

ANNUAL EXCURSION.

THURSDAY, JULY 29TH, 1908.

The Excursion for the year 1908 proved both pleasant and interesting. The district visited by the Institute was the neighbourhood of Monks' Eleigh, and, although no great halls were visited, yet the area selected afforded many historical sites which attracted the attention of the visitors.

Lavenham was chosen as the starting place; thence the conveyances proceeded along the valley of the Bret, through Brent Eleigh to Milden Church. At Brent Eleigh attention was drawn to various stud and plaster houses of the 16th century. The gateway, once the entrance to Welles Hall, also attracted attention. This gateway is a small Tudor erection; the old hall, which was standing in 1658, no longer exists. The windows contained many shields in coloured glass to mark the descent of the Shorlands, occupiers of the Hall (Arms: *Azure, 6 lioncells rampant argent, and canton ermine*), from blood royal. The Hall took its name from the Welles or Wellys family of Suffolk. This family had extensive possessions in the Babergh Hundred. The last of the family to occupy the Hall was Erkenwald Wellys, son and heir of Alice Welles. He sold the manor and adjacent lands to Ralph Shelton, of Brent Eleigh, in 1478 (*Suffolk Feet of Fines, 16 Edward iv., No. 8*). The owner of Welles Hall in 1579, after the Shorlands, was Paul D'Ewes, writing master to Edward vi. Sir Simon D'Ewes resided at the hall before he went to Lavenham. After leaving the gateway the conveyances ascended a long steep hill till a four leet way was reached, when a turning was made to the left for Milden Church.

There the visitors were received by the Rev. W. D. and Mrs. Churchill. The Rector gave a short paper on the church, which has the appearance of a building retaining many of its early characteristics. There is a good Norman south doorway; a very early window in the south wall displays deep splays; an ancient square font stands upon a round pillar; carved oak beams span the nave from the south to the north wall; the pulpit is an excellent specimen of Jacobean workmanship; the walls are formed of material similar to stones gathered from the fields, and are strengthened at the corners by hewn stone of long and short work. The north porch is now used as a vestry. There are some quaint "Churchwarden" pews of the 17th century. The sockets which formerly received the bar to close the north door still remain visible. The windows are of various sizes and architecture, in one window are two quarrels of old stained glass. The most interesting feature within the church is a finely carved tomb placed within the north wall of the chancel. The recumbent alabaster figure, with head reclining upon four carved volumes, represents a knight clad in ancient armour, as an effigy of one James Allington who died in 1628. He was the son of Robert Allington and Margaret, daughter of William Conningsbye, of King's Lynn (*Proceedings of Suff. Inst. of Arch.*, vol. iv., p. 121). His nephew, Sir Giles Allington, of Horseheath, succeeded to the estates (*Chancery Proceedings, Dep. Keeper's Report 43, App. i.*, p. 120). An early writer considers the monument to have been "carved by a deceitful workman," probably because the artificer has represented armour of an older date than that which was worn in the period when James Allington died. Symbols of death and burial—hour-glass, cross-bones, spade and mattock—are carved upon the monument. William, Lord Allington, was patron of Milden. In 1662 he nominated the Rev. Henry Harrison, A.M., to the benefice. Mr. Harrison neglected his cure, and his successor, the Rev. William Burkitt, A.M., was appointed in his stead, 31 Jan., 1678.

This eminent divine was the writer of the once very popular "Expository Notes on the New Testament." He was the second son of the Rev. Miles Burkitt, of Hitcham and Sudbury, and died at Dedham, Sunday, 24 Oct., 1703. His successor to the living was nominated by Miles Burkitt, gent. Burkitt held the vicarage and lectureship at Dedham, as well as the benefice at Milden (1692—1703).

Attention was drawn by the Rector to the sale, by his predecessor, of a valuable library belonging to the church of Milden. The books were bequeathed to the incumbent of Milden for the time being, by the Rev. W. Burkitt, and it was the unanimous opinion of all present that strong efforts should be made to recover the volumes, many of which were considered to be rare editions of good works. An excellent portrait of Burkitt, woven in silk, was exhibited. The lack of time prevented the visitors from accepting the kind hospitality which the Rector and Mrs. Churchill desired to extend towards them.

The company was then driven through pretty country lanes, and at several points were able to obtain a most extensive view of the neighbourhood. The next stopping place was the Chapel Farm, Lindsey, where an inspection was made of the remains of the old manorial chapel of St. James. Its owner, Mrs. Arthy, owing to a serious illness was not present, but she had granted permission for her visitors to examine any part of the premises. Her two sons acted as guides. The building, which was once the chapel, forms a conspicuous part of the out-buildings attached to the farm. It has recently been carefully restored, and since the visit of the Institute some of the pinnacles or leaning sheds have been taken down from the sides of its south and east walls. The building is one of exceptional interest; it was erected in the 12th century, but the main features of its present structure belong to the 13th and 15th centuries. Its history is given, and the details of its architecture, as well as plans, which have been supplied by a member, Mr. H. J. Wright, appear in an

accompanying paper. The photographs, which give an accurate idea of the present buildings, have been presented to the Institute by Mr. Wright's son.

Many additional members joined the party, now more than sixty in number, at Lindsey, and proceeded from the Chapel through some adjacent fields to the site of Lindsey Castle, marked on the Ordnance Survey as "The Mounts." The Hon. Excursion Secretary read a paper upon the history of Lindsey Castle.

The next stopping place was Chelsworth Church, where the party was met by the vicar, the Rev. E. J. Teesdale, who had obtained the services of Mr. R. Pocklington, a member of a family who for many years occupied Chelsworth Hall. This church possesses an ancient painting of the Last Judgment, depicted upon the wall over the chancel arch. A copy of the picture is given in Volume I., p. 146, of the Proceedings of the Institute. The painting was discovered in September, 1849, by some workmen, who were cleaning the walls of the church. "It represents our Saviour sitting on the throne of Judgment, with his hands extended and a crown of glory." The throne is a rainbow of three colours. On the right of Our Lord is the Virgin Mary and the Apostles; on His left is St. Peter. The usual scene and grotesque figures, which generally form the subject of such pictures, also appear in this painting. A second mural painting, supposed to have reference to Ahab coveting the vineyard of Naboth, appears over the great western arch. The paintings were restored by Mr. Mason, an Ipswich artist. Attention was chiefly directed towards a fine specimen of a canopy, which once covered a mural monument of some importance. Various opinions were given, and many suggestions were made, as to its early position and use. There was a general agreement that the monument had been subject to more than one removal. The squares of diaper work which forms part of the canopy, were probably carved about the year 1330. It is considered that the work formed part of a mural

tomb erected to the memory of John de St. Philiberto, who held the right of free warren in Chelsworth in 1327, and who died before the year 1334. Some old stained glass called for special notice. The arms of St. Philibert, Earl of Savoy (*argent a cross gules*), are to be seen in Hadleigh church.

The company then quitted Chelsworth for Monks Eleigh, where a halt was made at "The Lion" for luncheon, after which a visit was made to the church. There the rector, the Rev. the Hon. A. F. Northcote, read a paper, giving an account of the history and architecture of the church. Attention was paid to a piscina in the north aisle, marking the existence of a former chapel; to the rood-loft steps quaintly cut and fixed in the north-east corner of the south aisle; to the ancient poor-box in the form of a small pillar-like receptacle bearing the date 1636; to the curious spandrils at the west-end of the south aisle; and to the strangely arranged "squint" in the recess of the rood-loft. There is a good collection of pewter flagons preserved in the vestry. The tower of the church is a noble structure; it contains a clock to chime the hours. This clock is stated to have been given by a lady, who had been safely directed in her belated wanderings by hearing the bells of Monks Eleigh church. There is nothing very remarkable in the exterior structure of the walls; the old gargoyles are still in use; the south walls of the porch have a slight ornamentation of recent insertion in the form of two inset crosses.

Among the possessions of the monks of Holy Trinity, Canterbury, in the days of Stigand, Archbishop of Canterbury, were the vills of Hadleigh, Toppesfield, and Monks Eleigh; the towns formed the Peculiar of Hadleigh. Various attempts made by the monks of Canterbury to assert their rights over these lands caused many disputes to arise between the inhabitants of the district and the servants of Bury Abbey. Jocelin of Brakelond gives an account of these disputes in his *Chronicles* (*Sir Ernest Clarke's edn., 1903, p. 76*). The rector of Monks Eleigh was