling them up. The members proceeded to enter the house, and were conducted up the narrow staircase on to the leads, and there gained a view of the beautiful landscape, and still realized the features of the forest scenery which gave "hurst" as the termination to the name of this place. On descending from the roof, the party visited the interesting rooms, their guide calling attention to the initials "K. D." (Kenelm Digby) in one portion, which reminded the visitors that the Digbys were once the possessors of this mansion. He pointed out that the Queen Anne character of the rooms had been well preserved, and drew attention to some of the valuable paintings hanging on the walls.

Leaving Gayhurst, the party drove through Weston Underwood, without staying to inspect its beauties and features of interest, as time was pressing, and halted at the town of Olney.

The company first visited the Parish Church, where Mr. J. L. Myres, one of the Honorary Secretaries of the Society, gave some particulars of the building.

From the Church the members went to Cowper's Summer House, which was inspected with great interest. Some also viewed the outside of "Cowper's House."

In view of the visit of the Society, a temporary museum of relics of Cowper and Newton, and of other objects of local interest, had been formed in the house formerly occupied by Major Lochmer. The Local Committee to carry out the formation of the Museum and the reception of the Society at Olney, was composed of the following gentlemen, viz., The Revs. J. P. Langley, G. F. Sams, J. Tarver, W. Sutthery, and J.

Allen; Messrs. J. Garrard, T. T. Coles, J. Palmer, T. Eyles, T. Bass, A. Allen, and T. Wright (Secretary).

Among the numerous articles in the Museum were to be noticed pieces of a patchwork quilt, given by Cowper to Mrs. King, wife of the Vicar, to whom he wrote the lines contained in one of his poems; a collection of old bills referring to the incendiarism which occurred in the town in 1853; the "Universal Review," with Miss D'Arcy Collyer's articles on some unpublished MSS. of Cowper; a fac-simile of some verses written on a billhead of one James Nicholls; the Rev. J. Newton's book, "Wilberforce's Practical View of Christianity," with an autograph account of the conditions on which he lent it to his daughter; half of an old pickle jar of Cowper's; copies of James Storer's "Cowper Illustrated"; copies of Newton's "Letters to a Wife"; Bibles, 1599 and 1609; William Hayley's "Life and Posthumous Writings of Cowper," 1843; high-backed rush-bottomed chair belonging to Newton; published private correspondence of Cowper; a small oak table belonging to Cowper; Roman pottery, coins, etc., found at Hyde, near Olney; hand painted miniatures of Lady Austen, a friend of Cowper's, and of Baron Tardiff, her second husband; Lady Austen's fan; Cowper's poker, from the Aylesbury Museum; painting of Olney Church during harvest thanksgiving, showing the Newton pulpit; copy of Jackson's oil painting of Cowper; tracings of brasses in the surrounding churches; Cowper's shadow, by James Andrew, of Olney; Cowper's drawing-master and a sculptor of that time; Lady Austen's flowered silk dress; small box made from Cowper's oak; watch stand made from Cowper's mulberry tree; fretwork box, from Cowper's oak; old tinder pistols and boxes; copies of Newton's works; a dress that belonged to Lady Austen; Roman silver and brass coins found at Ash Furlong; a couple of buttons from Cowper's coat; a small oak box belonging to Newton; Cowper's silver shoe buckles; a portion of Cowper's hair in a brooch, set with garnets; Cowper's coffee pot; Cowper's stock buckle; a Charles II. guinea, found in the walls of Weston House; a copy of Watts's hymns given by Newton to his servant, with autograph; portrait of the Rev. Mr. Sutcliffe, one of the founders of the Baptist Mission at Olney; and a franked letter from Lord Egmont, from Malvern, addressed to a man named Wilson, a hairdresser, of Olney, making an appointment to meet him at Finedon.

Mr. Thomas Wright read a paper to the Members entitled, "Matters not generally known concerning the Poet Cowper," at the conclusion of the luncheon at the Bull's Head Hotel, and which is as follows:—

"LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

"Having for several years been collecting materials for a new life of Cowper, which, I am glad to say, is now nearly half written, I have found that a good many of the notions that people hold concerning the poet are altogether erroneous. And on this subject, as well as on certain discoveries made during the last few years, I purpose saying a few words.

"Born in 1731 at 'the pastoral house' at Great Berkhamstead, William Cowper experienced his first trouble six years later, when occurred the death of his mother, an event which many years after was the subject of a beautiful poem—a poem that is undoubtedly not only one of the finest of his productions, but one of the most touching elegies in the language—'Lines on the receipt of my Mother's Picture.' Shortly after the death of his mother, little William was sent to the boarding school at Market Street, which was kept by a Dr. Pitman. It may seem censurable to have sent so young a child away from home, but it must be

remembered that the school was distant from Berkhamstead only about six miles. Had proper supervision been placed over the pupils, all would have been well. Unfortunately it was otherwise, and the timid little fellow suffered in no common degree from the brutality of his schoolfellows. 'Here,' he tells us in his Memoir, 'I had hardships of different kinds to conflict with, which I felt more sensibly in proportion to the tenderness with which I had been treated at home. But my chief affliction consisted in my being singled out from all the boys, by a lad about fifteen years of age, as a proper object upon whom he might let loose the cruelty of his temper. I choose to forbear a particular recital of the many acts of barbarity with which he made it his business continually to persecute me: it will be sufficient to say that he had, by his savage treatment of me, impressed such a dread of his figure upon my mind that I well remember being afraid to lift up my eyes upon him higher than his knees, and that I knew him by his shoe-buckles better than any other part of his dress.'

"From 1741 to 1748 Cowper was at Westminster School. Then succeeded 'three years misspent in an attorney's office,' followed by twelve more 'equally misspent in the Temple,' where he twice suffered derangement.

"Now, it is upon the causes of these derangements that I first purpose to dwell. The former occurred when he was twenty-one years of age, just after he had left the office of Mr. Chapman, the attorney. To imagine, as some have done, that the origin of this malady is to be sought in the grief felt by him, when a child of six, for the death of his mother is simply ridiculous; nor need we suppose that the ill-usage he received at his first school had anything to do with it. By the time he was twenty-one he would certainly have got over the death of his mother, and as regards the school, we know that his time there was succeeded at Westminster by some very happy years. The cause of it seems to me very simple. The poet himself assures us that a tendency to lowness of spirits was observable in his family, and the case of his brother John, to enquire no further, at once occurs to those who have acquainted themselves with Cowper's family history. Yes, the case of his brother John, whose whole life was made miserable just because a gipsy tinker, 'in an old soldier's red coat,' made predictions about him, some of which, by curious coincidence, came true. This constitutional dependency, in a man of Cowper's morbid temperament, linked with the facts that he had had far too much time at his disposal, and that he was troubled with a feeling of remorse on account of his having abstained from both public and private devotion, seems quite sufficient to account for what happened.

"We now skip over twelve years—twelve years spent in love-making, verse-writing, the study of Homer and Virgil, lounging at the coffee-houses, idling with his friends of the Nonsense Club—anything and everything, in fact, except what he ought to have been doing, studying the law: living, in short, a gentleman's life, in the hope, Micawber-like, that something would turn up. And yet, which made him at times uneasy enough, his patrimony was fast diminishing, and he sometimes felt not quite sure whether he would always have even clean linen. At length something *did* turn up, something quite respectable, too, an office under Government, the gift of a relative—an office with excellent pay and not much work. In fact, like so many other happy-go-lucky people, Cowper had the opportunity, at any rate, of falling on his feet.

"But together with the appointment came the crash. As candidate for the office Cowper had to appear at the Bar of the House of Lords, in

order to prove his efficiency, a conjuncture he had not reckoned upon. Despite, however, his dread of appearing in public, he now put his shoulder to the wheel, and really tried his best to make some headway. Had he, during the past twelve years, displayed only ordinary diligence, he would have been able to go through the ordeal with flying colours. But he was a dunce (of course we are speaking only in respect to the law), he was a dunce, and he knew it; and as he turned over the pages of the journal books his heart sickened, and the words danced before his eyes. I don't know that there is a more pitiable picture than that of Cowper, with aching brain, poring, uselessly, over the journals in the office of the House of Lords. The sequel everybody knows: his purchasing the laudanum; the drive to the river; the madness that would not come; the scene in his bedroom; and, finally, the long-desired madness and the mad-house.

"If we take into consideration the circumstances that preceded this second derangement, I do not think it is possible to feel much surprise at the consequences; nevertheless, Grimshawe has the coolness to tell us that the derangement was in part brought about through the poet's disappointment in not being permitted to marry his first love, his cousin Theodora. That his disappointment on this account was keen, we know from the bitter verses he wrote on the occasion of their parting; but to suppose that it was anything more than transient is simply laughable, for within a few months after he had found out that there was no possible chance of having his cousin, he had allowed her to fade altogether from his recollection, and not only so, but had fallen in love with another young lady, of whom he speaks in the following terms:—'I lately passed three days at Greenwich; a blessed *three days*, and if they had been *three years* I should not have envied the gods their immortality. There I found that lovely and beloved little girl, of whom I have often talked to you; she is at that age, sixteen, at which every day brings with it some new beauty to her form. No one can be more modest, nor (which seems wonderful in a woman) more silent; but when she speaks, you might believe that a Muse was speaking.' After all this, I think you will agree with me that the poet had quite got over Theodora.

"There are many other points of interest in Cowper's life, on which new light has lately been thrown, to which I should like to refer, but it would probably take up too much time just now to deal with more than one or two. In the first place I am informed by Mr. H. Gough, that in T. Thorpe's 'Catalogue of Manuscripts,' in the year 1844, appeared the following entry, 'Common Place Book of William Cowper, the poet,' in his autograph, 4to, in the original wrapper, 1757. Evidently compiled while studying the law. Never was a more tantalizing paragraph, and I need hardly say that I should feel greatly indebted to anybody who could inform me as to the whereabouts of this manuscript—for, in all probability it was sold by Mr. Thorpe.

"On account of the second attack, to which I have before referred, Cowper was sent, in 1763, to a private asylum at St. Albans. On his recovery, in 1765, he removed to Huntingdon, where he became acquainted with the amiable 'race of the Unwins.' The period from 1767 to 1786 was spent at Olney, where he wrote the 'Task,' 'John Gilpin,' and a great number of other poems, and this brings us to another interesting circumstance, none other than the discovery, a few days ago, by Mr. W. J. Harvey, F.S.A., of the long lost diary of Samuel Teedon, the impecunious parish schoolmaster and poetaster of Olney, in the time of Cowper—a small manuscript volume (6 in. by 3½ in.), which dates from 17th October, 1791, to

2nd February, 1794, and contains numerous references to the poet and Mrs. Unwin. Possessors of the 'Life of the Rev. H. Gauntlett,' by his daughter, Catharine, may like to refer to page 182, where they will find a brief account of Teedon; and also to pages 356 to 388, which contain thirty-eight of the poet's letters to him. The whole subject is one of intense interest; Teedon having had an immense, and, as I think, deleterious influence over Cowper during the last few years of the Weston period. The Teedon household, I may observe, consisted, besides the schoolmaster himself, of 'Mammy' and her daughter 'Polly,' and his relative and assistant 'Worthy' (Eusebius Killingworth). It is also interesting to note that Teedon, who, as before intimated, was extremely poor, enjoyed for some time, from an unknown benefactor—of whom Cowper was the almoner—the sum of £7 10s. per quarter. Of the interesting article, 'Some Unpublished Manuscripts of the Poet Cowper,' by Mrs. D'Arcy Collyer, which appeared in last month's number of 'The Universal Review,' I need only say that the manuscripts in question consist of two letters, several odd notes, and five pieces of verse, one of which, 'The Song of Mercy and Judgment,' not only contains some very melodious lines, but fills up a gap in that little-known portion of the poet's history—the two years spent at St. Albans. It is superfluous to add that all lovers of Cowper owe a debt of gratitude to Mrs. D'Arcy Collyer. During Cowper's residence at Weston was published his translation of 'Homer.' His death took place at East Dereham, in Norfolk, on April 25th, 1800. And now just a few words concerning that vexed question, the pronunciation of the poet's name. In the recently-printed diary of the Rev. A. Maddock, of Kettering, we find that in the first entry referring to the poet, the name is spelt Cooper; but in all subsequent entries, when he came to know more of the poet, Mr. Maddock spells the name correctly. In the first entry he doubtless spelt it as he heard it pronounced. It is a noteworthy fact that the Rev. John Newton did exactly the same thing. In his early letters to the poet at Huntingdon, he spelt the word Cooper; later on it is always Cowper. May we not assume that Newton, like Maddock, was at first misled by the pronunciation. We are told, moreover, distinctly, by the Rev. William Bull, Cowper's friend, that the poet always pronounced his name Cooper. How ought we to pronounce the name? As the poet pronounced it himself, surely. It is rather hard on a man who has worked himself up to eminence to deny him even his own name. If a poet's name was Jones, it would be unjust, as well as ridiculous, for succeeding generations to insist on calling him Robinson. To all arguments, however, your obstinate Philistine returns but one answer. 'C-o-w,' he says, 'spells cow; you can't get over that.' But if Cholmondeley is allowed to spell Chumley, Beauchamp Beecham, and Colcohoon Cohoon, surely one may be permitted to call Cowper Cooper. Besides cow is coo in Scotch, and Cowper, whether rightly or wrongly, imagined himself to be of Scotch descent. Of course, you know the story of George Stephenson, in the House of Commons. When asked by one of the members what would happen if a *cow* should get in the way of his locomotive, the great engineer only made answer, 'So much the worse for the coo.' Words, however, are only wasted. C-o-w, persists the Philistine, spells cow. It's of no use, you can't turn him; and as, in these lax times, you mayn't burn him, you are obliged to let him have his own way; and so he goes on through life pronouncing the name wrongly, and, what is worse, endeavouring to shake the faith of those who have been in the habit of pronouncing it rightly. Then one recalls the riddle propounded by Cowper, and subsequently printed in the 'Gentleman's Magazine'—

I am just two and two, etc.,' and the answer to that riddle in the same periodical which begins:—

“ ‘ A riddle by Cooper  
Made me swear like a trooper.’ ”

And now just one word more. In a copy of Cowper's poems, in the possession of the Rev. J. Tarver, of Filgrave (near Olney), is a slip of paper with the rubbing of a seal, showing three hoops, and the following note in manuscript, by the Rev. Josiah Bull, 'The above seal was taken from one of the following letters. By a singular accident the two noble families of Shaftesbury and Cowper changed their arms, the Shaftesbury family having three cows, and Cowper family three hoops. This fact was once mentioned by the poet to his friend, the Rev. Wm. Bull, from whom I heard it, and it is a curious circumstance that, in pronouncing his own name, Mr. Cowper always adhered to the arms and not to the spelling, calling himself Cooper, and not Cowper. (Signed J. P. Bull.) To say or quote more, however, would only be slaying the slain, and with a pathetic appeal to all present to pronounce the name properly, I wind up my paper.'

The Annual Meeting was held at the conclusion of the luncheon, the Rev. W. M. Myres being chairman.

Mr. J. Parker moved that the Bishop of Oxford be elected President of the Society. They were aware that by the death of the late Duke of Buckingham and Chandos, their former excellent President, a vacancy had occurred in the office of President. In conversation with some of the officers of the Society, he suggested that the eminent historian and archaeologist, who had come amongst them, would be a most suitable President, but he confessed that he hardly expected the Bishop would consent to accept the post, for in addition to his episcopal duties, he was continuing his literary work. He wrote to the Bishop on the subject, and he replied, saying he would willingly accept the office. He hoped that on some future occasion the Bishop would give them the advantage of his archaeological knowledge, which would greatly tend to promote interest in the Society, and increase its influence.

Mr. R. Gibbs, in seconding the proposal, said the Bishop's literary attainments were well known, and his accepting of the office was a great compliment to the Society. He had reason to believe that the Bishop would prove far from being a nominal President, and that on a future occasion they would have the pleasure of listening to an address from his Lordship.

The motion was carried unanimously.

Mr. Williams proposed that Lord Addington and the Rev. E. Warre, D.D., Eton College, be elected Vice-Presidents. The Rev. T. Cockram, in seconding the proposal, said that he had no doubt that the new Vice-Presidents would strengthen the Executive.

The motion was carried with applause.

Mr. Cocks moved the re-election of the Hon. Secs., the Rev. R. H. Pigott, Mr. J. Parker, F.S.A., Mr. R. Gibbs, F.S.A., and Mr. J. L. Myres. This was seconded by the Rev. Goddard, and cordially agreed to, Mr. Myres being especially thanked for his trouble in connection with the excursion.

Mr. J. T. Harrison proposed the re-appointment of Mr. Williams as Hon. Treasurer; this was seconded by Mr. J. L. Myres, and carried unanimously.

On the motion of Mr. G. T. De Fraine, seconded by Mr. Williams, Mr. H. Jowett was elected an auditor in the place of the late Mr. Bartlett,

The following were elected on the Committee, on the motion of Mr. Myres, seconded by Mr. Parker, viz., Mr. A. H. Cocks, the Rev. H. Dale, the Rev. C. H. Evelyn White, F.S.A., Mr. T. Horwood, Dr. Lawford, Mr. J. Rutland, Mr. Sanders, Mr. Wheeler, the Rev. T. Williams.

Mr. Parker proposed that Mr. Henry Gough, of Sandcroft, Redhill, be elected an hon. member in recognition of the value of his authorship of the "Bibliotheca Buckinghamiensis." He remarked that Mr. Gough had collected a vast amount of information which would be of great use to future historians, and the least they could do was to pay him this compliment.

The motion was seconded and agreed to, as was also a proposition by Mr. W. Weller, to elect as an hon. member Mr. R. S. Downs, of High Wycombe, in recognition of his contributions to the study of Archaeology.

The following new ordinary members were elected, viz., Lady Augusta Fremantle, Swanbourne; the Rev. C. H. Tompkins, Leckhamstead; Mr. Mount, M.P., Newbury; Mr. G. B. Canning, High Wycombe; Mr. P. Manning, Watford.

Mr. Williams made his financial report as follows:—They began the year with a balance of about £6. On the receipt side they had one life member at £5; subscriptions, £50; and odd receipts, 8s. He had great pleasure in announcing that the appeal to the generosity of members to help them to reduce their debt resulted in £45, and he thought it would amount to £50. The total receipts were £101. On the other hand, the value and importance of the RECORDS had been kept up and they were in debt for the printing. It had been heavier than usual, and the account for 1888 was £65. The account for other printing was £7; two years' rent, £12; and sundries about £15; leaving a balance in hand of £9. They had complimented him on the way in which he had got in the subscriptions; but unfortunately he had not been uniformly successful. In making out the arrears for 1889 he found there was £42 outstanding, notwithstanding frequent applications. He had written to some of those who had received the RECORDS, but had not paid their subscriptions, hinting that if they no longer desired to continue members they should return the RECORDS sent them, as they were getting valuable. They had one hundred and ninety-four annual subscribers, twenty-three who compounded, and eleven life members. There had been eight resignations, they had lost six members by death, while there were twenty-three new members in 1889, and others had since joined. He should like to repeat for consideration a suggestion he had made before, viz., that the subscription should be raised. The present amount of 6s. was very low, and virtually represented the cost of the RECORDS. He thought it might be raised to 10s. Their present income was about £60, and it was nearly all absorbed in the publication of the RECORDS.

Mr. Parker gave an outline of the current number of the RECORDS, and stated that he and Mr. Myres attended the Archaeological Conference at the rooms of the Society of Antiquaries. The question of Parish Registers was thoroughly considered at the Conference, and the best means to be adopted for their preservation; and another matter of great importance was brought forward. It was suggested that maps should be prepared showing the places of archaeological interest in each county. It remained to be seen whether a body of men could be found who would give the necessary time and attention to so useful a work as the preparation of such a map for Buckinghamshire. Mr. Parker also reported on the lectures that had been delivered in connection with the Society during the year.

Mr. Myres referred to the re-arrangement he was undertaking in

connection with the Museum. The Museum at Aylesbury, he remarked, was little used, and he had not received a penny on account of it for two years. It was proposed to offer lectures in the coming winter, as before. Their success, he added, would largely depend on local organization.

The Rev. J. Tarver proposed a vote of thanks to those who had contributed papers at this excursion, and expressed the pleasure of the people of Olney at welcoming the Society.

This was agreed to, as also a vote of thanks proposed by the Chairman to the Olney Committee.

The majority of the members then walked across the fields, while others drove by road, to inspect the interesting church of Clifton Reynes. A paper on this church by Mr. J. L. Myres appears in this number of the RECORDS.

The Rector had very kindly offered tea for the members in a tent on the lawn, but they were prevented accepting his hospitality in consequence of the necessity of being in time for the departure train at Wolverton.

The arrangements for the excursion were ably made and carried through by Mr. J. L. Myres.