

Proceedings of the Bucks Architectural and Archæological Society,

FOR THE YEAR 1886.

THE Annual Excursion and Meeting of this Society took place on Tuesday, the 10th of August. The gathering was not so large as usual, and the weather was unpropitious, but a very interesting journey was made. The company included the Archdeacon of Buckingham, and the following officers of the Society, viz., the Rev. R. H. Pigott and Mr. John Parker, F.S.A. (hon. secs.), Mr. R. Gibbs (hon. librarian and curator), and Mr. J. Williams (hon. treasurer).

The members met at Aylesbury, and proceeded by road to Great Kimble. Here they halted at the church, and were received by the Rev. E. K. Clay, the Vicar, who addressed them on the points of interest in connection with the building. He first alluded to the five bells, three of which, he said, were by Knight, of Reading, dated 1587. The church itself was supposed to have been built in the middle of the thirteenth century, though some thought it of a later date. The present roof was apparently the third. Before the restoration there was a trace of the original roof, a very high-pitched one, in the tower. A flat one seemed to have been substituted for this, as with many Buckinghamshire churches. The present roof was formed at the restoration. The only other alteration was the rebuilding of the vestry, in the south aisle of the chancel, it having entirely fallen down, and here a very interesting window at the east end was discovered. The vestry was interesting, because in it Hampden and the parishioners came to the front with reference to the ship-tax. Among the parishioners there was an entry whereby Hampden and the parishioners protested against that tax as an imposition, not being levied by the authority of Parliament, and it being contended that inland towns were not subject to it. The present parishioners rather prided themselves upon this memorable protest. It was curious to see that a good many of the names appended to this protest were still names in the district—*e.g.*, East, Rutland, Goodchild, Clarke, Stratton, Atkins. The font was of the fourteenth century date, and many must have noticed that it was of the same type as the fonts in many adjacent churches. He believed there was one exactly the same at Bierton, and that that at Aylesbury was not unlike it. (The font at Great Kimble is, however, much more massive.) There was a very interesting barn to be seen by the Manor House, just opposite the church, and he would be glad if anyone could solve its origin. It was supposed to have been a chapel attached to the old manor-house; but Willis and others thought it had only been a dining-house. With regard to the adjacent tumulus, a sun-dial used to stand upon it, and the old men of the parish remembered it. There were stones about the parish which were said to have formed the pedestal of the dial.

Outside the church porch the company viewed the supposed Tumulus, and Mr. Rutland, of Taplow, read a carefully prepared paper on Tumuli, in which he remarked that the county of Bucks is not rich in barrows, but many are to be found. Some have been explored, and with remarkable results, as at Taplow; others have been opened, yielding only disappointment, possibly for want of a well-directed *modus operandi*. There are three barrows in the adjoining parish of Hampden, one in Velvet Lawn, one on Ivinghoe

Beacon, one on the Downs at Wendover, two small ones on White Leaf Hill, two in the parish of Radnage, one at Parham Royal and the Montem Hill, one in Hitcham Park, and one in the Old Churchyard, Taplow, which is within an entrenched enclosure, or large camp—the site most probably of the ancient British village. He believed they were all of the secondary, or round, form. Mr. Rutland added that he had little or no information concerning the Tumulus in view; he believed it had never been opened.

CHEQUERS COURT.

In pouring rain, the party proceeded to Chequers Court, where they were hospitably received. After luncheon, Mr. E. F. Astley kindly conducted the visitors over the house, pointing out the various objects of interest. Attention was directed to the older part of the house, dated 1490, and the general lines of architecture indicated. The house is rich in family pictures and Cromwellian relics, and these were much admired. In the groined ceiling room special notice was taken of the picture by Jackson (engraved), and the portraits. In the ante-room were highly interesting pictures of Richard Cromwell, when a child; Elizabeth Cromwell, daughter of Sir Thomas Steward, of Ely, and mother of Oliver Cromwell; and Oliver Cromwell, aged two years. The last-named was purchased in January, 1791, from Mrs. Graves, print seller, Catherine Street, to whom Mr. Gerard, the auctioneer, sold it many years before among the furniture of Mr. Storey, of Greek Street, whose mother was waiting-woman to Mrs. Ireton, daughter of Oliver Cromwell. Mrs. Astley is descended from Margaret, Countess of Richmond and Derby—mother of Henry VII.—whose portrait was seen in this room. The sword which the Protector used at Marston Moor was seen in the library. Other noticeable pictures were portraits of John Claypole, and his wife Elizabeth, second daughter of Oliver Cromwell. Proceeding to the drawing-room, the visitors found a fine portrait of Mrs. Ellis, by Sir Peter Lely; also, amongst others, portraits of Frances Lady Russell, fifth daughter of Oliver Cromwell and wife first of Hon. J. Rich, and second of Sir John Russell of Chippenham; Prince Maurice, brother of Prince Rupert; Bridget Lady Croke, and Sir Robert Croke. Mr. Astley observed that the inner drawing room was understood to be the apartment where Lady Mary Grey was confined, and pointed out the place from whence a staircase—now removed—led to a bedroom. The visitors gazed with special interest, therefore, on the portraits of Sir William Hawtrey and his wife Winifred, who had charge of Lady Mary during her imprisonment. There are a couple of sea pieces, by Ruysdall, in this room. The library was found to contain many objects of interest, including Cromwellian pictures and relics. Among the former may be mentioned the portraits of the Protector (with Sir Peter Temple tying his sash), Jeremy White (his chaplain), Mary Lady Fauconberg (third daughter), Bridget Fleetwood, wife of General Fleetwood (eldest daughter), John Thurloe (secretary), Elizabeth Claypole (second daughter), Henry Cromwell (fourth son, and Lord Lieutenant of Ireland—married Elizabeth, daughter of Sir Francis Russell, Bart.), Richard Cromwell, (eldest son, and sometime Lord Protector), and General Lambert. The cabinet, containing a cast of Cromwell's face, miniatures of his generals and James, 7th Earl of Derby, was closely inspected. The Earl of Derby was beheaded in October, 1651, by Oliver Cromwell. Mrs. Frankland-Russell-Astley is seventh in descent from Lord Derby and Oliver Cromwell. Under glass were seen various interesting relics, including a deed by Richard Cromwell dissolving Parliament; and opening a drawer Mr. Astley displayed the christening clothes of Oliver Cromwell. The portrait of Lord Cutts, Baron of Gowran, was noticed, and Mr. Astley showed the visitors the patent of nobility. In the oak room were seen more family portraits, and one of the

Prince of Orange, by Zucchero. Mr. Astley kindly showed the company several genealogical tables, of which the following table was one:—

“The Protector, Oliver Cromwell, b. 25th April, 1599—ob. 3rd September, 1658.—1st, Frances Cromwell, m. Sir J. Russell, Bart.; 2nd, Elizabeth Russell, m. Sir T. Frankland, Bart.; 3rd, Henry Frankland, m. Mary Cross; 4th, Sir Thomas Frankland, Bart., m. Sarah Rhett; 5th, Sir Thomas Frankland, Bart., m. Dorothy Smelt; 6th, Sir Robert Frankland Russell, Bart., m. Louisa, third daughter of Lord George Murray; 7th, Rosalind Alicia.”

After inspecting the apartments, Mr. Astley read the paper which appears in this number of *THE RECORDS*.

The Archdeacon, on behalf of the members, thanked Mr. Astley for the information he had given them, and remarked that he had set before them all kinds of lines of interest. Members of such associations as theirs were supposed to be well acquainted with history, and therefore he presumed they had all followed Mr. Astley in his remarks, but if not they had sufficient material to work upon when they reached home. He thanked Mr. Astley for the paper and guidance over the house, and further, he had to thank Mrs. Astley for the kind entertainment of them that day. It was always of interest to visit the gem of Buckinghamshire, as he would be bold enough to call that place, and especially was it so when visitors were received with so much kindness and hospitality. Mrs. Astley had allowed them to invade her house on a day when they carried a good deal of the mud of the lanes with them, and they must thank her most heartily. They all wished that that mansion and property might continue to her posterity for as many generations as Mr. Astley had explained to them it had already been in the family.

Mr. Astley then thanked the Archdeacon very much for the kind way in which he had spoken of his mother and himself.

HAMPDEN.

From Chequers, the party drove on to Hampden, where they first visited the church.

A paper was read by the Rector, Rev. T. W. D. Brooks. He stated that the main part of the edifice was probably built at one time, and it was a good example of the parish churches of the latter end of the 14th century. The north aisle might have been added a little later. The earliest portions were the lower part of the tower, the upper part having probably been added later; the font,* which was a beautiful specimen of the Decorative style, and a good three-light Decorative window at the west end. The roof of the nave was a good specimen of the Perpendicular, and the piers and arches, which have good mouldings, were of the Decorative style. The church was restored in 1870, the architect being Mr. James Edmeston, of London. The altar cloth was then given by Mr. Beaumont Hankey. In the chancel an entirely new roof was formed—an exact restoration of the old roof, part of which existed, but in a rotten state, above the plaster ceiling, that had been put in in modern times. Two stone niches were placed in the east wall—faithful copies of the old niches, which had been destroyed years ago, the fragments of which had been used to build up the recesses. Happily, pieces of every part were found sufficient for the accurate restoration of them. A curious discovery of ancient figures, walled up behind these niches, was made. These, with the fragments of the niches,

* An illustration of this interesting font, by Mr. Thomas Thurlow, of High Wycombe, appears in this number of *THE RECORDS*.

which still retained their colouring and gilding, were placed in a case in the vestry. The floor of the chancel was raised, and the space within the rail laid with encaustic tiles; on other parts of the floor brasses which had been taken in former years from the church, and had been found in Hampden House, were replaced. Two ancient "squints" were discovered and opened, having been evidently formed to enable persons in the aisles to look into the chancel and see the altar. In the nave the low window seat on the south side, which had been bricked up, was restored to its old use as *sedilia*, or seat for the clergy. A beautiful piscina was discovered in the wall of the south aisle, so perfect as to require no restoration beyond the removal of the stones and plaster with which it had been blocked up. The whitewash was removed from all the stonework. The walls (which were found to have been coloured in every part) were tinted buff, and the flat spaces of the roof blue. At the west end of the church two crosses in red paint (similar to the cross now painted under the east window) were discovered under the whitewash, but were not restored. On the exterior nothing was done but the necessary work of repair, and the complete restoration was left to a future time. Further restorations were carried out in 1881 and 1884, mainly at the expense of the late Earl of Buckinghamshire; these consisted of a new tiled roof to the nave and lead roofing to the north and south aisles, the restoration of the porch, and the removal of rough casts from the south front of the church. Three very interesting brasses only remained of a number which had ornamented the floor, the date of the earliest being 1496, though Edmund Hampden, who founded a chantry in St. Paul's Cathedral in 1404, was, by will, to be buried here, and Thomas Hampden, who died about 1482, willed that his "body be buried before ye image of St. Mary Magdalene, in Hampden Church," and many others were recorded in the burial register of the parish, memorials of which had been lost. There were also some interesting inscribed mural tablets, notably one to the wife of the Patriot, and written by himself.

Mr. Parker also read a paper on "The Lords of Great Hampden Manor." The insertion of this paper in *THE RECORDS* is postponed to next year's number, owing to want of space in the present number. Mr. Parker concluded his communication by reading an account of the exhumation of what was supposed to be the body of Hampden.

After listening to the papers, and seeing the objects of interest in the church, the members proceeded to the House, and inspected with great appreciation the various rooms and antique pictures. Mrs. S. C. Hall, in "Pilgrimages to English Shrines," says of this mansion:—"The Hall is of that gloomy character, once considered necessary for grandeur and effect; the suite of rooms consists of a library, two dining-rooms, a drawing-room, a sort of small presence chamber, and a bed-room that enjoys the reputation of having been especially furnished for Elizabeth by Griffith Hampden." After referring to the portrait, "in one of the reception rooms," which, it is stated, was recognized as that of the Patriot from its resemblance to the face of the body exhumed by Lord Nugent, the paper continues:—"It is deplorable that this noble mansion, honoured by time and circumstance, contains no other record of the one who has given it immortality; no papers, no documents, no scrap of his handwriting, no table upon which his hand rested, no chair, as the master of a household often has appropriately called 'his own,' no room—nothing except a doubtful portrait."

On the billiard table of the hall were open to view the curious Bible, once the property of Philip, uncle of Oliver Cromwell, which contains detailed entries of the births of many of the Cromwell family; and also the beautiful emblazoned vellum roll executed in 1579, containing the pedigree and alliances of the Hampdens; truly a precious record as well as heirloom of a distinguished family.

THE ANNUAL MEETING

was held at the Assembly Room, Princes Risborough, the Archdeacon being in the chair.

In calling upon the Hon. Treasurer to make his report, the Chairman observed that the Society had made application to the Lords of the Treasury for a portion of the coins found at Long Crendon. Their Lordships seemed perfectly ready to let them have some of the coins, but it appeared that they had returned them to the finders, Messrs. Wilson and Son, and Mr. Gibbs had not been able to extract any from those gentlemen.

The Hon. Treasurer made a financial statement. He said the balance in hand at the beginning of last year was £8, 14s. 4d. The receipts included—Subscriptions, £72, 13s.; £5 from Mr. H. Gough, towards the expenses of engraving, in illustration of an article; and £4, 7s. 6d. from Mr. A. H. Cocks, towards the extra expenses of another article; and sundries, £4, 8s. 6d.; making, with other items, a total of £95, 3s. 4d. The payments included—Repairs and cleaning, £5, 18s.; extra printing expenses, £7, 18s. 3d.; Mr. De Fraine's bill for RECORDS, £46, 12s. 4d.; rent for two years, £12; and sundries, £12; leaving a balance of £4, 9s. 1d. Last year was an unusual one for receipts. They received more in subscriptions than they had for some years past, the figures for the past five years being—1881, £54; 1882, £51; 1883, £67; 1884, £50; and 1885, £57; giving an average income of £62. There was still a debt of some £63 due to the printer of THE RECORDS. His balance at the present time, including the balance brought forward, was about £14, and if he could only get members to pay up their subscriptions more regularly, it would be better. That would enable him to clear the Society of the debt which had become chronic. They had always owed a large sum to the printer, and that hardly seemed fair, because he did the work at a very moderate price.

In reply to the Chairman, Mr. Williams said there was about £50 of subscriptions due, and he thought only about £5 of that amount was irrecoverable. The Society would have about £65 to receive, if all the subscriptions were paid.

Mr. Williams stated that last year he sent out eighty applications for payment of subscriptions, and had about twenty replies.

Mr. Ward asked if the unpaid subscriptions were of long standing?

Mr. Williams—Yes, four or five years.

The Chairman thought the report was not unsatisfactory, and all they could do was to urge the members to pay their subscriptions regularly.

The report was then adopted.

The Chairman said it was his business to return thanks, on behalf of the members, to the officers for their exertions during the past year.

Mr. Ward wished to propose a new member, but the Chairman said the proposition must first come before the Committee.

The Chairman, continuing, said their thanks were also due to those who had read papers that day. He was sorry they could not extract all the learning on the *Annals*, but perhaps they could push their enquiries further by means of sinking a shaft. Mr. Astley's paper gave them what they could not have picked up for themselves, and he thought the Secretary should send a letter of thanks for the paper and the hospitality shown them at Chequers. The paper on Hampden Church was also very good, and he hoped Mr. Parker's paper would be printed in THE RECORDS. He hoped that they would have as successful a meeting next year. With regard to the locality they should visit there were excellent fields for investigation both in the north and south of the county. It had been suggested that it might perhaps be as well to pass over the county and visit Oxford. Of course Oxford was full of interest, but it always appeared to him that with such a

Society as this, the great thing was to keep to their own locality. It was not difficult at any time for any number of people—large or small—to arrange an excursion to Oxford, but it was extremely difficult for a set of people—small or great—to arrange an excursion to Aldbury or Upton. They might visit them, but not get the information they required, as this Society did. They should work their own field thoroughly. It had not yet been so worked, because if they looked through THE RECORDS they would see that there was a great deal of Bucks which had not been touched, and it unfortunately happened that the ecclesiastical architecture of Bucks had met with very little favour indeed. He knew the churches in Bucks pretty well, and he was struck with the little amount of attention given to them, whereas there was not one of them which had not points of interest worthy of working out. When they knew their own county from end to end, as they ought to know it, they might cross the border and find objects of interest elsewhere.

The Rev. R. H. Pigott rose for two reasons—viz., that he was one of those who had been thanked, and he wished to make a few remarks. Having acknowledged the value of the services of Mr. Parker and Mr. Williams, and asked the members to assist the latter by paying their subscriptions regularly, he went on to say that to his mind the Society did not come up to his idea of what a County Association should be. It was very hard to explain why it did not, but at each meeting he felt more and more that it was not quite all they wanted it to be. He did not say that there was any lack of splendid hospitality, such as they had at Stowe and other places, but there was great fear that their Society might degenerate into an annual picnic, and that they would not do very much good. If they were not to depend on the excitement of one great field day, but to try and divide their work and visit different localities three or four times in a year, they might be really doing a great deal more good. The Archdeacon had mentioned the interest attaching to churches—and little churches. When this Society was founded by Archdeacon Bickersteth there were churches in Bucks restored. No doubt the restoration of churches in some instances was injudiciously carried out, and the interest in them destroyed, and he thought the Society might take cognisance of contemplated restorations, and offer suggestions. Some of these churches were of very great interest. He was lately at Winchendon, and went into the little neglected church on the brow of the hill, where, originally, the great mansion stood. Directly he went in he noticed that around the altar there were rough benches. On inquiry he found, that they were the original benches of olden times, when the Puritans sat round the table. There they were exactly as at the time when the altar was moved away from the walls and the benches placed around it by men who thought it right to sit instead of kneeling, when receiving the Sacrament. This church was going to be restored—they were getting large subscriptions—and now came a question for antiquarians. If those seats were to be moved certainly there should be some record in their annals. He believed there was only a single case left in England now, where those seats were to be found. They were very rude and untidy, but they certainly gave a wonderful interest to the church. The question was whether for the sake of preserving a great landmark in the history of the church, probably at the loss of beauty, they should be retained? He was inclined to think they should be, but if not they should have a view of them for their annals, and see that the old seats were not destroyed. A county society properly fulfilling its duty should take cognisance of that. It was only one small example of little things and interest which made up the history of their county and their country. If he continued to be Organising Secretary—and he was sure Mr. Parker, who was an antiquarian at heart, was with him—he should feel great satisfaction if it could be arranged that their Society

should be more useful than it was at present. He thought it should not be enough for the county gentry to give them a magnificent entertainment; he wished them to come more amongst them and help the Society with their presence. He felt deeply disappointed at the absence of some who were present last year, and if they could interest them, they would be doing that which would benefit the Society very much. It might be possible to arrange, by means of local secretaries and correspondence with them, several meetings during the year in different parts of the county. Notice might be sent, and those might come who liked, and then they might have one great field day for a gathering like this.

Mr. Parker said he quite agreed with the remarks made, but unfortunately, though very fond of archæological subjects, he was not a man of leisure. He urged that their visits to interesting objects in the county should be more frequent, and particularly to churches which were to be restored. It was astonishing the amount of history which might be lost to the historian through thoughtless restorations of our ancient churches.

The Rev. R. Chilton, Vicar of High Wycombe, proposed a vote of thanks to the Archdeacon, which was heartily accorded.

In response, the Archdeacon said he thought nobody was more bound to uphold such a society as this than himself, because it appertained to the office of Archdeacon to look into the fabrics of churches, parsonage houses, glebe houses, tithé barns, etc., and around each of these a great deal of interest circled. In his last visitation he specially recommended to the notice of the clergy the point of local parochial histories. He advised them—and he was certain it was good advice—to occupy themselves in their leisure moments in collecting all possible information they could find as to their own parishes. Of course it was a serious matter to write a county history. They had not got one of Bucks yet. They had four huge volumes of Lipscombe, which he frequently consulted, but architecturally his information was contemptible, and on other points he was not altogether trustworthy. It would not be a very serious thing to get these local histories completed, and they would form material for the future historian of Bucks to work upon, which would be beyond all price. Year after year the old land-marks were slipping away. Many of them who lived in the county saw how the local names were disappearing; that whereas almost every field in Bucks had its own old historical name, they were gradually getting to be called "Mr. So-and-so's field," and though that might be of interest to the owner, it was not so to the historian. He ventured, therefore, to advise the clergy to collect, amass, and record every single bit of information they could get as to their parishes. It would be of great value to the historian, and of infinite interest to themselves.

Mr. Jowett suggested that monthly or quarterly meetings should be held, and that the clergy should send in papers.

The Chairman said the difficulty was that some of them lived rather far afield, and many of them were busy. Perhaps the gentlemen who lived in and about Aylesbury might be able to meet once a quarter, and publish the result of their deliberations.

The Rev. R. H. Pigott thought they need not always meet at Aylesbury.

The proceedings then concluded.

The members subsequently paid an informal visit to the Manor House, which was in course of reparation, and were repaid by inspecting the interesting interior, which possesses a singularly fine staircase.