

## EXCURSIONS.

---

AUGUST 10TH, 1922.

On August 10th an attractive Excursion Programme drew many Members and friends to Bury Station, which was the meeting and starting point for our round of visits, commencing with the thatched Church of St Peter, Great Livermere. Here the Rector, the Rev. H: C. Dobree pointed out features of interest, also mentioning that Baptist Lee, who owned the Hall during the latter part of the 18th century, won a prize of £30,000 in a State Lottery and improved the property, enclosed the Common (conditionally on payment yearly for ever of £8 to the Feofees of Great Livermere) formed a Deer Park and made so many alterations that Little Livermere Church became isolated and is now only used for funerals.

Our next halting place was Ampton Church, where the Rector, the Rev. W. A. Wickham read a most interesting Paper and drew our attention to Cokets Chantry, a Palimpsest Brass and the Ampton Sealed Book. (An article by the Rector giving the History of this Sealed Book, appears in the last issue of our Proceedings).

From Ampton we went to Wordwell Church, a tiny Church but big with interest to archæologists, as so many suggestions of the earliest form of Church Architecture still remain.

The whole atmosphere is Saxon. The Chancel was evidently once Apsidal, and in the Arch separating it from the Nave, is the Long and Short work typical of the Saxon touch. This Arch being the Triumphal Arch symbolizing the Gate of Heaven.

The Doorway in the outside North wall preserves the survival of a very primitive style of building, for here the Pilasters that form the jambs of the door are not parallel but contract from the base to the top, being nearer together above than below. A utilitarian method employed when the Lintel was a flat stone and before arching was general.

The Font and Tympani are in keeping as they also belong to that debatable Period, on the border land of the Norman, ambiguously termed "Early Norman."

The riddle presented by these Tympani has been much discussed but left unread.

The meaning, however, seems plain and follows the customary teaching by Symbols. The shape of the Church, its ornamentation, carvings, colours, fittings, and particularly their position, were all allegorical, unfolding the Story the Church would teach, for the Church though silent is never dumb.

These Tympana are a pair and placed where they are with a purpose. The two Beasts among Trees in the Tympanum over the South door, outside the Church, represents animal man before he has "entered" the Church. He is an Outsider, unregenerate and bestial, tangled in the Thicket of Sin and gloomy shades of ignorance, where Light has not penetrated. Continually do we come across carvings of Beasts, Monsters, and Wodemen, in company with Devils, prowling around on the Outside of Churches, especially on the Porch, representing the Unregenerate.

Bestial man on entering the Church is immediately faced by the Font and he must "Pass over" or pass through its Water of Regeneration to become Spiritually new born.

And as the Tympanum *outside* the Church depicts his first state of animal existence, so the Tympanum *inside* the Church represents his New birth, as Spiritual man.

It shows a Figure rising up from the ground—the Dust out of which he was formed, and holding a large Ring in his right hand. This ring is so large and conspicuous because it is the central Symbol in the design. The Ring representing in early Symbology, the World over, Birth, New birth, and Life. It is an older form of the Ankh or Crux ansata. This ring, the symbol of his New birth, he is holding forth to a second Figure who stands beside him and is extending both arms in the attitude of Prayer, this being the position in which Our Saviour hung upon the Cross. The second Figure therefore represents the Crucified One and the Power of the Cross, and to Him the New born is appealing.

In this design we may notice the influence of Egyptian Art on Christian symbology. For the Egyptian Ankh or Crux ansata combines the cross and ring in one but here they are separate and apart.

Our next visit was to the Luncheon basket, which contained items of consuming, if not archæological, interest, although our methods of partaking may have been primitive.

After lunch we went to West Stow Hall, which through the courtesy of Major Baird was thrown open to our Society. Mr. C. E. Power gave a short history of the Manor and Hall. He said that the Lordship or Manor of West Stow was the property of the Abbey of Bury St. Edmund's from early times up to the Dissolution,

when the Abbey lands were separated. John Croft apparently purchased the estate at that time, paying £497 for lands in West Stow, and rebuilding the house in 1540. He put up the Arms of Mary Tudor, sister of Henry VIII. and Dowager Queen of France, and a good many people had wondered why they appeared on the gateway. A legend grew up that Mary Tudor once lived there; but it was more likely that Croft had been a member of her household, and put up the Arms of his patroness over his gateway. The gatehouse corridor was of a little later date than the gateway itself and a reduction of the size of the house commenced in 1795, when it ceased to be the Manor House of West Stow, and became part of the Culford estate.

Our last visit was to Hengrave Hall, where Sir John and Lady Wood gave us tea. Many Members renewed acquaintance with this fine old hall or recalled its description as given in Gage's "History of Hengrave." Speaking in the banqueting hall, Sir John recalled outstanding events in its history, and observed that Queen Elizabeth was twice entertained there by Sir Thomas Kytson. The Queen's Chamber, at the top of the great stairs, so-called because Elizabeth stayed in it, is panelled to the ceiling, and contains over the mantelpiece a picture of Elizabeth.

The doorway of each bedroom is of oak, with handles, and locks of quaint English design in steel, and in the centre of the lintel, on a scroll in old English lettering, is the name of each chamber—such as the "Rose Chamber," or the "Oriol Chamber." On one of them is the name "Wilbye," so named because it is the room where the celebrated madrigal composer spent most of his life at Hengrave, where he composed his madrigals and held the post of chief of the minstrels and confidential friend of the family.

The house was built by Sir Thomas Kytson, being begun about 1525 and finished in 1538 at a cost of £3,000, a sum equal to £40,000 at the present day. Whether a mansion existed here previously has never been quite determined, although it was always considered probable that this was the case, but an extract which was sent to me this morning only by a very active member of the Institute, Mr. Redstone, and which does not appear to be mentioned by Gage, would seem to definitely establish the fact. The extract is to the following effect: "John Fysshier, Chaplain of Simon, Parson of Hengrave, accused of theft of arms, arrows, etc., from Hengrave Hall. 2 Henry IV. (1401). Gaol Delivery for Suffolk No. 65." The house is built partly of stone and partly of brick. Much of the stone undoubtedly came from the neighbouring Abbeys which had been recently demolished, such as Ixworth and Thetford (but not Bury, which fell at a later date), for during the renovation

of the building I found that whilst the outer side of the stone work had been faced, the inner showed carving of an early date, which in the interior walls in some instances still retained the colour with which they had been painted. The house was much reduced in size by the demolition of the wing in 1775, and in order to provide for the necessary offices thus displaced, much of the remainder was considerably altered in character at that time. The moat surrounding the house was also then filled in. Since it came into my possession, and guided by an old plan of the house, I have endeavoured, fortunately long before the war, to restore it to something of its original form by the renovation of the Banqueting Hall, the Chapel, the Summer Parlour, the Gallery, and many of the other rooms in the house. An annexe was built to take the place of the demolished wing, which we little thought at that time would serve for several years as a hospital in the Great War.

The South Front, the Gate House, and the Inner Court are rare examples of the domestic architecture of the time. The domestic chapel contains a window of Flemish glass with 21 lights, dated about 1540, perhaps almost as perfect an example of the period as can be found in the country, and fully described in Gage's History.

The chapel outside, mentioned in Domesday Book, and rebuilt by Sir Thomas De Hemegrave in the 14th century, and formerly parish church, closed in the reign of Edward VI., has many points of great interest, including some very fine canopy and other monuments. This chapel was restored by me in 1899.

Included amongst the portraits in the house are those of Sir Thomas Kytson, by Holbein, his son, the second Sir Thomas Kytson, and his wife, by Gower (a Suffolk artist), Sir John Gage, Lad Rivers, Lady Penelope Darcy, and Charles I. and Henrietta Maria.

The garden and church having been visited, tea was served in the dining room, and Great Hall, and after this the Mayor of Bury St. Edmunds, in a short speech, on behalf of the visitors expressed their appreciation of the hospitality and kindness of Sir John and Lady Wood.

H. A. HARRIS.

---

#### THE BURY MEETING. 5TH JULY, 1922.

Members foregathered at the Norman Tower at 1.30, and some ascended to its summit, while details of its structure were being indicated by Col. E. C. Freeman, M.D., C.M.G., who continued with those of St. James' Church where registers and vessels were examined. A similar explanation of the adjacent St. Mary's was