

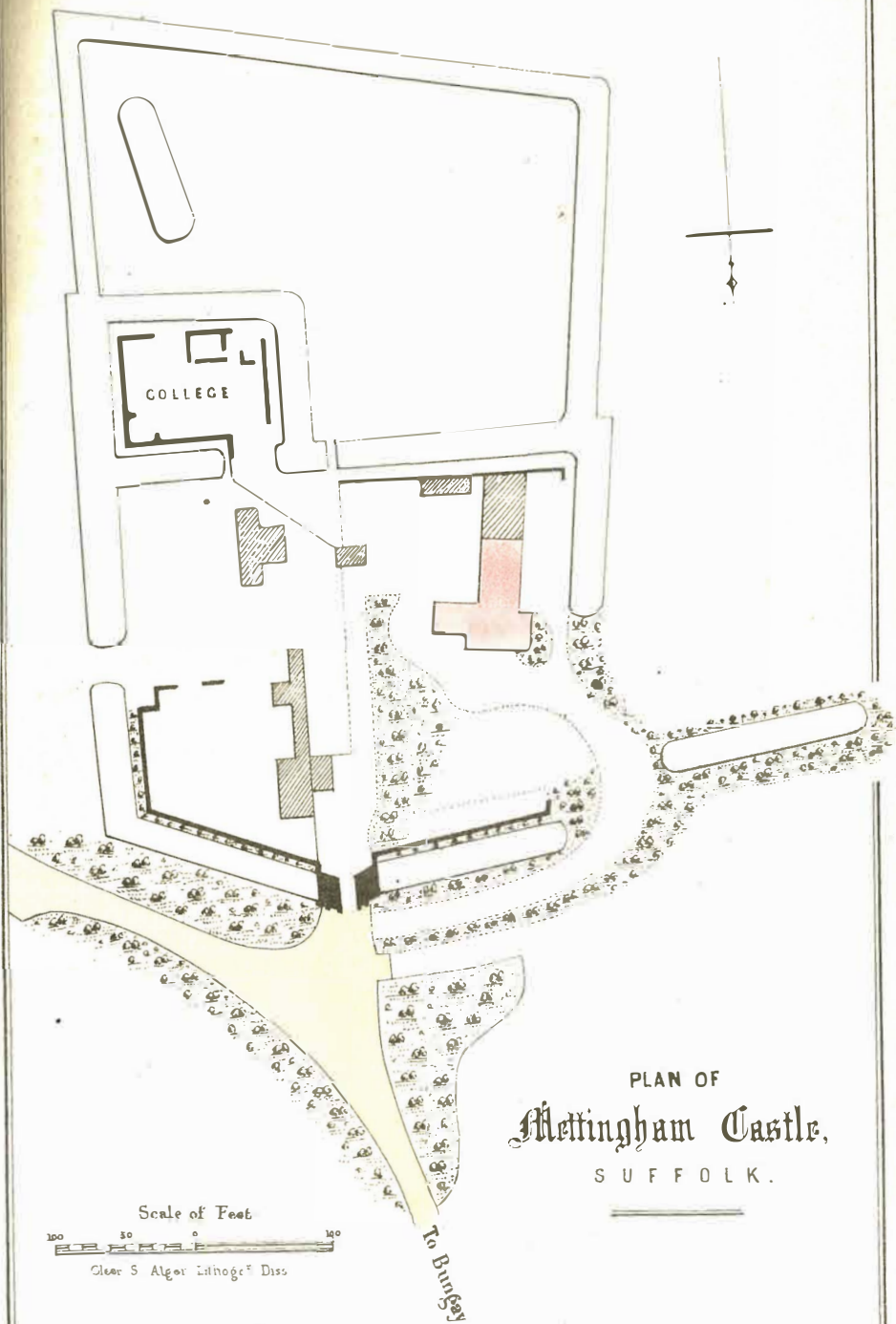
Its bones lie scattered throughout the parish, even unto Stowe Park, but we live in hope the days are in store which shall reinstate our grand old church to her pristine beauty—that the “building up of old waste places” will be seen by our eyes; and our town, which in a smaller degree, may be called the “Bury St. Edmund’s of East Suffolk,” will have no reason to be ashamed of the interior of St. Mary’s as compared with the exterior.

J. J. RAVEN.

METTINGHAM CASTLE AND COLLEGE.*

THE Castle of Mettingham is one of those erections of which our Societies visited another example a year or two ago at Wingfield, of a fortified manor house rather than a regular military fortress such as we have just seen upon its lofty artificial mound, at Bungay. It has been, however, a place of very considerable strength. It owes its origin to Sir John de Norwich, who obtained license from Edward the Third, 21st August, 1342, to castellate his residence here in reward for his services in the French wars. The deed is printed by Suckling in his *History of Suffolk*, vol. i, p. 173. He was the son of Sir Walter de Norwich, of a family believed to be descended from the Bigots, Earls of Norfolk, a branch of whom may have adopted the name of de Norwich from birth or residence there, and who appear to have slightly changed their arms accordingly. He was an Admiral under Edward the Third, “versus partes orientales,” and was summoned to parliament as a Baron, 25th Feb., 1342. He was Governor of Angoulême, in France, where he saved his

* Read at a joint meeting of the Norfolk and Suffolk Archaeological Societies, October 9th, 1861.



PLAN OF
Mettingham Castle,
SUFFOLK.

Scale of Feet
100 50 0 100
Clear S. Algor Lithog. & Diss.

Geo. Baker, Surveyor, Bungay

garrison by a stratagem which Froissart relates. His services appear to have been considerable, and the King rewarded him with two allowances out of his Exchequer, granted him a license for a market on Fridays weekly, and a fair for three days annually, at his manor of Great Massingham, in Norfolk, and permission to make castles of his manor houses at Blickworth and Ling, in Norfolk, as well as here. "The form adopted by Sir John de Norwich, for his castle," as Suckling describes it, "was a parallelogram, of which the east and west sides were rather the greatest; and its area, taking in the site of the college of priests, afterwards attached to it, included nine acres and a half." The more accurate survey, here published, shows the area, including all the moats except the out-lying one on the west side, to be only 5a. 0r. 16p. A moat surrounds the whole castle, and the parallelogram is divided into two, by a cross moat running east to west, each portion measuring about 88 yards from north to south, by 110 from east to west. In the southernmost of the two enclosures is another inner moat surrounding the ruins of the college. Here is also a fish pond running nearly parallel to the eastern moat, south of the college. The northern parallelogram formed the castle itself, and was completely surrounded by walls, much of which remain on the north side or front, and some on the south side.

Sir John de Norwich, the founder, being compelled to return to the French wars, the completion of the castle was intrusted to Dame Margaret, his wife, who built the keep, "which she placed on the west side of the first court." This information is obtained from Leland, who, however, says she constructed "*antiquiorem castelli partem*," "*in interiori parte domus*," the older part of the castle, in the interior part of the residence: that is to say, it was older than the college which was founded afterwards. It was the *keep* in its proper sense, not the most fortified part, but the keeping-place of the family, the inhabited portion of the castle.

As the castle was conveyed, as I shall mention hereafter,

to the college in 1382, it existed as a residence of the founder's family only for forty years, and was for 160 years in the hands of ecclesiastics. The keep appears to have been converted into the residence of the Master of the college, as the arms of Richard Shelton, one of the last Masters, with several matches of his family, ornamented the walls of its apartments. The arms of Ufford, quartering Beke, and of Brewes were also upon them.*

The late Mr. Safford pulled down the old farm house, which occupied the interior of the castle in the last century, and erected a new house on its site. Mr. Suckling was curate of the parish at that time, and says that he saw much of the work of Dame Margaret de Norwich laid open. Several of the interior decorations, long hid, were found in excellent preservation—the colours and gilding of the arms being fresh and brilliant. The discovery of these embellishments was the more interesting, as they are recorded in Ayscough's Catalogue, in the British Museum, which says, "the arms of Ufford, quartering Beke, are said to be in a parlour in the chapel or college of Mettingham."

The principal portion remaining, besides the ruins of the college, is the fine gateway, forming the original entrance. It is a massive square building, with corner turrets extending down to the ground, and had a chamber over the archway, and another in the higher story. The mouldings of the arch show its date to correspond with that of the rest of the building, in the reign of Edward the Third. The entrance was guarded by a projecting barbican, the walls of which partly remain, abutting against the jambs of the archway. There are considerable remains of the outer walls of the castle, running east and west from this gateway, and there was formerly a massive square tower at each angle. In the upper part of this north wall, west of the gateway, are four windows, which are said to have lighted the hall. They seem too small for this purpose, even if this were the proper position for the hall, and were more probably the windows of a dormitory.

* Suckling, vol. i., p. 174.

A small portion of the interior building remains at the west end of the present house. There is still an arched doorway, and a stone was found there carved with the arms of Ufford.

The *Manor* of Mettingham Castle, at the time of the Norman survey, was returned among the possessions of Earl Hugh. In the reign of Edward the First, Sir John de Norwich was Lord; in the 9th of Edward the Second, Walter de Norwich held it, from whom it descended to his son, Sir John, the same who built the castle in 1342. He died in 1361, when it devolved to his grandson (son of another Sir Walter, who died before his father, and was buried at Raveningham), also named Sir John, who died here in 1373, and appointed his body to be buried at Raveningham, by the side of his father, Sir Walter, "there to rest, till it could be removed to the new church of Norton soupe-cors," to the building of which he gives £450. Leaving no issue, his cousin, Catharine de Brews, widow of — de Brews, being daughter and heiress of Thomas de Norwich, brother to the founder of the castle, inherited as next heir. She being, in the reign of Richard the Second, a nun at Dartford, in Kent, conveyed this manor to the College in Mettingham Castle, removed here from Raveningham, of which I shall speak presently. It continued in the hands of the College until the Dissolution, when Henry the Eighth granted it in 1541 to Sir Anthony Denny. In the 5th of Elizabeth, Henry Denny held the castle and manor with license of alienation to Nicholas Bacon; and in the 8th of Elizabeth, this Nicholas occurs as lord and patron of the church, with license of alienation to Sir Robert Catlin. The Bacons however retained possession till 1675.

The Lord Keeper, Nicholas Bacon, appears to have visited or resided at Mettingham, for in a letter, which Suckling quotes, in the possession of Sir Thomas Gage, of Hengrave, Sir Thos. Kitson, writing to Thomas, Duke of Norfolk, relates several circumstances which took place "with my Lord Keeper, when I awaited on him with my

father-in-law, on Easter Wednesday, in the morning, at which time we found him newly entered on his journey from his house at Redgrave towards Mettingham, and accompanied him about five or six miles on the way."

In 1675 the manor and castle were transferred to John Hunt, Esq., whose grandson Tobias Hunt, dying without issue, the estates fell to Mary and Grace Hunt, his co-heiressess. The castle had evidently fallen to ruin long before this, as in the view of it published by Buck in 1738, dedicated to Tobias Hunt, Esq., the remains were then not much more extensive than at present. The younger co-heiress, Grace Hunt, married James Safford, Esq., of Ipswich, the great grandfather of the present proprietor, who is sole lord, being also the representative of the elder co-heiress, Mary Hunt, the wife of Burham Cutting, Esq.

It is believed that John de Mettingham, Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, in the reign of Edward the First, derived his name from the parish. He is honourably mentioned by the historians of the time as being the only judge, except Elias de Beckingham, who was not included in the number of those fined and disgraced by Edward the First for their corruption. "As Caleb and Joshua," says Fuller, "amongst the jury of twelve spies, so these two amongst the twelve judges, retained their integrity." He is one of the benefactors commemorated by the University of Cambridge.

THE COLLEGE.

WITHIN the moats which enclose the ruins of Mettingham Castle, is a separate portion on the south east side, of quadrangular form, consisting now only of the external walls and a ruined tower, and open to the sky. This was once a small *College* of secular canons. To explain its existence here, we must go back to its original foundation on a different site. In the year 1342, Sir John de Norwich, Knight, Vice-Admiral of England, eldest son of Sir Walter de Norwich and Catharine his wife, founded a college for a master

and eight canons at Raveningham, Norfolk. Blomefield, in his account of that parish (vol. viii, p. 52), erroneously places the date of foundation in the year 1350. He quotes a deed which he calls the foundation deed, and says it is dated at Thorp, by Norwich, July 25, 1350. I myself possess the original deeds and charters relating to the college, and the one Blomefield refers to, with that date, is not Sir John de Norwich's foundation deed, but the appropriation by William, Bishop of Norwich, of the church of Norton Subcourse to the college. An earlier deed, of the 14th August, 1343, is a confirmation of Anthony, Bishop of Norwich, to Sir John de Norwich, of the college of Raveningham, for eight Priests; and another of the 28th of June, 1345, is the licence from Edward the Third for the same purpose. These canons were to officiate in the church of Raveningham, and were to pray for the souls of the founder, and of Margaret his wife, for the honour of God, and the Blessed Virgin, St. Andrew the Apostle, and all the saints.* This college was munificently endowed by the founder with seven manors, the advowson and appropriation of the church of Raveningham, and many lands and tenements in twelve parishes.

He died in 1362, and was succeeded by his grandson, Sir John de Norwich, son of Sir Walter. He also died in 1373, and was the last heir male of his family. His next of kin was his cousin, Catharine de Brewes, widow, who confirmed the grants of her predecessors, and being a nun of Dartford Priory, released her interests to trustees.

In the year 1381, Sir John de Plays, Sir Richard de Boys, and Sir Robert Howard, executors of Sir John de Norwich, and trustees of the Lady Catherine de Brewes, obtained a licence from King Richard the Second to remove the master and chaplains from Raveningham to the adjoining village of Norton Subcourse, which alteration was effected in 1387, when the college was established in the rectory-house there: a new chapel was then built for the canons, and their number was increased to twelve with a master.

* Taylor, Ind. Mon. p. 49.

The advowson of the church of St. Margaret there, had been given to the college of Raveningham by the founder; to the building of the new church, his grandson, Sir John, in 1373, gave the sum of £450.*

Again, in the year 1382, Sir John Plays, Sir Robert Howard, Sir Roger Boys, knights; John Wolterton and Elias Byntre, clerks, executors under the will of Sir John de Norwich, knight, obtained the king's licence, which I possess, dated 5th July, 6 Richard the Second, to translate the college to the castle of Mettingham, in Suffolk, and to endow it with the said castle, and with several manors in Suffolk. The translation being retarded, principally by the opposition of the nuns of Bungay, who were impropiators of the parish church of Mettingham, was not fully effected till the year 1393. The endowment was very ample, embracing 13 manors, with moieties of others; four advowsons; besides 86 acres of land, and 25 more of moor, alder, and reed.

The College consisted of thirteen chaplains at the time of the foundation here; of a master and eleven chaplains or fellows, in 1535. Richard Shelton the master, and nine fellows, subscribed to the king's supremacy in 1534. Upon the foundation of this College, according to the *Liber Valorum*, were also 14 boys, who served God, and were educated and supported here at the annual charge of £28.

The College was surrendered to the King, April 8th, 1542; and on the 14th of the same month, the whole was granted to Sir Anthony Denny, with the rectories of Raveningham and Norton. The estates were then returned as producing an annual income of £238. 3s. 10½d.; and a clear rental of £202. 7s. 5½d.

Its subsequent history I have already shown under the manor.

A list of the masters of the College is given by Suckling. The patronage was at first with Sir John Plays, the trustee of Catherine de Brewes. After him, the Lords Willoughby de Eresby presented from 1392 to 1452; Cicely Ufford,

* Taylor. Blomefield.

daughter of Robert Ufford, Earl of Suffolk, by Margaret de Norwich, daughter of the founder, having married John, third Lord Willoughby de Eresby. The presentation descended by inheritance from them to Sir Richard Hastings, and thence to Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, who in 1539, presented the last master, Thomas Manning, who was also Suffragan Bishop of Ipswich and Prior of Butley.

Colleges of this kind were very numerous throughout the kingdom previous to the Reformation. They were not generally instituted for the purposes of instruction to the young, as we restrict the term college now, or the pursuit of learned studies, but only for the daily celebration of mass, according to the injunctions of the founders.* There were twenty-two such colleges in the diocese of Norwich.

From its present ruined state, not much can be now accurately ascertained as to the plan of its apartments. A very picturesque tower, which formed the most attractive feature in these ruins, fell down in the night, about twenty years ago.† Its lower stages still remain, in the centre of the south side of the College, with a portion of a staircase leading to the upper floor. It was called Kate's Tower, from Katherine de Brewes, who probably contributed out of her inheritance from Sir John de Norwich, towards its construction. A tradition that she concealed herself there for three weeks to avoid exposure of her misconduct, is doubtless a scandal, as she was a nun at Dartford in 1374. several years before the College was built. There appears to have been another tower at the north-east angle. The square enclosure of the College was no doubt once occupied by the apartments of the fellows, the chapel, the dormitory, and the kitchen, but it is impossible now to distinguish the position of each. There are some large openings in the upper part of the west wall, and possibly the chapel may have had its west end there. There are believed to be cellars underground, below the level of the moats.

Some years ago, the present proprietor, in causing the ruins to be dug for building materials, discovered a large

* *Taylor*, xii.

† *Suckling*, p. 176.

quantity of broken sculptured stones, and portions of window-tracery. They were found at the bottom of a crypt, still partly vaulted over, which was about eight feet deep. It is also said that six bells belonging to the chapel, were found at the end of the last century, in cleansing the moat. Two daggers, about sixteen inches long, are in the possession of Mr. Safford, discovered in a similar manner.

Although the ruins afford us but little information as to the arrangement of the buildings, and the uses to which the several parts were applied, we are fortunately able to ascertain, in greater measure than usual, much of the domestic economy of the establishment, and the progress of affairs under the management of the Fellows, from the existence of six folio volumes of manuscript *Accounts* of their receipts and expenditure, from the reign of Henry IV, to the dissolution. These volumes are in my own possession, and were formerly the property of Peter le Neve, and afterwards of Thomas Martin, the well-known antiquaries. They are full of curious and interesting matters relating to this college, especially during the time of its first establishment on this spot. Some of the most remarkable entries are collected together in a paper which I contributed to the sixth volume of the *Journal of the Archæological Institute*, (p. 62) and are accompanied by some very able notes by Mr. Albert Way. Each year's account is headed "the compotus of the master of the college of the blessed Mary of Mettingham, from the feast of St. Michael" in such a year, to the same feast in the following year; and the various heads of receipt and expenditure follow in much the same order throughout the volumes. For instance, to take the first year of the mastership of John Wilbey, 1403-1404. The receipts from the different manors, with which the college was endowed, are first given. Bramfield, £28. 6s. 8d.; Mellis, £13. 5s.; Ilketshall, 100s. 8d.; Mettingham, 50s. 6d.; Howe, £9. 16s. 4d.; Haddeston, £21. 13s.; Lyng, £22. 15s.; Raveningham and Norton, 18s. 4d. Then follow some separate items of smaller sums received, chiefly for wool and hides sold; the total of receipts being for that

year £137. 2s. 7*d.* In following years, the amount seems generally to have been larger. The expenses in the same year commence with the heading of "Dona," a large number of small items, such as gifts to messengers and servants bringing articles of consumption for the household; for one riding to Cley for salt fish; to the servants of the College and others, as gifts at Christmas and Easter; to one Henry March, for writing a charter and a release, 20*d.*; payments to bailiffs and clerks, &c., amounting altogether to £7. 18s. Then follow the wages of the servants, as John Buteler, Richard Baker, Wm. Smith, Robert de Stable, Joan Lavender, in all £8. 17s. 6½*d.* Then, the pensions of the master and fellows, the master £10, and the fellows £2. Then the "custos domorum," work done by carpenters and others, on the premises, both here and at Raveningham, in all 110s. 8½*d.* Then, two or three pages of small expenses, among which in this year, are the following: to Richard the armourer, for cleaning armour, 12*d.*; cloth bought for the tables in the hall, 3s. 9½*d.*; for cups, dishes, salts, plates, and potladys, 4s.; to the school master of Beccles, for the schooling of two clerks, 16*d.*; frequent payments for the making of blankets and linen, and for leather cushions, and to one Hugh Dunston for writing, and numerous other items, amounting to £35. 4s. 5½*d.* Next follows the cost of cartage, coals, &c., £2. 0s. 4*d.* Next, the expenses of the master, for riding to various places on the business of the College; to Bungay, to consult the Duchess of Norfolk and Sir John de Norwich; to Yarmouth, to speak with Sir Miles Stapleton; to Framlingham, to speak with the Earl Marshal; to Norwich, &c., amounting to £3. 12s. 9*d.* Then, expenses for cattle and horses, £15. 2s. 5*d.* Then for payments to the bailiffs of Raveningham and Mettingham, £7. 4s. 3*d.*; small rents, 6s. 1½*d.*; expenses of the chapel, which in some years contain much curious information, but in this year are only for wine and wax, 3s. 10*d.* Then autumn expenses, 5s. 10*d.*; fees, ecclesiastical dues, and other payments from their estates, £16. 12s. 7½*d.*; and lastly, delivered to the keeper of the hospitium, £21. 1s. 7½*d.* The total of expenses

being in that year £136. 9s. 0d., leaving a balance in the master's hands of 13s. 7d.

This will be sufficient to show the arrangement of these accounts, which throw light on many parts of the ordinary life of a household in the 15th century, particularly in an ecclesiastical establishment, and are almost worthy of being printed entire. In the accounts of the years succeeding that I have given the foregoing summary of, there are so many interesting entries, that a few relating to the works undertaken in the College after its removal hither, and the decorations of the chapel, may perhaps be acceptable. The fabric expenses run over several years of the reign of Henry the Fourth. The roof of the choir at Norton was taken down in 1467, at a cost of 26s. 8d., and removed to Mettingham. It does not, however, appear to have served the same purpose in the College Chapel here, as by the receipts of the years 1410-11, it appears that the men of Ditchingham paid by instalments for it, the sum of £6. 13s. A gilt cup and cross, vestments, "and other ornaments," were purchased for the chapel in 1407, at a cost of £25, a considerable sum in those days. At the same time a painted cloth, "*panna picta*," was bought for the high altar, for 8s. John Mason and his men were at work at the chapel for ninety-nine days in 1408-9, and John Lokere and his men for ninety-five days. Free stone came from Yarmouth to Beccles by water, and from thence by land carriage to Mettingham. Black stone (perhaps marble), came from Norwich. New stalls were constructed, for which one of the chaplains went over to Lynn and Castleacre to find a good model, "*ad videndum stalla ibidem*," in 1414. In the same year we find twelve "*edificia*" made (housings or niches) for images of the twelve Apostles, at a cost of £6. 3s. 4d. John Holgate made the images; and Thomas of Yarmouth, or Thomas Barsham of Yarmouth, was a carver and painter who made images with tabernacles, and a "*tabula*" for the high altar, for not less than £37. 4s. 8d. These entries are the more interesting, as Mr. A. Way has observed, because they lead us to attribute the screen



SEAL OF METTINGHAM COLLEGE, SUFFOLK.

paintings and wood carving which so abounded formerly in the churches of these counties, to local artists, and not to Flemings, as is sometimes conjectured. If so, the Mettingham accounts may have rescued the name of Thomas of Yarmouth from oblivion, as a not unworthy representative of an early school of art in England. In 1415, an organ was brought from Boston to Lynn, and from Lynn to Mettingham, the carriage of which cost 9s. 1½*d.*

It was not till 1415-16, that bishop Wakering of Norwich came and dedicated the church, for which he received 40*s.*, and his three attendants 4*s.* 4*d.* Probably the works only advanced as the funds were available. In 1418-19, the suffragan of the bishop came and dedicated two altars, for which he received 6*s.* 2*d.* A cloister was also in course of erection.

Of articles of church furniture and vestments the notices are very numerous; crosses, chalices, tabulæ for the high altar, a thurible, &c. Illumination was carried on in the college, and frequent payments are recorded to William Lominowr, or the illuminator, for writing and painting books, in gold and colours.* Vestments of "baudekyn," a doublet of gold, copes of cherry red with "raygs" of gold, are among the entries relating to vestments; and 13 oblong black hats for the master and fellows occur. A payment occurs of "panno steynynd," stained cloth for the *lectern*. This piece of church furniture, it appears, was removed, at the surrender in 1542, to St. Mary's church, Bungay, for there is an entry in the books of that parish, under that year, quoted by Suckling (vol. i., p. 150), "Pd for flettyng the brassen lecterne from Mettingham, 4*d.*" Unfortunately it has since been lost from Bungay also.

The word "Nolloths" which frequently occurs, is the name of a piece of land left to the college to find a wax light for ever, to be burnt before the image of the blessed Virgin, in the choir. I have not met with any mention of St. Wandered, or his shrine, which Suckling says attracted

* Suckling mentions that some of the music formerly used in the chapel, was

in the possession of a person living near Harleston.

an annual peregrination here. One other item may be mentioned as interesting, as it gives the exact date of the *seal* of the college, of which an impression remains, appended to a deed in my possession, and which was engraved with the paper already mentioned in the *Archæological Journal* (vol. vi., p. 68).* Among the expenses of the year 1405-6, is "paid for making the common seal of the college of Mettingham, 20s." The device is the Virgin and child in a triple canopied niche, in the centre; on the dexter side the arms of de Norwich, the founder, viz., party per pale, Az. and Gules, a lion rampant Ermine; and on the sinister side, a cross engrailed for *Ufford*, quartering a cross moline, for *Beke*, being the arms of the lords Willoughby de Eresby, the patrons of the college.

The extracts I have given are all from the first volume of these accounts. Many curious particulars no doubt remain to be gathered from the other five, although of course the works carried on consisted more of repairs to what had been already erected; and at a future time, I should wish to compile another paper on them.

C. R. MANNING.

* The wood block has been kindly lent by the "Archæological Institute of Great Britain," for the illustration of this paper, and is published on the opposite page.