The Abbey Piece
5.1.30

Abbey
0.2.32

Skiffs

From Yarmouth

BLYTHBURGH.

No date to Map, perhaps in 1810.

Scale of Chains.

Chirr S. Alger Litho Biss.
The Site of the late Dissolved Priory

Ri

Lands of several persons

Church Yard

From a Map made in 1770.
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 "Blithborow." 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° 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 Praemonstratensians, 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* cartam Dni † firmacœs Edwardi quondam Regis Angl' p'genitoris nri se'am in hec v'ba. Edwardus Dei gr'a Rex Angl' D'nis Hib'n et Dux Aquit' Archiep'is Ep'is Abb'ibs Prioribs Comitibs Baronibs Justic' Vicecomitibs Prepositis Ministris et om'ibs Balluis et fidelibs suis, salt'm. Inspexim* cartam

* Patent Roll, 21 Hen. VI., pt. 2, m. 27.
† Edward II.
quam celebris memoriae Dnls Ric'us quondam Rex Angl' p'gentor nr' fecit Deo et eccl'ie S'ce Marie de Bliburgh et Canoniciis ibidem Deo s'uentibus in hec v'ba. Ric'us Dei gr'a Rex Angl' Dux Normanfi [et] Aquit' Comes Andeg' Archiep'is Ep'is Abb'ibs Comitib'is Baronib'is Justic' Vicecomitib'is Ministrib'is et om'ibs Balluibus et fidelibus suis tocius Angl' Francis et Anglis p'sentib'is et futuris , salt'm. Sciasit nos p' aie nr'e concessisse et p'senti carta nr'a confirmasse in p'petua eleemosinam Deo et eccl'ie S'ce Marie de Bliburgh et Canoniciis ibidem Deo s'uentibus et s'uituris om'es tr'as quas h'uerunt in Donewyco tempore Regis Henr' pr'is nr'i scilt ex dono Brut'ech 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 eiustem Malet et Arnaldi P'sbit'i et Safuli fil Huthredi et Vlf le Riche et Walt'i Leadeheperi 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 Wast's et Henr' * fil' T'ri et Leuene Tod et Godender 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 tr'am quam tennit Gerardus de la Mare et quietas ab om'i t'reno et seculari exac'6e p'duodecim denarios singulis annis reddendos ad festum Sc'i Mich'is sicut reddi solebant ante extensionem se'am in Donewyco. Et p'hibem' ne aliquis sup' hoc p'dcis Canoniciis molestiam faciat vel g'nam vel p' p'dcis tr'is quicq'am ab eis plus exigat. Concedim' eciam et confirmam' p'fatis Canoniciis redditus suos'quos nunc h'ent et quos impost'am rönabilitt' adquirere pot'int et om'es tr'as quas h'ent ex dono Witti del Chednei in Bliburh tr'am scilt que vocat' Kyngescroft' et mesuagii Blacstani et t Brueram del Hussei quani Burthardus de Wenhaestun tennit et viginti acras in Westfeld' et totam decimà piscac6is in Walberdeswyke. Et om'ia que h'ent in Brigge ex feudo Will'i de Monay et heredum suor' siue ex dono siue ex empoam tem in tr'is et herbaris q'm in p'bis et pasturis. Et ex dono Reginaldi c'ici brueram que iacet iuxta nemus in Walberdeswike. Et ex dono Rob'ti fil' RegiMì duas solidatas redditus in Eleth' quas Hermerus Russell' tennit. Et ex dono Mainardi p'sbit'i quatuor solidatas t're in Barneby. Et ex dono Holdebur Rit Baudenunt'duas solidatas in Mutford. Et ex dono Will'i Lagunam quandam tr'am in G'nmue quam tennit Anandus Simnek' f in illa parte que est in Luderingland'. Et ex dono Wimari Capellani quandam tr'am in Becles iuxta aquam. Et ex dono Rob'ti le Boteciller et Rob'ti de Curtoun et ex feudo Rog'i del Chednei tr'as 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 tr'am de Westhale cum bosco et aliam t'ram eiusdem W. in Holetune. Et ex dono Rog'i de Coleneile duas solidatas redditus in || Brötune. Et om'es tr'as et redditus quos h'ent ex feudo Osbt'i fil' Will'i et ex feudo Gaufri'di de Marti siue heredum suor'. Om'es istus p'dcas t'ras et redditus conced'im'nos et confirmam' Deo et eccl'ie Se'ecuelle
Marie de Bliburh et Canonici ibidem Deo s'uiientis 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'ibs nundinis et in om'i t'nsitu pontiū calcear' viar' et
maris p' totum regnū 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 sūmonicī'bs Comitatus et Hundr'or' et pl'itis
et queralis et de pecunia danda p' forisf'ūra de murdro de gledis et de
Denegeldis et Homegeldis de scutagīi de assisiis vet'ibs et nouis de
auxiliis vicecom' et p'posixor' hundr' et Balliuor' suor' et de or'
imsericordia de misericordia Comitatus de custodiis et op'ibs Castellor'
estauris et de om'i carregio et carragio et summagio et nauigio et lestagio
et stallagio et domu' regalium edificacōe et om'imo da op'acōe. Et
phibem' ne de alicuo tēni suor' ponant' in pl'ūtum nisi coram nob' vel
coram Capitali Justicia nr'a aut p' sp'ale mandatum nr'm. Quare volum'
heit' p'cipim' qu'd' p'dci Canonici de Bliburh tam dc'as t'ras et con-
cessionsis et lib'tates tam ecclesiasticas q'm laicas que eis in p'senti collate
sunt vel impost'um p' Dei gr'am siue ex dono siue ex empcoeiuste
conferent' h'eant et teneant bene et in pace lib'e et, quiete integre et
honorifice in bocso in plano in viis in semitis in pascuis in pratis in
campis in siluus in maribus in herbariis in molendinis in stagnis
in vuiari in piscariis in cōmunis in m'cato in feria in thelonio in furis
app'hensione et suoria effucoe infra Burgū et ext' cum soca et saca et
tol' et team et infangethetf et ordel et oreste infra tempus et ext' in
om'ibs temporibus et in om'ibs locis et in om'ibs rebs lib'as et quietas de
om'i Miskenninge de Gridbrethe fridosca fit'hwite fit'hwite leierwite
hamsoca france clegio de auperpeni de Wardpeni de hundredpeni de
Thidenpeni nisi in introitu de Blodwita et de om'i seculari suici et op'e
s'uli et exaccōe et om'ibs occōnibs alias et consuetūnis secularis
 excepta sola justicia mortis et membro'. Et p'hibem' ne quis hanc nr'
cessionis et confirmationis paginam in minimo aut in magno infrangat
sup' forisf'ūram decem lib'as Rob'to Joello Baldewino
Capellano,Brand' clico Will'o de Stagno Rad'o de Arderfi Thoma Basset.
Dat' p' maul E. Ep'i Elyen Cancellarij nr'i apud Cha'gnes xxiij die
Januarij anno nri decimo. Nos autem donaco'es concessionset con-
firmaco'esp'dc'as necnon concessionem donaco'em et confirmaco'em quas
Walt'us fil' Simonis de Wenhaw'estun p' cartam suam fecit Deo et eccle
et Canonici p'dc'is de toto illo tenemento quod Dīs Will's de Redham
et Dīs Rog's de Wymplles Walt'us de Cretyng Will's Fareman Rob'tus
Hulfketel' et Ric'us le Do (sic) de Don'eyuco tenuerunt de ip'o Walt'o
fil' Simonis in Villa de Wenhaw'estuū et Thuringtune cum homagiis
s'uciiis et om'ibs aliiis p'tin' ad ip'm Walt'um fil' Simonis et heredes suos
spectantibs. Concessionem eciam quam, idem Walt'us fil', Simonis p'
andem cartam suā fecit canoniciis p'dcis de redditu trium denario'
anuatuim quos Reginaldus de Monte sibi reddidit annuatuim p' quadam
pecia t're quam tenuit de eo in villa de Wenhawestune Donaco'em eciam

* Eustachii.
concessionem et confirmacionem quas Rog'us de Chednei p' cartam suæ fecit Deo ecclie et Canoniciis p'dc'is de t'ra illa quam Basilia vidua tenuit de ip'o in Ders'ham, Concessionem eciam et confirmacionem quas Will's de Criketot p' cartam suam fecit Deo ecclie et Canoniciis p'dc'is de octo acris t're in Westletun et vna sümä frumenti scd'm mensuram que h'et' in villa Sc'i Edmundi. Donaco'em eciam et concessionem quas Galt'us p' cartam suam fecit Deo et ecclie p'dc'ae ad opus Canoniceor' p'dc'or' de sex acris in Dere'sham. Concessionem eciam et confirmacionem quas Dn's Nich'us de Falsham Miles p' cartam suam fecit Deo ecclie et Canoniciis p'dc'is de sex acris t're cum p'tin' in Dersham. Donaco'em eciam et concessionem quas Hugo de Cressy p' cartam suam fecit Deo ecclie et Canoniciis p'dc'is de vna marcata redditus in Walb'tewio. Donaco'em eciam concessionem et confirmacionem quas Thomas de Hopetunie p' cartam suae fecit Deo ecclie et Canoniciis p'dc'is de tota t'ra quam Domelin tenuit de ip'o Thoma in Jokesford' et de s'ucis eisdem t're scil't de decem denariis et dubas gallinis et quadam op'aco'e vniis diei ad cibum eisdem Domelin cum om'ibs aliis p'tinencis suis necnon quietam clamancii quam idem Thomas p'eandem cartam suam fecit Canoniciis p'dc'is de ea'dem Domelin et om'ibs heredibus suis ab homaggio p'dc'i Thome de Hopitune et o'm heredum suor cum om'ibs catallis suis * impp'm. Concessionem eciam et confirmacionem quas Rog'us f'it Thome de Hopetu'n p' cartam suam fecit Deo ecclie et Canoniciis p'dc'is de om'ibs donacio'ibis et concessionibus quas p'dc'us Thomas pater suus fecit eisdem Canoniciis de tota t'ra quam Alanus fil' Rog'i de Joke'ford' tenuit de ip'o Thoma pr' suo scil't de quatuer acris de t'ra arable 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 homaggio p'dc'i Rog'i vel heredum suor sine om'i retenemento sibi vel heredibus suis. Concessionem eciam et confirmacionem quas idem Rog'us p' eandem cartam suam fecit Canoniciis p'dc'is de tota t'ra quam Domelin tenuit de pr' suo in Jokesford' et homaggio ip'ius Domelin cum om'i sequela sua absq' om'i retenemento sibi vel heredibus suis. Donaco'em eciam concessionem et confirmacionem quas Hub't'sus de Bauant p' cartas suam fecit Deo ecclie et Canoniciis p'dc'is de vna acra t're in villa de Estune. Concessionem eciam et confirmacionem quas Michael de Bauant p' cartam suam fecit Deo ecclie et Canoniciis p'dc'is de vna acra t're in eadem villa. Concessionem eciam donacio'nem et confirmacionem quas Galfr'us Cap' de Bulcamp' p' cartam suam fecit canoniciis p'dc'is de mesuagio et totò tenemento quod Thomas le Hopp'e tenuit de ip' o in Bulcamp' cum homaggio et om'i iure quod h'uit vel h'ere debut in p'dc' o tenemento. Remissionem eciam quam idem Galfr'us p' eandem cartam suam fecit Canoniciis p'dc'is de duobs denariis quos idem Canonici solebat sibi annuatim reddere de mesuagio Hub't'i 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 domü Thome le
Hopp' e quam Petrus Permentarius tenuit de eodem et de duabus acris t're int' domû Benedicti fil' Alani Carpentarii' et Crucem quas idem Benedict' us tennit 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' a diuisa de Brigge vsq' ad diuisam de Henham et a diuisa de Henham vsq' ad Galchefordeslade. Concessione eciam et confirmacœos quas Ric' us de Blumulie p' cartam suam fecit Deo et be Marie et Canoniciis p'dcis de om' ibs t'ris et redditibs quos Galfr' us Cap' et p'decessores qui contulerunt eisdem Canonicis de feodo ip' ius Ric' i in villa de Bulcamp' . Concessionem eciam et confirmacœos quas Will's fil' Walt' i de * Sadenefeld' p' cartam suam fecit Deo eccl' ië et Canoniciis p'dcis de vna acra t're arabilis cum p'tiï que iacet iuxta Cimit' ium eccl' ië de Thuritoñ ex parte occidentali's vna cum aduocaco' e eiusdem eccl' ië de Thuritoñ et de om' ibs t'ris et possessionib quas h'ent de feodo ip' ius Will' i in p'dca villa de Thuritoñ. Concessionem eciam et conformacœo'm quas idem Will's p' alia cartam sua fecit Deo eccl' ië et Canoniciis p'dcis de om' ibs t'ris et possessionib cum om' ibs p'tiï quis quis h'ent de feodo ip' ius Will' i in villa Thuriton. Concessionem eciam et quietam clamancid quas Walt' us fil' Will' i de Sadenefeld' p' cartam suam fecit Deo eccl' ië et Canoniciis p'dcis de vna acra t're cum p'tiï in villa de Thuritoñ iacentibus iuxta eccl' iam eiusdem ville ex parte occidentali vna cum aduocaco' e eccl' ië eiusdem ville. Donaco'em eciam et confirmacœo'em quas Rad' us de Cricketot p' cartam suam fecit Deo eccl' ië ac Canoniciis p'dcis de eccl' iæ de Blifordia cum om' ibs p'tiï et obuencòibs suis et de particula silue in eadem villa que vocat' Pilchershegh' cum omibs rebs ad p'dcam eccl' iam p'tinentib. Concessiones eciam et confirmacœos quas Hub'tus de Criketot p' cartam suam fecit Deo eccl' ië et Canoniciis p'dcis de eccl' iæ de Blifordi et de om' ibs rebs ad eandem eccl' iam p'tinentib tam in decimis q'm in libis t'ris et alii obuenco'ibs. Donaco'em eciam concessione et confirmacœo'em quas Will's fil' Gileb' ti p' cartam suam fecit Deo eccl' ië et Canoniciis p'dcis de quinqu' solido' de marcius et dellitus quem Nich' us nepus suos tenuit de eo in + Risemere. Concessionem eciam donaco'em et confirmacœo'em quas Alicia de Frostenden filia Willi de London p' cartam suam fecit Deo eccl' ië et Canoniciis p'dcis de redditu qui' nior solidor' in villa de Frostenden ratas h'entes et g'tas eis p' nob' et heredib n'nis quantu in nob' est dii'cis nob' in Xp' o Alex' o nunc Priori et Canoniciis loci p'dci ac eor' successorib concede' et confirmam' sicut carte p'dce r'onabilit' testant' . Hiis testib Venabilib pr'ib † J. Elien' et § S. London' Ep' is Hugone le Despenser Dn' o de Glammorgan' Rob' bo de Insula Thoma le Blount Senescale Hospicii nri et aliiis. Dat' p' manu n'am apud Bernewell decimo octau die Februarii anno regni nri' decimo nono. Nos autem cartam p'd' am de huiusmodi donaco'ibs concessionib confirmacœibs franchesiis lib'batibis immunitibis.

* Shadingfield.
† Rushmere.
‡ John Hotham, Chancellor of the £ Stephen Gravesend.
et privilegiis minime reuocatis deuisamento et assensu dominor' sp'ualium et temporaliu' ac Cottatis regni nr'i Angl' in parliamento n'ro apud Westm' anno regni nr'i primo tente existen' approbam' ratificam' et confirmam' put carta p'de'a r'onabilit' testat' et put nunc Prior et Canonici loci p'de'i et eor' p'decessores donaco'ibs concessionibs confirmaco'ibs francesiis lib'tatibs immunitatibs et priuilegiis illis et eor' qual't a tempore confecco'is carte p'de'e semp' hactenus r'onabilit' vsi sunt et gausi. T' R' apud Westm xxiiiij 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. ap'Bliburg. et alii ignoti venerunt ad domum unius lib'i ho'is vid' Joh'is de Kyngeshaye. et ab eo injuste ceperunt iiij equos, iij boves, j vaccam et xxx oves et eos infugav't usq. ad aulam Dn'i Will'i de Valenc. in Bliburg. tune tempis Dn'i. et eos ibi imprisonaverunt quousque idem Joh' eos redem : de p'dico Hugon. p. I. 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 withheld 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:—

\[ \text{ANIBIC} \text{OMEFHKR} \]

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 indent 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

\{ \begin{align*}
Craven & : \text{Ar. a fess between 6 crosses and 6th } \text{fitchée gules.} \\
Swillington's shield & : \text{with eleven quarterings, amongst which}
\end{align*} \}

\begin{align*}
Swillington & : \text{Ar. a chevr. az.} \\
Rosse & : \text{Gu. a griffin rampant ar.} \\
Hopton & : \text{Erm. 2 bars sa.} \\
Spencer & : \text{Ar. on a bend sa. 3 martlets ar.} \\
Tiptoft & : \text{Ar. a saltire ar. gu.} \\
Goswell & : \text{Barry of 6 gu. and or. a canton ar.} \\
Wingfield & : \text{(?)}
\end{align*}

On the 3rd rib

\begin{align*}
Barrington & : \text{Ar. 3 chevrons gu. and label of 3 points.} \\
Bacon of Baconsthorp & : \text{Ar. 3 swine passant.}
\end{align*}

On the 5th rib

\begin{align*}
Kerdiston & : \text{Gu. a saltire engrailed ar.} \\
Ufford & : \text{Sa. a cross engr. or.}
\end{align*}

On the 6th rib

\begin{align*}
Mekilfield, or Milketfield (of Blythford) & : \text{Ar. on a cross engr. sa. certain changes now indistinct.} \\
Argentine (of Halesworth) & : \text{Gu. 3 covered cups or.}
\end{align*}

On the 8th rib

\begin{align*}
Cailly & : \text{Chequée gu. and ar. Over all a fess ermine.}
\end{align*}

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,
Francis Jessup, who visited this Church on April 9th, 1644.

Beginning from the east there are on the north side—

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 gargoyles 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 \textit{Fædera}:

\begin{verbatim}

"Pro Eodem Cardinali, Bulla Suppressionis Monasteriorum de Romboro, Felixtow, Bromehil, Biborow, and Montjoie. Registra in Camera Apostolica de Mandato Reverendissimi Cardinalis Sanctorum Quatuor. B. MOLTA.

Clemens Episcopus Servus Servorum Dei, Dilecto Filio Thome Tituli Sanctae Ceciliae Presbitero Cardinali in Regno Angliae nostro & Apostolicae Sedis Legato Salutem & Apostolicam Benedictionem.

Cum hodie per alias nostras Literas circuminspectioni tuae in Monasterio per Priorem gubernati solito, Sancti Petri Ordinis Sancti Augustini Canoniciorem Regularium in Villa Sou Oppido, de Ipswich Norwicensis Dioecesis sito Nomen Dignitatem Ordinem & Dependentias Supprimendi & Extinguendi ac inibi Nomen Collegii imponendi, illiusque Fructus Reddimitus & Proventus Collegio per Te Instituendo Applicandi & Appropriandi Licentiam & Facultatem concesserimus, prout in illis plenius continetur, Et quia, sicut accipimus Fructus Reddimitus & Proventus

* Rymer, \textit{Fædera} xiv, 240.
\end{verbatim}
dicti Monasterii longe minores & tenuiores existant quam pro Scholaribus inihi Literarum Studio vacare debentibus ad eorum Alimoniam & Sustentationem sufficiant sintque in Partibus illis infra scripta Monasteria, quorum Fructus Redditus & Possessiones, si in usus tamen salutares (videlicet) Religioni & Moribus multum profuturos converterentur & applicarentur, ex hoc profecto plures Personae Literarum Studiô vacare volentes sustentari & Marginam Scientiam acquirere, qua postea acquisita Regno consulere ac Scientiam & Virtute Fidelium animarum Salutis prodesse possent:

Nos, de Circumpectione tua, quam Altissimus egregiis Virtutibus & animi Dotibus plurimum insignivit, & Prudentiam, ac Rerum Experience in arduis Negotiis experti sumus plenam in Domino fiduciam obtinuimus, Motus proprio, non ad alicujus Nobis super hoc oblatae Petitionis Instantiam, sed de nostra mera Deliberatione ac ex certa nostra Scientiarum & Apostolicae Potestatis plenitudine, eidem circumspectioni tuae de Romboro & de Felicistou alias Fulstou ac de Bromehil propè Braddonfury necnon de Bliborow & Montisaudii alias Montjoy Sancti Benedicti & Sancti Augustini Ordinum respectivè dictae Dioecesis Monasteria, per Priorum gubernari solita & in eorum singulis Nomina Dignitates Prioratum ac Ordines & Dependentias, si ad hoc Carissimi in Christo Filii nostri Henrici Anglistiae Regis Illustris, & Domini Ibrunce & Fidei Defensoris accesserit Assensus penitius Supprimendi & Extinguendi, ac Monasteria ipsa cum suis Juribus & Pertinentiis universis eidem collegio perpetuo Uniendi, ac illorum Monachos ac Canonicos & Personas ad alia Loca sive Monasteria ejusdem vel alterius ordinis, prout Tibi melius videbatur expedire; Transfertendi necnon Monasteriorum sic Suppressorum hujusmodi & unius cujusque sic suppressi Fructus Redditus & Proventus cujuscunque naturae aut qualitatis fuerint, sive sint Oblationes Decimi aut Pensiones quaecunque ratione Unionis Appropriationis, aut alio quocunque Jure speciali vel generali Praescriptionis aut alius predictis Monasteriis aut eorum alicui spectantes aut pertinentes, necnon omnia & singula Monasteriorum predictorum Bona mobilia sive immobilia de quorum omnium tamen Bonorum extimatione quâm Redditiu Fructuum & Proventuum Monasteriorum predictorum vero annuo valore sumus certiorati & hic pro expressis volumus haberi, Ex dicto Collegio per Te in Villa sive Oppido de Ipswich Norwicensis Dioecesis hujusmodi extruendo perpetuo Applicandi & Appropriandi & cum omnibus suis Privilegis, Juribus, Dependiis, ac Appendentiis & Pertinentiis universis pleno & Integro Jure ad Collegium predictum Transferendi, eidem quoque Ecclesias Parochiales quocunque dicitis Monasteriis aut eorum alicui unitas jam & appropriatas Uniendi similliter Annectendi & Appropriandi, prout Nos etiam potiori pro Cautela in eventum suppressionis hujusmodi respectivè unimus appropriamus & Incorporamus, aliaque denique omnia & singula, qua ad Stabiliendam Conformandam & perpetuandam Bonorum Terrarum Fructuum Redditiu & Proventuum predictorum Monasteriorum sic suppressorum Possessionem predicte Collegio pacificè in futuro Habendam & Tenendam necessaria videbuntur aut opportuna, per Pena & Censuras Ecclesiasticas & Alius quomodo-
cuinque Faciendi Statuendi & Exequendi Plenam integrum & liberam
Tenore Praesentium Licentiam concedimus & Facultatem, Istasque
Litteras ad hoc extendimus & apliamus, non obstantibus nostrā quā
voluimus, quod in Unionibus faciendis verus Annuus Valor tam Beneficī
Uniendi quàm illius cui Unio fieri peteretur, & semper vocarentur
quorum interest ac aliis Apostolis & Bone Memoriam Ottonis & Ottoboni
olim in Regno Anglica Apostolice Sedis Legatorum in Provincialibus &
Sinodalibus Concilīs editīs generalibus vel specialibus Constitutionibus
& Ordinationibus, necon Monasteriorum sive Ordinibus predictīs vel
cuibuscumque Tenoribus & Formis etiam per modum Statuti & Ordinationis
perpetuorum & cum quibusvis etiam Derogatoriarum Derogatoris
fortioribus & insolitīs Clausulis ac irritantibus & aliis Decretis, etiam
Motu simili & ex certa Scientia ac de Apostolica Potestatis plenitudine,
etiam per Nos & Sedem tandem etiam iteratis vicibus concessīs confirmātis
& innovātis, etiam si in illis caveatur expressē quod illis etiam per quas-
cuinque Literas Apostolicas nullatenus derogari possit, nisi in Literis
quae iis derogares viderentur illorum omnium Tenores de verbo ad verbum
inserentur, & expressē appararet Romanum Pontificem illīs voluisses
derogare & causa urgens & sufficiens exprimatur & aliis certis modis &
formis observātis, quibus omnibus, illorum Tenores, ac si de verbo ad
verbum inserīs & forma in illīs tradīta observāta foret, Prahentibus pro
expressī habentes, illīs iōsi in suo robore permansūris, hac vice duntaxat
specialiter & expressē, Motā Scientiā & Potestate similīis, Derogāmus
ac etiam quibuscumque Defunctorum Testamentis ultimis Voluntātibus
Ordinationibus aut Dispositionibus, quaeunque Auctoritate confirmātis
corrobātis & consolidātis at quibuscumque Pesiani & Censuris Ecclesiastici
commūnis, super quorum omnium Testamentorum ultimārum Voluntatūm
Ordinationium & Dispositionum ea omnia & singula & illorum Tenores pro hic expressī & recitātis habentēs Immutatione Alteratione & in Usum prēdictum conversione & Translacione specialiter
and expressū Motū & Scientiā similīs Dispensamus, ac specialiter
quācumque Allegacione de non expresso vero Valore Bonus autor Annu
Redditūs Monasteriorum prēdictorum in Litteris nostrūs prestentutu
alicujus Constitutionis inde editæ Curiæve nostræ Stili aut aliās requisitō
& inserendo ceteraeque contrariūs quibuscumque,
Nullī ergo omnīno Hominum liceat hanc Paginam nostrārum Con-
cessionis, Unionis, Appropriationis, Incorporationis Extensionis, Amplia-
tionis, Derogationis, & Dispensationis infringere &c.
Dat in Vrbe Veteri Anno Incarnationis, Dominica Millesimo
Quingentesimo Vigesimo octavo, Pridie Id. Maii Pontificatūs nostri Anno
Quinto.

Clemens Papa Septimus,

Super pliçam,

Hen. d' Bussevo,

Sub Sigillo plumbeo pendentē a filo servicis flavi rubēique 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, fudgelwight,
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