

The
Suffolk Institute of Archaeology
AND
Natural History.

ABSTRACT OF PROCEEDINGS, 1885—1887.

THE Council met at the Athenæum, Bury S. Edmund's, on the 27th of March, 1885. Five members were present, the Lord John Hervey presiding. The Report for the past year and Statement of Accounts, were submitted to the Council and approved.

The General Annual Meeting of Members was held at the same place a few hours later. Besides the President there were also present Mr. Beckford Bevan, Mr. E. M. Dewing, Dr. Hetherington, Mr. R. Burrell, the Rev. Francis Haslewood, F.S.A., Mr. H. F. Bacon, Mr. J. C. Ford, Mr. H. Prigg, and the Rev. C. H. Evelyn White, the honorary secretary. The Minutes of the last General Annual Meeting, and of the subsequent General Meeting at Ipswich, having been read and confirmed, the Report followed, which appears at the end of part 2, vol. vi.

Mr. F. Machell Smith having left Bury and vacated the office of honorary secretary and treasurer, Mr. E. M. Dewing was elected unanimously, to fill the office of honorary secretary in conjunction with the Rev. C. H. Evelyn White.

The Rev. Francis Haslewood, F.S.A., and Mr. Robert Burrell were elected upon the Council, and one new member joined the Institute.

GENERAL MEETING.—GREAT YARMOUTH, GORLESTON,
BURGH, BRADWELL, BELTON, FRITTON,
JULY 6th, 1885.

Monday was chosen for the Summer Excursion of the Members of the Institute. The party numbered about 20 ladies and gentlemen, including Lord John Hervey, Rev. Dr. Raven, Rev. Dr. Creswell, Rev.

W. H. Sewell, Messrs. Freeman Wright, B. Binyon, Felix Cobbold, Mrs. Turner, of Ixworth Abbey, and Rev. C. H. Evelyn White, hon. sec. The rendezvous was the Southtown Station, at Great Yarmouth, and about ten o'clock, the excursionists proceeded by tramcar to the quaint, but pretty, suburb of Gorleston.

GORLESTON CHURCH.

The vicar, Rev. A. R. Abbott, welcomed the members to his Church, and explained that so far as the fabric itself was concerned, it had remained unaltered during the period of his vicariate. As to the architecture, the north and south aisles, he said, were early English, as was also the fine high tower, with the exception of the upper storey. The building was formerly rich in decoration, but had sadly suffered at the hands of the Puritans. The Vicar read an extract from the diary of Jessop, telling of his deeds of spoliation, how he took up 20 brazen superstitious inscriptions, *Ora pro nobis*, in the chancel; broke 12 apostles carved in wood; ordered Moses with his rod, and Aaron with his mitre, to be taken down; destroyed the organ, rent in pieces a hood and surplices; and ordered the altar steps to be levelled by the parson of the town. (See Proceedings of Suffolk Institute, vol. vi, p. 244).

The Font especially suffered; evidence of its former beauty being clearly visible in the headless figures and broken base of stone-work. It was carved to represent the Seven Sacraments—the Eucharist, Holy Baptism, Confirmation, Penance, Orders, Matrimony, and Extreme Unction.

The Rev. A. R. Abbott in detailing information, added that the parishioners declined to assist Jessop in his work of spoliation, and he was compelled to leave untouched certain portions of the windows, only reached by the aid of ladders.

Amongst the relics shown to the visitors, was a cup with the date 1567 inscribed thereon: and another vessel, which it was stated could only have been used for domestic purposes, had been rescued; it bore the name of John Dawney, a churchwarden.

The Bacon chapel stands on the right of the altar, and fixed upon the wall is a fine effigy, one of four cross-legged effigies found in different parts of England. The brass (dated about 1320), appears to have been lost from the church for many years. The late Mr. Rokewood Gage, of Hengrave Hall, discovering it on sale in London, kindly restored the same to Gorleston, in a tolerably good state of preservation. Originally the effigy was represented as standing upon a boar, but only the outline of the animal now remains. The Rev. C. H. E. White remarked that a hog, was the emblem of that family. The figure is clothed in chain armour, and shows how fashions changed at that time as they do now. Only they in days of yore altered them for usefulness instead of fancy's sake. The heaviest brand and the keenest blade of the warrior would not cut through the chain armour, but a blow on the arm would often

break the bone. So they put plates on their arms and greaves on their legs, and this brass shows the introduction of the improvement. On the other side of the aisle is a slab with the name of Colonel Belfort, son of General Belfort, whose guns cut the Highlanders to pieces at Culloden. Having explored the church throughout, the Vicar was congratulated by the Rev. C. H. E. White upon the successful restoration that had already been accomplished.

BURGH CHURCH.

This church (dedicated to S. Peter), was first visited, by way of introduction to the more famous site of the old Roman camp. The architecture of the building is most depraved; the tower archway, possibly early English, has been much mutilated, and some corbel-like cuttings are the only indication of better days. Remains of two depressed arches may be seen on each side of the chancel, but the object of most interest, a fresco of S. Christopher, has disappeared. There is a great deal of Roman brick worked into the church, the upper portion of the curious round tower being entirely composed of similar modern material. The rood-loft staircase, to which access is gained from a little door behind the pulpit, is almost complete and is one of the most interesting features of an undoubtedly ancient building.

BURGH CASTLE.

Here the archæologists found much to interest them. The scene from the Prætorian gate, where the company gathered, was charmingly diversified and beautifully picturesque.

This celebrated Roman stronghold, the remains of which are still formidable in their decay, furnishes evidence, if proof were wanting, of the superiority of ancient materials for building purposes. What a contrast these ruined walls, with their ivy-grown bastions, of massive flint and mortar, which anciently were so zealously guarded by the stern Roman sentries, formed to the peaceful scene which now presented itself. Instead of the martial sound of arms, with all the paraphernalia of war and strife, there was the peaceful art of haymaking now going on. How vastly different was the appearance of this spot eighteen centuries ago, when those ancient warriors, ever watchful, kept their grim watch from the battlements of a fortress, the only remains of which are a crumbling ruin—a ruin which could tell many a wild tale of midnight attacks, misery, and bloodshed, as well as of gorgeous pageants and festivities.

Here under the shadow of the walls, the Rev. Dr. Raven, read his interesting paper on "Garianonum and the Count of the Saxon Shore." (See page 345.) Dr. Raven also pointed out the extraordinary hardness of the mortar in the walls, which would wear away pick axes faster than the latter could crumble the material itself. The walls, too, it was observed, were made over-hanging, to prevent them being scaled. The

country around, he said, might be called the Punjaub, the county of the five rivers. There were the Yare and the Waveney in front, the Wensum further away on one side, and then there were the Ant and the Bure, which at the time of the Conquest met the sea at Caistor. The question arose as to whether Caistor or Burgh were the older Roman occupation, and he thought that it was pretty clearly indicated by the coins found at both places that Caistor was the more ancient.

Having made a minute inspection of the ruin, the party advanced to the next stage of their journey.

BRADWELL CHURCH.

The Rev. John Walker, the rector, met the members at his church, which is dedicated to S. Nicholas. It consists of a round tower, nave, chancel, and a porch on the south side, and contains a very handsome font. There are few special features beyond a lofty oak roof, and unusually small clerestory windows, also a circular window in the tower. In the chancel is a richly sculptured monument to the memory of some of the Vesey family. A fragment of Norman masonry worked into one of the chancel buttresses indicates that an older church formerly occupied the site. The church has undergone restoration. The altar rails afford an excellent specimen of carving, but they are not antique.

By invitation of the Rector the party lunched at Bradwell Rectory. When luncheon was over, a meeting was held in the drawing-room, for the despatch of business. Four new members were elected, namely the Revs. S. F. Creswell, D.D., Cecil Deedes, W. Borrow, and Mr. Herbert Fison. A resolution was passed that Sudbury should be the next place of meeting. A vote of thanks was awarded to the Rector of Bradwell for his kind hospitality, and to the Rev. E. White for arranging the excursion. The Honorary Secretary in acknowledging the vote of thanks, expressed the obligation both he and the society were under to the Rev. Dr. Raven for his valuable assistance, without which the excursion could scarcely have been held.

BELTON CHURCH.

Here the members were cordially welcomed by the Rev. T. G. F. Howes and his family, who during their long residence in the parish (a period of half a century), have most conscientiously preserved and renovated the sacred edifice committed to their care. The church is dedicated to All Saints. The beautifully proportioned round tower has been thoroughly rebuilt, and with its facing of split flints presents a substantial appearance. Mural paintings, from which the whitewash was scraped in 1848, appear upon the north wall of the nave. The Rev. E. White exhibited some exquisite sketches of these frescoes, in volumes

temporarily placed at the disposal of the society by Mr. Henry Watling, of Stonham, and the Rector directed attention to a photograph and original paintings by Winter. The subjects are S. James the Less, and the legend of the "Three Quick" and the "Three Dead," the latter painted over a portion of S. Christopher. Tradition has it that three kings went out hunting with all the gorgeous display peculiar to the times, when they came across three skeletons, whose appearance seemed to create no little consternation among the royal party, to which the scrolls will testify. Some are defaced, but they are to be read as follows:—the first king is represented as saying, "O benedicite;" the second, "O marvellous syte is that I see;" and the third monarch . . . "I wyl fle." The octagonal font is of Purbeck marble; a few years since remains of a rude square Norman font were discovered below, where it formed a kind of well. This now stands in the chancel. The church possesses an Elizabethan chalice, dated 1547, and inscribed "Ye towne of Belton."

FRITTON CHURCH.

This church, dedicated to S. Edmund, has a thatched roof and low round tower containing one bell, and consists of a navé and chancel, with a porch on the south side, and a handsome font. The chancel has a circular apse with stone roof, possibly Norman. The ancient fabric was thoroughly repaired in 1855. The register dates from 1691. There are frescoes on the walls of S. Christopher, with his staff, bearing the infant Saviour and S. John. One of the members, the Rev. W. H. Sewell, drew especial attention to a piscina on the right side of the communion rail, containing a bowl for lavabo water or ablutions. The curious groined vaulting in this church it was remarked, struck one as wholly suggestive of Saxon work. The windows are unusually small and the walls of extraordinary thickness, these latter being of more ancient date than the former.

It had been arranged to take a turn on Fritton Lake, but this time would not allow. In the churchyard Mr. White, however, read a letter from Mr. W. M. Crowfoot, of Beccles, on the subject of this supposed lake dwelling. The late Mr. J. Larkman, Mr. Crowfoot stated, had informed him that a gentleman owning property at Lound, examined Fritton Decoy in search of treasures supposed to have been hidden there by smugglers, for which he had an iron cylinder constructed to pump out the water. All he found, however, was a hard platform, composed of chalk or marl, surrounded by stakes or wood-work of some description, used, he supposed, for washing sheep. Mr. Crowfoot propounded the idea that these hard bottoms may have been formed for some such purpose as the steeping of hemp, which was formerly extensively carried on in the district.

A start was then made for Yarmouth, which was reached a little before five.