

EXCURSIONS 1996

Report and notes on some findings

*13 April. John Blatchly, Timothy Easton, Edward Martin and Peter Northeast
Raydon and Little Wenham*

Raydon, St Mary's Church. The annual general meeting was held here by kind permission of the Revd T. Wells. The church is wholly of late-13th/early 14th-century construction, except for the ruined tower. The chancel is basically 13th-century (window tracery, priest's doorway and fine piscina) but with 14th-century additions (crocketed pinnacles at the east end and 'founder's tomb' in the north wall). The nave is early 14th-century (window tracery). The 15th-century tower (wills of the 1440s and 1450s refer to its building) containing four bells fell in the mid-17th century (faculty petition of 1750); the remaining bell is now housed in a small west protruberance.

Items of note are: part of a small female figure, the remains of a brass to Elizabeth Reydon, and the inscription for Thomas her brother, both of whom died in 1479; the founder's tomb, which formerly held a stone effigy of Sir Robert de Reydon (d. 1323) bearing the Reydon arms – seen by Tillotson at the end of the 16th century; wooden brackets, formerly supporting the roodbeam, over the chancel arch; a monument on the north wall to the Revd John Mayer (d. 1664; see *D.N.B.*) who served here for thirty-three years, detailing his publications; and a carving of a dragon with a curved tail on the exterior of the east wall, below the north pinnacle.

Little Wenham, All Saints' Church (by kind permission of the Redundant Churches Fund). The church, of late 13th-century date, is isolated, in a group with the Hall, with which it is probably contemporary and shared some of the same masons, as they have decorative details in common. There are striking wall paintings of *c.* 1300 on the east wall – the Virgin and Child, St Margaret, St Catherine and St Mary Magdalene – and a 15th-century St Christopher in the nave. The stone dado of the rood screen survives to a height of 5ft. On the south wall of the nave is a large tomb (uninscribed) for Gilbert I Debenham (d. 1369); his will (dated 1361 and proved at Norwich in 1374) requested burial in the south wall of the church. On the north wall of the chancel is the uninscribed tomb of Robert Brewes (d. 1513), a large brass for Thomas Brewes (d. 1514) and his wife Jane, and a wall monument with kneeling figure for Sir John Brewes (d. 1585). The tower has a 16th-century brick top.

Little Wenham Hall (by kind permission of Major and Mrs A.T.C. Binney). An article giving a re-interpretation of this important late-13th-century building and new evidence about its probable builder will appear in next year's *Proceedings*.

*4 May. Leigh Alston, Peter Ennis, Edward Martin, Alistair Oswald and Kate Sussams
Clare (combined meeting with Council for British Archaeology, East Anglia)*

Clare Camp (by kind permission of Clare Combined Charities). This is a D-shaped enclosure, defined by a double bank and ditch, covering about 5.25ha (13 acres). It was thought by 19th- and early 20th-century antiquarians to be a Roman 'camp'; writers since then have tended to see it as an Iron Age fort, even though there is actually no direct evidence for its date. P.G.M. Dickinson (1952) was apparently the first historian to connect the camp with *Erbury*, an alternative name for the manor of Clare-cum-Chilton. This is recorded as *Erdebir c.*1232 and represents Old English *earth-burh*, meaning 'earth fortification' (as also at Arbury Camp in Cambs.).

In the Late Saxon period Clare belonged to 'earl' Ælfric son of Wihtgar, who administered the eight and a half hundreds that became West Suffolk for Queen Emma, wife of Æthelred the Unready (Douglas 1932, 48, 60). Around 1045 he founded a collegiate church dedicated to St John in Clare, which Norman Scarfe (1972) has suggested was sited in Clare Camp. However, by 1090

the church of St John was explicitly stated to lie within Clare Castle (*'ecclesia Beati Iohannis Baptiste sita in castello Clare'*) and that castle was near the river, for there is mention of a fishery extending from Sturmer to *'castellum de Clara'* (Harper-Bill and Mortimer 1982, no. 70).

A medieval *List of Benefactors of Bury Abbey* states that Ælfric's son, Wihtgar, 'dwelt in a certain tower where the hospital now is' (Hart 1966, 71). Though the location of this is uncertain, it does perhaps indicate the presence of a Late Saxon thegn's *burh* at Clare, and *Erbury* is the most likely location. Although documentary evidence points to the existence of thegnly *burhs* (an 11th-century recital of the qualifications for thegnly status mentions the possession of a *burheat* or 'fort-gate'; Whitelock 1955, 432), they are actually very rare in the archaeological record (Goltho, Lincs. and Sulgrave, Northants. are rare exceptions). If Clare Camp could be confirmed as a Late Saxon personal *burh* it would be of considerable national importance.

Scattered clues in Domesday suggest that Wihtgar survived the first years of the Norman Conquest, but later suffered forfeiture, possibly in the wake of the revolt of the earls in 1075. By 1086 Wihtgar's estates had been granted to Richard son of Count Gilbert de Brionne, who already had extensive estates in south-east England. That he chose to make Clare the *caput* or head of all his properties, and that Clare gave its name to his dynasty, suggests that it was already a place of some importance (Ward 1988). Richard developed the pre-Conquest market into a borough with forty-three burgesses and by 1090 a castle had been built nearer the river (see below). Throughout the Middle Ages separate manorial courts were held for the borough and the remaining 'rural' parts of the manor, called Erbury. The manorial rents for the latter were still being paid at Clare Camp in the 17th century and a pair of stocks (*cipporum*) were built there in 1309/10. This association between the Camp and the manor of Erbury suggests that despite the building of the new castle, the agricultural and administrative centre of the manor remained on its ancient site.

From at least the early 13th century Clare Camp served as the farmyard for the large Erbury demesne and contained a number of agricultural buildings.¹ This demesne had amounted to twenty-four carucates of land before the Conquest, the second largest recorded in the Suffolk Domesday, and was surveyed in 1262 as 1,159 acres of arable.² An extensive series of early-14th-century manorial account rolls³ detail repairs to the many buildings there. The list includes two great barns (one for wheat and one for oats), a dormitory for the agricultural servants and manorial bailiff, various granaries, two sheephouses housing some 350 sheep, a dovecote, smithy, dairy, pound, oxhouse, stables, hay and tackle houses, cartlodges and even a great gate at the entrance with a wicket gate alongside. The site was subdivided by thatched cob walls 7ft high, including a wall 480 yds long around a garden. This garden produced foodstuffs for the castle, together with cash crops such as madder, beans, leeks, teasels, flax and garlic. Part of it was leased to townsmen in small allotments called 'pennyworths' – albeit for threepence per year. Although most of the buildings disappeared in the 15th and 16th centuries when the demesne was leased out, a 'great old barn' called *Sheepcote bame* survived as late as 1606 (Sheepgate Lane, which borders the north side of the camp, was originally *Sheepcote Lane*).

Traces of rectangular structures had been noted in the south-west corner of the earthwork (Martin 1991) and in 1993 an earthwork survey was carried out by the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England, followed by a geophysical survey by English Heritage in 1994 (see 'Archaeology in Suffolk 1993' and '1994'). These surveys confirmed the presence of three long rectangular buildings (? barns), with associated lengths of walling forming a courtyard, and a small square building, perhaps the smithy or dovecote.

Early in the 16th century Queen Katherine of Aragon granted lands called Houndwall and Erbury Garden, part of the demesne of the manor, to be used as a common pasture for the poor people of Clare. This grant was confirmed in 1554 and it is still charity land. In 1724 the Clare churchwardens pulled down a house next to the churchyard and rebuilt it on the common, doing the same with another house the following year.⁴ Both are shown on the Tithe Map of 1846 (Fig. 22). Various described as 'pest-houses' or 'small pox houses', the one on a small ditched

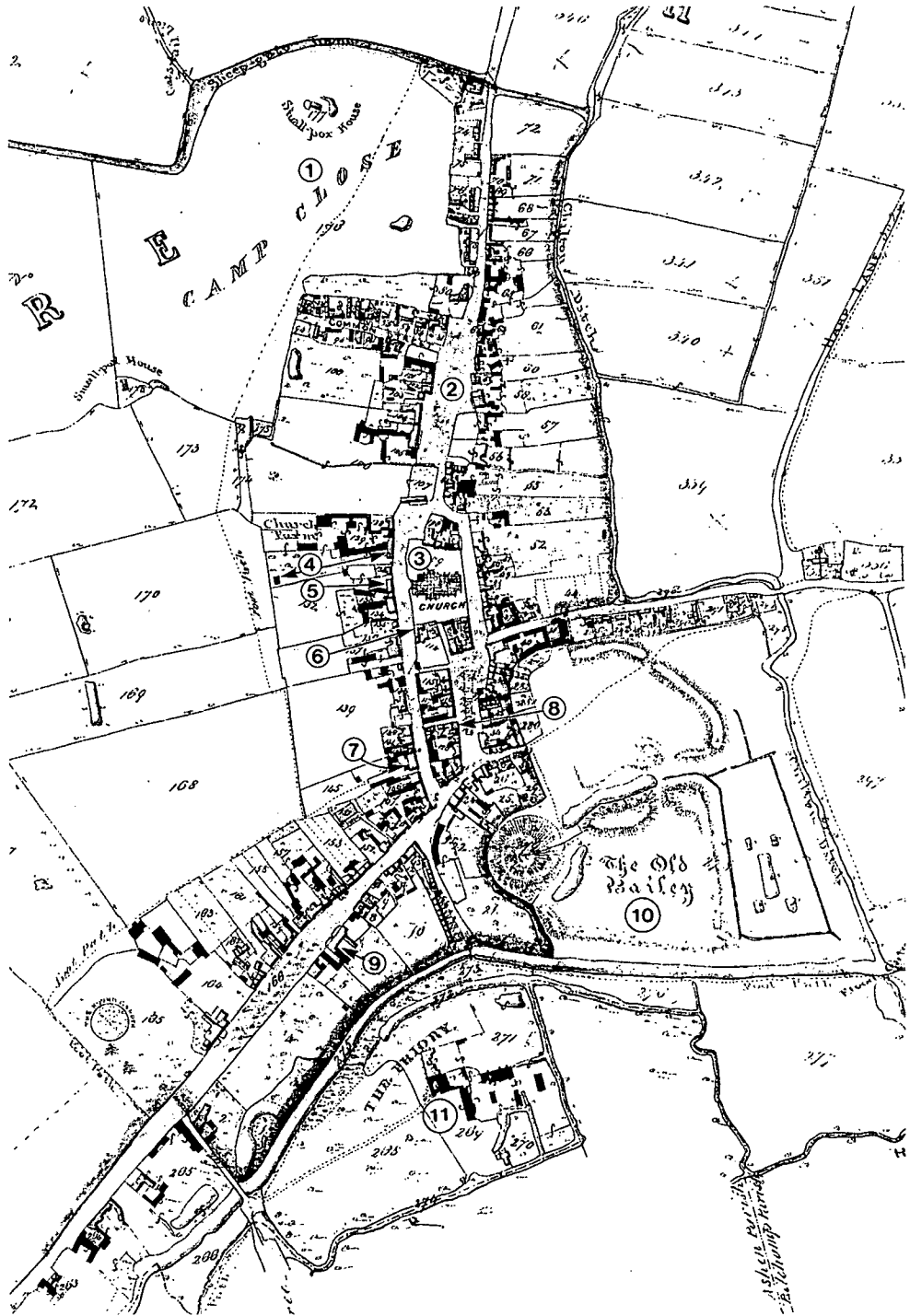


FIG. 22 – Portion of the Clare Tithe Map, 1846 (S.R.O.B., T146/1). Added numbers within circles indicate: (1) Clare Camp; (2) Callis Street; (3) Church of SS Peter and Paul; (4) Church Farm and dovecote; (5) Guildhall; (6) Ancient House; (7) Swan Inn; (8) stone undercroft in Market Hill; (9) Nethergate House; (10) Clare Castle; (11) Clare Priory.

enclosure within the Camp had disappeared by 1884; the other, outside the Camp in the south-west corner of the common, survived until about 1960.

Callis Street and the Market Place. Together these form an elongated rectangle that stretches almost from Clare Camp to the foot of the castle motte, with the parish church near the centre (Fig. 22). This layout is likely to be the planned creation of Richard fitz-Gilbert in the late 11th century: the market forming a link between the two main administrative centres, with the church as a central feature. The northern part, called Callis Street (*Gosford Street* until the 16th century) may have been the site of the pre-Conquest market. It narrows at the site of the eponymous ford (bridged by the 14th century) before joining the main market place. The present High Street was earlier the *High Rowe* of the market. The original large open area was encroached upon by houses and shops in the later Middle Ages.

Church of St Peter & St Paul. This was in existence by 1090, when the tithes of St Paul's church were given to the Abbey of Bec. It was extensively rebuilt in the 15th century, but the base of the tower is 13th-century. There is a 14th-century porch chapel with an inserted Jacobean gallery, and a 16th-century chantry screen; the chancel, rebuilt in 1617, has glass with arms of benefactors, Jacobean choir-stalls, and the tombstone of Robert de Goodrich, Provincial of the Augustine Order 1450, before the sanctuary.

Church Farm and dovecote, High Street. A continuous-jetty house of c.1510, it has extensive non-domestic ranges to the north (partly demolished) and rear, which may have been industrial. A contemporary brick cellar survives. It was occupied by the Fenn family, clothiers, in the 16th century. The farm-yard contains a well-preserved mid-16th-century timber-framed dovecote, square, with a partition above its tiebeam to allow pigeons to exit (as they can fly vertically) but to trap hawks (which cannot). There are clay 'bats' for nesting boxes.

Guildhall Surgery, High Street. A three-phase 14th-century gildhall, sited opposite the church tower. The rear range contains an important first-floor meeting-hall with a sooted roof. A rental of 1537 indicates that it was the hall of the Fraternity of St John.⁵

Ancient House, Church Lane (by kind permission of Clare Parish Council). The main range is probably a priest's house of the latter part of the 15th century (the date '1473' in later plaster may be approximately correct). It has a jettied frontage to Church Lane, with a contemporary window with a carved coat-of-arms beneath it. The side range was originally jettied towards High Street, but was rebuilt in the 17th century, when the building acquired its present pargetted covering.

The coat-of-arms beneath the window is that of the Hamelden/Hameldon family (argent, fretty gules/azure, the fret charged with fleurs-de-lis or, on a canton gules an estoile or). The same arms occur on a late medieval parclose in Brent Eleigh church and were once to be seen in the glass of the now-vanished south chapel of Holton St Peter's church (MacCulloch 1976, 47). In the early 14th century, Sir Lawrence de Hamelden was a manorial lord in Holton, Moulton and Little Waldingfield, but the family then seems to disappear. In 1363 John de Hembleton or Hambleton became Archdeacon of Sudbury and was immediately granted an indult of non-residence for two years, 'the archdeaconry being of small value, and having no manse or church annexed to it' (Bliss and Twemlow 1902, 33). His successor does not appear until 1384 (Jones 1963, 31). Interestingly, by 1254 a portion of the church living at Clare was in the hands of the archdeacons of Sudbury (Hudson 1908, 92), but as yet no later evidence for this appropriation has been found. Could it be that having no manse, Archdeacon Hambleton chose to build a house at Clare? However there is a serious problem in that the existing house appears to be a hundred years later than Hambleton's term of office. One possibility is that Hambleton somehow endowed the property and this connec-

tion is commemorated by the coat-of-arms – an unsatisfactory explanation but the best that can be advanced at the moment.

Swan Inn, High Street. The inn sign of this late-16th-century building is the former sill of a very large oriel window, quite possibly from the castle. It bears the arms of Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March and lord of Clare 1398–1425, and the royal arms and white swan badge of the period 1399–1422. *Le Swann formerly Quylters* tenement is mentioned in 1498.

Motorwise shop, Market Hill. Beneath a heavily-disguised late-15th-century timber-framed building in the middle of the market place is a well-preserved 14th-century stone-vaulted undercroft. Stone ribs spring from shafts set into the mortared-flint walls to a central octagonal column with a moulded capital. The infill of the vault consists of plastered tiles and flint. The only original doorway leads, via steps, to Market Hill, suggesting that the undercroft was built for commercial rather than domestic purposes.

Nethergate House, Nethergate Street (by kind permission of Mr and Mrs R. Burge and Mr and Mrs G. Potts). A substantial timber-framed merchant's house of *c.* 1500, originally with an open hall between a parlour cross-wing and an in-line service range. In addition to the usual twin service rooms, the range contains a high-quality heated room, which apparently separated the service rooms from the cross-passage. Similar rooms are found in contemporary merchants' houses elsewhere and probably represent counting-houses or offices. The hall was raised and largely rebuilt in the 17th century. It has a fine late Jacobean/early Caroline staircase with acorn finials. Although the builder is unknown, this was the house of the Crosse family of saymakers in the 17th century. The initials and date 'FCE 1644' appear above a window in the rear courtyard, standing for Francis and Elizabeth Crosse. The initials of the novelist C.P. Snow are heavily carved on a timber in the parlour.

Clare Castle (Suffolk County Council). A large Norman motte crowned by a 13th-century shell keep, and two baileys, the inner one mutilated by the insertion of a railway line and station (now disused) in 1865. Probably built by Richard fitz-Gilbert to be the *caput* of his extensive Honour of Clare, the castle is first recorded in 1090, when his son Gilbert granted the collegiate church of St John in the castle to the Abbey of Bec. The monks were moved in 1124 to Stoke-by-Clare, where they built a new church.

As the 12th century progressed, the powerful de Clare family acquired even greater estates elsewhere in the country (they became Earls of Hertford and Gloucester) and they came to spend less time at Clare. However the death of Earl Gilbert at Bannockburn in 1314 brought the male line to an end. His great estates were divided between his three sisters and Clare fell to the lot of Elizabeth de Burgh, Countess of Ulster. From 1317 until her death in 1360, Clare Castle was the principal home of one of the wealthiest noblewomen in the country, and both castle and town were extensively rebuilt as a consequence.

Little is known of the castle buildings before the 14th century, but Elizabeth's extant administrative records paint a detailed picture of everyday life at the castle in its heyday.⁶ The timber buildings recorded include several chapels, two great halls (the lesser being known as *Clarettehall*), a barn which had previously been the great hall (1309), various chambers heated by timber chimneys, a kitchen alley or covered way from the kitchens to the hall, a saucery, scullery, smithy, brewhouse, bakehouse and many others. Most of these buildings seem to have been underpinned in flint, which required occasional repointing, and had roofs of clay tile, shingles, *Eastland* boards or lead rather than thatch. The bailey ramparts were defended only by wooden palisades. A private garden or *herber* within the castle contained pathways of flint, a glass building housing pheasants, an enclosure for deer, and some form of tomb-like ornament, perhaps modelled on the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem (see also Harvey 1981, 87–88, 110). The outer bailey, which would normally be expected to contain the

agricultural buildings, held nothing but a large commercial garden and a great *kenil* which housed Elizabeth's huntsmen and hunting dogs.

After 1360 the castle again declined in importance and eventually came into the hands of the Crown *via* the Mortimer family (Elizabeth's heirs). It was probably allowed to fall into decay during the later 15th century and by the beginning of the 17th century it looked much as it does today, the site being used for a garden and for grazing purposes. The existing path up the castle mound was made by J.B. Armstead of Clare in 1848.

Clare Priory (by kind permission of the Trustees of the Order of St Augustine). Founded in 1248 by Richard de Clare, Earl of Gloucester, as the first house of the Augustinian Friars in England. The burials here of two members of the royal family, Joan of Acre (daughter of Edward I) in 1305 and Lionel, Duke of Clarence (son of Edward III) in 1377, added greatly to its prestige. A new chapter house, dormitory and refectory were built between 1310 and 1314, and in 1361 the chapel of the Annunciation was 'newly built'.

After its suppression in 1538, the site was granted to Richard Frende (later 'trumpeter to Edward VI'). After passing through various hands it was acquired by the Barker family in 1745. In 1953 the granddaughters of Sir George Barker, Stella de Fonblanque and Iris Johnson, conveyed the property to the Augustinian Order.

The house consists mainly of the converted prior's lodgings, with a small early-15th-century timber-framed 'cloister' at its south end, which was probably a kitchen alley. The church and most of the remainder of the complex fell into ruins, though the infirmary and reredorter range has survived and is now a chapel. Excavations in 1902 by Sir William St John Hope (Barnardiston 1962, 2) and in 1962 by P.G.M. Dickinson have elucidated much of the original layout.

16 May. *John Blatchly*

William Dowsing at Laxfield, Linstead Parva, Weybread and Metfield.

A large party of members were grateful to Mr Howes and Mr and Mrs Fisher who opened Laxfield Museum specially, and to Mr Victor Peskett and ladies of the parish who kindly provided tea and biscuits, and laid out a small exhibition at Metfield.

Laxfield, All Saints' Church (by kind permission of the Revd M. Walkey). The future iconoclast was baptised here on 2 May 1596, third and youngest son of Wolfran and Joan Dowsing. His cousin William was trusted to carry out the work he ordered on 17 July 1644. By 'two angels in stone at the Steeple's end' he meant angelic figures in banded robes holding scrolls in the spandrels of the west doorway. 'Another [Cross] on the Porch, in Stone; and 2 superstitious Pictures on Stone there': now the cross on the south porch is considerably truncated (presumably saved and reinstated later) but the two seated angels at the corners of the parapet look well enough. There are empty niches below, and lower still the Passion and Trinity shields held by angels are defaced. Inside, the seven sacrament font is badly damaged, though not mentioned in the Journal. 'An Eagle, and a Lion, with wings, for 2 of the Evangelists' probably refers to bench ends, for there is a headless eagle, and several more badly damaged finial figures on the north side of the nave. The church is aisleless and appears immensely long (about 150 feet) and wide, and if anything the east end, up one low step, is lower than the west. In front of the chancel arch lie two Dowsing memorials, one with a brass inscription in Roman capitals to William Dowsing's grandfather William, who died in 1614 aged eighty-eight, and a black marble ledger slab for Sybille, wife of William Dowsing (the cousin), (d. 1676, aged sixty-eight), with the impaled arms of *Dowsing* (Arg. a fess vert between two lions passant sable) and *Green*.

In the excellent Museum the most interesting exhibit was two painted planks decorated with shields of the Passion and censuring angels, probably from a chantry ceiling in a local church, discovered hidden in the attic of Dowsing's Farmhouse in the parish; unfortunately it cannot be established which branch of the family gave the farm its name.

Linstead Parva, St Margaret's Church (by kind permission of the churchwardens). Members heard the Solemn League and Covenant read out as written in one of the parish books by William Aldhouse, Curate of both Linsteads 1635–49, who, perhaps significantly, did not subscribe by signing himself.

The church here is a humble building but none the less delightful. The window mullions are of brick, there is a timber-framed filling between nave and chancel, and there has probably never been a tower, only a bell-cote. On the font, angels hold shields with three crowns, the Trinity and the Instruments of the Passion; they and the lions' and angels' heads are defaced. 'And a Picture of Christ on the outside of the Steeple, nailed to a Cross, and another superstitious one' seems to be explained by examining the west wall of the church where two niches surround a small and roughly cut window opening which may have been made by excavating a third larger niche. Three niches could have held a rood group, the figure of Mary or John gone by the time Dowsing came.

Linstead Magna, St Peter's Church. The church became ruinous; the tower remained until it was swept away in 1964. The font and one medieval bell are at St Augustine's, Ipswich. Damage to the font (the same pattern as at Linstead Parva) is not quite the same. The heads of one pedestal lion and the two angels holding plain crosses on shields have been knocked off. The shields themselves are quite untouched, even those bearing the Trinity symbols and the Instruments of the Passion. 'Drunkard Francis Evered', mentioned in the Journal was a recusant, and some of his property later fell into the hands of Parliamentary sequestrators. In one of the Linstead churches William Hervy drew good armorial glass for the Everards; if that had short shrift along with the 'images' the provisions of the Parliamentary ordinance were overstepped.

Weybread, St Andrew's Church (by kind permission of the Revd L. Doolan). Because Francis Verdon of Linstead Parva, Dowsing's deputy for several deaneries, was the visitor here, there is no entry in the Journal, but the churchwardens' accounts confirm that he came: 'It'm, to Mr Verden for demolishing and taking away onlawful things upon our church windows, and in other parts about our church being authorised hereunto by the Earle of Manchester: 5s.' In 1651 two brasses and 'the litle [sanctus?] bell in the chest' were sold for 5s. 6d., no doubt taken out and stored at the visit. Victorian restoration has obliterated any signs of damage here save on shields held by angels in the spandrel of the porch doorway. Bishop's lithograph of the church (1830) shows only the remaining stumps of the gable crosses.

Metfield, Church of St John the Baptist (by kind permission of the Revd L. Doolan). Here Verdon and Dowsing visited together and, as at Ufford, there is a record of some resistance in the Journal:

Aug. the 30th [1644]. In the Church, was Peter's Keys, and the Jesuits Badge, in the Window; and many on the top of the Roof. I. for *Jesus*, H. for *Hominum*, and S. for *Salvator*, and a Dove for the Holy Ghost, in Wood; and the like in the Chancel; and there, in Brass, *orate pro animabus*; and the steps to be levelled, by Sept. the 7th. Mr *Jermin*, the Gentleman in the Town, refused to take the Inscription, as the Churchwarden informed, whose Name is —.

'Mr *Jermin*' was Thomas Jermy, Esq., eldest son of Sir Thomas, K.B. He died in 1652 without issue and had an altar tomb against the north wall of the chancel (Tom Martin, 1743) which by Davy's time had been taken down and the slab laid in the floor. Next to the south is the slab with brasses which Thomas defended as it commemorated his forebears John and Isabelle Jermy (John d. 1504). The churchwarden who reported him to Dowsing was Stephen Lilly or William Welton, a joiner. In the event, the left hand quarter of the inscription plate was cut away to remove the '*Orate pro animabus*', and the final '*quorum animabus propitiatur deus amen*' was marked around with two grooves and then defaced. The surviving portion has been inverted in the indent, and there is only one shield beneath (Jermy impaling Wroth—presumably a first wife). In William Hervy's rough notebook kept on his Visitation of 1561⁷ the lost shield is shown to have been Jermy impaling Hopton

quarterly, for Isabelle was daughter of John Hopton Esq. of Blythburgh. The angels on the font hold Jeremy lions on shields, but it is undamaged. Much else to which Dowsing would have objected remains today: the wooden lierne vault in the porch has a carved Trinity as the central boss, and the canopy of honour at the east end of the nave has its original painting, with crowned MRs or IHS in each panel, only one or two of which have been defaced. The churchwardens' accounts are full of relevant detail (see Bower 1938).

22 June. Clive Paine

Great Barton Church and Park

Holy Innocents' Church (by kind permission of the churchwardens). A church with fifty acres of land is mentioned in Domesday Book. The chancel of the present building dates from the late 13th century and has windows with plate tracery, an ogee piscina with pinnacles and crocketed gables, an external 'founder's tomb' with a coped coffin lid, and hexagonal buttresses with gabled pinnacles; the whole very reminiscent of Raydon, visited in April (see above). The chancel arch has friezes of leaves on the capitals.

The south aisle was added in the early 14th century: see the east window of that date. The piers, of the same date, alternate between circular and octagonal. The windows in the south wall were renewed *c.* 1500–1520, and there are parallels between them and the work of John Wastell at St James's, Bury St Edmunds and King's College, Cambridge.

Bequests were made to the tower *c.* 1439–*c.* 1482. There were large bequests of £6 13s. 4d. in 1439, 1440 and 1472, £3 6s. 8d. in 1449, £1 6s. 8d. in 1482 and £1 in 1465. The 1440 bequest marks the start of the work, as it was conditional on the parishioners having within a year of the testator's death '... effectively set the work under way and prepared the materials'. The battlements received a specific bequest in 1482, and have similarities to nearby Rougham. There are parallels between the windows here and those in the towers at Stanningfield and Fornham St Martin. There is stylistic evidence to suggest that the tower was designed by William Layer (*fl.* 1419–44), another mason at Bury Abbey. The work was carried out in two main stages, as can be seen from changes in the construction below the apex of the chancel arch. The bequests also fall into two phases: 1439–49 and 1472–89, with a single one in 1465.

While the tower was being built the north aisle was added, and there was a substantial bequest of £6 13s. 4d. to the 'reparation of the aisle' in 1472. It is possible that it is the work of John Forster, who was apprenticed to William Layer in the 1430s and rose to become alderman of Bury St Edmunds in the 1470s. There are parallels between the windows here and those in the tower at Rougham and the nave at Tostock.

The clerestory, with two windows per bay, and the single-hammerbeam roof followed the completion of the north aisle and the second phase of the tower. A bequest of £5 was made towards 'the battlementing of the church' in 1515, and another to the 'pamenting' of the church in 1521.

The north aisle has no east window, possibly because the width available had been reduced by the rood stair turret which pre-dates the aisle. The turret is higher than the aisle roof, and could have been used as a focus for the Palm Sunday ceremonies, as at Long Melford. The west wall of the north aisle abuts against the tower, giving further evidence that the aisle was built after the lower stages of the tower had been completed.

Some fragments of 14th-century glass remain in the north chancel windows, and 15th-century canopies in the north aisle. The south aisle has a window by Heaton, Butler and Bayne to commemorate Queen Victoria's Jubilee in 1887, showing Victoria flanked by Queen Esther and the Queen of Sheba.

When David Elisha Davy visited in 1810 the easternmost bay of each aisle was enclosed by a parclose screen. The screens were still *in situ* in 1855, but must have been removed during the later restoration. Parts appear to have been re-used in the vestry screens at the west end of the south aisle.

The westernmost window on the south side of the chancel had a 'low side', which was recorded

in 1855, but subsequently blocked up. The chancel contains monuments and stained glass to the Bunbury family, lords of the manor from 1746 to 1915. They include Henry William Bunbury the caricaturist (d. 1811) and Lt-Gen. Sir Henry Bunbury (d. 1860). The latter was a leading social reformer in Suffolk and a pioneer and advocate of allotments for agricultural labourers.

Great Barton Hall. The manor of Great Barton was held by Bury Abbey until 1539, and eventually passed to the Audley family who owned it from 1554 to 1704. The manor house was on the site of the present 'Manor House' in Church Lane, and among its outbuildings was the 13th-century aisled barn. A 'new house' or 'new hall' was built by Robert Audley (d. 1624) further to the south, in the area known today as The Park. The manor was purchased by the Folkes family, who held it from 1704 to 1725, when it passed by marriage to Sir Thomas Hanmer, Speaker of the Commons, who lived in Mildenhall. In 1746 he left his estates in Mildenhall and Great Barton to his nephew the Revd Sir William Bunbury (5th baronet). The Bunburys owned the manor until 1915, and lived both at Mildenhall and Great Barton Hall.

The greatest alterations to both house and estate were undertaken by Lt-Gen. Sir Henry Bunbury (7th baronet), who was owner from 1821 to 1860. The house stood near the main Bury to Diss road, in a small garden rather than a park. In order to create a park around the house Sir Henry diverted several roads and footpaths, 1821–28. He then laid out a new main road, and built labourers' cottages along its route. The earlier road system is preserved in building lines and footpaths, and explains why many groups of pre-Victorian buildings are set back at unusual angles to the present road. Sir Henry's other improvements included laying out a walled kitchen garden (now Garden Close) and arboretum within the new park, and building almshouses, a reading room and schools. The cottage accommodation was increased from thirty in 1821 to 107 in 1860.

The Hall was gutted by fire in January 1914. The Bunburys had let it since 1900 and were living at Mildenhall. The Great Barton estate of 2,136 acres, including the ruins of the Hall and the lordship, was sold in July and October 1915.

28 September. Kate Sussams, Edward Martin and Colin Pendleton

Some Breckland Archaeology: Santon Downham, Suffolk and Santon, Norfolk

Santon Downham, High Lodge Forest Centre (by kind permission of Forest Enterprise). The new visitor centre is near the site of the lodge of a formerly extensive warren, described in 1778 as 'well stocked with rabbits'. In the 1930s it became a labour camp for the unemployed and then an army base in World War II. Running for several miles through the woods nearby are multiple linear banks which mark the boundary between Downham and Brandon parishes and of their respective rabbit warrens. Sections dug across the banks in 1995 and 1996 (see summaries in 'Archaeology in Suffolk') showed that they were made almost entirely of sand. The warren banks are thought likely to be 18th-century in date, possibly linked with an agreement in 1710 between the Duke of Norfolk and Robert Wright of Downham Hall over 'the right of taking conies and sheep feeding' on the Santon Downham/Thetford border,⁸ but as yet there is no firm dating evidence. A grant of free warren to the lord of Newhall manor in 1276/7 may mark the origin of Downham warren. It was certainly in existence by 1440, when an armed gang of thieves raided it.⁹ An information board will be erected at the warren banks in 1997.

Santon Downham, Horseshoe Pit. Finds of Iron Age and Roman pottery around this isolated water source in the 1920s and 1930s suggest that it is a small but ancient Breckland mere. Recent clearance of trees around it has revealed a circular bank and ditch around it of unknown date, but possibly 18th–19th-century. An information board will be erected here in 1997.

Brandon, Lingheath gunflint mines (by kind permission of the Lingheath Trust), one of the best surviving groups of gun-flint mines in England. Dating from the 19th and early 20th centuries, these have recently been surveyed by the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England (see

'Archaeology in Suffolk 1996'). Part of the group is in the process of being cleared of vegetation and is to be made accessible to the public, with an information board.

Santon Downham village. Originally just *Downham* 'the estate on the hill', it was later called Downham St Mary or Little Downham to distinguish it from Downham Market in Norfolk, finally becoming 'Santon Downham' (i.e. the Downham near Santon in Norfolk) or 'Sandy Downham' in the 17th century. Around that time the village was almost overwhelmed by an infamous 'sand flood', as recounted by Thomas Wright in *Philosophical Transactions*, 1668. At Domesday, *Dunham*, together with its church, belonged to the Abbey of Bury St Edmunds. Sheep were already an important part of the local economy, with 900 recorded here in 1086. Although the Abbey continued to be the overlord throughout the medieval period (with the Earls of Oxford as mesne lords), Downham was sub-divided into several smaller manors by the 13th century:

Merseys, Mersies or Marses or Downham Marsez, later *Bagot's* (named after the de Mereshay family (? from Mersea in Essex), lords from the mid 13th-century and the Bagots, lords in the 15th and early 16th centuries). The name may survive in 'Mayes Plantation' near the church (*Mazes* 1791).

Newhall alias Shardelowes (the knightly Shardelow family of Barton Mills (from Shardlow, Derbyshire) were lords in the 14th and early 15th centuries).

Downham Ixworth or Downham Priory (granted to Ixworth Priory in the mid 13th century).

Downham Monkshall (the residual demesne holding of Bury Abbey).

Downham Hall, site. In 1618 Robert Wright, gent., a younger son of Thomas Wright of Kilverstone Hall, Norfolk, Master of the Bench, acquired the manors of Newhall and Downham Ixworth and appears to have settled at Downham, being buried here in 1656. He was succeeded by his nephew, Thomas Wright, Esq., J.P., (c. 1632–99), the author of the famous account of the 'sand flood' at Downham. He had twelve hearths here in 1674. His tombstone lies outside the east end of the church. Following the death in 1777 of his great-grandson, Thomas Wright of Downham Hall and King's House, Thetford, the estate was offered for sale, the Hall being described as a 'Mansion sashed, fronting South, with all conveniences, gardens, plantations, meadows &c . . . [with] rights of fishing and swaning' (*Ipswich Journal*, 4 Apr. 1778). It was purchased by Charles, 3rd Lord Cadogan (later 1st Earl of Cadogan) of London and Caversham, Berks., apparently for use as a 'shooting lodge' – one of a number that appeared in Breckland at this time. Cadogan had been appointed Surveyor of the King's Gardens in 1764, with 'Capability' Brown as his deputy. Around the same time Cadogan's father employed Brown to landscape the grounds at Caversham. A map of the Downham estate (Fig. 23) records numerous plantations of trees established by Cadogan from 1779 onwards; did he seek Brown's advice on the form of these? The Earl died at Downham in 1807.

In 1829 David Elisha Davy visited: 'In our walk to the church at Downham, we passed along the private road up to the Hall. Here are large plantations, tho' from the badness of the soil, the trees are not very flourishing: I saw however, no traces of the devastation caused by the sand flood, the effects of which are so deplorably described in Kirby's *Suffolk Traveller*. The Hall stands low, & is a modern house of apparently the former part of the last century: it is much inclosed with trees, of an old growth' (Blatchly 1982, 139).

In 1830 the estate was sold to Lord William John Frederick Powlett, later 3rd Duke of Cleveland. Alterations were made to the Hall in 1836 by the architect Lewis Vulliamy of London, probably as a result of a fire in 1833. The two avenues of limes leading to the village from the Brandon and Thetford roads are said to have been planted by the Duchess. The Duke died in 1864 and Downham was sold in 1871 to Edward Mackenzie Esq. of Fawley Court, Bucks. He died in 1880, leaving the manor of Downham to his eldest son, William Dalziel Mackenzie Esq. (1840–1928) of Fawley Court and Croxton Park, Thetford, but gave the occupation of Downham Hall to his younger son, Colonel Edward Philippe Mackenzie (1842–1929). In 1879 the Hall was described as being 'a noble mansion built of white Suffolk brick, situated in a well-timbered park [of 1,000 acres], on the

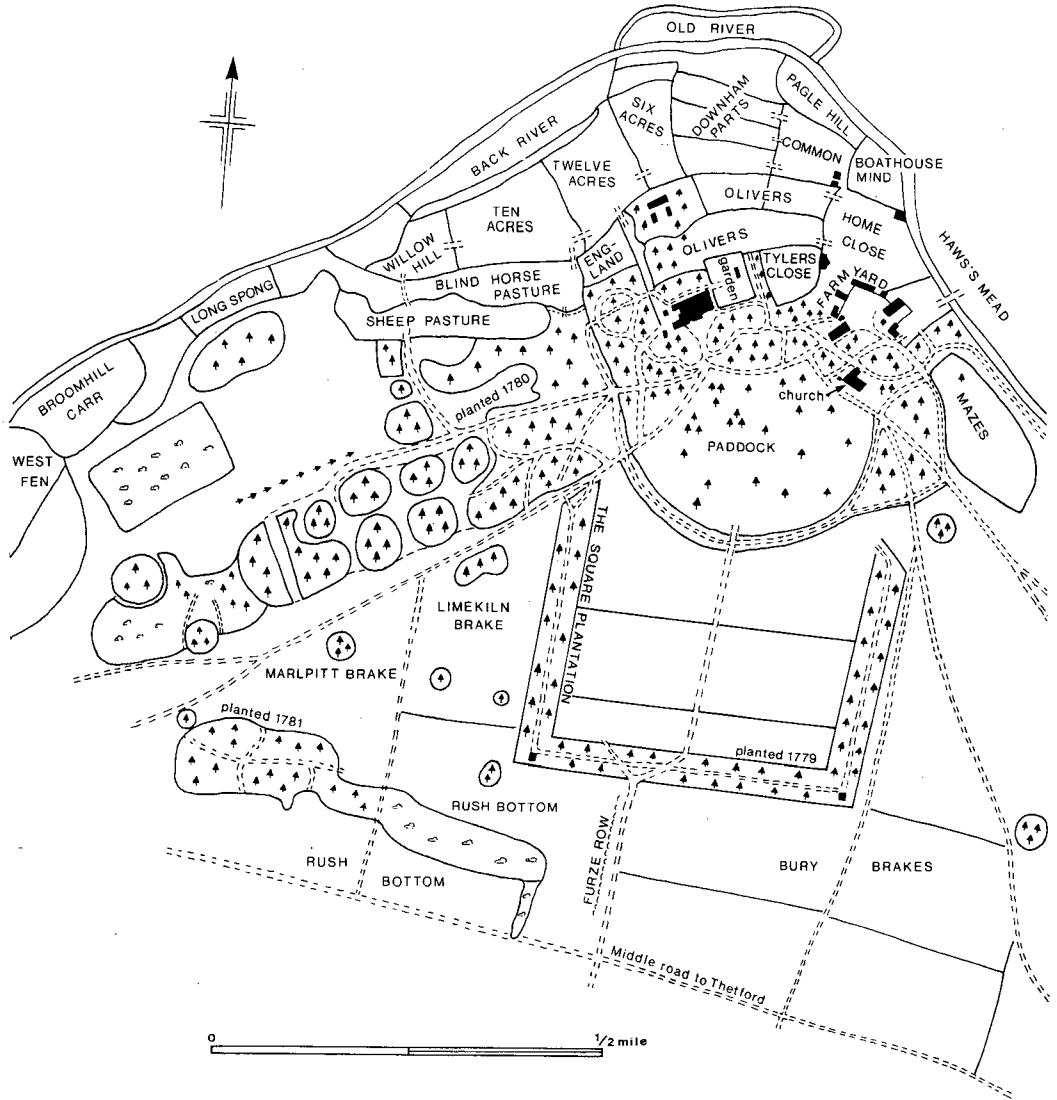


FIG. 23 – Redrawn portion of William Webb's map of Santon Downham, 1791, showing Lord Cadogan's ornamental tree plantings around the Hall (S.R.O.B., M550/3).

southern bank of the Little Ouse, and is approached from Brandon and Thetford high roads by two carriage drives, each one a mile in length and each having an entrance lodge: it is in the heart of an extensive game preserve, and the gardens are laid out in the Italian style' (Kelly 1879, 837). In 1918 the estate was sold for £75,310 to a succession of land speculators and companies. In 1924 it was acquired by the Forestry Commission. The Hall was demolished in 1925 or 1927. The site lies at the north end of Hall Drive, where there is now an open square fringed by the converted remains of the Hall: the billiard room and adjacent ice-house on the south, the coach house on the west and the tack room on the north. Elements of the garden still survive along Mark Lane and features of the park can be traced in the village and the surrounding forestry plantations. The

Forestry Commission development by Kenneth Wood in 1967, on the site of the Home Farm, was praised by Pevsner as relating to the strong local vernacular tradition of flint and tile.

Santon Downham, St Mary's Church (by kind permission of the churchwardens). Noteworthy features are a Norman south doorway with a very interesting stone carving of a beast above it; Norman shafts to the north doorway; a 13th-century tomb recess and wall paintings (thin scrolls) in arch of window on the south side; fragments of late medieval glass in the tracery of the south chancel window; the north transept chapel (?associated with the Trinity Guild) now demolished, except probably for its east wall, now the west wall of the porch; an early-14th-century rood screen with stencilled decoration; a 17th-century font cover and pulpit; 19th-century stained glass by Kemp and Co. (three lancets on the north side, and the west window) and Heaton, Butler and Bayne (lancet, south side), and by Harcourt Doyle, 1952 (lancet, south side). There are two medieval coped coffin lids in the chancel; monuments to the 1st Earl of Cadogan (1807), Col. the Hon. Henry Cadogan (1813), and Col. E.P. Mackenzie (1929); a hatchment to the Duke of Cleveland (1864); and monuments to the Wright family outside the east end. The base of the tower has an inscription (similar in type to that on nearby West Tofts tower) recording a group of benefactors of c. 1470–1500 who paid for its erection: Maria monogram, IHS monogram, IS and IR, chalice and PD, ST [?Sancta Trinitas], John Watts, John Reue, Agnus Dei emblem, Sir John Dow[n]h[a]m, Margaret Reue, Jafrey Skytte, Willia[m] Toller. (Relevant wills are: John Watts 1499 (Lambeth), John Reue, senior 1473 and John Reue 1488 (both Sudbury), Sir John Downham (presumably a priest), executor of the will of Thomas Hernyng 1472 (Sudbury), Geoffrey Skete and his widow Alice (the daughter of John Reue) 1500 (Norwich), and William Toller 1503 (Sudbury).)

Santon, Norfolk. The name, meaning 'the sandy farm', reflects the dry, sandy nature of the place. Always sparsely populated, the parish now has only six dwellings.

A 10th-century Viking burial (a man and a woman) was found here in 1867 – one of only two pagan burials of this period known in Norfolk. In 1086 *Santuna* formed part of the extensive possessions of William de Warenne, later Earl of Surrey. The later manorial history is however complex and not totally unravelled, the descent of the advowson not matching the manorial descent given by Francis Blomefield (II, 155–56). In 1384/5 John de Bodney apparently gave the manor, via trustees, to Thetford Priory. At the Dissolution the manor passed to a succession of non-resident owners before being purchased in 1625 by Thomas Bancroft Esq., 'Remembrancer in the King's Exchequer'. He came to live at Santon and possibly built the existing Santon House near the church, though the parish had already been called 'Santon Howse' in 1577. His heirs sold the manor to non-resident owners and in 1791 it was acquired by Lord Cadogan, as an adjunct to his Downham estate. It has been closely connected with Santon Downham ever since.

In medieval times there was a fair here on the eve of the Nativity of St John the Baptist (23 June) and a ferry, both belonging to the manorial overlords, the de Warennes.

Moated site at St Helen's Picnic Site (by kind permission of Forest Enterprise). This is a small square moat beside the Little Ouse, with slight linear earthworks around it, which could be either the remains of a small deserted village, or yards associated with the moat. Traces of mortared-flint walls on the moated platform suggest a building of some importance, despite the small size of the moat: it was possibly a hunting lodge of the priors of Thetford. The priory accounts record repairs to *Santon logge* (? here or in the warren to the north) in the early 16th century (Dymond 1995). It could also be the original 'Santon House'. A new information board will be erected here in 1997.

Santon, All Saints Church (not St Helen's,¹⁰ as often stated); vacant. This is the only church in Norfolk belonging to the diocese of St Edmundsbury and one of the smallest churches in England, as befits a parish with such a low population. The advowson in the 14th and 15th centuries belonged to the lords of Newhall manor in Downham, but was apparently given in 1472 by Isabel Gallion to the

College or Chapel of St Mary, Bayly End, Thetford. It was subsequently conveyed to the Mayor and Commonalty of Thetford on condition that they presented the master of the College at every vacancy, but a conflicting account says that it was granted *c.* 1494/5 to the Mayor and Commonalty to be used for the master of the grammar school. The church was rebuilt in 1628 by Thomas Bancroft, 'the sole parishioner' (Blomefield 1805, 157). His gravestone, 1636, is on the floor of the church. It was extensively restored and enlarged around 1858 by the Revd William Weller-Poley (1814–87) of Brandon House, Rector of Santon and Vicar of Santon Downham 1858–87. The chancel is said to have been built with materials from the south transept of West Tofts church (Pevsner 1962, 301). There is painted decoration on the woodwork, and the Minton tiles were designed by Pugin. Weller-Poley's grave lies outside the east end of the church.

*Clive Paine,
Hon. Excursions Secretary*

NOTES

- 1 P.R.O., 1109/6.
- 2 P.R.O., C132/27.
- 3 P.R.O., SC6 992.
- 4 S.R.O.B., FL 501/5/1.
- 5 S.R.O.B., HA 517/A4.
- 6 P.R.O., SC6, E101 etc., and see Ward 1995, 162–85.
- 7 B.L., Add. MS 4969.
- 8 S.R.O.B., 651/30.
- 9 S.R.O.B., 651/31/3.
- 10 Domesday Book records a church of St Helen in Thetford. The site of this is at St Helen's Well, on the Santon/Thetford boundary.

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Abbreviations

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| B.L. | British Library. |
| <i>D.N.B.</i> | <i>Dictionary of National Biography</i> . |
| P.R.O. | Public Record Office. |
| S.R.O.B. | Suffolk Record Office, Bury St Edmunds Branch. |

LECTURES

- March 2 At Ipswich: 'The Buildings of 14th-century Clare', by Leigh Alston.
- March 9 At Bury St Edmunds: 'Palaeolithic Landscapes in Suffolk', by Nick Ashton.
- October 19 At Bury St Edmunds: 'Sutton Hoo and the Origins of Suffolk', by Dr Peter Warner.
- November 16 At Ipswich: 'The Archaeology of the Hinterland of Saxon Ipswich', by John Newman.
- December 7 At Otley: short contributions by the Institute's members:—
 'The Stable at Boundary Farm, Framsdon: Recent Findings', by Ian McKechnie.
 'The Two Wills of Richard Hotard and the Island of Rhodes', by Peter Northeast.
 'The Mysterious Warbanks', by Edward Martin.
 'Representations of the Trinity', by Dr John Blatchly.

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During the year 56 members were elected and, after taking into account resignations and lapsed members, the membership at the end of 1996 stood at 817, a net decrease of 47. The total comprised 549 full members, 183 associate members, and 85 institutions and societies.

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