

John o' Groats, exhibited a few weeks ago a fine collection of objects recently rescued from the bed of the river, which I begged him to show to the Berks Society before they find a home at Eton College, whither they are destined.

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Mr. Everard Green, Rouge Dragon, read a paper last week at the Society of Antiquaries on the Heraldry of Ockwells Manor House, which some of us visited not long ago, and were so delighted to find that the interesting house had fallen into the hands of Mr. Edward Barry, F.S.A., who has so carefully preserved this ancient building and restored its mediæval glories. I hope later on to tell you what the Rouge Dragon had to say about the perfect old glass adorning the windows of Ockwells, which he suggested formed a *liber amicorum* of the patrons and friends of John Norreys, the builder of the house, *temp* Henry VI.

Proceedings of Societies.

BERKS ARCHÆOLOGICAL SOCIETY.—The Annual Meeting of the Society was held at the Abbey Gate, on Wednesday, May 3rd, when there were present C. E. Keyser, Esq., President, Lord Saye and Sele, W. Berkeley Monck, Esq., and a large attendance of members. The Officers of the Society were elected, the Report read by the Secretary, which we publish in this number of the Journal, and other business transacted. Mr. Keyser then gave a very interesting lecture on "Norman Doorways of Berkshire Churches," which we hope to publish. The lecture was illustrated by a fine collection of large photographs, and thirty-two of the most interesting doorways were exhibited by a magic lantern on a screen, which shewed with much accuracy the architectural details. The lecture was repeated in the evening for the benefit of those who were unable to attend in the afternoon, and the thanks of the Society were heartily given to the President for his most valuable contribution to the history of the architecture of Berkshire.

The first Summer Excursion took place on May 31st, when the Society visited Hurst, Binfield, Billingbear and Wokingham. The attendance of the members was larger than usual. Hurst House

was first visited by the kind invitation of Mr. and Mrs. Mackey. Mr. Mackey described the principal features of the residence. The old house, built by Richard Ward in Tudor times, was pulled down and rebuilt by the Rev. A. A. Cameron, Vicar of Hurst, but all the old materials were used, the old and finely carved oak panelling, massive doorways, &c., being carefully preserved. Hurst Church was described by the Secretary, who pointed out the Norman character of the pillars on the North side of the nave. In 1300 the western part of the nave was taken down and rebuilt, and the roof, porch and chancel added. The screen was erected in the time of Henry VII., the tower in 1612, and in 1627 and 1638 alterations were made and a new chancel aisle added. The pulpit is Jacobean, and possesses a curious hour-glass bearing the date 1636. Archbishop Laud frequently preached in Hurst Church. The church contains many interesting monuments of the old families of Hurst, the Wards, Saville, Harrisons, Biggs and Barkers.

Binfield Church was next visited and described by Canon Savory, who stated that he had a list of the Rectors dating from 1317, the first being Thomas de Thorp, the advowson belonging to the Abbey of Cirencester. There was a church at Binfield in very early times. Among the Rectors were John Truman, against whom a quaint and violently worded presentment was made in the Bishop's Court; Lamplough, afterwards Archbishop of York; and Wilson, travelling tutor to William Pitt. The church has many interesting brasses, one with a Norman-French inscription to Walter de Amesfordhe, Rector in 1361. After alluding to Pope's connection with Binfield, Canon Savory pointed out the monuments of the Leigh and Stirling families, of Lady Sunderland, who was painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds, and Mrs. Macauley Graham, satirised by Dr. Johnson. The older part of the church is Early English, as is the bowl of the font. The porch is a good illustration of the transition between the decorated and perpendicular styles.

The High Sheriff, Mr. C. T. D. Crews, kindly welcomed the party to Billingbear and hospitably entertained them. He said that the manor of Billingbear was given to Henry Nevill, gentleman of the bedchamber to Edward VI., it having been surrendered to the King by the See of Winchester in 1551. Sir Henry Nevill, a younger son of Sir Edward Nevill who was executed in 1568, had a younger son who was afterwards Ambassador to France. A sister of Sir Richard Neville succeeded to the estate and married a Mr. Aldworth who took the name of Nevill. The house was com-

menced in 1567, and was of the early Elizabethan character. In 1669, Cosmo, Duke of Tuscany, stayed two days there, and one of his suite wrote an account of his visit, which MS. is still in existence, and contains an illustration showing the front of the house at that date, almost exactly as it is now. Mr. Crews showed many objects of great interest, coats of armour, valuable pictures and choice furniture of ancient date. The President proposed a very hearty vote of thanks to the High Sheriff for his great kindness in receiving the party, and for the hospitality he had accorded to them.

The last stopping-place was the Church of All Saints, Wokingham, when the party were received by the Rector, Canon Sturges, who described its history and architecture. The columns of the nave were of chalk dating from the 15th century. There was a chantry chapel in the South-east corner dedicated to St. Mary, with a priest's chamber over it. The two windows at the end of the transept were very early 14th century work, and in the South porch there was a trace of Norman architecture. Mr. Ditchfield alluded to the old church plate which was removed by the Commissioners of Edward VI., and to the epitaph of Thomas Godwin, Bishop of Bath and Wells, a native of Wokingham, which was written by his son Francis Godwin, Bishop of Hereford. The party then returned to Reading.

An excursion to Oxford was arranged for June 21st, but on account of the Encænica it was necessarily postponed until July 12th, when we hope a large party will visit the Cathedral and Colleges of that interesting City. The Secretary hopes that the Society will lunch in his old College Hall of Oriel.

NEWBURY FIELD CLUB.—On May 31st a large party of members, including the President, Mr. Mount, M.P., visited Chalgrove Field, Shirburn Castle and Ewelme, and had a most successful excursion. The party were favoured by the presence of Mr. Walter Money, F.S.A., who ably described the chief incidents of the battle, and read an excellent paper on Shirburn Castle which we hope to publish in a future number of this number. An article on Chalgrove Field has already appeared in our paper. Pyrton Manor House, the seat of Mr. E. Hammersby, the house of Elizabeth Simeon, first wife of John Hampden, was visited, and after a hurried stay at Ewelme, the party returned to Newbury, after a long expedition lasting more than thirteen hours.