

Chelsworth was visited, and its extremely interesting church inspected. The curious fresco over the chancel arch, representing the Day of Judgement, was a feature which naturally attracted much attention. There were many other objects which were of great interest from an archæological point of view, and it was generally felt that the church was one which would well repay a more extended visit. From Chelsworth the party drove to Bildeston Rectory to inspect the valuable antiquarian collection of the Rev. James Beck, by whom they were hospitably entertained.

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GENERAL MEETING.—SHELLEY, POLSTEAD, BOXFORD,  
KERSEY, AND HADLEIGH. *August 23, 1883.*

It would have been hardly possible to have chosen a finer day than the members of the Suffolk Institute enjoyed throughout this excursion. The heat was intense, and the dust very intrusive, but beyond these slight discomforts, nothing could have been more enjoyable. It was arranged that the members should be at the starting point, the White Lion, Hadleigh, at 9.30 a.m., but more presented themselves than were expected, and owing to difficulty in obtaining horses, the expedition did not start until a much later hour. The first place named in the list was Layham. It was approached through genuine old Suffolk lanes, full of quiet peaceful beauty, to which even a party of archæologists seemed much like desecration. The first halt was made at Overbury Hall, the residence of J. F. Dipnall, Esq. The name is, of course, derived from the Saxon Ueberbury, and there is the corresponding Netherbury, about a mile and a half the other side of Hadleigh. The dining-room was originally all of oak, but some parts have been restored. It has a unique ceiling formed of close set oak beams, dating back perhaps as far as the house, to 1520. A second room had at one time evidently been divided into several, the beams marking the original divisions still remaining. Mr. Dipnall pointed out the Tudor windows with their carving, and mentioned that ten years ago these were hidden in plaster, and had only just been properly restored. Layham church was not visited, and the next object was the church of All Saints, at Shelley, a pretty little Perpendicular structure. Against the wall of the chancel are the perfect remains of a panelled oak canopy, which used to belong to a pew occupied by some noble frequenters of the church. The chapel, now the vestry, of some unknown patron, contains his coat of arms and an iron and wood structure, like a small gallows, which is supposed to have been for the purpose of hanging a banner therefrom when the family attended here. The carved heads of the choir stalls are exceptionally well preserved, and bear the arms of Tynley quartered on Thorpe. An adjoining pew has some well-carved panels of the old "linen" pattern. On an altar tomb is the recumbent effigy in stone of Dame Margaret Tynley, in Elizabethan costume, bearing the date

1598. After some of the inscriptions on tombs in the churchyard had been copied, the party proceeded to Shelley Hall, the residence of Mr. Charles Partridge, in the occupancy of whose family the hall has been for the past 140 years. The three griffins of the Tylney arms seem almost ubiquitous, and above them in one place on the wall is a motto in Norman French, signifying "Hope gives me strength." In a bedroom of the house are some very fine carved oak panels above the chimney piece. The Dutch tiles of the fire-place are probably of later date. One corner of the house, from its ornamented buttresses and general structure, was undoubtedly the chapel. The whole fabric presents a most picturesque appearance, built of red brick in Tudor style. The entrance is underneath the shade of two old yew trees, which looked as if they might be as old as the house itself. A somewhat curious feature is presented by a piece of land adjoining the hall completely surrounded by a moat, looking as if it were intended to preserve from attack the food supplies of the inhabitants. The manor in the time of Henry IV. was held by John d'Orby and Adam Blyston of the King, at the annual rent of twenty pence. The hall for over three centuries being the residence of the Tylneys, accounts for the frequent occurrence of their crest. From here the major part of the visitors took a short cut across the fields, over a hill commanding very fine views of the country for miles round, to Gifford's Hall. This is in the parish of Stoke-by-Nayland, and is most charmingly placed, almost buried in trees, and approached by a long avenue of lime trees, but in sorry condition owing to want of use. The mansion is the property of Walter Mannock, Esq., coming into the possession of the Mannocks by purchase from the Crown in 1428. About two centuries before this the manor was held by Richard Constable, who built the chapel of St. Nicholas, the ivy-mantled remains of which are opposite the entrance to the hall. Considerable doubt exists as to whether this Richard Constable built the older part of the present mansion, the first record of it being in the time of Henry III., when it seems to have belonged to one Peter Gifford. In this latter family it remained from about the middle of the 13th to the middle of the 14th century. In the first year of Richard II., Simom Burley held the manor, and after him, John and Richard Withermarsh. It was purchased in 1428 by Phillip Mannock from the Crown, and was held by the different members of the Mannock family till 1814. Under the will of Lady Elizabeth Mannock, Patrick Power inherited the property, taking upon him the name of Mannock, and on his death in 1874 he was succeeded by his son, the present proprietor. The Mannocks seem to have been a very persecuted family for their religion, or rather want of religion, as in 1596 Queen Elizabeth let two-thirds of the estates to Richard Croft for Wm. Mannock's recusancy in not going to church. James I. pardoned him, and shortly afterwards forfeited two parts of the estate for further recusancy. Charles I. grants Francis Mannock a general pardon and creates him a baronet by letters patent, and in the same year orders an inquisition to be taken of his

estate for recusancy. There are several monuments to this family in Stoke-by-Nayland Church, the principal one being a recumbent figure of Sir Francis Mannoek in alabaster. The Hall like most Elizabethan mansions, is a huge rambling old place, surrounding a quadrangular court, to which a fine gateway gives entrance. Over this latter, which has frequently been engraved, is a shield bearing the arms of Mannoek. It is of red brick, the greater portion of it being re-built in the reigns of Henry VII. and VIII. Crossing the courtyard, the party were invited to enter, first, the grand old dining hall, with its fine oak roof and oak carvings. It is a lofty room, with a minstrels' gallery on one side. Here Mr. F. Machell Smith read some interesting notes on the Hall and its history, the substance of which is given above. The Tapestry Chamber was next visited, some very quaint Flemish tapestries giving the room its name. One of these gives a representation of the house itself, and another is that of the chapel referred to above, built by Richard Constable. A curious hiding-place giving access to the chimney was here shown. It has a false door covered with tapestry, which would be, if perfect, quite indistinguishable from the rest, and afford effective concealment. In the panelled-room there is said to be a sliding panel opening into a passage communicating with the exterior, but although diligent search has been made none can be discovered. There is also said to be a subterranean passage to the chapel, but the entrance cannot be found. An oak gallery runs quite round the house, containing portraits of family-ancestors. Up a winding stairway, past the back of the old timepiece which has a face to the minstrels' gallery, one arrives on the top of the turret, from which a fine view can be obtained of the gardens and grounds attached to the house; then into the room, which was formerly the chapel, attached to the hall; thence through numberless passages and rooms, filled with nick-nacks and most lovely objects. Some grand specimens of inlaid work, in the shape of escritaires, &c., attracted much attention, and it is to be feared that the tenth commandment was broken more than once, perhaps at the sight of some fine old clock, panel, bronze, or any of the thousand and one beautiful things that crowded the rooms. Many regrets were expressed at the time being so short. Leaving Gifford's Hall about one o'clock, the next place on the programme was Polstead church, which ought to have been reached at 11.30. Just before reaching this, one passes the site of the Red Barn, of Polstead, the scene of the murder of Maria Martin. It was stated that in the Archæological library at Bury St. Edmund's there was a history of the murder bound in the skin of the murderer! The barn itself was burnt down years ago, but the house in which the unfortunate woman lived, and her tomb in the churchyard, were pointed out to the visitors. In this churchyard there is a "Gospel Oak," which doubtless has heard many a fiery denunciation of sinners in days gone by. The church itself, dedicated to St. Mary, is Norman. It possesses the somewhat unusual distinction of a stone spire. Having just been restored, everything looks fresh and clean, but the

characteristic features have been well preserved. The pulpit, a modern structure, has one of the old sounding boards still suspended over it. The remains of a painted ceiling still exist in the north aisle; but the chief interest centred in a splendid Norman arch under the tower, the moulding quite perfect, and the care bestowed upon it seems to indicate that this was originally the principal entrance to the church. This was quite a discovery, as no mention of any Norman doorway was given in works referred to by the members. The font is supported by five pillars, and is well preserved. No time could be wasted here, so leaving the church, and passing by Polstead Park, with the deer reclining in the shady groves, the excursion wended its way to Boxford church, a fine structure, with a most elaborate stone porch on the south side. On entering the church the first object which meets one's eye is the font, with its plain wooden cover painted inside with various mottos and devices. The nave is lofty, and so are the pews! Some remains of brasses still exhibit traces of very fine work; one of these bears the date 1598. At the west end is a rood loft opening in one direction upon the roof. The east window has five lights, and exhibits some very fair tracery. By far the most interesting part of the church, however, was the north porch, often called "Death's porch," because the dead were brought in at the south and carried out at the north door. This is quite a unique specimen of woodwork. It is of oak and richly carved. The light spandrils, arranged in the same form as the groins in a stone roof, are still perfect, and the tracery of the sides and roof is in exceptionally good condition. The exterior of this structure has suffered considerably. An inscription on a tombstone in the church tells of a lady, "Elizabeth Hyam, of this parish," who had buried four husbands, and then "was hastened to her end on the 4th of May, 1748, in her 113th year." Kersey church was the next on the list. This is a Perpendicular structure, with a lofty tower overlooking the quiet little village, which nestles quite down in the hollow. This church is dedicated to St. Mary. It was repaired about 1851, and the chancel rebuilt in 1862. The Provost and Fellows of King's College, Cambridge, are the patrons and appropriators. With its pinnacled buttresses and somewhat ornate style, the church presents a pretty appearance from the roadway. The interior, like those of all the churches in this district, is carefully whitewashed, no regard being paid to oak carving or delicate moulding—whitewash is omnipotent. It makes the inside look very clean certainly, but one occasionally wishes for a little more variety. The octagonal font has some well cut panels, with angels bearing shields, and, what is rarer still, some with a rose pattern, which produce a very good effect. There is some most elaborate carved oak work in the north aisle—white-washed of course,—representing scenes from our Lord's life. A recess in the wall evidently contained the finish of this, but the figures have long since disappeared; judging, however, from the lovely work displayed above, this tail-piece must originally have been a grand piece of work. Some discussion took place as to the meaning of a high

pew in Sampson's chapel, as it is called, with some elaborately painted panels, representations of kings or saints; the conclusion arrived at was that these panels belonged to a rood screen, which had been cut down, and its lower part used for the side of this pew. There are still to be seen two brasses partly covered by one of the pews, evidently representing the children of a person, the brass of whom, if it exists, is underneath the pew. The next place to visit was the Priory, but as dinner had been ordered at the White Lion, Hadleigh, for 3 p.m., after some consultation it was decided to leave out the Priory. A general meeting of the members was afterwards held, at the close of which most of the members took the opportunity of viewing the church of St. Mary, the history of which, written by the late Rev. Hugh Pigot, formed Part I. of the third volume of the Society's 'Proceedings.' It is a large and handsome structure, with a lofty nave and aisles. The altar window has seven principal lights filled with fine stained glass; the window at the east end of the chancel is in memory of the wife of a late rector, by whom the chancel was restored and re-seated in 1859. It is by Hedgeland, from a painting by Overbeck, representing Christ blessing little children. Some of the members expressed very strongly their sense of the incongruity of the gaudy texts at the west end of the nave. They have only been placed there quite recently, and are decidedly out of harmony with the rest of the building. After this the party broke up, expressing their great pleasure at the success of the excursion, and congratulating Mr. F. Machell Smith on his able discharge of the arduous duties of leader.

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GENERAL MEETING.—CHIPPENHAM, LANDWADE,  
AND SNAILWELL. *June 6, 1884.*

Notwithstanding the threatening aspect of the weather, which proved as bad in reality as the gloomiest imagination could have anticipated, there was a very good muster of members, most of whom left Bury St. Edmund's for Kennett station by the 11.30 train. Conveyances were in waiting at Kennett station, and a start was made for Kentford church. The short journey of half a mile crossed the boundary between Suffolk and Cambridgeshire. No arrangements had been made for a prolonged stay at this point, and the excursionists made but a cursory inspection of the church. The building does not, in fact, present many features of interest. It dates from the 14th century, and is a combination of Decorated and Perpendicular work; the only feature attracting attention was a rose window, of five lights, filled with stained glass, and placed in the tower; a gargoyle over the porch also caught the eye, but the roof of the church is hidden, the interior is whitewashed, and there is nothing calling for special notice. A start was then made for Chippenham Park, and the drive to the entrance was pleasant and enjoyable. On the way an ancient tumulus was pointed out, and the party crossed the old coach-road from London to