



The Berks, Bucks & Oxon Archæological Journal.

Proceedings of Societies.

OXFORD ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY.—This Society has been very active as usual, and during the past term has made the following excursions:—On October 19th they visited Wood Eaton, Noke and Elsfield. At Wood Eaton there is a 13th century church and a way-side cross. Near this village is the site of a Roman villa. There is a small 15th century church at Noke, and a 13th century church at Elsfield. The forged Roman Inscription in the grounds of Elsfield House is remarkable. On November 2nd the Society visited the new City Buildings and Carfax Church, which is soon to be pulled down. Four evening meetings have been held during the term, and lectures delivered by the Rev. C. Fletcher, on Carfax Church, Mr. H. W. Taunt on the Cistercian Abbeys of Netley and Beaulieu, by the President on the Irish Abbey of Mellifont, and by Mr. C. R. Beazley, on the Portuguese in East Africa. Lord Rosebery has exhibited a 17th century Chalice, and Mr. Manning, a late Celtic bronze dagger sheath, dredged up near North Hinksey, and other objects found near Oxford. We believe that Mr. J. H. Parker, to whose services the Society is so greatly indebted, and who takes so keen an interest in all archæological studies, has been re-elected President; and the Society has been fortunate in retaining the services of Mr. P. Manning and Mr. J. L. Myres, as Hon. Secretaries.

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OXFORDSHIRE ARCHÆOLOGICAL SOCIETY.—This Society has incurred a great loss by the resignation of Dr. Macray, who has so long acted as its Secretary. The services of the Rev. G. E. Barnes,

have, however, happily been secured, who, in conjunction with Mr. Loveday, will now conduct the work of the Society. The Report for the last two years has recently been issued.

In 1893 the members met at Bicester for their annual excursion, and proceeded to Caversfield Church. Of this very interesting building and its brasses, the President, Sir Henry Dryden, contributes to the Report a full description with carefully prepared illustrations. Other places visited were Fringford, Tusmore Park, Souldern, where the members were hospitably entertained by Mr. and Mrs. Gough, and Aynhoe House.

The annual excursion in 1894 was made by water, and was much enjoyed. The party journeyed by steam launch to Nuneham from Oxford; then to Abingdon, where the numerous interesting features of the old town were inspected, and on the return journey made a short stay at Iffley. An account of the conference of Archæological Societies and the President's able article on Caversfield, conclude the Report.

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BERKS ARCHÆOLOGICAL SOCIETY.—The last excursion of the season took place on October 2nd. The party—about 25 in number—left Reading at 2 p.m. in brakes to visit the scattered old hamlet of Rotherfield Peppard and Wyfold Court, the residence of Mr. R. Hermon-Hodge, M.P. Passing over the Oxfordshire uplands, by way of Mr. Martin J. Sutton's picturesque estate at Kidmore End, the visitors arrived in about an hour at the tiny church of Peppard, hidden away in the wood, but standing on almost the highest ground in the country. The building, dedicated to all Saints, was restored in 1874. Mr. Guilding, speaking from the chancel step, apologised for the unavoidable absence of the Rector (the Rev. R. P. Williams). The church, he said, was a representative of its kind in rural parishes, throwing light upon the ecclesiastical, social and architectural history of the country, but it did not contain much that was of surpassing antiquarian interest. The name Peppard was derived from that of the Norman family of Pipard, who once held the advowson of the living and occupied the Manor. To them was due the erection of the massive chancel, the oldest portion of the church. When the north aisles were added in 1874 two Norman or Early English windows at the east end were laid bare. They probably dated from the end of the 12th century. Between them was a window in the Decorated style, now partly filled in with stained glass. The font was late Norman, and cup

shaped. Three of the chief types of architecture were thus to be found in the same church. Peppard was probably at first a station where the missionaries who converted Wessex happened to put up their cross. Then perhaps followed a Saxon Church, on whose site the Normans—our great church builders—erected another, under the patronage of the Pipard family. Those feudal families, the “makers of England,” who did so much good in their day by the lesson of reciprocal duties, had their changes. The Pipards were succeeded by the Botelers (corrupted into Butler), who held large possessions in Oxfordshire and came into power at Peppard in the time of Edward II. With them came the change in the style of that Church’s architecture, so faithfully re-produced at its restoration. In the same parish there was a small chapel built in 1798 by Mr. French, grandfather of Bishop French, and a Reading man. A few minutes’ driving brought the party to Wyfold Grange, the original Wyfold Court standing in full view of the immense building which now bears that name. Wyfold Grange owes its interest to the fact that it stands on the site of an old British and Roman circular camp, the *vallum* and *agger* of which are still to be traced in the grounds. Near it are some magnificent specimens of the wych elm. The present house was only built in 1871. Opposite Wyfold Grange, in a wood called Castle Grove, is a large square camp, also of British and Roman origin. Autumn daylight did not permit lengthy investigations. The party drove under pine and larch woods through an avenue leading to Wyfold Court, where Mrs. Hermon-Hodge welcomed her visitors and gave them afternoon tea in the dining room. Mr. Guilding interpreted the gratitude of the guests to Mrs. Hodge for her very great kindness and hospitality. Mr. Hermon-Hodge was unfortunately unable to be present, owing to a pressing engagement. Wyfold Court was described by Mr. Guilding as one of the finest houses in England, combining all the good features of a French *château* and a Scotch castle. The party were then permitted to visit the main portions of the house—the magnificent picture gallery, with its specimens of Stacey Marks, Landseer, Canaletto, E. de Schampheleer, Poole, and E. W. Ward; the library; and the corridors hung with frescoes, tapestry, and a series of paintings illustrating different phases of native life in India. Wyfold Court was erected in 1875. The Manor is held by the curious tenure of presenting a rose to the King, if he happen to pass on May-Day. The party drove back, in darkness and a chilly atmosphere, to Reading. Few afternoons have been spent by the Archæological Society more pleasantly.