

who was the probable Junius, resided at the present rectory (not then the rectory) for a part of each year from 1811 to about 1830.

The Parish Registers from 1559 to 1850 have been published. In the original register mention is made of a portrait of Sir John Crofts, drawn in 1612 in his 49th year. This picture was moved from Little Saxham to West Harling in the 18th century. Where is it now? A portrait of William, Lord Crofts, which was engraved for Gage's "History of the Thingoe Hundred," is at Althorpe, Lord Croft's second wife being a Spencer. Might not a complete list of Suffolk portraits be worth printing in some future volume of the Suffolk Archæological Institute?

### EXCURSION TO LITTLE WENHAM.

There are in Suffolk few places of greater interest than the Hall and Church of Little Wenham. Antiquaries have for some years past been sorely grieved to notice that these historic buildings of the 13th century were gradually falling into ruins. Efforts have been made to rouse sufficient public interest to secure them from utter decay; but it was not until the Hall was purchased by G. E. Crisp, Esq., of Playford Hall, that any prospect of saving these unique specimens of Early English architecture appeared. With his characteristic zeal for the preservation of ancient buildings, Mr. Crisp, as soon as he became the owner of what is locally known as Wenham Castle, set to work to stay further dilapidation, and to retain all the features and details of the early edifice. When satisfactory progress had been made in the work he kindly invited the members of the Institute to visit the Hall, to see those beauties of the architecture which had been concealed for so long a time under a massive growth of ivy.

The extent to which the excursion, held on August 31st, 1901, was patronised, proves how greatly his invitation was appreciated. Well-filled carriages started from the Cornhill, Ipswich, and were accompanied by numerous cyclists, who arrived to find other visitors in motor cars and carriages had preceded them. The attendance upon this occasion was equal to, if not greater than, that of the excursion to Icklingham.

The visitors first assembled in the church, with falling roof, broken-down pews, and desecrated chancel, bearing all the signs of neglect. Beneath the ruins and *débris* were marks of the skilful masons' hands which placed the stones upon each other. The Hon. Secretary read a letter from Dr. H. T. Bensly, of the Diocesan Registry, Norwich, from which it appeared that efforts were being

made by persons interested in the building, notably Miss Rosa Crisp, to preserve the church from further ruin, by replacing the roof and windows before the winter storms came on. From a paper read by Mr. V. B. Redstone it was shewn that in the time of the Domesday Wenham Combusta, or Great Wenham, and Little Wenham formed one district, containing two or more manors. Little Wenham Church was distinctly a manorial church, and, with the manor, once the property of Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, fell into the hands of the Bigods in 1070. In the 13th century it formed part of the possessions of the Brewses, who were great church-builders. Wherever the family held lands some member has recorded his connection with the Church. It has been stated by Page and other historians that the Brewses were first connected with Little Wenham in the reign of Henry vi., and that the church was probably built by a member of the Holbroke family. The Brewses were, however, connected with Little Wenham in 1336, for John de Breouse, then parson of the church of Stradbroke, and William de Breouse, parson of the church of Little Wenham, settled the manors of Little Wenham and of Brent Wenham, and the advowson of the church of Little Wenham, on William de Holebroke and Amice his wife in tail male, or in default on the heirs of William de Holbroke. Whilst there are many marks of the presence of the Brewses, there remains no sign of a Holbroke having worshipped in the church. When a close inspection has been made of the "Castle," it will be seen that church and hall were planned by the same architect and reared by the same masons. The first impression of the architecture of a building is obtained from the appearance of the windows; in this instance the lancet windows and the sedilia fix the date of erection to be 1260-1270. The deep recess of the "low window" is very noticeable, but its similarity to the "low window" of the "Castle" chapel shows that it could not have been used for a "leper's window." Low windows are to be found principally in Early English churches. The east window, with its three lights and three quatrefoils, is the exact counterpart of the east window to be seen in the chapel before mentioned. The north window, with its falling mullions, was in style late Perpendicular, and once bore in stained glass the many shields marking the alliances of the Brewse family. The double-canopied brass to Thomas Brewse and his wife Jane, 1514, may be coeval with the altar tomb within the south wall. There are many features which excite a curiosity difficult to satisfy. The shelving grove in the east wall may have been the site of the Easter sepulchre; within the arch near the south door was probably fixed a holy water stoup, and the frescoes on the east wall may once have represented some saints connected with the dedication of the church. The foundation of the rood screen is still standing; upon it is scratched, in Elizabethan Court-hand, G. Brewse, with date in Latin. (Giles Brewse, was the only son of Sir John Brewse, by his second wife). He died at Toddington, co. Beds., and his "*Vale, 1584,*"

carved upon the portals of the Castle fixes the period when the Brewses quitted this their ancestral home.

Since the visit to the church Miss Rosa Crisp has received enough encouragement to be able to commence the work of preservation; the roof is now entirely relaid. During the progress of the work the doorway to the rood loft has been opened, the piscina to the altar tomb has been uncovered, and sufficient material has been collected to enable the old font to be reconstructed.

More funds are needed to make this church suitable for worship, and not to be retained solely as a museum.

After the reading of the paper an adjournment was made to the farmhouse adjacent to the Hall, where, through the kindness of Mr. and Miss Curtis, Mr. Crisp and his sister were able to dispense hospitality towards their guests.

When tea was finished the visitors assembled in the "Sovereign" or "banqueting" room of the Hall, an apartment 40 feet in length, approached from without by a flight of steps, instead of, as formerly, by a circular staircase within the massive wall. In this room the Hon. Secretary read a short paper before making a survey of the building. The extensive earthworks of Offton and the circular moats of Denham were never protected by embattlements, and the castellated manor-houses of Mettingham, Southwold, and Little Wenham never had their defences tested as did the Royal and Baronial Castles of Bungay, Framlingham, Waltou, and Orford. A monumental inscription within the church states that Sir Thomas de Brewse was Lord of the Manor, and resided at Wenham, in 1500. It is probable that his son Robert, who succeeded him in 1514, made those alterations of the building which are of the perpendicular style of architecture. The abundant use of Flemish bricks, "*wall-tiles*," and bricks stamped with the cross crosslet of the Brewses, mark the work of still earlier alterations than those alluded to in the legend over the west door, "*Cecy fait à l'aide de Dieu l'an de Grace, 1569.*" In making an inspection of the outer walls, proceeding from the west door northwards, we pass a narrow lancet window, and the massive buttress on which the lines of the old sundial are faintly visible. Upon the buttresses, corner-stones, and throughout the Castle, three distinct marks are frequently repeated—one is a **Z** running from right to left, and from left to right, or in combination; another is a **W**, with the final stroke converted into the figure 6; and the third is a triangle, with the right side produced downwards. The window of the Sovereign room has its dripstone of the same character as those over the church windows. Above may be seen the narrow window of the chapel corresponding to the "low window" of the church. The flint and stone used in the construction of the walls resembles the seashore stone of which Orford Castle is built; in places the weather has so acted upon the stone that it is fretted and branched like coral. The banqueting room—with its Tudor

recess, wherein the massive gold and silver plate used at the feast was washed in sight of the lord, the extensive hearth, with its charred beam, the windows, with deep recesses, used as seats, the glazed tiles of the floor, once strewn with reeds and rushes, and its fine oak ceiling— attracts attention ; but the most charming spot is the chapel, with its piscina and sedilia, its vaulted roof and carved figure in the vesica, with uplifted hands, in the act of benediction. Wenham is worthy of a pilgrimage to see this room alone. An approach is gained to the roof by passing through the chapel and ascending a winding staircase. Through the loop-holes an extensive view may be obtained of the surrounding country, and a close inspection of the curious chimney may be made.

After the reading of the paper Col. the Hon. H. W. L. Corry thanked Mr. Crisp for having invited the members to Little Wenham, he said it was a matter of congratulation that these ancient buildings had passed into the hands of a gentleman so deeply interested in matters of archæological and of antiquarian interest. The restored buildings would stand as a memorial to Mr. Crisp's generosity. A vote of thanks was passed to Miss Crisp and to Miss Rosa Crisp for their hospitality, and for the deep interest and sympathy with which they supported their brother's work.