

The  
Suffolk Institute of Archæology  
AND  
Natural History.

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ABSTRACT OF PROCEEDINGS, 1889.

GENERAL MEETING.—BUXHALL, RATTLEDEN, GEDDING,  
THORPE, MORIEUX, LAVENHAM, BRETTENHAM.

THE Annual Excursion of the Institute took place on Thursday, July 18th, 1889, when a large number of members and their friends assembled at the railway station, Stowmarket, to carry out the programme which had been arranged by the Council. The route lay through Finborough to

BUXHALL.

The vehicles halted at the entrance to the church, where the Society was welcomed by the rector, the Rev. Henry Hill, B.A., who read the following paper on the building, which is dedicated to St. Mary :—

At the request of your worthy Secretary I have compiled a few remarks on the salient points of the building, premising that I am by no means a *savant* on the subject. After looking through Parker's *Architecture*, I am by no means decided as to the style being Perpendicular, Early English, or Decorated. Beginning with the exterior, I would say the building is one of massive simplicity, but I cannot agree with the Davy MSS. (1826), in calling it clumsy. The steeple is very large, 20 feet square and some 95 feet high, with buttresses running up higher than usual, and contains five bells (*vide* Dr. Raven's book). The stone water-spouts are very good. The chancel is battlemented with freestone, the church with brick. The original battlements were used as coping for the churchyard wall, and now lie ready for replacement. That there was a very high-pitched roof is evident from marks on the steeple, as well as the break of the arches inside by the flat roof, dated 1656. At the south-east end will be found two buttresses at right angles, and the north one on the skew. Over the east window is an

iron cross, and a handsome pinnacle at each corner. The porch has a niche in front for a figure, but the iconoclast has been here as well as inside. On entering the church, midway between the north and south door, is a large and handsome octagon font, with all its faces carved alike. The west window—surely perpendicular—contains four figures, probably the four Marys, actually rescued from a heap of painted glass found in the steeple some 40 years ago. The staircase to the rood loft is on the north side of the chancel arch, and on the south is a piscina, and there is also a spare one to be seen. The side windows of the church are like those of the chancel, with one cusp instead of two. The hollow fluting of the arch would mark Early English style, while the angles of the abacus would be called Decorated. All must allow the east window to be very unique—some say modern. As a specimen of the Decorated style, it may be compared with that of Austin Friar's, London, 1350. (Parker, p. 140.) At the south-east angle is a fine canopied double piscina with sedilia adjoining, but it is a point of doubt from the existing tracery whether arches were ever carried on so as to intersect the window. In front of the sedilia is placed a stone coffin lid with lance or standard (of some Crusader?) found under the old pews, and now called the Founder's Tomb. In the first side-window is a coat of arms much broken and patched: Copinger on a fess argent: 3 plates, with part of an inscription. In the next another coat is probably Gu: 3 Cocks, or: perhaps alluding to St. Peter's denial, or a property called Cockerell's Hall. In the next was a figure (now gone, and its place filled up with scraps), between two angels and part of another figure, probably our Saviour with a staff in his hand. Below are the remains of some legend in which the name of Pilate is seen. On the front of the seats are carved the arms of families who married Copingers. The large monumental slab of 1668 formed the passage between the pews, and got worn. A copy is given by Davy. The other Copinger slabs are still legible (1675 and 1648). (*Copinger History*, p. 333-39, 386.) Those members of the Institute who go on to Lavenham will find a monument to a member of this family. As to the present state of the church (restored 1876), I may be allowed to say that on removing the pews evidence of the original—shall I say—oak benches were found, but utterly cut to pieces. The bench end carving in the church, and likewise in the chancel, is copied from the windows. The pulpit is traced according to the west window. Without being considered egotistical, I may say the first member of my family of whom record is made as holding the living was John Copinger, 1416, who afterwards became lord of the manor (like myself). Omitting a brief space of some 150 years, a list of rectors is given from 1569 downwards:—

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|------|------------------------|------|---------------------|
| 1416 | John Copinger .....    | 1708 | George Watson ..... |
| 1569 | Ambrose Copinger ..... | 1719 | Thomas Hill .....   |
| 1570 | George Dickinson ..... | 1743 | Henry Hill .....    |
| 1619 | Ambrose Copinger ..... | 1776 | Henry Hill .....    |
| 1644 | Pelo Devereux .....    | 1826 | Charles Green ..... |
| 1644 | Thomas Copinger .....  | 1852 | Copinger Hill ..... |
| 1662 | William Copinger ..... | 1870 | Henry Hill .....    |
| 1685 | William Copinger ..... |      |                     |