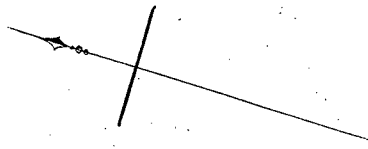
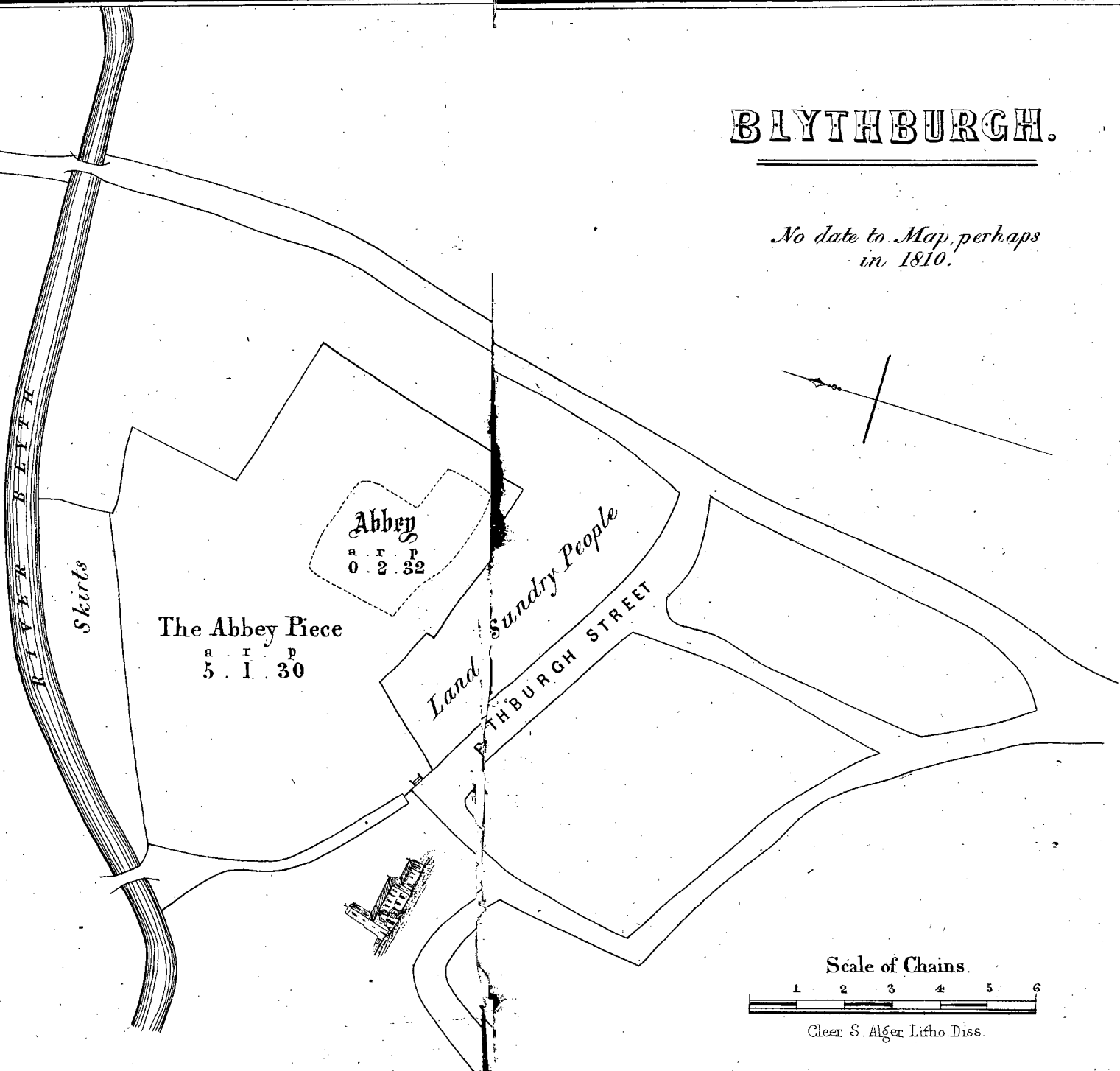


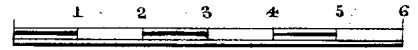
BLYTHBURGH.

*No date to Map, perhaps
in 1810.*

From Yarmouth

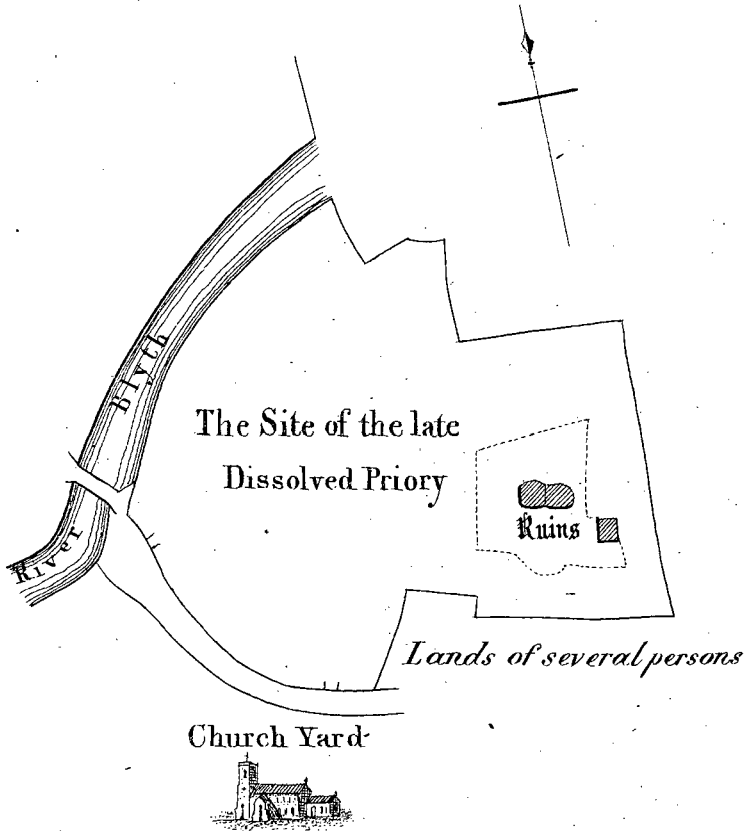


Scale of Chains



Cleer S. Alger Litho. Diss.

Blythburgh.



From a Map made in 1770.

Cler. S. Alger, Litho. Diss.

BLYTHBURGH.

I. THE village in which we are this day assembled, though presenting on the surface slender traces of its ancient importance, will be found to possess in its history and architectural remains matter of more than usual interest. I shall endeavour to sketch a few scenes from that small portion of the great Human Drama which has been acted in this place, and to point out as far as possible the existing remains of past days which are connected with these scenes.

I must pass over pre-Adamite Blythburgh as a subject beyond my powers, and Blythburgh under Queen Boadicea as having left no trace of its history.

II. The Romans, however, as is not unusual, afford us a starting point in the annals of the place. That they had a small camp here is shown by the urns and other remains dug up in 1678. Indeed, without this direct evidence, there would be a very strong presumption in favour of the existence of such a camp.

Three old ways at least cross at this point—the trackless course of the Blythe—a road nearly in a straight line from Aldeburgh to Beccles, crossing the little Minsmere near a place called *East Bridge Street*, and a road from one square burgh* to another—from Dunwich to Bungay—passing *Bulcamp Street*, as it is called in Camden's map, and a farm known as *Stone Street Farm*, between Halesworth and Bungay. These "Street" names are highly suggestive, and *Stone Street* is a name well known in other counties as marking the position of a Roman road. We may picture to ourselves, then, a small band of Stablesian horse—part of the force under that respectable man, as he is called, the Count of the Saxon Shore—stationed here, perhaps in a

* Gibson on Camden.

slightly-entrenched camp, engaged in beating back with all their might the sanguinary pirates who swarmed up the creeks and estuaries of this coast. We may, without verging on improbabilities, imagine a light Liburnian galley in the broad off Walberswick, and horsemen riding hard with orders for the great camp on the Yare, or clattering over *Stone Street*, through Bungay, for the ancient market town of the Iceni, *Venta Icenorum*, now Caistor near Norwich. Blythburgh, too, must have known exciting times when two Roman officers—*Carausius* and *Allectus*—successively defied the home authorities, raising an ineffectual protest against that excessive centralization which seems to attach to Rome in all periods of her history. But the Roman at Blythburgh as elsewhere dies out in smoke.

III. The pirate hordes from the north and east gain the land and hold it. Very few years elapse, however, before their ancient faith begins to fade away in the light of Christianity. The third king of the East Angles, *Redwald*, whatever his own views may have been, certainly permitted the preaching of Christ in his kingdom. But under his successor, *Erpenwald*, the old creed again lifted its head, and when *S. Sigbert* came to the throne in 636 he found the truth nearly dying out, and at once invited to Suffolk the great Apostle of the East Angles, *Felix*, the Burgundian, whose name yet survives in a window in the north aisle of this church. In the course of the following twenty years the ferocious *Penda*, king of the Mercians, who, as *William of Malmsbury* says, "hated peace worse than death," was engaged in constant wars with his neighbours on every side. What brought him to Blythburgh is not clear. Possibly there was the usual "religious difficulty," for he claimed to be eleventh in descent from *Woden*, and *Anna*, then (655 or 656) king of the East Angles, was a Christian. There is a wide divergence in the various accounts of the war between *Penda* and *Anna*; but that which is most commonly received represents the latter as falling with his son *Firminus* at "*Blythborow*." The body of *Firminus* is said to have been removed to *Bury S.*

Edmund's, but that of Anna, according to local tradition, is in this church. Kirby, c. 1733, visiting this place, was shown King Anna's tomb, concerning which he doubted; "For," says he, "the present church is certainly a modern building." The tradition is certainly rather to be questioned than rejected; for there may have been a church here in Anna's time as there was at the Conquest, and Anna's bones may have been removed from the one building to the other. The battle, according to local tradition, was fought at Bulcamp; but that certain bodies were buried here is rendered probable by discoveries, especially in 1758 and 1851, of a great number of bones lying near the site of the Priory. One circumstance of the burial, discovered in 1851, seem to indicate the fierce Pagan spirit of old Penda, who had then reached the age of three score and ten. There were several skeletons lying side by side, the feet of one eastward and the other westward. This may have been in mockery of the usual manner of Christian burial.

A Penda might cast down Christianity, but he could not destroy it. The year after the battle of Blythburgh he fell near Leeds, fighting against Oswy, King of Northumbria, and East Anglia witnessed the revival of the truth under the Bishops of Dunwich, successors to Felix.

IV. And now, passing by some centuries, we come to the foundation of the Priory, whereof so little remains to meet the eye of the archæological excursionist. Weever attributes the foundation to Henry I. and Richard Beauveys, Bishop of London; but the patronage was not vested in the Crown, and the biographers of Beauveys are silent on the subject. The conjecture of Davy is more probable, that the Abbot and Convent of S. Osyth in Essex built the house, having had the church granted to them by the King; for Leland says, "Abbas S. Osithæ fundator 1^{mus} Smodemus," and the sole patronage did not vest in the Prior of S. Osyth, who only nominated to this Priory, his nominee being presented by the Lord of the Manor. The date of the foundation is about 1130, and the building

itself is of about the same date, as is made clear by the Norman character of the remains in Mr. Trueman's garden and elsewhere; yet the sketch made by Mr. P. Sandby in 1772, for *Grose's Antiquities*, would lead to the conjecture of a somewhat later date, from the presence of the segmental pointed arch (ogive tronquée) in the sketch. The monks who were settled here were of the rule of S. Augustine—"black canons." You will find in some books that they were Præmonstratensians, in which case they would have been "white canons." The latter adopted the rule of the former with some severe additions, amongst which was a vegetable diet.

I regret that I am unable to add much to Suckling's notices of the history of the Priory. Sir Richard Gipps, in his *Suffolk Collections*, speaks of a register of the Priory in Gresham College Library. I trust it may yet be found out and examined. I have enquired for it in vain at Gresham College.

The buildings of the Priory seem to have extended nearly to the Church. There are remains of ancient walls in the foundations of a cottage nearly opposite the east window, and in Mrs. Hunt's cottage; and in the field known as the "Abbey Piece." The accompanying plans, made respectively in 1770 and about 1810, may suggest some hints to those who are bold enough to re-construct the whole from the part. I am indebted for them to Mr. S. Wilton Rix, of Beccles.

The original Charter, as granted to the Priory by Richard I., is given imperfectly in Suckling. It is rehearsed at length in a Charter of Confirmation, granted by Henry VI., which I here insert:—

(PRIORY OF BLIBURGH.*)

D' con- } R' Om'ibs ad quos &c', salt'm. Inspexim^a cartam Dñi †
firmacõe } Edwardi quondam Regis Angl' p'genitoris nr'i fc'am in hec
v'ba. Edwardus Dei gr'a Rex Angl' Dñs Hib'n et Dux Aquit' Archiep'is
Ep'is Abb'ibs Prioribs Comitibs Baronibs Justic' Vicecomitibs Prepositis
Ministris et om'ibs Balliuis et fidelibs suis, salt'm. Inspexim^a cartam

* Patent Roll, 21 Hen. VI., pt. 2, m. 27.

† Edward II.

quam celebris memorie Dñs Ric'us quondam Rex Angl' p'gentor nr' fecit Deo et eccl'ie S'ce Marie de Bliburgh et Canonicis ibidem Deo s'uietibus in hec v'ba. Ric'us Dei gr'a Rex Angl' Dux Normanñ [et] Aquit' Comes Andeg' Archiep'is Ep'is Abb'ib' Comitib' Baronib' Justic' Vicecomitib' Ministris et om'ib' Balliuis et fidelib' suis tocius Angl' Francis et Anglis p'sentib' et futuris, salt'm. Sciatis nos p' aie nr'e concessisse et p'senti carta nr'a confirmasse in p'petuā elemosinam Deo et eccl'ie Sc'e Marie de Bliburgh et Canonicis ibidem Deo s'uietibus et s'uituris om'es t'ras quas h'uerunt in Donewyco tempore Regis Henr' pr'is nr'i scil't ex dono Brut'ch et Augustini fil' eius et Godwini Oxefot et Botilde fil' eius et Hunteman et Rog'i fil' eius et Malet et Steph'i fil' eius et Rob'ti fr'is eiusdem Malet et Arnaldi P'sbit'i et Safuli fil' Huthredi et Vlf le Riche et Walt'i Leadeneperi et Vlf Canun et Ric'i Diaconi et Seild' et Snoting' le Riche et Alwini Bunt et Rand'i Kake et Adwini Kenewald' et Gode-seald' et Dice et le Waist'e et Henr' * fil' T'ri et Leuene Tod et Godenerd et Walt'i Besant et Bernardi qui h'uit sororem Malet et Thredrodi et Ric'i fil' Brichune et Brithmari fil' Goche et vx'is Walt'i fil' Malg'i et t'ram quam tenuit Gerardus de la Mare et quietas ab om'i t'reno s'uicio et seculari exaccōe p' duodecim denarios singulis annis reddendos ad festum Sc'i Mich'is sicut reddi solebant ante extensionem fc'am in Donewyco. Et p'hibem' ne aliquis sup' hoc p'dcis Canonicis molestiam faciat vel g'uamen vel p' p'dcis t'ris quicq'm ab eis plus exigat. Concedim' eciam et confirmam' p'fatis Canonicis redditus suos quos nunc h'ent et quos impost'um rōnabilit' acquirere pot'int et om'es t'ras quas h'ent ex dono Witt'i del Chednei in Bliburgh t'ram scil't que vocat' Kyngescroft' et mesuagiū Blacstani et † Brueram del Hussei quam Burthardus de Wenhaestun tenuit et viginti acras in Westfeld' et totam decimā piscacōis in Walberdeswyké. Et om'ia que h'ent in Brigge ex feudo Will'i de Monay et heredum suor' siue ex dono siue ex empecōe tam in t'ris et herbariis q'm in p'tis et pasturis. Et ex dono Reginaldi cl'ici brueram que iacet iuxta nemus de Walberdeswike. Et ex dono Rob'ti fil' Regiñ duas solidatas redditus in Eleth' quas Hermerus Russell' tenuit. Et ex dono Mainardi p'sbit'i quatuor solidatas t're in Barneby. Et ex dono Holdeburt de Bandemunt' duas solidatas in Mutford. Et ex dono Will'i Lagunce quondam t'ram in G'nemue quam tenuit Anandus Simekin ‡ in illa parte que est in Luderingland'. Et ex dono Wimari Capellani quondam t'ram in Becles iuxta aquam. Et ex dono Rob'ti le Boteiller et Rob'ti de Curtoun et ex feudo Rog'i del Chednei t'ras quas h'ent in Coue et in Norhales. Et ex feudo Will'i de § Falesham t'ram quam ip'i emerunt de Hermesent vx'e Will'i Kempe. Et ex feudo Will'i fil' Walt'i t'ram de Westhale cum bosco et aliam t'ram eiusdem W. in Holetune. Et ex dono Rog'i de Coleuile duas solidatas redditus in || Brötune. Et om'es t'ras et redditus quos h'ent ex feudo Osb'ti fil' Will'i et ex feudo Gaufridi de Marti siue heredum suor'. Om'es istas p'dcas t'ras et redditus concedim' nos et confirmam' Deo et eccl'ie Sc'e

* Fil Terræ. (?)

§ Foulsham.

† Heath.

‡ Now Southtown.

|| Brampton.

Marie de Bliburh et Canonicis ibidem Deo s'uiuentibus et s'uituris quatenus ip'i eas teneant et h'eant bene et in pace lib'e et quiete integre et honorifice sicut carte donator' suor' testant'. Et sint sepedc'i Canonici et om'ia m'cata sua lib'a et quieta ab om'i thelonio quod ad nos p'tinet in om'i foro et in om'ib's nundinis et in om'i t'nsitu pontiũ calcear' viar' et maris p' totum regnũ nr'm et p' om'es t'ras nr'as. Sint ip'i et om'es hoies sui lib'i et quieti de sectis et sũmonicoi'bs Comitatus et Hundr'or' et pl'itis et querelis et de pecunia danda p' forisfc'ura de murthero de gl'edis et de Denegeldis et Hornegeldis de scutagiis de assisis vet'ib's et nouis de auxiliis vicecom' et p'positor' hundr' et Balliuor' suor' et de or' misericordia de misericordia Comitatus de custodiis et op'ib's Castellor' et clausuris et de om'i carregio et carruagio et summagio et nauigio et lestagio et stallagio et domuũ regalium edificacõe et om'imoda op'acõe. Et p'hibem' ne de aliquo t'fũ suor' ponant' in pl'itum nisi coram nob' vel coram Capitali Justicia nr'a aut p' sp'ale mandatum nr'm. Quare volum' et firmit' p'cipim' qd' p'dc'i Canonici de Bliburh tam dc'as t'ras et concessiones et lib'tates tam eccl'iasticas q'm laicas que eis in p'senti collate sunt vel impost'um p' Dei gr'am siue ex dono siue ex emp'cõe iuste conferent' h'eant et teneant bene et in pace lib'e et quiete integre et honorifice in bosco in plano in viis in pemitis in pascuis in pratis in campis in siluis in mariscis in herbariis in brueris in molendinis in stagnis in viuariis in piscariis in cõmunis in m'cato in feria in thelonio in furis app'hensione et sanguinis effucõe infra Burgũ et ext' cum soca et saca et tol' et team et infangenethf et ordel et oreste infra tempus et ext' in om'ib's temporib's et in om'ib's locis et in om'ib's rebs lib'as et quietas de om'i Miskenninge de Gridbrethe fridsocna ferdwite fit'hwite leierwite hamsoca franco plegio de auerpeni de Wardpeni de hundredpeni de Thidenpeni nisi in introitu de Blodwita et de om'i seculari s'uicio et op'e s'uili et exaccõe et om'ib's occõnib's aliis et consuetudinib's secularib's excepta sola iusticia mortis et membror'. Et p'hibem' ne quis hanc nr'i concessionis et confirmacõis paginam in minimo aut in magno infringat sup' forisfc'uram decem librar'. Hiis testib's Rob'to Joello Baldeuino Capellano Brand' cl'ico Will'o de Stagno Rad'o de Arderũ Thoma Basset. Dat' p' manũ * E. Ep'i Elyeñ Cancellarij nr'i apud Chaa'gnes xxiiij die Januarij anno nr'i decimo. Nos autem donaco'es concessiones et confirmaco'es p'dc'as necnon concessionem donaco'em et confirmaco'em quas Walt'us fil' Simonis de Wenhaw'estun p' cartam suam fecit Deo et eccl'ie et Canonicis p'dc'is de toto illo tenemento quod Dñs Will's de Redham et Dñs Rog's de Wymples Walt'us de Cretynge Will's Fareman Rob'tus Hulffketell' et Ric'us le Do (*sic*) de Don'ewyco tenuerunt de ip'o Walt'o fil' Simonis in Villa de Wenhaw'estuñ et Thuringtune cum homagiis s'uiciis et om'ib's aliis p'tin' ad ip'm Walt'um fil' Simonis et heredes suos spectantib's. Concessionem eciam quam idem Walt'us fil' Simonis p' eandem cartam suã fecit canonicis p'dc'is de redditu trium denarior' annuatim quos Reginaldus de Monte sibi reddidit annuatim p' quadam pecia t're quam tenuit de eo in villa de Wenhawestune Donaco'em eciam

* Eustachii.

concessionem et confirmaco'em quas Rog'us de Chednei p' cartam suā fecit Deo eccl'ie et Canonicis p'dc'is de t'ra illa quam Basilia vidua tenuit de ip'o in Ders'ham, Concessionem eciam et confirmaco'em quas Will's de Criketot p' cartam suam fecit Deo eccl'ie et Canonicis p'dc'is de octo acris t're in Westletun et vna sūma frumenti sed'm mensuram que h'et' in villa Sc'i Eadmundi. Donaco'em eciam et concessionē quas Galt'us p' cartam suam fecit Deo et eccl'ie p'dc'e ad opus Canonicor' p'dc'or' de sex acris in Dere'sham. Concessionem eciam et confirmaco'em quas Dn's Nich'us de Falsham Miles p' cartam suam fecit Deo eccl'ie et Canonicis p'dc'is de sex acris t're cum p'tin' in Dersham. Donaco'em eciam et concessionē quas Hugo de Cressy p' cartam suam fecit Deo eccl'ie et Canonicis p'dc'is de vna marcata redditus in Walb'tewic. Donaco'em eciam concessionem et confirmaco'em quas Thomas de Hopetune p' cartam suā fecit Deo eccl'ie et Canonicis p'dc'is de tota t'ra quam Domelin tenuit de ip'o Thoma in Jokesford' et de s'uiciis eiusdem t're scilt' de decem denariis et duabs gallinis et quadam op'aco'e vnus diei ad cibum eiusdem Domelin cum om'ib's aliis p'tinenciis suis necnon quietam clamanciā quam idem Thomas p' eandem cartem suam fecit Canonicis p'dc'is de ea'dem Domelin et om'ib's heredib's suis ab homagio p'dc'i Thome de Hopitune et oīm heredum suor' cum om'ib's catallis suis * imp'p'm. Concessionem eciam et confirmaco'em quas Rog'us f'it Thome de Hopetun' p' cartam suam fecit Deo eccl'ie et Canonicis p'dc'is de om'ib's donaco'ib's et concessionib's quas p'dc'us Thomas pater suus fecit eidem Canonicis de tota t'ra quam Alanus fil' Rog'i de Joke'ford' tenuit de ip'o Thoma pr'e suo scilt' de quatuor acris de t'ra arabili et dimid' acra de prato et dimid' acra de Marisco cum mesuagio et de ip'o Alano et Mab'ilia' c'um' toto sequela sua quietis ab homagio p'dc'i Rog'i vel heredum suor' sine om'i retenemento sibi vel heredib's suis. Concessionē eciam et confirmaco'em quas idem Rog'us p' eandem cartam suam fecit Canonicis p'dc'is de tota t'ra quam Domelin tenuit de pr'e suo in Jokeford' et homagio ip'ius Domelin cum om'i sequela sua absq' om'i retenemento sibi vel heredib's suis. Donaco'em eciam concessionem et confirmaco'em quas Hub'tus de Baauent p' cartā suam fecit Deo eccl'ie et Canonicis p'dc'is de vna acra t're in villa de † Estune. Concessionem eciam et confirmaco'em quas Michael de Baunent p' cartam suam fecit Deo eccl'ie et Canonicis p'dc'is de vna acra t're in eadem villa. Concessionem eciam donaco'em et confirmaco'em quas Galfr'us Cap' de Bulcamp' p' cartam suam fecit canonicis p'dc'is de mesuagio et toto tenemento quod Thomas le Hopp'e tenuit de ip'o in Bulcamp' cum homagio et om'i iure quod h'uit vel h'ere debuit in p'dc'o tenemento. Remissionem eciam quam idem Galfr'us p' eandem cartam suam fecit Canonicis p'dc'is de duob's denariis quos idem Canonici solebant sibi annuatim reddere de mesuagio Hub'ti Coci et de illis particulis marisci et p'ti in Bulcamp' quas Aluredus de Bulcamp' tenuit de ip'o Galfr'o et de illa particula marisci quam Petrus Parmentarius tenuit de eodem et de illa particula marisci quam Rog'us Cocus tenuit de eodem et de vna acra t're arabilis iuxta domū Thome le

* In perpetuum.

† Easton Bavents.

Hopp'e quam Petrus Permentarius tenuit de eodem et de duabz acris t're int' domū Benedicti fil' Alani Carpentarii' et Crucem quas idem Benedc'us tenuit de et de vna acra t're in villa de Bulcamp' p'pinquiori fossato Ranulf' de Bulcamp' et de dimid' acra marisci in Siremor et de tota parte quam idem Galfr'us h'uit in marisco qui appellat' Pochesfen scil't a diuisa de Brigge vsq' ad diuisam de Henham et a diuisa de Henham vsq' ad Galchefordeslade. Concessionē eciam et confirmacōem quas Ric'us de Blumuile p' cartam suam fecit Deo et b'e Marie et Canonicis p'dcis de om'ibz t'ris et redditibz quos Galfr'us Cap' et p'decessores sui contulerunt eisdem Canonicis de feodo ip'ius Ric'i in villa de Bulcamp'. Concessionem eciam et confirmacōem quas Will's fil' Walt'i de * Sadenefeld' p' cartam suam fecit Deo eccl'ie et Canonicis p'dcis de vna acra t're arabilis cum p'tiñ que iacet iuxta Cimit'ium eccl'ie de Thuritoñ ex parte occidenti's vna cum aduocaco'e eiusdem eccl'ie de Thuritoñ et de om'ibz t'ris et possessionibz quas h'ent de feodo ip'ius Will' in p'dca villa de Thuritoñ. Concessionem eciam et confirmacōem quas idem Will's p' aliā cartam sua fecit Deo eccl'ie et Canonicis p'dcis de om'ibz t'ris et possessionibz cum om'ibz p'tiñ suis quas h'ent de feodo ip'ius Will'i in villa Thuriton. Concessionem eciam et quietam clamanciā quas Walt'us fil' Will'i de Sadenefeld' p' cartam suam fecit Deo eccl'ie et Canonicis p'dcis de vna acra t're cum p'tiñ in villa de Thuritoñ iacente iuxta eccl'iam eiusdem ville ex parte occidentali vna cum aduocaco'e eccl'ie eiusdem ville. Donaco'em eciam concessionem et confirmacōem quas Rad'us de Cricketot p' cartam suam fecit Deo eccl'ie ac Canonicis p'dcis de eccl'ia de Blifordia cum om'ibz p'tiñ et obuencōibz suis et de particula silue in eadem villa que vocat' Pilchershegh' cum omibz rebs ad p'dcam eccl'iam p'tinentibz. Concessiones eciam et confirmacōes quas Hub'tus de Criketot p' cartam suam fecit Deo eccl'ie et Canonicis p'dcis de eccl'ia de Bliford' et de om'ibz rebs ad eandem eccl'iam p'tinentibz tam in decimis q'm in lib'is t'ris et aliis obuencōibz. Donacoem eciam concessionem et confirmacōem quas Will's fil' Gileb'ti p' cartam suam fecit Deo eccl'ie et Canonicis p'dcis de quinq' solidis de marcata redditus quem Nich'us nepos suus tenuit de eo in † Rissemere. Concessionem eciam donaco'em et confirmacōem quas Alicia de Frostendeñ filia Will'i de Londoñ p' cartam suam fecit Deo eccl'ie et Canonicis p'dcis de redditu quatuor solidor' in villa de Frostendeñ ratas h'entes et g'tas eas p'nob' et heredibz nr'is quantu in nob' est dil'cis nob' in Xp'o Alex'o nunc Priori et Canonicis loci p'dci ac eor' successoribz concedim' et confirmam' sicut carte p'dce r'onabilit' testant'. Hiis testibz Ven'abilibz p'ribz † J. Elien' et §.S. London' Ep'is Hugone le Despenser Dn'o de Glammorgan' Rob'to de Insula Thoma le Blount Senescallo Hospicii nri et aliis. Dat' p' manū nr'am apud Bernewell decimo octauo die Februarii anno regni nr'i decimo nono. Nos autem cartam p'dcam de huiusmodi donaco'ibz concessionibz confirmaco'ibz franchisesiis lib'tatibz immunitatibz

* Shadingfield.

† Rushmere.

‡ John Hotham, Chancellor of the

Exchequer, Lord Chancellor and Lord Treasurer.

§ Stephen Gravesend.

et priuilegiis minime reuocatis de auisamento et assensu dn'or' sp'ualium et temporalium ac Coitatis regni nr'i Angl' in parlamento n'ro apud Westm' anno regni nr'i primo tento existen' approbam' ratificam' et confirmam' p'ut carta p'de'a ronabilit' testat' et p'ut nunc Prior et Canonici loci p'de'i et eor' p'decessores donaco'ib' concessionib' confirmaco'ib' franchises lib'tatib' immunitatib' et priuilegiis illis et ear' qual't a tempore confecco'is carte p'de'e semp' hactenus ronabilit' vsi sunt et gauisi. T' R' apud Westm xxiiij die Maii.

V. Turning for a moment to a specimen of manorial tyranny during the reign of Edward I., we have an instructive *item* in the report of the Jury of the Hundred of Blything in the third year of that monarch. A member of the noble house of De Valence was at this time the lord of the manor, and Hugh de Bussey was his bailiff. It appears from the following *Inquisitio*, as recorded in the *Rotuli Hundredorum*, that a wrongful distress had been levied on one of De Valence's tenants, whether freehold or copyhold is not clear :—

“*Item*—(jurati) dicunt qd' Hug. de Bussey ball's Dn'i Will'i de Valenc. apd Bliburg. et alii ignoti venerunt ad domum unius lib'i ho'is vidt Joh'is de Kyngeshaye. et ab eo injuste ceperunt iij equos, iij boves, j vaccam et xxx oves et eos infugav' usq. ad aulam Dn'i Will'i de Valenc. in Bliburg. tunc tempis Dn'i. et eos ibi imprisonaverun't quousque idem Johā' eos redem : de p'dico Hugon. p. l. solid.”

—The terms of the verdict seem to indicate that the cattle had been removed to a *pound covert*, in spite of the rule of the common law concerning distress on cattle; so that Kyngeshaye had been put under pressure to pay the fifty shillings, which he appears to have recovered by this action. It is remarkable that in this very year the Statute of Westminster I. materially checked the harshness and tyranny of the lords, enacting that in case of a lord not causing beasts illegally withholden within the close of his castle to be delivered to the sheriff or king's bailiff, the king shall cause the said castle to be beaten down without recovery.

VI. The lapse of another century or two brings us to the description of the fine Church in which we are assembled. The earliest bequest we find for this object is that of John Greyse, who left twenty marks in 1442

towards rebuilding the chancel. There are none after 1473; but the workmen had not left the place by the death of Henry VII., if we may judge at all by style, which is decidedly late Perpendicular. The ground plan consists of chancel, nave, aisles with chapels, south porch, west tower.

Before we pass into the Church our attention is arrested by the fine flint-work of the east end. Below the east window are the following letters :—

A N £ B £ C □ M £ F h K R

The east gable is occupied by a figure, now mutilated. The flying buttress over the door now constitutes the only important external feature of the north aisle, which has lost its battlement.

The tower, though it has not suffered so much as other parts of the Church, is hardly worthy of the magnificent nave and aisles, and contrasts rather unfavourably with its neighbours at Southwold and Walberswick.

In the chancel we may observe a blocked-up piscina and a tomb, under a Purbeck marble canopy bearing indents of three figures in brass with scrolls, alleged by Suckling, on the authority of a MS. in possession of the late Rev. Sir Ralph Blois, to have been raised to the memory of Sir John Hopton, the founder of the chantry which occupies the east end of the north aisle. But I would direct your attention primarily to the roof, which, though of a late and depressed character and without a break between chancel and nave, is a fine instance of ornament judiciously applied. Though the eye has to traverse the great unbroken length of 127 feet; yet, through the enrichment of the timber with angels, sacred monograms, bosses, and armorial bearings, there is no sensation of weariness, and before the work of decay and destruction had commenced the effect must have been very striking. The intersections of the three longitudinal ribs of the roof with the nine transverse ribs afforded places for fifty-four shields of arms, and as six more were probably

added by the terminations of the longitudinal ribs in the east wall and tower, there were sixty shields in the nave, not half of which now remain. All the intersections at the ridge-rib are occupied by fine flower-bosses, each supporting two angels bearing the shields. Many of the missing shields are to be found registered in Davy's MSS. in the British Museum. They were first noted by one Mr. Henry Sampson, Fellow of Pembroke College, Cambridge, who visited this Church about 16 years after the great Puritan havoc. Among the more remarkable of those remaining we may notice (reckoning from the east end):—

On the 2nd rib } *Craven*—Ar. a fess between 6 crosses
and 6th „ } fitchée gules.

On the 2nd rib—*Swillington's* shield with eleven quarterings, amongst which

Swillington—Ar. a chevr. az.

Rosse—Gu. a griffin rampant ar.

Hopton (?)—Erm. 2 bars sa.

Spencer (?)—Ar. on a bend sa. 3 martlets ar.

Tiptoft—Ar. a saltire ar. gu.

Goswell—Barry of 6 gu. and or. a canton ar.

Wingfield (?)

On the 3rd rib—*Barrington*—Ar. 3 chevrons gu. and label of 3 points.

Bacon of Baconsthorp—Ar. 3 swine passant.

On the 5th rib—*Kerdiston*—Gu. a saltire engrailed ar.

Ufford—Sa. a cross engr. or.

On the 6th rib—*Mekilfield*, or *Milketfield* (of Blythford)—
Ar. on a cross engr. sa. certain changes now indistinct.

Argentine (of Halesworth)—Gu. 3 covered cups or.

On the 8th rib—*Cailly*—Chequée gu. and ar. Over all a fess ermine.

Some of these coats and others are noted by Mr. Sampson as in the windows, and “cut in stone on the outside of the Church in divers places.”

In the aisle roofs the spandril spaces were all occupied with carving at once delicate and bold, in a style worthy of buildings of the period of the best Geometrical Decorated. That the work, however, is of the Perpendicular period is plainly shown by the most western spandril in the north aisle. In the south aisle several corbels remain, in the physiognomy of which the individuality is so strong as to lead us to suppose that they are portraits.

Fragments of painted glass yet remain in the windows. In the Hopton chantry we may observe a bishop with crosier and book, and portions of the names of S. Paul, S. Stephen, and the first and third Bishops of Dunwich—Felix and Boniface.

In Davy's time (c. 1825), the south aisle windows were filled with shields corresponding to those in the roof. Many of these have disappeared, but there yet remain (numbering from the east) in (2) the well-known Trinity shield, and above it a figure bearing a cross on the head and a shield with the rising sun. In (4) a king with Saxon crown bearing a cross tau, and S. Etheldreda, or Audrey, foundress of Ely, daughter of King Anna who was killed at the battle of Blythburgh. In (5) the Virgin Mary in a mantle of rich crimson diapered, and a bodice with a diaper containing the letter O.E. ; also the name of S. Matthew, and an angel with six wings. In the west window of this aisle, according to Davy, there appears to have been a creed. He records these fragments, *credo i in sanctum . . .* The last word only remains.

The woodwork which is now in the chancel has been recently removed thither from the Hopton chantry at the end of the north aisle, which was screened off from the chancel proper, as was also that in the south aisle. The screen which, with its coats of whitewash, well typifies the insolvent condition of the benefice, extended all across the Church. We may congratulate ourselves that this fine series of figures, with their flowing locks carefully arranged and beards of various cut; escaped the fury of the Iconoclast,

1



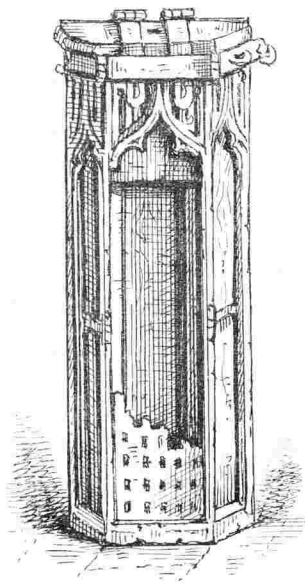
2



3



4



5



Francis Jessup, who visited this Church on April 9th, 1644. Beginning from the east there are on the north side—

- (1) S. Luke, with doctoral cap and book.
- (2) S. Andrew, with beard in six peaks.
- (3) S. Philip.
- (4) S. Bartholomew, with flaying knife.
- (5) S. Matthias, with axe and book.
- (6) Joseph the carpenter (?), with cross tau.
- (7) S. John the Baptist, with leathern girdle.
- (8) S. Stephen, with napkin.

On the south side—

- (1) S. Thomas. (Staff or spear, now broken.)
- (2) S. Matthew, with purse.
- (3) S. James the Less, with fuller's club.
- (4) S. Jude, with boat.
- (5) S. James the elder, with staff and book, as on the screen at Randworth.
- (6) S. Paul.
- (7) S. Peter.
- (8) S. John the Evangelist.

—We miss in this series S. Simon Zelotes, with his fish.

There are also on the north side two other figures—an Ecclesiastic giving the benediction, and a Queen, probably Etheldreda, in the dress usual about the time of the building of the Church.

On the bench-ends in the north aisle there appear to have been, amongst other subjects, the seven deadly sins, of which Sloth and Gluttony are as little injured as their antitypes in the world.

In the nave there are the figures of husbandmen sowing, treading in the seed, and taking up a sheaf of corn.

The lectern, which has been engraved by Mr. J. H. Parker, and the ancient alms'-box are good representative articles of church furniture; but a more rare specimen of the days that are gone is in the tower—the "Jack o' th' Clock," apparently a near relation of the man at Southwold,

who stands with battle-axe in hand to give a chop at his bell, as Richard II. says—

“My time
Runs posting on in Bolingbroke’s proud joy,
While I stand fooling here, his Jack o’ th’ Clock.”

The exterior of the south aisle and porch presents an instance of the individuality which an architect of genius could infuse into the Perpendicular style, even at a late point of its existence. The pinnacles of the aisle are surmounted with figures of animals; while the angles of the porch bear two well-executed angels. The gargoyle-spouts are bold; one of them, especially, being of surpassing hideousness.

The battlement has a light and elegant effect, being formed of circles containing quarrels, and presents a resemblance to that at St. Mary’s, Bungay, where, however, the circles are changed into ellipses. One of the figures which formerly surmounted a pinnacle is now doing duty in the meaner office of supporting a neighbouring hog-stye.

In 1528, Wolsey obtained a grant of this Priory, with those of Romboro’, Felixtow, Bromehil, and Montjoye, by bull of Pope Clement VII., for the purpose of founding his college at Ipswich. This bull is of considerable interest, and I give it entire from *Rymer’s Fœdera* :—

A.D 1528. An. 20 H. 8. Ex Origine.*

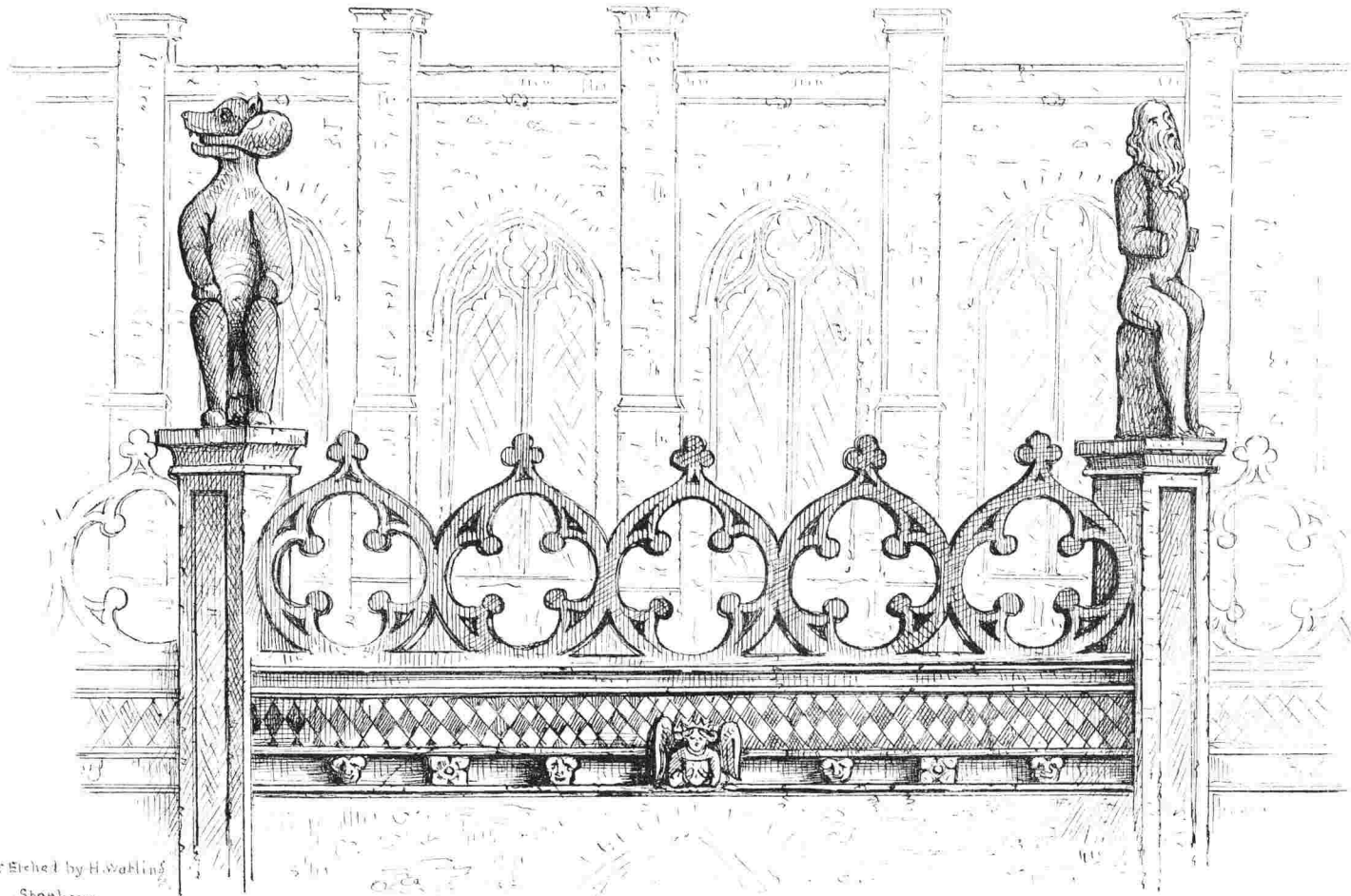
“Pro Eodem Cardinali, Bulla Suppressionis Monasteriorum de Romboro, Felixtow, Bromehil, Bliborow, and Montjoie. Registrata in Camera Apostolica de Mandato Reverendissimi Cardinalis Sanctorum Quatuor.

B. MOLTA.

Clemens Episcopus Servus Servorum Dei, Dilecto Filio Thomæ Tituli Sanctæ Cecilie Presbitero Cardinali in Regno Angliæ nostro & Apostolicæ Sedis Legato Salutem & Apostolicam Benedictionem.

Cùm hodiè per alias nostras Literas circumspeditioni tuæ in Monasterio per Priorem gubernati solito, Sancti Petri Ordinis Sancti Augustini Canonicorum Regularium in Villa Seu Oppido, de Ipswich Norwicensis Diœcesis sito Nomen Dignitatem Ordinem & Dependencias Supprimendi & Extinguendi ac inibi Nomen Collegii imponendi, illiusque Fructus Redditus & Proventus Collegio per Te Instituendo Applicandi & Appropriandi Licentiam & Facultatem concesserimus, prout in illis plenius continetur, Et quia, sicut accepimus Fructus Redditus & Proventus

* Rymer, Fœdera xiv, 240.



Drawn & Etched by H. Wakling
Stonham.

dicti Monasterii longe minores & tenuiores existant quàm pro Scholaribus inibi Literarum Studio vacare debentibus ad eorum Alimoniam & Sustainationem sufficiant sintque in Partibus illis infra scripta Monasteria, quorum Fructus Redditus & Possessiones, si in usus tam salutares (videlicet) Religioni & Moribus multum profuturos converterentur & applicarentur, ex hoc profectò plures Personæ Literarum Studiò vacare volentes sustentari & Margaritam Scientiæ acquirere, quâ postea acquisitâ Regno consulere ac Scientiâ & Virtute Fidelium animarum Saluti prodesse possent.

Nos, de Circumspectione tua, quam Altissimus egregiis Virtutibus & animi Dotibus plurimum insignivit, & Prudentiam, ac Rerum Experientiam in arduis Negotiis experti sumus plenam in Domino fiduciam obtinemus, Motû proprio, non ad alicujus Nobis super hoc oblata Petitionis Instantiam, sed de nostra mera Deliberatione ac ex certa nostra Scientiæ & Apostolicæ Potestatis plenitudine, *eidem circumspectioni tuæ de Romboro & de Felixtow aliàs Fylstou ac de Bromehil propè Brandonfery necnon de Bliborow & Montisgaudii aliàs Montjoy Sancti Benedicti & Sancti Augustini Ordinum respectivè dictæ Diocesis Monasteria, per Priores gubernari solita & in eorum singulis Nomina Dignitates Prioratum ac Ordines & Dependencias, si ad hoc Carissimi in Christo Filii nostri Henrici Angliæ Regis Illustris, & Domini Ibernæ ac Fidei Defensoris accesserit Assensus penitus Supprimendi & Extinguendi, ac Monasteria ipsa cum suis Juribus & Pertinentiis universis eidem collegio perpetuò Uniendi, ac Illorum Monachos ac Canonicos & Personas ad alia Loca sive Monasteria ejusdem vel alterius ordinis, prout Tibi melius videbitur expedire, Transferendi necnon Monasteriorum sic Suppressorum hujusmodi & unius cujusque sic suppressi Fructus Redditus & Proventus cujuscunque naturæ aut qualitatis fuerint, sive sint Oblationes Decimæ aut Pensiones quæcunque ratione Unionis Appropriationis, aut alio quocunque Jure speciali vel generali Præscriptionis aut alius prædictis Monasteriis aut eorum alicui spectantes aut pertinentes, necnon omnia & singula Monasteriorum prædictorum Bona mobilia sive immobilia de quorum omnium tam Bonorum extimatione quàm Reddituum Fructuum & Proventuum Monasteriorum prædictorum vero annuo valore sumus certiorati & hic pro expressis volumus haberi, Ex dicto Collegio per Te in Villa sive Oppido de Ipswich Norwicensis Diocesis hujusmodi extruendo perpetuò Applicandi & Appropriandi & cum omnibus suis Privilegiis, Juribus, Dependenciis, ac Appendentiis & Pertinentiis universis pleno & Integro Jure ad Collegium prædictum Transferendi, eidem quoque Ecclesias Parochiales quoscunque dictis Monasteriis aut eorum alicui unitas jam & appropriatas Uniendi similiter Annectendi & Appropriandi, prout Nos etiam potiori pro Cautela in eventum suppressionis hujusmodi respectivè unimus appropriamus & Incorporamus, aliâque denique omnia & singula, quæ ad Stabiliendam Confirmandam & perpetuendam Bonorum Terrarum Fructuum Reddituum & Proventuum prædictorum Monasteriorum sic suppressorum Possessionem prædicto Collegio pacificè in futuro Habendam & Tenendam necessaria videbuntur aut opportuna, per Pænas & Censuras Ecclesiasticas & Alias quomodo-*

cúnque Faciendi Statuendi & Exequendi Plenam integram & liberam Tenore Praesentium Licentiam concedimus & Facultatem, Istasque Literas ad hoc extendimus & apliamus, non obstantibus nostrâ quâ volumus, quod in Unionibus faciendis verus Annuus Valor tam Beneficii Uniendi quàm illius cui Unio fieri peteretur & semper vocarentur quorum interest ac aliis Apostolicis & Bonæ Memoriae *Otonis & Ottoboni* olim in Regno Angliæ Apostolicæ Sedis Legatorum in Provincialibus & Sinodalibus Conciliis editis generalibus vel specialibus Constitutionibus & Ordinationibus, necnon Monasteriorum sive Ordinum prædictarum Juramento Confirmatione Apostolicâ vel quavis Firmitate alia roboratis Statutis & Consuetudinibus, Privilegiis quoque & Indultis ac Literis Apostolicis etiam in forma Brevis Monasteriis & Ordinibus prædictis vel cuibuscunq̃ Tenoribus & Formis etiam per modum Statuti & Ordinationibus perpetuorum & cum quibusvis etiam Derogatoriarum Derogatoriis fortioribus & insolitis Clausulis ac irritantibus & aliis Decretis, etiam Motu simili & ex certa Scientia ac de Apostolicæ Potestatis plenitudine, etiam per Nos & Sedem eandem etiam iteratis vicibus concessis confirmatis & innovatis, etiam si in illis caveatur expressè quod illis etiam per quas cúnque Literas Apostolicas nullatenus derogari possit, nisi in Literis quæ eis derogares viderentur illorum omnium Tenores de verbo ad verbum inserentur, & expressè appareret Romanum Pontificem illis voluisse derogare & causa urgens & sufficiens exprimatur & aliis certis modis & formis observatis, quibus omnibus, illorum Tenores, ac si de verbo ad verbum inserti & forma in illis tradita observata foret, Præsentibus pro expressis habentes, illis aliâ in suo robore permansuris, hac vice duntaxat specialiter & expressè, Motû Scientiâ & Potestate similibus, Derogamus ac etiam quibuscumque Defunctorum Testamentis ultimis Voluntatibus Ordinationibus aut Dispositionibus, quacunque Auctoritate confirmatis corroboratis & consolidatis at quibuscunq̃ Pœnis & Censuris Ecclesiasticis communitis, super quorum omnium Testamentorum ultimarum Voluntatum Ordinationum & Dispositionum ea omnia & singula & illorum Tenores pro hic expressis & recitatis habentes Immutatione Alteratione & in Usum prædictum conversione & Translatione specialiter and expressè Motû & Scientiâ similibus Dispensamus, ac specialiter quacumq̃ Allegatione de non expresso vero Valore Bonorum aut Anni Redditûs Monasteriorum prædictorum in Litteris nostris prætextu alicujus Constitutionis inde editæ Curiaev nostræ Stili aut aliâs requisito & inserendo cæterisque contrariis quibuscumq̃,

Nulli ergo omnino Hominum liceat hanc Paginam nostrarum Concessionis, Unionis, Appropriationis, Incorporationis Extensionis, Ampliationis, Derogationis, & Dispensationis infringere &c.

Dat in Vrbe Veteri Anno Incarnationis, Dominicæ Millesimo Quingentesimo Vigesimo octavo, Pridie Id. Maii Pontificatûs nostri Anno Quinto.

CLEMENS PAPA SEPTIMUS,

Super plicam,

HEN. DE BUSSEYO,

Sub Sigillo plumbeo pendente a filo sericis flavi rubeique colorum.

The Cardinal's fall arrested that of the Priory, and afforded the last Prior (John Righton) an opportunity of obtaining some ready cash by granting a lease for ninety-nine years to Richard Freston, Esq., of Mendham, "Bliburgh beneficiæ cum capella Walberswick." The lease is signed by John Baker as well as by the Prior, and his is the only name Blomefield has thought worthy of record. Five years after this transaction, Righton and his small convent resigned the Priory into the King's hands, and it was granted to Sir Arthur Hopton.

Since that time the process of decay and destruction has been steady. On April 9th, 1644, William Dowsing's deputy visited the place. He notes "20 superstitious pictures—one on the outside of the Church; 2 crosses—one on the porch, & another on the steeple; & 20 cherubims to be broken down in the church and chancel; & I brake down 3 orate pro animabus: and gave order to take down 200 more Pictures within 8 days."

All Puritans were not equally tinctured with a spirit of barbarous iconoclasm. Mr. Henry Sampson, to whom we are indebted for valuable notes on the Church, was one of the ejected in 1662. Among later visitors was that

"Fine, fat, fodgeg wight,
Of stature short, but genius bright"

—Captain Grose. I have already referred to the sketch made for his work by Mr. P. Sandby.

At the present day, which has seen the restoration of so many of the houses of God in our land, the condition of Blythburgh is a sore scandal. Here is one of the finest Churches in Suffolk, in a place of historic note, and surrounded by fair estates, shorn of its architectural ornaments and reduced to the lowest point of squalor; the nave filled with rickety pews of the meanest deal; the windows, many of them blocked up with red brick and plaster; the flooring loose and broken; and the whole plentifully smeared with whitewash, which dose was being administered at the time of one of my visits by workmen with caps on their heads and pipes in their mouths.

We have "sounded the very base-string of humility." Perhaps the placing of a new organ in the Church in 1870 may be the beginning of brighter days.

The engravings which illustrate this paper have been made from drawings kindly furnished by Mr. H. Watling, of Stonham. In Plate I. (1) and (2) are poppy-heads from the north aisle; (3) and (5), figures now in the chancel, removed from the Hopton chantry; (4) is the alms-box. Plate II. represents a portion of the south aisle parapet.

J. J. RAVEN.

[The members are indebted to the kindness of Mr. H. Watling, of Stonham Earl, who, while these sheets were passing through the press, prepared drawings on a reduced scale from tracings taken by himself from the stained glass still remaining at Blythburgh. With great liberality Mr. Watling has presented to the Society hand-coloured copies of these faithfully-executed drawings, in order that members may for themselves colour the tracings after the originals. These coloured copies will be found in the Collection of Suffolk Illustrations at the Museum.—Ed.]

Since Mr. Raven's paper upon Blythburgh has been in type, I have met with the following letter addressed to Sir William Betham. The letter will be found among the Davy MSS. in the British Museum at the end of a volume of "Church Notes," collected by Sir William Betham, and was addressed to him by some relative, whose initials I have unfortunately omitted to record. The notes are by the writer of the letter.—E. M. D.

*Extract from a letter addressed to Sir William Betham,
May 6, 1821.*

BLYTHBURGH.

On visiting this church lately we observed a large chest strongly bound with iron. The sexton opened the lid, when it appeared to be half full