No. 18

BATTLE AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Transactions
1968 - 1969

BATTLE AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Affiliated to the Sussex Archaeological Society, the Sussex Archaeological Trust, and the South Eastern Federation of Museums and Art Galleries

---

President:
LIEUT.-COLONEL C. H. LEMMON, D.S.O.

Vice-Presidents:
MRS. E. WEBSTER MR. A. E. MARSON
MR. C. T. CHEVALLIER, M.A. MR. A. R. CLOUGH
PROF. DOROTHY WHITELOCK, C.B.E., D.LITT., F.S.A.
THE VERY REV. F. H. OUTRAM, M.A.

Chairman: MAJOR L. C. GATES, M.B.E., M.C.

Vice-Chairman: BRIG. D. A. LEARMONT, C.B.E.

Hon. Secretary: MR. W. ORGER

Hon. Treasurer: MR. R. W. BISHOP

Committee:

Till 1969:	*Till 1970:*	*Till 1971:*
MRS. W. N. PALMER	MR. G. BRODRIBB	MRS. O. BINDLEY
MISS J. E. S. ROBERTSON	MR. K. CLARKE	MISS R. CHIVERTON
MR. E. S. TOZER	MR. B. A. WEBER	MR. E. H. MAYER
		MR. A. E. STEVENSON

Museum Trust (Museum, Library and Excavation Committee):

Chairman: MR. A. R. CLOUGH

Hon. Secretary: MISS J. E. S. ROBERTSON

Members:
MR. C. T. CHEVALLIER MR. E. H. MAYER
MR. W. ORGER MR. W. N. PALMER
MR. B. A. WEBER

Hon. Curator of Museum: MR. E. H. MAYER

Hon. Editor of "Transactions": LIEUT.-COL. C. H. LEMMON

Delegate to South Eastern Federation: MISS J. E. S. ROBERTSON

CONTENTS

NOTE:—The Society is in no way responsible for the opinions of contributors as expressed in the above articles.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Besides the lectures printed in this number, Prof. E. Bate, M.Sc., Ph.D., F.Inst.P., gave, on November 6th, 1968, a lecture on St. Albans, Past and Present"; Mr. K. C. Leslie, B.A., F.R.S.A., gave a lecture on "The Activities of the Industrial Archaeological Group" on November 29th, 1968; Mr. K. Clarke, Ph.C., of Battle Camera Club, spoke on "The History of Photography"; Mr. H. F. Cleere, F.S.A., lectured on "The Progress Westwards of the Use and Working of Iron" on January 31st, 1969; Mrs. Dorothy M. Palmer on "A History of Valentines" on February 14th (St. Valentine's Day), and Dr. D. Ridge on "Brasses and Brass Rubbing" on February 28th. Our Vice-President, Mrs. Evelyn Webster brought the lecture season to a close with a lecture on "Western Asia (Turkey) and its Place in the Ancient World", delivered on March 28th.

On June 28th, at the kind invitation of Sir Peter and Lady Allen, an evening garden party was held at Telham Hill House.

In September, 1968, the B.B.C. approached the Society to obtain particulars of defence works in our area. ranging from Roman times to the last war, with a view to photographing them from the air for a documentary programme. Particulars of such works as Pevensey and Camber Castles, The Royal Military Canal, the Martello Towers, modern blockhouses and tank traps were supplied; some of which appeared in "The Island Fortress", broadcast on October 26th, 1969.

The end of the Society's year was much saddened by the death of Mr. Clement Theodore Chevallier. He served the Society from its inception; having been elected at the public meeting held on 9th November, 1950, to be a member of the temporary committee which drew up the constitution and rules. Thereafter he served on the Committee until he was elected Chairman in November, 1959, a position which he held until 1962, when he was made an honorary member *Honoris Causa*. In November, 1963, he was elected a Vice-President, an office he filled until his death. In addition, he served on the Museum Committee from 1963. Unless away from home, he rarely missed a meeting when serving on committees.

Mr. Chevallier's scholarship and capacity for research were apparent in his painstaking work which resulted in the solution of the 100 year old mystery of the location of the Malfosse, and also in editing the Society's contribution to the commemoration of the 900th anniversary of the battle. "The Norman Conquest, its Setting and Impact," a highly successful publication, issued before the spate of books on the Conquest in

1966, was the result entirely of his foresight and initiative. As a delegate to the Lambeth Conference about 1962, he obtained the consent of the Archbishop of Canterbury to preach at our 900th Anniversary Commemoration Service on 16th October, 1966. Clement Chevallier will be sadly missed, and remembered with affection and esteem by our Society.

THE EFFECT OF THE NORMAN CONQUEST ON ENGLISH LOCAL LIFE

Sir G. M. Trevelyan's *English Social History* begins from 1340. The preceding centuries (from 1066) he says "he would find most difficult". So scanty is the material for the *social* and *domestic* scene in Norman England, that one has to draw inferences from abroad, or from preceding Saxon or later Plantagenet documents. One who has done this pre-eminently well was our other distinguished member, the late Alfred Duggan. His *Growing up with the Norman Conquest*, as also *Life in Norman England* by Mrs. O. G. Tomkeieff, effectively bridges the gap. To them every student is greatly indebted; both books are in the Society's library.

Here one can only give a few background aspects. England before 1066 was a rural nation. London, with a population of over 10,000, and York, with rather less, were the commercial centres. Other towns grew up around small local markets to become the shire towns, with shire courts controlled by the King's Sheriff. Mostly walled as *burghs* by Alfred and his son, and garrisoned by their own militia, they were subject to the demesne rights of some local lord, but he had no castle to overawe them.

Rural society fell into three main classes: the thegns and their kindred landowners, the tenant farmers tied to their holdings but otherwise free citizens, and subordinate workers and some slaves. The Thegns owned their lands by right, not by the performance of duties which fell upon all free Englishmen. The ancestral thegns were reinforced by new men who for three generations had owned 5 hides (i.e. 600 to 800 acres), and by merchants who had made three sea voyages at their own cost. The Hundred court would usually choose a thegn to lead the local *fyrd*, or militia, which it had to provide at the rate of one man for every five hides. In all there were perhaps 4,500 thegns.

Other free owners were *Sokemen*, or just *Freemen*. Sokemen were mostly found in the Danelaw, often as groups of independent owners, who merged to hold their own *"soc"* or right to hold a local court. These descended from Guthrum's and other Danish settlers. Other Sokemen, also Freemen,

had in adversity besought the *soc* or protection of some more fortunate lord. In Essex especially, many Freemen paid their *geld* (tax) and lived substantially free from the local manor's control. Together these two groups formed half the landowners in the eastern counties in 1066. By 1086 they were but a tenth, and their freedom was nominal.

The backbone of the farming class was the *Ceorls* (churls) who paid rent to the lord (often ten pence a year), did week works (one day a week) and at harvest gave *boon*works; in return for which latter the lord gave them *bien*feasts and *bon*fires (these were the later, Norman, names). *Geneats* also, who did escort services, were men of higher status. All these cultivators merged by 1086 in the *Villeins* (manor-men). They formed two-fifths—in the southeast over half—of the effective rural population.

The subordinate workers were *Bordars* and *Cottars* (names reflecting their meagre homes), who included the herdsmen and craftsmen. There were also *Slaves*. These were most numerous where the ownership was most aristocratic—e.g. on Queen Edith's manors in Devon, 24 per cent of the workers. Monasteries too in the west had many slaves—refugees who had sought protection. In Sussex, where thegns were very few, so were slaves—the fewest in England, a mere 5 per cent.

Of the fourteen bishops two were already Normans under Edward. By 1086 only two were English—William wanted his bishops for civil as well as spiritual governors.

After 1050 there was no royal fleet, only the right to call on seaport towns to equip and man ships for fighting. As with the fyrd, the obligation to serve was limited to two months in a year, except to meet invasion. Before 1066, all England had only four castles (three in Herefordshire), all built by King Edward's Norman friends. By 1100 there were about a hundred; and by 1153 there were 120 duly authorised, and over eleven hundred illicitly built; all of which latter Henry II ordered to be destroyed. The crux of a castle was a *motte*, a raised mound often 300 feet across at base, with a flat summit 100 feet across, bearing a keep of great strength. This overlooked a lozenge-shaped *bailey*, usually on its most defensible spur. There the garrison and grooms normally lived. In and from it a few men could control a wide area. There was no chance for an English revolt.

The English landowner could dispose of his estate. His Norman successor held it under strict feudal obligation as a *Tenant in Chief* of the King. Domesday Book shows some 1,400 of these—14 of the greatest Barons (and Bishops), 180 with land valued at £100 or more (these included two Englishmen), and some 1,200 smaller but direct holders. The King then held one fifth of all the recorded lands, 20 Barons and 12 leading Churchmen held two fifths, and the remaining

1,370 Tenants in Chief, the other two fifths. The chief condition was that each one had to provide and equip a specified, but unpublished, number of knights for the King's service. Indeed we only know from an inquest in Henry II's time how many knights each Tenant in Chief had to produce in Henry I's time. Under the Conqueror, the unknown total was probably about 5,000. Though silent on that point, Domesday Book is clear on the current value of each manor. This suggests that William may have intended, had he lived, to raise taxes to pay for mercenaries in place of knights often unsatisfactorily provided.

In the farming class the ex-*ceorl*, now a villein, was still free to attend the hundred court, but this had largely yielded to the manor court. Also this time was fully occupied by his weekly work on his lord's demesne and his own holding. The restraint confining him to his own village was more strictly enforced. Here, in the Weald of Sussex, land was not held in strips in a common field as in the Midlands or in the prosperous arable behind the Downs. In our most difficult conditions the *virgate* or farm-unit stood at 15 acres, probably from the days of the old Sussex kingdom right down to 1086. This was half the national standard of 30 acres. That the Battle Abbey Chronicle gives self-contradictory information is not surprising, it being the work of several hands between 1090 and 1204. Frequent recourse to Domesday Book, which appears to have been based locally on the 15-acre unit, may have speeded the elimination of this awkward exception.

If the farm-unit in Sussex was small, the grouping of the great holdings was widespread and large. Of the 3,400 hides the country contained before 1066, King Edward, his Queen, and his sister held 400; while Earl Godwin, his wife and sons, held 1,150, more than a third of the total (Godwin had in fact died A.D. 1053 but his 500 or more hides were still recorded in his name—why?). Harold had 338 hides of his own—including Crowhurst and Whatlington. The remaining 1,850 Sussex hides belonged to various owners of whom only 19 were of Thegn status, out of some 4,500 thegns in all England.

After the Conquest, figures are best given not by hides but by manors—285 in all. Of these, Roger Montgomery, lord of the Rape of Arundel, held 89, the other four lords of Rapes about 40 each. These, with three bishops and as many abbots, were the Tenants in Chief, the king only keeping two in his own hands; one being Bosham, which had been Canute's, Godwin's and Harold's. The smallness of the king's holding reflects his reliance on the lords of the five Rapes to secure the ports facing Normandy. Each of the five lords had his own Sheriff until after 1200, but from Henry I's time there was, as elsewhere, one king's sheriff covering the whole county.

Before it became safe for a knight with a few French retainers to inhabit a manor, the Tenant in Chief—here the lord of the Rape—secured control of his area, piecemeal, by organising troops of knights termed *constabularia*—men "stabled together". Though pacification took place early in Sussex, no Englishman could find a place in such a body; but among a bare score of English undertenants recorded in 1086, though with much reduced holdings, one Haiminc still held the four manors, including Exceat, he had owned in King Edward's time. As Englishmen fought in the North under Count Robert of Mortain, lord of the Pevensey Rape, it may be guessed that Haiminc captained the Sussex fyrd there. Few English holders continued in the next generation, but perhaps Haiminc was the ancestor of the Philip de Essetesford (Escheat, not Ashford) who witnessed some early 13th century Battle charters.

The lord of the Hastings Rape was the count of Eu in east Normandy. He kept for himself the great manors of Hooe and Filsham, also Brightling, Dallington and Burwash. On his sheriff Rainbert he conferred Salehurst, Mountfield, Ninfield, Udimore, Whatlington, and "Corteslei"—which probably was Baldslow. Among other retainers, who perhaps began as a constabularia based on Bexhill, were some with surnames drawn from their Norman homes. Thus Osbern de *Criel* later received Bexhill, Ashburnham and Bodiam. So too Crowhurst is linked with *Etocquigny,* Hooe with *Normanville* Pett ("Ivet"—perhaps, Ivy House behind Ore) with *Sept Meules,* Fairlight with *St. Leger,* Guestling with *Flocques.* The Count also gave Pebsham to the Abbey of *Le Treport.* These Norman places lie close to Eu, as the map on p.80 of the Society's book, *The Norman Conquest, its Setting and Impact,* shows. With this area, Battle and its district has the closest affinity.

How did the people fare? The upper class, where it escaped being killed in hot blood, was mainly reduced into the villeinage. For the rest, all depended on the character of each individual Norman and the good sense of the conquered English.

C.T.C.

THE GROWTH OF THE BATTLE ABBEY ESTATE DURING THE MONASTIC PERIOD

A factual step-by-step story in chronological order of how the Battle Abbey Estate grew during the monastic period is for many reasons hardly possible. Many names in old documents either cannot be identified or suggest a wrong identification. Does *Schorham,* for instance, mean Shoreham-by-Sea,

or a farm called Shoreham, near Bodiam? Identification of property which changed hands presents a problem when only the owner's name and no location is given. What land is indicated, for instance, when "Michael, son of Reginald de Beche gave to the Abbey a deed of release and quit-claim for his lands in *Bodehurst* [Bathurst] and afterwards feoffed them with 11 acres lying contiguous"? Many old deeds are undated, and in some cases can only be approximately dated when the life dates of witnesses are known. Most of the original Abbey charters, title deeds, leases, and other priceless documents—some 97 folios of them—are now in the Huntington Library, California. When in this country they had been so readily accessible to researchers that no copies or annotated translations were made. Now research is only possible by a savant who travels to and spends some time in America. This article, therefore, based on a variety of odd sources, translations of extracts, and some oldish maps, must be considered only as a preliminary survey of a most fascinating story which covers the monastic period of approximately 470 years.

When referring to measurement of land and taxation it is desirable that the units should be clearly defined. It is generally agreed that the *Virgate* covered approximately 30 acres of arable land, and that normally there were four *Virgates* to the *Hide*. However, areas of partially cleared forest and unproductive land such as existed round Battle in the time of Domesday could not possibly have afforded to pay at the same rate as arable land. So, for the purposes of this article, the *Hide* is taken purely as a criterion for taxation; and it is assumed that in undeveloped areas the *Virgate* paid only one-eighth of the tax levied on a *Hide*.

When William ordered the building of the Abbey he gave it a tract of land called a *Leuga* around the site. It is generally agreed that a *Leuga* means an area of $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles radius, measured in this case from the high altar of the Abbey church. It was therefore a circular estate covering some 4,500 acres, which in 1066 was largely covered by forest, shrubland, or marsh, with a few scattered homesteads in forest clearings. The *Leuga* cut across all existing parochial and manorial boundaries and private holdings regardless of their owners, and included two outlying portions, called members, of the manorial estates of Hooe and Bollinton. These were colonisations, eight miles away from the parent manors, and represented land recovered from virgin forest. Domesday records that only nine Hides, some 1,000 acres, of the Leuga was productive and taxable. Much of it, from Domesday evidence, had been intentionally wasted and some had been fought over at the time of the battle. There was, therefore, in the local estate itself not much in the way of income to maintain the Abbey,

monks, staff, guests, and building programme. William doubtless realised this, for he also gave the Abbey the royal manor of Wye in Kent, with its member Dengemarsh, in all 2,000 acres valued at £125-10-0 per annum, Alciston in Sussex with 5,000 acres valued at £40-5-0, Limpsfield in Surrey of 3,000 acres valued at £24, Ham in Essex of 450 acres, Brightwalton in Berkshire of 1,200 acres, Crowmarsh in Oxfordshire of 600 acres, and Collumpton in Devonshire of 120 acres, together with the church at Reading and that of St. Olave and the Priory of St. Nicholas at Exeter. All these had belonged to King Harold and amounted to an estate of more than 20,000 acres of arable land.

Quite early, minor adjustments were made with neighbouring owners on the Leuga perimeter, and when 1538, the date of the Dissolution, had been reached 470 years later the local estate had grown from 4,500 acres to 14,000 acres, in which in the immediate vicinity of the Abbey the Leuga had grown to some 6,500 acres. The axis of expansion lay on a line running S.W. to N.E. through Battle. Beyond this there is evidence that the Abbey did come into possession of land which is now exceedingly difficult to identify; while at the same time changes and additions had occurred in its more distant possessions. During these 470 years the forest had dwindled very considerably; and, as clearing proceeded, the acreage owned at the Dissolution was largely arable, or at least productive. Battle Abbey was undoubtedly very wealthy in 1538.

Generally speaking, the estate grew by royal gifts, charters, gifts from local laymen, purchase, and exchange. William II, for example, when he attended the consecration of the abbey church in 1094, gave the Abbey the churches at Exning, Trilawe, Mildenhall, Norton, Brantham, Bergholt, Bentley, Mendlesham, Bramford, Aylsham, Stiffkey, Brundell, Banningham, and Ingworth, all in the diocese of Norwich, and Stamford in the diocese of London. He also gave it the manor of Bromham in Wiltshire. Laymen gave land "for the good of their souls". Land was purchased mainly during the abbacies of Ralph (1107-1124) and Walter de Luci (1138-1171). An example of an addition by both purchase and gift occurred when Anselm de Fraeville sold to Abbot Ralph and the monks for 11 silver marks land called Dudeland (unidentified) and Bregesele (Breadsell Farm), and also gave them one acre of meadow and the tithes of Glesye (Glasseye Farm). The church at Reading, which was given by the Conqueror, was exchanged by Henry I for the manor of Appledram near Chichester because he wanted to found a monastery at Reading. Henry also gave the Abbey the churches of St. Peter and St. Theodore at Carmarthen; but the abbot soon exchanged these again for another manor not yet identified.

The Abbey, no doubt, also had valuable possessions in the form of sacrimental vessels, church ornaments, vestments, and its library. It is interesting to note that not much of this nature seemed to have been visible at the Dissolution. On taking over the Abbey the Commissioner's report stated " . . . the implements of the household be the worst that ever I see in abbey or priory; and the vestments so old and as base as your Lordship would not think". It has been suggested that Hammond the last abbot and the monks probably hid the valuable moveable property. If so, it has never been found. Perhaps one day a scientific excavation of the Abbey ruins might reveal its hiding place. There are reputed to be underground passages from the Abbey to the Almonry and the parish church.

The income of the Abbey came firstly from rents from lands, houses, mills, etc., leased to individuals. We know, for instance, that in Battle itself in the early 12th century William the shoemaker paid 7d. a year and labour, and Goodwin the cook 6d. and labour.[1] Labour involved helping to repair the mill and prepare the malt for the monks' ale, one day a year each, and also mowing the Bodiam meadow which required two days a year. The practice of commuting out of labour began at the end of the 14th century. At that time the tenants of each virgate of land paid 3/- a year rent. They also had to work one quarter of their time for the Abbey and bring in supplies on their own packhorses: wine from France through Winchelsea, fish from Hastings. The labour obligation was commuted for cash in due course. Income from rents in the more distant parts of the estate are difficult to assess; but it is known that Alciston manor had an annual value of £40-5-0 and the Leuga £8-2-0 in Domesday.[2] At the Dissolution these had become £105 and £108 respectively.

The second source of income was from the Great Tithe levied on the many manors and churches throughout the country. In the early years this appears to have averaged about 40/- a year per manor. Vicars appointed to hold churches might keep the Little Tithe and farm the glebe lands; but sometimes they had to make an annual payment as well. For instance, it is known that Withgar, Vicar of Mendlesham, originally paid 10/- and had it raised to 40/-.

The third source of income came from money paid for prayers to be said, and it is known that Mabilla, widow of John, gave for this purpose rents from land at Bregsele (Breadsell Farm).

A fourth source of income was fees, fines, etc., from ecclesiastical and judical activities; the Abbot being both a church dignitary and a lord of the manor with his own court.

It is difficult to give any coherent idea of the fluctuations in the annual value of the estate; but it is known that in 1369 the central accounts of the Abbey showed an income of £1,256 and an expenditure of £1,244; while for the housekeeping accounts the figures were £363-2-0 and £404-1-0 respectively.[3]

Defrauding the Abbey seems to have been common—boundary marks were moved, outlying land misappropriated. Communications were bad, and the law very slow and partisan. The Abbey seems to have been involved during its whole existence in some argument or lawsuit. On the more important of such occasions some of the alleged forged charters were produced by the Abbot.

The income of £1,256 towards the end of the 14th century would equal about £60,000 today; and the capital value can only be guessed at. However, at the Dissolution in 1538, 150 years later, the Commissioners gave the annual income as only £987-0-10¼. It could be that the Commissioners made a very low estimate; or that some manors were omitted. Alciston, valued at £102-9-8, might have been omitted as it was given to Sir John Gage, the Commissioner. Or it might have been that Abbot Hammond, foreseeing the Dissolution, had taken steps to reduce the rent roll.

Nevertheless, the estate remained considerable at the Dissolution.

Abbot Walter de Luci (1138-1171), whose abbacy was one of the periods of main growth, was the brother of Richard de Luci, right-hand man to both Stephen and Henry II. Walter was most active in recovering the Abbey property which had been misappropriated during Stephen's reign. He was also the hero of the final stage of the controversy over the freedom of the Abbey from episcopal control.

The details of this ecclesiastical controversy have already been the subject of a lecture given to the Society on March 9th, 1953, by Mr. Alfred Duggan. Since that date, however, there has been much further research into the probability that several of the Charters which figure so prominently in the dispute were in fact forgeries. So some of Mr. Duggan's assertions may not now be acceptable; and the full detailed story of the two closely connected incidents—a story which will be full of interest—must await the outcome of further research.

On Walter's death Richard was "President" of the Abbey for four years before the abbacy of Odo; during which time he misappropriated for his son the very rich Wye church. This the Abbey never recovered.

Not all the Abbey property was given in 1538 to Sir Anthony Browne. All he received was the local estate comprising Battle, Sedlescombe, Whatlington, Herstmonceux, Wartling, Catsfield, Telham, Hollington, Bexhill, Bodiam, Angmerhurst, and Romney Marsh.

Distant holdings were returned to the king, who either retained them or gave them to his friends living locally. Thus Appledram manor, valued at £29-8-0 in 1538 was given to Lord Howard of Effingham.[4]

1. Other specimen rents were: Le Rette Farm in 1312, 1409, 1420, 26s. 8d. Pepperingeye Mill in 1312, 46s. 8d., in 1409, 50s., and in 1420, 60s.
2. Other Domesday annual values were: Wye £125-10-0, Limpsfield £24, Bromham £40. Detailed values for the Leuga were: Bocheham (Uckham) ½ hide 20s., Beche 3 virgates 6s., Bathurst 1 virgate 15s., Wilmington 6 virgates 15s., Netherfield 6 virgates 10s., Penhurst ½ hide 15s., Hooe ½ hide 5s., Filsham 1 virgate 4s., Bollington 7 virgates 20s., Crowhurst 1 virgate 12s., and Demesne lands 2 ½ hides 40s.
3. Housekeeping accounts for other years were: 1275 receipts £135-9-2¾, expenditure £135-9-3¼, 1306 receipts £313-15-8½, expenditure £313-15-8½, 1351 receipts £316-0-11, expenditure £362-19-4½ 1400 receipts £257-19-10, expenditure £288-12-2½, 1412 receipts £268-6-1½, expenditure £274-18-10.
4. The maps of Battle Abbey property in monastic times, used to illustrate this lecture, are on display in the Society's museum.

D. A. L.

MICHELHAM AND WESTHAM CHURCH

The meeting was attended by 25 members.

Michelham Priory and the Family of de Aquila

The history of Michelham Priory begins in Normandy. Fulbert, who built the Château de l'Aigle near Mortaign, had a son, Engenulf de l'Aigle, who was also called Engarran or Enguerrand de l'Aigle, a companion of the Conqueror who fought at the Battle of Senlac. William had promised to give him a large barony in Sussex if he won the battle. Unfortunately, Engenulf fell in the battle, it is said at the Malfosse. His grandson Gilbert received from King Henry I, who of course was also Duke of Normandy, the lordship of Pevensey; which was thereafter known as *l'Honneur de l'Aigle*. It was Gilbert's great-grandson, also called Gilbert, who founded the Priory.

King Henry III gave his royal permission for its foundation on March 10th, 1229; but by then Kings of England were no longer Dukes of Normandy, the duchy having been lost by Henry's father John. There were at that time in Normandy many establishments of the order of St. Augustine under the name of Premontrés (Premonstratensians); and the conquerors were willing to introduce the order into England because of their knowledge of medicine, and because their canons could

say mass in and administer the parish churches. At the request of Gilbert de l'Aigle the Prior of Hastings supplied 13 regular canons of St. Augustine, one of them having been selected as prior, to set up the priory at Michelham. To maintain it, Gilbert gave it a vast domain, and other landowners followed suit with grants of land. Very curiously, Gilbert de Aquila, six years after this pious foundation, left for Normandy without the King's permission, and his whole domain was confiscated. Five generations of the de l'Aigle family had lived in England during 170 years, yet it is in Normandy that their descendants are now to be found.

The Priory buildings are situated in a loop of the River Cuckmere, which has been made into an island by cutting a canal across the enclosed tongue of land. So surrounded, the monks were protected from the bandits which infested the country at that time. The towered gatehouse was erected in the last quarter of the 14th century to make the buildings even safer. The area of water around the priory extends to 7 or 8 acres and forms the largest moat on private property in the whole of England.

In 1536 in the reign of Henry VIII parliament passed an act to suppress small monasteries. Those whose income was less than £200 a year were to be closed. Michelham's income was only £8 too small; but it was closed and the Prior was retired with a pension of £20 a year, equivalent at present values to about £600; and the canons were given benefices in the neighbourhood. The church, the dormitory, and the ambulatory, in fact nearly all the buildings except the refectory, were destroyed. The middle portion of the existing building was the refectory and is built of sandstone; the western portion, built of green Eastbourne stone, was probably erected in 1587 by Herbert Pelham, a member of the famous Sussex family which is descended from William du Bec-Crespin, a companion of the Conqueror; the eastern portion is modern.

In 1601 Herbert Pelham sold the property to Thomas Sackville, later created Duke of Dorset, whose family owned it for 300 years. Two owners later made many reconstructions of the buildings, and finally Mrs. Hotblack gave the property to the Sussex Archaeological Society and Lord Inchcape provided a very generous endowment to preserve the buildings in perpetuity.

(The above article was contributed in October 1960 to *Les Normands de Paris.*)

C.H.L.

Westham Church

Members also visited this church. A previous visit of the Society was on July 16th, 1952. An account appeared in *Transactions* for 1951–1952.

BORDE HILL AND FLETCHING CHURCH

The meeting was attended by 25 members on a perfect English summer day.

Borde Hill House. This is the home of Sir Ralph Clarke, a noted horticulturalist and Lady Clarke.

The house stands on high ground a few miles north of Haywards Heath and commands a magnificent view across the valley of the Ouse. The gardens are beautifully but informally laid out, with many fine specimens of trees and flowering shrubs. The original 15th-century house has seen much addition and alteration but is said to have been the boyhood home of Andrew Borde, who was born in 1490.

Brought up at Oxford, Andrew became a Carthusian monk, but after 20 years, he could stand the rigorous life no longer and obtained absolution from his vows. After studying medicine for two years, he cured the Duke of Norfolk of some ailment and was introduced by him to King Henry VIII. He studied and travelled extensively and at one period lived at Pevensey where he had charge of the young prince, Edward, later Edward VI. Later he fell from grace and died in the Fleet Prison in 1549.

Fletching Church. The Society previously visited this church on June 28th, 1961, and an account of it appeared in *Transactions*, No. 10.

L.C.G.

WYE AND BROOK CHURCH

This all-day outing was attended by 46 members. It was of particular interest to the Society because of the very close association in the past between Battle Abbey, the Royal Manor of Wye, and Wye Church. Both the latter were given by William the Conqueror to Battle Abbey on the foundation of the Abbey about 1070. The Manor remained in its possession throughout the whole monastic period up to its dissolution in 1538, when it reverted to the Crown.

Church of Ss. Gregory and Martin

Domesday Book contains the first mention of a church at Wye as being part of the *Terra ecclesiae de Labatailge*, but, seeing that in Saxon times Wye was a royal town of no little importance, which had under its jurisdiction a large part of East Kent, it is very likely that there was a church there long before the Conquest. We also know that in the 11th century there were 7 churches, including those of Ashford and Hawkhurst, subordinate to Wye. The present church dates from late 12th or early 13th century. It was formerly much larger, of cruciform shape, and with a large central tower.

In the 15th century when Cardinal Kempe built the college he inserted bigger windows in the church, added a clerestory, and possibly lengthened the chancel to accommodate the Master and Fellows of the college. The nave roof, which bears Kempe's arms was presumably put up at the same time. On July 15th, 1572, a flash of lightning "fyred" the wooden steeple, partially destroying the tower and body of the church. A fresh disaster occurred in 1686 when the tower collapsed one Sunday during Matins. The congregation was just able to escape. Almost the entire east end of the church was destroyed; and, on rebuilding, the chancel and transepts were not re-erected.

Pre-Reformation tombs formerly in the church are, therefore, out in the open far beyond the east end. In 1764 the roof was ceiled and there were some repairs. In 1878 the galleries were removed and the west window was enlarged and filled with stained glass. The latter was blown out by a German bomb in 1943. A new window was put in after 1950. Special features of the church include a line of gargoyles along the string-course below the eaves, the "Private Chamber" above the porch, a curious carved and pierced corbel stone, and the remains of a holy water stoup near the south door.

In 1173 Godfrey de Lucy was instituted Vicar of Wye. His misappropriation of the incumbency is dealt with in the Battle Abbey Chronicle. He was the nephew of Walter de Luci, who was Abbott of Battle from 1138 to 1171, and he later became Bishop of Winchester and Chief Justice of England.

Wye Agricultural College

The Society was warmly welcomed at the college, where Miss E. S. Smyth, Vice-Principal and Librarian, acted as guide. It was originally founded as a college for secular priests and built about 1440 by Cardinal Kempe, Archbishop of Canterbury. The land was made available by Battle Abbey, and it is interesting to know that right up to the Dissolution each new Provost of the college had to be approved on appointment by the Abbott of Battle. After the Dissolution the building, Withersdone Hall, became a grammar school and a private residence; and then at the beginning of this century it became the now famous Wye Agricultural College, the estate of which is a part of the original manor estate. The greatly increased number of students has necessitated considerable extensions to the original building; but these have been tastefully and beautifully executed. There is an attractive muniment room which is now becoming the accepted resting place of all the history of Wye—church, manor, college, and village, a convenient arrangement which is worthy of note.

In this room, Miss Smyth had put out for the inspection of members many old manuscripts referring to the Battle Abbey-Wye association.

D.A.L.

Church of St. Mary, Brook

This church, notable for its remarkable gallery of medieval wall paintings, was previously visited by the Society on June 27th, 1962, and a description of it appeared in No. 11 of *Transactions*.

LEWES AND PIDDINGHOE

The meeting was attended by 24 members.

Anne of Cleeves House, Lewes

This was last visited by the Society on May 11th, 1955, and an account appeared in *Transactions* for 1954–1955.

Piddinghoe

The name means *The hill spur of Pydda's people*. Kipling called the place "Windy Piddinghoe", and it was formerly known for the activities of "The Gentlemen", who hid smuggled spirits there in pits, whence they removed them at night for distribution. Piddinghoe, Southease, and St. Michael's, Lewes, all in the Ouse Valley, are the only churches in Sussex with round towers. This may be because stone had to be brought from a distance, and, transport in the Ouse Valley being difficult, economy was effected by building with rough flints obtainable in local chalk. Quoins cannot be built with such material, so the towers were made circular. Piddinghoe church is partly 12th century. The arches on one side of the nave are Norman, and those on the other side Early English. The 13th century chancel arch rests on clustered colums with very fine capitals. A curious sculptured head with shut eyes and open mouth can be seen on one wall of the nave.

BAYHAM ABBEY AND LAMBERHURST CHURCH

This outing, the last of the season, was attended by 44 members.

Bayham Abbey was previously visited by the Society on September 10th, 1958, and is fully described in *Transactions* No. 7. The ruins have been in the care of the Ministry of Works for the past eight years and are now in beautiful order. Four or five craftsmen are employed consolidating the stonework and there is talk of excavating the foundations of some of the monastic buildings—when funds permit.

A very fine model of the Abbey has also been made.

Lamberhurst Church

The party was met by Mr. William Morland, a churchwarden and local historian. The road to the church is a spur off the old highway from Lamberhurst to Goudhurst; the church therefore stands in a pleasant enclave of its own, completely secluded from the village. The first church is believed to have been a wooden chapel, erected in pre-conquest days on a dry sandstone bluff above the River Teise called "*Lambra-Hyrst*". Nothing is known of the building of the present church, but in 1119 A.D. "the church of St. Mary, Lamberhurst, with its appurtenances" was given to Leeds Priory by Robert de Crevecoeur. Rebuilding took place in the 14th and 15th centuries, resulting in a pleasing medley of "Decorated" and "Perpendicular" architecture. The chapel on the south side of the Chancel is dedicated to Saint Katharine and belongs to Scotney Castle. After the reformation, Thomas Darrell of Scotney adhered to the Roman Church, which caused numerous problems to the conscientious vicar of Lamberhurst, especially in the burial registers. Of particular interest now is a fine Jacobean pulpit, originally a 3-decker, dated 1630 and with the vicar's initials R(obert) S(teede). In the 19th century, the pulpit was lowered and the clerk's desk removed in 1916. A remarkable coat of arms of Queen Anne, originally part of a reredos, is now over the south door. In 1961 under the guidance of the present vicar, the Rev. R. W. Bailey, a programme of rebuilding and redecorating was begun and the church was re-orientated with an altar against the north wall of the nave, flanked by the organ and the pulpit and free-standing seats arranged in a semi-circle before them. At the same time, the chapel of St. Katharine was decorated and re-equipped by Mr. and Mrs. Hussey, the present owners of Scotney Castle.

L.C.G.

Notes:— Lambra hyrst is the Anglo-Saxon for *Lambs' wood*. The name is parallelled by *Ticcena hyrst* (*Kids' wood*) only four miles away, now called Ticehurst. The association of lambs with woodland is strange: did Anglo-Saxon sheep eat the bark of trees like goats? *Hyrst*, however, can sometimes mean *wooded spur* or even a small hill, and may have done so in this connection.

The White Canons of Bayham Abbey were said to have been the possessors of St. Richard of Chichester's bed. Whoever lay on it, it was believed, would be instantly cured of any ailment.

It may not be generally known that the great screens to be seen in the aisles of St. Paul's Cathedral were made at Lamberhurst, but the 200 tons of railings which encircled the cathedral from 1714 to 1870 and cost £11,202, which were

also made at Lamberhurst, are at the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean. Small fragments of them may be seen at Lewes Castle and Hastings Museum.

There are further particulars about Lamberhurst and its church, which were visited by the Society on September 12th, 1956, in *Transactions* for 1955–1956. Ed.

THE NORWEGIAN INVASION OF 1066

Overshadowed by the second act of the drama of 1066, the first act, namely the brief campaign which culminated in the Battle of Stamford Bridge, has not, perhaps, received the attention it deserves. In particular the figure of Harald, son of Sigurd, tends to flit momentarily across the English stage without leaving as much impression as the other leading actors, William the Norman and Harold Godwineson. The first act of the 1066 drama took place in Yorkshire; but it is so bound up with the battle which is the *raison d'être* of our Society that an account of it would seem to be due. Documentation for the Norwegian invasion depends upon the Heimskringla of Snorri Sterlusen and the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. Snorri's account is full and detailed; but historians regard it as romantic and unreliable, particularly where it describes events in England. Both authorities give fairly full accounts of victories and gloss over defeats. Thus we are mostly dependent on Snorri for the Battle of Fulford, and the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle for the Battle of Stamford Bridge. For events prior to the landing we are wholly dependent on Snorri. The gaps in the story of Harold's northward march and the method of fighting have to be filled by analogical reasoning from his southward march and the Battle of Senlac.

Harald, son of Sigurd Syr, nephew of King Olaf the Saint and first cousin of his son King Magnus the Good of Norway, was born in 1015. At the age of 15 he fought and was wounded at the Battle of Sticklestad, where his uncle was killed. He escaped to Sweden and thence went to Novgorod, where he remained two or three years and probably fought for Prince Yaroslav the Wise in his campaigns against the Wends and Poles. He then went to Byzantium (Constantinople), where he joined the Varangian Guard, a body of Norse mercenary soldiers in the service of the Byzantine Empress Zoë. He served in the Varangian Guard from 1034 to 1042 and rose to command it. With them he saw active service against the Corsairs and also in Syria, Armenia, Sicily, Palestine, Jerusalem, and possibly in Africa; fighting in all, so it is said, in 18 pitched battles. Returning home via the Dnieper and Russia, he visited Novgorod again, where he

married Ellesiv (Elizabeth), daughter of Prince Yaroslav. He left Novgorod in 1045, and on the way home helped the Swedish king to ravage a part of Denmark. On arrival in Norway his cousin King Magnus made him joint king of Norway and Denmark. On the death of Magnus the Good in 1047 Harald became King of Norway, and Sweyn, who was the grandson of Sweyn the former King of England and Denmark, became King of Denmark. Harald's wife, Ellesiv, had borne him two daughters, which is probably why, in 1048, he married bigamously Thora, daughter of Thorberg, by whom he had two sons, Magnus and Olaf. The 19 years of Harald's reign appear to have been chiefly occupied by invasions of Denmark, and counter-invasions by the Danes. He was nicknamed Hardrada (Hard bargainer), by which name we will now call him to distinguish him from the English King Harold. "He was a great warrior," wrote Snorri; but he says in another part of his saga, "Harald never fled from battle, but often tried cunning ways to escape when he had to do with superiority of forces". Rather neatly put.

Tostig, Harold Godwineson's brother, was outlawed by the Northumbrians shortly after August 24th, 1065, and Morcar was elected Earl in his place. Tostig went to Count Baldwin, father-in-law of Duke William of Normandy, in Flanders, where he spent the winter at St. Omer. Having collected a fleet manned by Flemings, he landed in the Isle of Wight in May, 1066, whence he ravaged the South Coast as far as Sandwich. There he obtained reinforcements by pressgang and his fleet is said to have numbered 60 ships, which, if we accept General James' calculation for the Norman invasion, may have carried 1,500 men. He then entered the Humber and plundered in Lindsey (North Lincolnshire) where Edwin and Morcar attacked him. There is no detailed record of the battle; but Tostig was driven into the sea and escaped with 12 ships, which were all he had left, to Scotland. Including desertions, he must have lost about 1,200 men. He remained all the summer with King Malcolm, refitted his fleet and even obtained Scottish volunteers.

There is doubt about where Tostig met Hardrada. Snorri says that he first tried to get his second cousin, King Sweyn of Denmark, to espouse his cause; but failed in this as Sweyn was too busy fighting off Norwegian invasions. He then went on to Hardrada in Norway. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, however, states that Tostig and Hardrada met in Scotland. Hardrada considered that he had a claim to the English throne because he was successor to Magnus, who, before Canute had become King of England, made a pact with him that the survivor should be king of both countries. Magnus, on the death of Canute, did not pursue his claim.

Hardrada had assembled his fleet in the Sulen Isles at the mouth of the Sogne Fjord. The number of his ships is given variously as 200, 240 and 300. Perhaps Hardrada had 240 ships, and Tosti had the same number that he had for his raids, namely 60. Three hundred ships suggests 7,500 fighting men; but the strength of Medieval armies must always be conjectural. Hardrada had made his elder son, Magnus, King of Norway before his departure, evidently anticipating that he would soon rule both countries from England. Thora, his second wife, was left in Norway and Ellesiv, with her daughters was brought to Orkney. Olaf, the younger son, accompanied the fleet.

The forces of Hardrada and Tostig effected a junction at Tynemouth and proceeded to raid Cleveland, Scarborough, which they burnt, and Holderness. They were engaged by local forces at Scarborough and in Holderness. They then rounded Spurn Point, sailed or rowed up the Humber and Ouse and cast anchor at Riccal. The English fleet in the Humber retired up the River Wharfe to Tadcaster. There is significance in the choice of these places. At Riccal Hardrada could blockade the English fleet in the Wharfe; or he could, if necessary, proceed up the Ouse to York. At Tadcaster, the Roman Calcaria, the English fleet was anchored alongside the Roman road from London to York.

Hardrada landed his army at Riccal, which is 8 miles south of York, and today a good road joins them. He did not make an immediate attack on the northern capital; and it is not until September 20th that we find him with his army drawn up near Fulford, two miles from York. His left flank, according to Snorri, rested on the Ouse and his right flank on a "ditch"; and there was also on that flank a morass—"broad, deep, and full of water". A modern map shows a watercourse on the eastern side of the road; and near Adlethorpe the Ouse makes a right-angle bend which approaches within 600 yards of it. There, where they are at their closest would be the most likely place for Hardrada's line of battle. He concentrated his greater strength and also placed his command post on his left flank. Morcar, who seems to have commanded the Northumbrians, quite naturally directed his main attack against the Norwegian weaker right flank on the ditch. Unfortunately he does not appear to have had sufficient troops to contain Hardrada's left flank, or, alternatively, he neglected to do so; for the Norwegian army executed a sickle-like movement which swept the Northumbrians into the ditch where there was terrible slaughter. The survivors of Morcar's army regained the citadel of York.

Hardrada did not occupy York: he went there with an escort on Sunday 24th and was welcomed by the inhabitants.

He demanded that hostages from all over Northumbria should be handed over to him at Stamford Bridge, a place where two Roman roads crossed at a bridge over the River Derwent, 8 miles east of York. While negotiations were taking place the Norwegian army marched back to Riccal—a very odd movement.

But the very same evening that the Norwegians were marching back to Riccal, King Harold's army, estimated, according to Garmonsway, at 3,000 Housecarls and 3,000 Select Fyrd and divided into seven units which would be of about battalion strength, marched into Tadcaster. Freeman says that Harold's northward march was "one of the most wonderful things in our wonderful history"; but there is nothing on which to found such a hyperbole; as, although we can assume that the march started from London, there is no record of when it began. In any case the southward march, of which the timing is known, is more worthy of praise.

Harold's northbound and southbound marches have this in common—that the Select Fyrd had to be called out and picked up, and that the army was halted at a "jumping off place" within striking distance of where Harold expected his enemy to be, Tadcaster on the first march and Caldbec Hill on the second, whose distances from York and Hastings respectively do not greatly differ. There are only two certain dates on which to base a reconstruction of the movements of the armies, "the Nativity of the Virgin Mary" (September 8th), when the southern Fyrd was disembodied, and the fleet, presumably, began its voyage to London from the Isle of Wight, and September 24th when Harold arrived at Tadcaster. Between these dates it was told to King Harold "when he came from the ships" which had been "driven to London" that Hardrada had landed near York. Harold's disembarkation depends on the fleet's sailing time from the Isle of Wight. It might be given four days; making the earliest date for disembarkation September 12th, and the start of the northward march September 13th. For the latest date of Harold's disembarkation we must work backwards, and, taking the southward march as a guide, conjecture that he marched on five days and spent five days on the way picking up the Select Fyrd. This gives September 15th as the latest date for the start of the march, and September 14th for his disembarkation. We shall not be far out by splitting the difference and making the start of the march on September 14th. There is no means of estimating the earliest date at which Hardrada could have landed; but the latest date is indicated by the time required to inform Harold in London on September 13th. One day, perhaps, for collecting information, and six days for carrying it to London. The distance from Tadcaster via Doncaster, Lincoln, Godmanchester, and

St. Albans, as the Roman road ran, was 200 miles, and would take six days as no post-riding services would have been established. This makes Hardrada's landing not later than September 6th.

We left the opposing armies spending the night of September 24th/25th at Tadcaster and Riccal. On the morning of Monday, September 25th, the Norwegian army, in merry mood, set out from Riccal for Stamford Bridge, leaving behind them, according to Snorri, their armour, and one-third of their strength to guard the ships. Simultaneously Harold set out from Tadcaster for York, where he must have been very surprised to find no Norwegians. He was welcomed by the fickle inhabitants and told that the Norwegians had gone to Stamford Bridge only eight miles further on. This spurred him to instant action. Although his army had already marched about eight miles that day and nearly 200 on the preceding days, it was essential to surprise Hardrada and the march was resumed. The fact that he was able to make this decision and that he could get his weary men to obey his order just when they were hoping for well-earned rest and refreshment is a tribute not only to his generalship but to the discipline of his troops.

The River Derwent at Stamford Bridge is a reedy sluggish stream about 40 feet wide flowing through a shallow valley. Colonel Burne took soundings and found it to be from 6 to 8 feet deep with a very muddy bottom, and therefore unfordable and quite impassable to men in armour. The four Roman roads, of which traces remain, converged on the river at a point 400 yards above the present bridge; which proves the position of the Roman and Medieval bridge, and also the fact that the river has not changed its course. South-east of the old bridge site is a low plateau called "Battle Flats", where battle debris has been dug up. The Norwegian army lay encamped or bivouacking on both sides of the river awaiting the hostages. A slight rise of ground where the village of Gate Helmsley now stands hid the York road. Suddenly a cloud of dust appeared. It was caused by the mounted Housecarls of Harold's army. After a hurried conference Hardrada ordered his troops on the east side of the river to form up for battle, and those on the west side to fight a delaying action to gain time for the main body to form up. Snorri says that they formed up in a circle because they expected cavalry attack; but we cannot believe him when he says that Harold's army fought on horseback. He then tells the story that Harold offered favourable terms to his brother if he would desert Hardrada, but only 7 feet of English ground to the latter.

The York road approaches the river line obliquely; so that the Housecarls' attack fell on the left flank of the Norwegian rearguard, which was rolled up, and the defenders were

pushed over and into the river. Soon the whole of the western bank was in English hands.

The second phase of the battle was the capture of the bridge, and here we get the story, curiously enough in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle alone, of the immensely tall and strong Norwegian who held the bridge single-handed for some time until pierced from below by an Englishman in a tub or other primitive craft.

The main battle then began about 600 yards from the bridge, in the area still called "Battle Flats", but no account of it exists. We can only surmise that the Norwegians formed the shield wall which was their speciality, and that the Housecarls battered it to pieces with their battleaxes, supported by their swordsmen and javelineers, while the Fyrd hurled the same kinds of missiles as they did at Senlac 19 days later. Hardrada and Tostig were both killed, the Norwegian army was almost annihilated, and its remnants sought safety in flight. Snorri has a story that Hardrada sent for reinforcements from Riccal, that they actually arrived, and under one Eistein Orri continued the battle. Seeing that Stamford Bridge and Riccal are nearly 13 miles apart, and that even today there is no direct main road between them, it seems quite impossible that even if sent for they could have arrived in time. Harold's tireless army, after a march of 16 miles and a battle which is thought to have lasted from noon till 3 p.m., pursued the remnants of Hardrada's army to Riccal.

Harold was lenient to the survivors of the battle and those left in charge of the ships under the command of Prince Olaf, Hardrada's younger son. On Olaf's promise that Norwegians would never again invade England, they were allowed to depart in the 24 ships which were sufficient to carry them. Norwegian casualties in the raids and the two battles must have been extremely heavy; for 24 ships suggest that only 600 men were left; but account has to be taken of deserters. The English casualties, if modern hand-to-hand conflicts are any guide, may have been in the region of 30% or 1,800 men, which undoubtedly had a bearing on the numbers which Harold could bring to the "Hoar Apple Tree". Seventy years later Orderic wrote: "The site of the battle is evident when crossing the ground: there is a large mass of the bones of the dead lying there to the present day".

It was only natural that Harold should have allowed his army a few days' rest and refreshment in York before returning south. However, this was rudely interrupted by a message which was handed to him on Sunday evening, October 1st. It had been transmitted at the rate of about 73 miles a day by his "signal service"—post-riders dropped at intervals along the Roman road; and it informed him that William Duke of Normandy had landed at Pevensey at 9 a.m. on September 28th!

One does not have to look far to see why Hardrada's invasion ended in disaster for the Norwegians. He made nearly every strategic error possible. He wasted time and probably men in petty raids on the coast. If, as suggested, he landed on September 6th, he did nothing for 14 days, and during that time did not even capture the English fleet. After his victory at Fulford he did not occupy York, a walled town, as a secure base. No reason at all is deducible for his march back to Riccal, nor for his demand that the hostages should be handed over at Stamford Bridge, To crown all, he marched his army to Stamford Bridge without its armour, and there divided it by an unfordable river. Throughout, he ignored security.

Harold, on the other hand, did not put a foot wrong. He appreciated the situation correctly, made a bold and correct decision, showed extraordinary driving power in the execution of his plan, and effected surprise. He showed himself to be a Captain of War; and it is indeed difficult to understand why, after his brilliant generalship in the Stamford Bridge campaign, some historians can assert that he contemplated nothing but a passive defence at Senlac.

When the late Lord Halifax was Foreign Secretary he unveiled a rough-hewn stone monument on the battlefield of Stamford Bridge, in the presence of the Norwegian Military Attaché and the Chairman of the East Yorkshire Local History Society. On it, commemorative plaques record in English and Norwegian a battle which is one of the great events of our history.

C.H.L.

FINDS AND FIELDWORK

Investigation of the Roman Ironworks site at Beauport Park continues slowly, and has recently been concentrated on the area which will be affected by the making of the golf course. This area fortunately covers only a limited amount of the whole works, which are the most extensive of all the Roman iron sites of the Weald. A habitation site, probably of workmen's quarters, has been discovered, and also a large patch of crushed ore. Several more tiles stamped CL BR have been found among the many scattered pieces of tile found on the dump, and some interesting timber has just come to light. Mr. Henry Cleere has visited the site on several occasions and is certain that it has many secrets to reveal.

G.B.

Note: First reported in 1862, some excavations were carried out at this site by Mr. F. Grinsted and Mr. Herbert Blackman. A statuette found there in 1877 is in the Hastings Museum. (See *Wealden Iron,* pp. 330–337, and *S.A.C.* XXIX, p. 168.) Ed.

COMMEMORATION OF THE 903rd ANNIVERSARY

OF THE BATTLE OF HASTINGS

Delayed by previous year

COMMEMORATION LECTURE

Pd Trans 1967/68 Page 30

Delivered by Mr. R. H. C. Davis, M.A.

Fellow of Merton College, Oxford

on Saturday, October 11th, 1969

THE REIGN OF KING STEPHEN

The lecture began by defining the problem which the reign presents. Was there a period of anarchy, mitigated by endeavours to govern; or was there real government which collapsed here and there from time to time? The machinery of government certainly existed, but how efficient was it?

Matilda, daughter of Henry I, called The Empress, from her first marriage to the Emperor Henry V of Germany, and who married secondly Henry Plantagenet Count of Anjou, landed in England in 1139, claiming the throne from Stephen of Blois, her first cousin. Thereafter there were in effect two governments—the king's at London and that of the claimant, who exercised a tenuous authority over the western counties, at Devizes. Stephen issued 720 charters, Matilda 88; but these can hardly be regarded as a measure of the relative efficiency of their governments, as we do not know whether they were obeyed or not, and of Matilda's government we know hardly anything. Stephen suspected the bishops who had virtually administered England under his uncle, Henry I, had them arrested, and sequestrated their castles. He evidently suspected that his seal had been used for improper purposes; for he changed it, and at about the same time, between 1138 and 1140, created earls in 14 counties to act as overlords in local government. Stephen had instituted a personal rule, and the change in the system of both central and local government must have meant an upheaval. Did it make the government more efficient? It does not seem so, because the civil war spread and grew in intensity, though this might conceivably have happened under the old administration. In any case, Henry II, in restoring order, abolished the earldoms.

"Pipe Rolls" giving details of the collection of royal revenues would provide proof whether Stephen's government was efficient or otherwise; but although one surviving from 1130 shows Henry I's financial system to be sound, none whatever exists for Stephen's reign. This has been shown not to be due to the civil war: they were probably destroyed in the reign of Henry II because they did not show an official collection of revenue. The Pipe Roll for 1155–56 (Henry II) shows that in the levy of Danegeld most counties received a rebate on account of "waste" of at least one-fifth, some one-half, with Warwickshire and Oxfordshire heading the list with two-thirds. This gives some indication of the devastation resulting from the civil war; for Duke Henry campaigned in Warwickshire and Oxfordshire in 1153 and probably laid much of them waste in order to make the local barons desert Stephen.

Some historians have charged the barons with prolonging the civil war by playing each side off against the other. J. H. Round in particular accuses Geoffrey de Mandeville of putting his castles up to auction because he had been granted two charters by Stephen and two by Matilda. The lecturer pointed out, however, that the charters were not alternate, that Geoffrey deserted Stephen only after the latter's capture at the Battle of Lincoln (February 2nd, 1141), and that although he tried to hold the Queen to ransom, he returned to his former allegiance and fought in the Battle of Winchester (September 14th, 1141) which released the king. Stephen, however, never forgave him his treachery, and in 1143 arrested him and forced him to give up his castles as a condition of release. He died within a year. Another example of perfidy was that of Ranulf, Earl of Chester, who changed sides three times. Far from being courted by both sides and risking nothing, as two writers have claimed, he lost his Norman lands to Matilda and his English castles to Stephen. He was eventually poisoned by one of Stephen's followers. Treason only pays, said the lecturer, when it turns the scale decisively. In Stephen's reign it did not do so, and the two sides were always in unstable balance. William de Mohun, made Earl of Somerset and Dorset by Matilda, changed sides in 1142. He chose a bad moment; for Matilda won the Battle of Wilton and regained Somerset and Dorset. He forfeited his earldom and died in obscurity.

The reason the civil war went on so long was not because it was prolonged by the barons, but because Stephen, although in control of most of the country all the time, never achieved decisive victory. Matilda's forces were too numerous and determined not to surrender. Both sides were convinced of the justice of their cause—Stephen's supporters because he had

been elected and crowned king, and Matilda's followers because they considered it her right to succeed her father in the kingdom. Unfortunately the first three Norman kings had not completely recognized hereditary tenure. Henry I had seized both England and Normandy from his elder brother, Robert, and distributed the lands of his brother's friends among his own. These the chroniclers called Henry's "New Men", who were not necessarily those of humble origin whom whom the king had ennobled; but those who had been given the lands of other persons. As a long term policy it was disastrous; because he created a body of "Disinherited" as well as "New Men".

It might be supposed that all Henry's "New Men" joined Stephen and all the "Disinherited" joined Matilda; but this was not so because the dispute was between two opposing factions of Henry I's friends, which split the "New Men"; while the side chosen by the "Disinherited" depended on the side taken by the men who had been given their lands. This is illustrated by the case of Gilbert de Lacy and Miles of Gloucester. The former, whose lands had been given to the latter, supported Matilda; while the latter supported Stephen: when, however, Matilda landed in 1139 Miles supported her cause, so Gilbert changed sides. Rival claims to lands were put forward by followers of Stephen and Matilda even at the beginning of the reign; but during the civil war this situation worsened as each rewarded followers with enemy lands.

Everyone longed for peace; but this could not come while men were systematically disinherited. Matilda might have had peace and the throne in 1141 if she had agreed to let Stephen's son inherit his father's lands. By the Treaty of Westminster (1153) Stephen was to be succeeded by Matilda's son; but his own son was to succeed to his lands.

The barons were determined to get their hereditary rights; but there was often no way to satisfy those who claimed the same land. Sometimes, however, exchanges of land and even marriage alliances made a solution possible. King and barons had come to realize that peace depended on the establishment of the hereditary principle. After 1154 hereditary descent of baronies was the rule; whereas between 1086 and 1135 little more than half passed regularly from father to son. Stephen's reign is like a watershed. Before it, kings interfered on a fantastic scale with hereditary right; but after it, forfeiture became a rare disaster and hereditary succession was assumed and became the rule. Feudal society was stabilized and the English peerage established. That, concluded the lecturer, was the achievement of Stephen's reign.

COMMEMORATION SERVICE IN THE CHURCH OF ST. MARY THE VIRGIN, BATTLE

The Commemoration Service on Sunday, October 12th, was conducted by the Rev. F. J. Coveney, L.Th. The lessons were read by Mr. E. Webster, a Vice-President, and Major L. C. Gates, Chairman of the Society. The sermon was preached by the Rev. Kenneth A. Pearson, Rector of Ewhurst, who has kindly written the following shortened version of it for *Transactions*.

"Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment." John VII, 24.

William I has in common with Charles I that his conduct and its consequences are oppositely judged, and the adherants of either opinion hold it with conviction. Irrational factors enter into the assessment. Was Charles a martyr for Church and people; or a tyrant enemy of democracy? Was William the founding creator of the English nation; or merely an incident in the mid-course of its history? Opinions differ, and I shall not enter into the argument. My subject is William the man.

William was a Norman with qualities inherited from a recent Viking ancestry. The Normans traversed the world to fight and plunder; and found scope in the war of Christendom against the Moors. The grateful Pope blessed the further adventure against the English.

William has been described as "massive, impressive, with the strength and gauntness of a great Alpine crag, and almost as inhuman". His character was formed and hardened by the struggles of his youth. A bastard son—only 8 years old when he became Duke—other claimants to the office—period of disorder, of assassinations, of rebellions. He survived and by the time he was 20 he was an experienced soldier and had learned how to manage men. His defeat of attempts by neighbouring principalities to conquer and dismember Normandy won the allegiance of the Norman nobles. Only twelve years later he invaded England.

William believed in his cause—in the binding force of King Edward's promise and of Harold's oath—in his Christian duty to avenge the murder of Alfred Atheling, and to depose the intruder Stigand from the see of Canterbury. The propaganda may have stemmed from his ambition, but it was approved by the papacy. Our questionings are unlikely to have been his. With single mind he marshalled his resources of diplomacy and military skill to achieve his ends. A great man, resolute and ruthless, feared by friend as by foe, he could but succeed or die in the attempt.

William's Christianity was of his times. He did not question the authority of the Church any more than he allowed his subjects to question his own; though he did not scruple to defy it if it interfered with his will. The movement to reform the morals of the clergy and to invigorate the monastic life had his firm support, while he married his wife in spite of a papal ban. When the ban was removed, however, he accepted the penance imposed by the Pope and built the twin abbeys at Caen. After Hastings he submitted again to penance imposed by the bishops for the sins committed in the invasion. A scale was drawn up of penances to match the crimes committed by the combatants. William's was to build a monastery for 150 monks. He began it on the site of the decisive battle, regardless of the constructional difficulties and of the cost of importing stone from quarries near Caen. It was unfinished at his death. The church was consecrated by Anselm in 1094 when the buildings were sufficiently advanced to receive about 50 monks. From then on prayers were offered daily in accordance with the founder's will for men on both sides, Norman and English, who fell in battle on S. Callixtus's Day, 1066. The ruins stand in this place symbolising the loss of the Christian charity which was the hidden gold in William's character. Such submission to ecclesiastical authority, such penances, such prayers are inconceivable to the victors of twentieth-century wars. William heard mass daily; was faithful to his wife; devoted to his children; and though illiterate had one friend—the Italian monk and scholar whom he promoted to Canterbury, Lanfranc.

A monk of Caen wrote of William's deathbed; of his tears as he prayed for divine mercy; of his concern for the future; of the immense effort needed to soften his heart towards his rebellious son, Robert; of his gifts to the poor, to churches, and to his sons, to his second son, William, the crown, sword and sceptre of England. Here is a glimpse of the man behind the mask. Our times have produced great men who pursued great aims: Lenin, Stalin, Hitler. None was a Christian. No softening gleam moderated the harshness of their policies. They multiplied human miseries, and miseries followed after them. In this respect William was not guilty. Whether England was the better for the conquest may still be a matter of opinion; but that it was not the worse needs no defence

"Judge not according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment."

K.A.P.

NINETEENTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

held on November 7th, 1969

About 40 Members attended and six junior Members from Battle Abbey.

The Chairman's Report, previously circulated, was approved. Membership at the end of the year stood at 262, including 38 junior Members from Battle Abbey and Claverham Schools. New Members joining numbered 36.

The Chairman dwelt briefly on the growing difficulty of finding places of interest to visit during the summer outings. A suggestion for a two-day outing to enable visits to penetrate further afield, was not approved.

The Treasurer's Statement and Report were presented by the Chairman and were also approved. Although the cash balance of the General Account stood only at £11 8s. 3d., the Guide Publication Account amounted to £59 18s. 8d., with a further £13 3s. 1d., on deposit. There was a stock of 1786 copies of the Guide still in hand—enough to last until 1971.

At the elections which followed, Lt.-Col. C. H. Lemmon, D.S.O., was re-elected President. Prof. Dorothy Whitelock, C.B.E., D.Litt., F.S.A., and the Very Rev. F. H. Outram, M.A., were re-elected Vice-Presidents. Major L. C. Gates, M.B.E., M.C., was elected a Vice-President. All these appointments to be for three years.

The following officers were elected for one year: Chairman, Brig. D. A. Learmont, C.B.E.; Vice-Chairman, Mr. B. A. Weber; Hon. Secretary, Mr. W. Orger (to serve for four months); Assistant Hon. Secretary, Miss R. M. Paine; Hon. Treasurer, Mr. R. W. Bishop. As the result of a ballot, two retiring members of the Committee, Mrs. W. N. Palmer and Miss J. E. S. Robertson, were re-elected and Mr. E. J. Upton was elected, all for three years. Miss M. Weiner was elected for one year vice Mr. B. A. Weber.

After the Museum Trust Meeting, by courtesy of the Battle Camera Club, two colour films were shown: "What Goes on at Battle Pottery", and "Battle Newsreel 1969".

MUSEUM TRUST

Third Annual General Meeting
held on November 7th, 1969

In the absence of both the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, Mr. B. A. Weber was voted to the chair. The report of the Committee of Management, previously circulated, was approved. The Committee of Management reported another successful year; the number of persons who paid for admission to the Museum having totalled 12,162, an increase of 249 over last year's figure. During the year a ventilator was installed at a cost of £48, which had resulted in much improved air conditions. The sum of £115 was invested in 6,700 postcards depicting three of the museum's exhibits. The sale of these would produce £167, of which £39 had already been taken. As a result of these expenses and legal costs, expenditure for the year exceeded income by £22; but the overall balances on October 13th were: General Fund £163, Deposit Account £288, and Research Account £20, with a stock of postcards of retail value £128.

At the elections which followed, Mr. A. R. Clough, Mr. E. H. Mayer, Mr. W. Orger, Mr. W. N. Palmer, Miss J. E. S. Robertson, and Mr. B. A. Weber, the retiring Committee members, were re-elected. Mrs. K. Upton and Dr. E. A. Bate were elected to the Committee vice Mr. H. Wadsworth and Mr. C. T. Chevallier, deceased.

Printed by
BUDD & GILLATT
NORTH STREET
ST. LEONARDS-ON-SEA
SUSSEX