

## SUFFOLK AND NORFOLK.

A PERAMBULATION OF THE TWO COUNTIES, WITH NOTICES OF  
THEIR HISTORY AND THEIR ANCIENT BUILDINGS.

BY M. R. JAMES, O.M., LITT.D., F.B.A., F.S.A.

Provost of Eton.

Illustrated by G. E. CHAMBERS, F.S.A.

Publishers: J. M. Dent & Sons, Ltd. Price 5/-.

This book needs no Bush. Both outwardly and inwardly it is full of appeal. For the Publisher has enshrined such excellent matter in such excellent material that, at the price, the book is a gift.

Its size is Royal octavo, printed on stout paper, with binding of red, backed in black with gilt lettering and is profusely illustrated by 53 full-page photogravures and 63 drawings in line, and containing a more than usually detailed index.

Suffolk zealots will note with approval that Dr. James is a man of discernment for he entitles his book "Suffolk and Norfolk," where lesser writers, impressed by superficial measurements, give pride of place to our larger sister.

We sympathise with the difficulty the Writer experiences in dealing with some 1279 Parishes, all of which are noteworthy, but where limited space compels the elimination of so many.

The knot has to be cut, and certain centres in either County have been selected, and mention made of those places in the neighbourhood containing something of special interest with a preferential regard for medieval association.

Comprehensive books of this description too often are of the "studies from an armchair" type, but this is not the case here as off and on for the last 50 years Dr. James has been among us taking notes. With the result that in many Parishes some hitherto unrecorded feature of interest is focused and elucidated, which less skilled observers may have seen but not understood.

With marvellous succinctness and clarity parish after parish is summed up and epitomised in one or two pregnant sentences or in some cases an illustration is left to speak for itself.

In addition to parochial jottings, the book contains a glance at history, and an excellent digest on monasteries with a little monasticon of Suffolk and Norfolk, and also a chapter on saints and shrines.

In three Churches mention is made of Mural Paintings which are not recorded in the "List of Suffolk Churches with Mural Paintings," appearing in the XIXth Vol. of our *Proceedings* and it would be well to insert them, viz., Alpheton, Gt. Livermere and Hitcham—Proverbially "walls have ears," but unfortunately possess no tongue to tell us of their vanished splendour.

The openly asserted guess that St. Mindred's Well, recorded on a map of Exning, may be a variant for St. Wendreda's Well, will cause many to guess again, as this mutilation is not according to the use of Suffolk, and their guess will be probably that St. Mindred emerged Minerva-like from the brain of the cartographer.

The reference to Honington, the birthplace of the Ploughman Poet, Robert Bloomfield, contains the statement, "How few of us have read the 'Farmer's Boy,' and how surprising it is to learn that it was translated into Latin, Italian and French, and that 26,000 copies of a seventh edition were sold in or about 1802!"

True, a contemplative poem of this style does not appeal to the advanced taste of to-day, and this might be said of any other poet of that date—*Tempora mutantur, nos et mutamur in illos*—but if you frequent Suffolk village auctions you will constantly find a well thumbed copy of the *Farmer's Boy* and hear the auctioneer dilate upon its merits as a most desirable acquisition.

The poem had its day as the "best seller"—Six editions were sold between 1800 and the end of 1802 and in these two and three quarters of a year, 26,000 copies were printed.

If 26,000 copies of the seventh edition also were sold, the publisher must have been a bold man to issue such an exceptionally large edition—possibly his venture was inspired by the *Printers' Toast*—"Woman—The edition is large and every man should have a copy."

Nathan Bloomfield, brother of Robert, is not well-known, yet he wrote a *Ballad on Honington Green* and the enclosure of the common and both brothers and this ode will live under the lash of Lord Byron's sarcasm.

———— "If Phœbus smiled on you,  
Bloomfield, why not on brother Nathan too?  
Him too the mania, not the muse, has seized;  
Not inspiration, but a mind diseased:  
And now no boor can seek his last abode,  
No Common be enclosed, without an ode."

“ AN ENGLISHMAN AT HOME AND ABROAD, 1792-1828 ”

WITH SOME RECOLLECTIONS OF NAPOLEON.

BEING EXTRACTS FROM THE DIARIES OF J. B. SCOTT, OF BUNGAY,  
SUFFOLK.

Edited by ETHEL MANN.

With a Foreword by Miss Liliās Rider Haggard.

12 Full Page Illustrations. 10/6 *net.*

Diaries too often are looked at askance, suggesting to our minds a style of literature of the Victorian Ladies Repository type such as have been bequeathed to us by our grandparents and which we do not care to burn, cannot sell and find too platitudinously dull to read.

This diary of John Barber Scott, of Bungay, is however of a totally different type and whilst providing a preferable method of self expression in the way of autobiographical literature, postulates the assumption that diaries are the product of evolution, of growth and decay.

Possibly the diary originated in the elaboration of the 15th century Household account books, which the Writer embellished with domestic or other notes on topical events.

Later on, these addenda monopolised the pages when, under Tudor culture, self consciousness developed and the urge for self expression and the analysis of life and character, sought satisfaction in a daily record of actions and reactions.

In the 17th century the diary became a form of religious discipline, by means of which a daily watch could be kept on the pilgrims progress and failures, attendant upon his conquest of self in the battle of sin. This spiritual temperature chart providing a ready means of self examination and consequent self correction.

In the 19th century to keep a Diary was deemed modish and genteel.—Publishers issued neat little books for the purpose, such as those sold by Fulcher of Sudbury and Pawsey of The Ancient House, Ipswich, and diary keeping became fashionable.

It is due to the diarist of that day that we are prejudiced against the diary generally but is a prejudice that the diary of J. B. Scott causes us to reconsider.

“ An Englishman at Home and Abroad,” consists of extracts from the Diaries of J. B. Scott 1792-1828 and is undoubtedly an

outstanding example of what a diary should be—that is a supplement to History.—History gives a skeleton, a diary should make the dry bones live.

Scott was blessed with the means that enabled him to travel and he made the most of his opportunities.

His experiences abroad are most interesting on account of the comparison they invite from those who cover the same ground today. The places are the same but what a different aspect they presented to the traveller before time and space was eliminated by rapid transport and modern improvements.

The Romans conquered the old world and we the new, by roads.

Scott's visit to Elba and his interview with Napoleon gives us a shock but elucidates the equivocal nick-name "Little Corporal."

The same brief span of years that has changed travelling on the Continent, has brought those parts of the diary that deal with Suffolk into the field of archæology, for time is really not a matter of years but of events.

The usefulness of the adage "When found make a note of," is illustrated times and again by the rescue from oblivion of many an incident serviceable to historian and antiquary.

We read that Louis XVIII visited Ipswich in 1807, that a Ball was held at Mr. Sparrow's in the old carved house in the Butter Market in 1808 and Masons will be interested to hear that Scott was passed and raised on December 15th, 1815 in Lodge No. 515. Archæologists will sit up and take notice on reading that Scott examined the Gillingwater MSS with Dawson Turner and finally bought them for Suffolk and that he also examined Clopton's Suffolk collection and Ipswich charters at Christies.

One entry is too brief to be readily intelligible—"Extracting from Ashby's MS on Suffolk and Bungay History."

These few extracts will show the value of the book to Suffolk people generally and archæologists in particular, although its interests by no means are confined to Suffolk but are cosmopolitan.

The book is Demy 8vo in art cloth binding with 12 illustrations, most of them representing Suffolk scenes contemporaneous with the diary. The index is useful and the numerous notes in the Appendix are valuable and informative.

The book is published by Heath, Cranton, Ltd., London.

H. A. H.

## DEBORAH LEE

By MIRABEL COBBOLD.

7/6 net.

To introduce a novel to archæologists appears incongruous but as all our members are interested in Suffolk books by Suffolk Authors this novel must not be passed over and disregarded especially as the family of the Writer is associated with that well-known early novel "Margaret Catchpole."

The book appears to be centred somewhere near Aldeburgh and opens with the Heroine reflecting on the evasive replies given by the Suffolk peasants to her questions respecting a house called "Stone" and its situation.

Both of these are clever touches,—as the vagueness of the Suffolk peasant is often mistaken for stupidity when really it is his shrewd method of avoiding discussion on a matter that is taboo. Look at his eyes, He's fooling you! you think he is shy and dazzled by your polished air—not a bit of it—you have come foreign and are therefore to be pitied and treated like a questioning child.

Again the house being called "Stone" instructs readers that mystery is the corner stone of this history—This name implies that the house stood on the site of some sacred stone or had a stone of magical properties incorporated in its structure. Stones from earliest days representing occult powers—These early stones were not carved nor fashioned but were rude blocks and amorphous, for primitive man did not make god in his own image nor attempt to define him. He was the Hidden One or Power behind.

Poetically Prometheus stole fire from heaven, actually he hammered divine sparks from one of these flint deities, on some sacred site.

In these days of spiritualists and seances probing into psychological phenomena a book of this description is popular as the story is replete with fragments of mystical ritual snatched from ancient cults.

In the house called "Stone," Deborah passes a night alone, yet not alone, with a dead, yet not dead, man, and this incomprehensible state of affairs entails an Orpheus like descent into the infernal regions—a figurative descent for these regions can be found on the earth's surface—in order to ascertain the cause of these strange manifestations and the remedy.

The plot in some aspects is a modern staging of the old morality type of Play in which good and evil strive for the possession of the soul—Deborah Lee representing the soul and the two chief characters, Ravenhaugh and Julian, respectively taking the parts of good and of evil,—sense and sensuality.—The ladies vacillation between her two lovers, is typically feminine consequently incomprehensible but is here attributed to atavism, hereditary and kindred palingenetic promptings, the results of previous incarnations.

The book does not confine itself to Ephesian letters but takes Deborah abroad and shows her life, and love, plots and counter-plots, not omitting murder and mysterious death.

It can be read by anyone who likes an exciting novel or by those interested in re-incarnation and survivals.

To Archæologists, who deem themselves superior to novel reading it supplies a glimpse into a much neglected branch of archæology which has left traces upon religion, art, ornament, nomenclature, etc., and should be known in order that we may avoid the propagation of error and not give ourselves away through ignorance.

Occult magic, under many aliases, originated in primitive days and flourished most among the lowest type of mankind, and in many of its forms and ritual is so uncouth and disgusting as to be unprintable.

It is therefore glossed, and in the popular form it now takes is so childish and silly that adults leave it in the nursery imagining that it belongs to that department.

“ A little learning is a dangerous thing.”

“ Drink deep or touch not the Pierian spring ”

The story reaches its climax in an orgy of thaumaturgical phenomena in which the powers of darkness fight to a finish with Deborah, Ravenhaugh and Julian.

A magic circle is drawn and herbs laid along its line but though called a circle it was not necessarily circular.

Julian or Pan, would draw his circle by stretching his right arm across his chest and touching the ground behind his heels and then sweeping his arm from rear to front would enclose his left side, then with another sweep from front to rear would enclose his right side and whole body in an aureole or pointed oval.

In the days of the Christian—Pagan overlap, seals were made of this shape to guard the individual engraved upon it from the powers of darkness.

The herbs employed are not named—Garlic was often favoured but all plants bore “signatures” which proclaimed their properties and were used accordingly.

The cross, The Holy name and water are introduced ; all of them being used in magic before Christian days but can be employed either in their early or later significance.

The cross was the cross of Osiris and the Underworld, The Holy name is invoked but never uttered, to pronounce it is death and Water is the “Mother of All.”

The book contains 287 pages of good paper printed in clear type and published by Heath, Cranton, Ltd.,

H. A. H.

## THE FENMAN'S WORLD.

MEMORIES OF A FENLAND PHYSICIAN.

By CHARLES LUCAS as the Historian.

This book recalls a very pleasant day's Excursion into Cambridge-shire, when the author acted as Guide and exhibited his collection of finds to us, including many that are mentioned in his book.

The book deals with changes and other matters connected with fen life and conditions in general, together with the author's own recollections during the latter half of the 19th century, all of which are decidedly interesting, especially as there is but a cartographic line of demarcations between the fens of Cambs and those of Suffolk.

That drainage has altered the water level of the fens does not surprise us, as this is expected of reclaimed lands, but when the doctor tells us that between 1857 and now the fall was between 8 to 10 feet, we can imagine the revolutionary alterations such a radical change from water to land would have upon man, beast, bird, insect and fish.

In a section headed, "How the Fen came into being," the author gives us his experiences as a Drainage Commissioner of 30 years, and tells us of the find of a Roman blacksmith's forge with all the necessary tools, ten feet below the peat and other finds too numerous to mention are recorded, and whether causative or resultant are usually supplemented with sound reasoning to support any theories he advances.

Industries, peculiar to the fens, once flourishing are now rapidly waning, both from lack of demand and lack of supply. Reeds, sedge and peat having little more than a limited local market.

The manufacture of chemical fertilizers from coprolite had its brief day, and an account of its initiation together with a sketch of the mills is given.

The cultivation of woad and the manufacture of the dye had a long innings, but at last succumbed, after a protracted struggle, to indigo. The fermenting or "couching" was a most unsavory process, as the stench of the ammoniacal ferments was well nigh unbearable. A sketch of the Woad Mill, at Parson's Drove, is given.

No one can write about the Fen without touching upon natural history, which to many of us is its chief — perhaps only — charm.

Upon fish the author touches very lightly. The remarkable periodic appearance of shoals of tiny eels is mentioned and a short life story of the eel is added. Many of us have seen this sight and marvelled where these myriad elvers came from swarming in thousands over some fen sluice, wriggling through the grass and on the droves, and dying by hundreds in dusty hollows. Nature—

“ So careful of the type she seems  
So careless of the single life.”

The peasants, or some peasants, scoop them up and pound and press them into a kind of fish cake.

Coarse fish abound, but are sluggish and give little sport.

Mention is made of the “ apparently indestructable character of ‘ fishes’ eggs ’ ” from the fact of fish appearing in places recently inundated.

This may not be due to introducing water weeds but from herons and water fowl visiting the water after feeding on some spawning beds and conveying fish spawn on their feet and feathers

Every isolated galt pit has its denizen—often a solitary jack who has grown fat through eating every living thing in the pond. How did he get there? Probably by wing, anyway not by fin. Water hens are great night travellers.

Animals mentioned as having recently disappeared are the martin, polecat, black rat, viper and black adder, but perhaps the black rat and polecat still survive as I have seen both of them within this century; the polecat within a few miles of Wisbech, and very much alive.

No list of fen birds is attempted but the bustard is remembered also the ruff and reeve; whether the quail is or was a usual visitor to the fens is not mentioned, but I have seen two specimens near Wisbech.

Wicken, the paradise of entomologists, seeking fen insects, is described, and allusion made to the swallow tail being occasionally found there. This is sad news as some 30 years ago, in some seasons, it was more plentiful than cabbage whites in a country garden.

Included in the author’s “ memories ” is a wealth of anecdote and humorous stories, and in some instances a detailed history of local places on which it is possible to focus attention, which are in “ The Fenman’s World ”—a world within a world—but are rather history than memories.

There are chapters on Burwell Parish, Church, Guildhall, and notes of historical value connected with Pont hall—half pub., half thieves'-kitchen, on Upware—five miles from anywhere—a rendezvous for Cambridge men, and in after years, a constant topic for reminiscences at the after dinner hour.

Many books have been written about the Fens, for the Fens are as variable and changing as the skies, and to one thing constant never and always there is room for one book more.

To those of us who know the Fens—and we pity those who do not—Dr. Lucas gives real pleasure in reviving old memories by supplying his own. Which not only revive but supplement them in a most enjoyable manner.

The book is published by Jarrold and Sons, Ltd., Norwich, and contains some 40 to 50 illustrations.

H.A.H.

## BLITHE WATERS.

## SHEAVES OUT OF SUFFOLK.

By B. GRANVILLE BAKER. With 55 pen and ink sketches by the Author, and a map. 7/6 net. (Heath Cranton, Ltd., 6, Fleet Lane, London, E.C.4.)

In the naming of children, finding texts for sermons, or titles for books there is the ever perplexing difficulty of ushering them into the world, auspiciously labelled with some happy voucher, prophetic, illustrative and apt.

Nomen est omen, is a consummation devoutly to be wished, but even when sponsored by Prometheus and Epimetheus the end does not always justify the means.

This by way of prelude to the very useful contribution to Suffolk literature, lately written by Lt.-Col. B. Granville Baker, under the above title "Blithe Waters."

As the name suggests it is lightly written in a cheerful and blithe strain of running comment, on people and places lying along our Suffolk water ways.

By this method the book contrives a double debt to pay—combining the transeant diversion of a novel with the permanent essentials for a book of reference. The former, by giving life and colour to the scene, as one lazes along these waters in the dolce far niente of a summer holiday. The latter, when burning the midnight oil we turn to the index for notes and facts of history.

The snag underlying the title "Blithe Waters" lies in the possibility that expectant readers, who are not particularly interested in the river Blyth may give the book a miss under the impression that the contents are restricted to the river of that name.

The writer does indeed discriminate between Blithe Waters and the river Blyth by the use of different spellings but niceties of orthography do not appeal to archæologists who put their trust in roots and phonetics.

We are told that the river Blyth is but one of the many blithe waters of Suffolk.

And surely the writer is right, for rivers are national monuments and recognised landmarks that are to one name constant ever. They change not, though nations rise and fall and different tongues at different times alter and wrest the old name to suit their transitory convenience yet without destroying the root principle that ever underlies its distinction as a geographical landmark.

The old name was not Blyth but is enshrined in it and probably no more meant "Blithe" than the other streams that figure in Blithe Waters.

The style of the book is in keeping with its title, and blithe waters run gaily along through the county, hailing friends on either bank with a cheery nod and word of greeting.

They are not "still waters that run deep" and drench the reader with a profundity of statistics and stubborn scientific facts nor are they "cold waters" thrown upon the pretty legends and imaginative fictions that pass as history along these ancient water ways.

With dry humour and whimsical wordings the writer conveys a marvellous amount of information respecting the history, geography and genealogy of places and people that have figured in the passing show.

Old traditions and tales that never die are again brought to life, for fiction is found to be more enduring than fact, and "you takes your choice" of what is writ in water or recorded in ink.

The auxiliary title of the book "Sheaves out of Suffolk" is as ingenious and delightfully ambiguous as that of Blithe Waters, for many of the sheaves are indeed garnered out of Suffolk, being in the adjacent county of Norfolk.

Diss is, however, a debatable sheaf as it was formerly in Hartismere Hundred, Suffolk—Diss Mere giving its name to the Hundred.

The Camping, or Football, matches, mentioned as being played between Norfolk and Suffolk on Diss Common were probably more correctly speaking played on Stuston Common, which is on the border line between Norfolk and Suffolk, and adjoining Diss.

Legend has it that here the youth of both counties met and kicked off, the goals being the towns of Norwich and Ipswich.

Camp, in Middle English, meant a "battle" and these battles were Homeric and the casualties enormous.

Alternative readings may be suggested on several occasions, as for instance that Wetherden, not Wetheringsett was the headquarters of the family that gave its name to the place—Wetheringset being a temporary seat to which they drove their cattle in spring to feed on these low lying pastures.

No proof that King Dagobert resided at Mendlesham is found in the legend that a silver Crown was dug up in that parish, as the tale evidently originated in a mis-spelling of Mendlesham for Rendlesham.

There is a touch of unintentional humour in the author's reference to the diminutive village of Thwaite, when he states: "Were it not for the White Horse Inn, you might easily pass by Thwaite without noticing it."

It appears that he did pass by without noticing it because the White Horse Inn is not in Thwaite but two miles north, in Stoke Ash. We gather that no one stops at Thwaite unless forcibly detained by sticking in the mud, so possibly the author's car skidded by and did not stick. A skid does distract the attention.

When seeking for the early founders of our villages, it is usual to find them in the in-rush of hostile aliens, whereas many were probably the result of peaceful penetration, for when the Romans left our shores, the mercenary troops were disbanded and left in England to look after themselves as best they could. Many of these were men from what we now call Germany, and those of them who had not already settled down would wander along the Roman roads, seeking some site on which to make a home and having established themselves would invite their friends over from the continent.

The peopling of our land after the Roman exodus was partly of a peaceful nature and followed along the line of the Roman roads and partly by a hostile invasion of our coast and up our estuaries and water ways by raiders.

Evidence of this is betokened in the temperament of our mixed population, for our inland folk appear to be more gentle than their coastal brethren. All are descended from soldiers but the former were soldiers by compulsion, the latter by inclination.

"Blithe Waters," true to its name, tells us more of peace than war, and true to nature covers up war devastated regions with pleasant verdures and decay with ivy. It is an optimistic book that one opens with expectancy and closes with profit.

H.A.H.