

Proceedings of Societies

BERKSHIRE ARCHÆOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

VISIT TO PAMBER PRIORY AND STRATFIELD SAYE.

THE first Summer Excursion of the Society, which was largely attended, took place on June 2nd. The first place visited was Pamber Priory, which was built by John de Port of Basing in the twelfth century, and where he and other of his descendants are buried. The priory was an alien priory attached to St. Vigor de C  r  sy in Normandy. The architecture of the building was described by the President. Having inspected the priory, Monk Sherborne Church, which was attached to Pamber Priory, was visited, where Mr. Keyser pointed out the various architectural details, including the Norman doorway, which dates from 1140—1150. The next place to be seen was Wootton St. Lawrence Church. In 1863 the whole of the church was re-built, except the tower; but the old work, re-used, shows that there was here a twelfth century building with a north aisle and an arcade of three bays.

Leaving Wootton St. Lawrence, the next place visited was Sherborne St. John, whose name recalls the days when the lords of the manor were the St. Johns of Basing, for Adam de Port of Basing espoused Mabel daughter of Reginald d'Aureville and grandchild of Roger de St. John of Halnaker, Sussex. On account of this marriage, the family of de Port were ever afterwards known as St. John. In this village are two fine ancestral mansions, the Vyne, built by Lord Sandys of the Vyne in the days of Henry VII, and one of the finest, if not the finest, house in Hampshire. The other house is Beaurepair, for four centuries the home of the Brocas family, who at one time were the hereditary masters of the royal buckhounds. At Sherborne St. John Church the members of the Society were received by the Rev. Devereux Chute, who for more than half-a-century has been the rector. The church, though it has suffered from the hands of the 'restorer,' contains many interesting details, such as the Norman font, the Jacobean pulpit; in the Brocas Chapel are memorial brasses of

the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries to this family. The one that preserves the memory of Raulyn Brocas and his sister Margaret is said to be the oldest brass in Hampshire.

Strathfield Turgess Church was next visited, from whence the party drove to Strathfield Saye House, which was purchased by the Government from Lord Rivers and presented to the Duke of Wellington in 1817, whose successors hold it by presenting to the Sovereign a French Imperial standard or 'eagle' on each anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo. Mr. Ditchfield described the architecture of the house, in which are several mementoes of the first Duke. In the hall are to be seen his banner of a Knight of the Garter, which formerly hung over his stall in St. George's Chapel, Windsor. In the same room are several busts of his companions in arms, both English and foreign; amongst the latter are Prince Blucher and the Czar Alexander I. Another bust is of his opponent in the Peninsular War, Marshall Masséna. In the hall hang two pictures of historic interest: one portrays the Duke's triumphal entry into Madrid; the other shows him crossing the Pyrenees. Another painting is the head and shoulders of a chestnut horse—Copenhagen—his charger at Waterloo. A hunting picture by Henry Calvert of a meet of the Vine Hounds in Hurstbourne Park hangs in the same room, one of the 38 portraits, shows the Duke on horseback in hunting dress, and this is the only likeness of him in such costume. Also at Strathfield Saye is preserved the Roman Eagle found at Silchester and two very fine Roman pavements from the same place. In the grounds is a curious little statue by some foreign sculptor of the first Duke; this was bought by the second Duke not so long before his death. Unfortunately Lord Douro (the eldest son of the Duke), who now resides at Stratfield Saye, and by whose kindness the Society was permitted to visit this historic house, was away from home, but his daughter welcomed the party in her father's name. Before leaving, Mr. Ditchfield, on behalf of the members, moved a vote of thanks to his lordship for his kindness in throwing open the house to the Society.

EXCURSION TO FARINGDON, FAIRFORD, BURFORD AND OXFORD.

For several years the 'two days' excursion of the Society has been a special feature. This year it took place on Thurs-

day and Friday, August 14th and 15th, and the tour extended through some very interesting country in the region of north-west Berkshire and southern Oxfordshire. The members and their friends made Oxford their headquarters, and spent the night at the Clarendon Hotel.

After a long drive through old-world Wantage, the party reached Faringdon, where they were met by the Vicar, the Rev. E. P. Lock, and other residents of the town and neighbourhood. The fine church, the work of the Cistercian monks of Beaulieu Abbey, of which house Faringdon was a cell, was first examined and described by the President, and then the company adjourned to the quaint old Town Hall in the centre of the Market Place, where a meeting was held, with the Vicar in the chair, and a lecture on the history of Faringdon was given by the Rev. P. H. Ditchfield, for which he was cordially thanked by the Chairman and others. To those who want to know more about the place, we may mention that a useful little guide to the church has just been issued by the Rev. A. F. S. Sheffield, curate of Faringdon.

The company then travelled to Lechlade to see the church, and thence to Fairford, where they lunched, after which they visited the church, famous for its stained glass windows. These were described very admirably by the churchwarden, who told the story of the church founded by John Thame and finished by his son, Edmund Thame. The old legend that the glass was made in the Netherlands for a church at Rome, and that the vessel conveying it was captured and the church built for the reception of the glass, was pronounced to be spurious, and there is no reason why the glass may not have been of English workmanship. It has been conjectured that it was made by T. Aeps, a Flemish artist who lived from 1480 to 1528, and who signed his works with the letter A and the figure of an ape. It is true that the letter A appears on some of the windows, but inasmuch as Aeps was born in 1480 and the church founded in 1490, little more need be said for the Aeps authorship. The windows must have been designed by one man, and represent a summary of the Christian Faith. The series of 28 windows of wonderful glass four centuries old shows in the aisles and clerestory the Prophets of the Faith, the Apostles of the Faith, the Historians of the Faith, the Persecutors of the Faith, the

Martyrs and Confessors of the Faith. In the chancel and side chapels we have the history of the Faith in the Gospel story, with stories from the Old Testament. During the troubles of the Civil War the windows were taken out and buried for safety, and at the Restoration the glass was again inserted, but in much confusion. Honour must be accorded to the late Vicar, Mr. Carbonel, who spent six months in rearranging the scattered pieces and in producing order out of chaos; and gratitude is due to the memory of John and Edmund Thame, to whose piety and liberality we owe these splendid examples of mediaeval art; and also to the name of William Oldyworth, who during the Commonwealth period did his utmost to save this matchless glass from the fanaticism of the iconoclast.

The churches of Langford, Little Faringdon, Kencott and Broadwell were next seen, where the members of our Society were welcomed by the Vicar and his wife and entertained to tea at the vicarage. This brought to an end the first day's excursion, and the party drove back to Oxford.

On Friday the first visit was to Eynsham, an important place in early times; there was in this village a Benedictine Abbey at which several councils of the Church were held. No remains of the Abbey, which stood in a meadow south-west of the church, now exist. The next stopping place was the fine old town of Witney, with its magnificent church, and then to Minster Lovell, where the church and ruined manor house of the Lord Lovels were inspected and the history of the ill-fated family recalled by the Lancastrian couplet:

‘When the Cat, the Rat, and Lovel the dog,
All ruled England under the Hog.’

‘Lovel the dog’ was an allusion to his crest, a talbot. Lord Lovel escaped from Bosworth Field to Flanders, where he was warmly welcomed by the late King's (Richard III) sister, Margaret Duchess of Burgundy. Eventually he returned to England and enlisted under the banner of the rebel, Lambert Simnel, and is said to have perished at the Battle of Stoke, 1487. That statement is not correct, for he was seen attempting to swim the Trent. What became of him is not known for certain. There is a tradition, which rests on the authority of Wm. Cowper, clerk of the Parliaments, given in a letter of

9th August, 1737, that, according to the Duke of Rutland, Lovel's remains were found in a vault at Minster Lovel, whither he had gone after the battle, it being supposed he was starved to death through the treachery of a servant.

Swinbrook, with its curious tombs of the Fettiplaces, was visited, and then the party arrived at beautiful Burford, where they were joined by the Vicar, the Rev. W. Emeris, and Mr. Monk, who has written so much about the history of the town. After luncheon at The Lamb, they adjourned to the noble church, which was admirably described by the Vicar and the President, and then to the Priory, at one time owned by Lucius Carey, Lord Falkland, who fell at the Battle of Newbury, 20th September, 1643, fighting for the royal cause. At the Priory the party was received by the owner, Mr. Horniman, who conducted them over the chapel and through the grounds. The afternoon was spent in inspecting the churches of Brize Norton, Bampton and Buckland, where tea was served in the little village inn. After tea the President thanked Mr. Morley, the new Excursion Secretary, for the admirable arrangements he had made, and Mr. Ditchfield expressed the debt the Society owed the President for all his many services, for drawing up the programme, and his admirable descriptions of the churches they had seen.

King Edward IV. and his Queen Elizabeth Woodville, at Reading Abbey

A memorable scene was witnessed at Reading Abbey on Michaelmas Day, 1464, when the King, Edward IV, publicly proclaimed Elizabeth Woodville to be his wife and Queen of England.

Some months earlier the infatuated King had become betrothed to the beautiful Elizabeth in the royal forest of Wyckwood (Oxon), the marriage rite being celebrated secretly at Grafton Regis on May 1, 1464. The only witnesses of this romantic wedding were the officiating priest, the bride's mother,