

No. 26

# BATTLE AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Transactions

1976 - 1977

1977 - 1978

## 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*

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

## EDITORIAL NOTE

The cost of printing Transactions has risen sharply in recent years and the Committee have decided to publish one volume covering the two years 1976-77 and 1977-78 as an experiment. The present number therefore outlines the Society's activities up to October 1978.

For the same reasons of economy it has only been possible to include extracts from the lectures which have been printed or to abridge them considerably. I hope that the speakers' meaning has not been obscured by these cuts or their personal style maltreated. If it has I apologise to them for the injury done to them.

Other talks given to the Society which have not been printed either because we have not received a text or because space would not permit included the following: Mr. E. J. Tyler on "Clockmakers of Battle", Miss E. Kennedy on Hadrian's Wall, Mr. J. A. Lowerson on "A Sleepy Hollow—Battle as a Late Victorian Market Town", Mr. Michael Vivian on "Archery Through the Ages", Miss J. F. Mackenzie on "The Living Theatre—Some Highlights in its History". Miss Mackenzie's talk was divided into two halves, up to and from the Restoration, the two parts being given one in each year. Other speakers were Mr. Manwaring Baines on the "Wreck of the Amsterdam", Miss Laura Tilling on "The Influence of Isaac Newton on the 18th Century", Mrs. F. Mason on "Looking at Parish Churches", Mr. G. Brodribb on "The Shrines of Apollo at Delos and Delphi", and Col. H. J. Wilson on "The Peninsular War".

We were again able to hold the Commemoration Party both in 1977 and in 1978 in the Abbot's Hall of Battle Abbey by permission of Miss Parker, to whom we are always grateful for the use of that most fitting and agreeable venue. For our summer parties we were indebted to Sir Peter and Lady Allen and to Mr. and Mrs. P. C. Noble who opened their charming houses for these occasions and joined the members. These reunions were pleasant social events much enjoyed by all who attended.

The preacher at the Commemoration Service on October 16th, 1977 was the Rev. Anthony Harbottle, Domestic Chaplain to Her Majesty the Queen, and on October 15th, 1978, Bishop Stanley Betts, whose address was particularly appreciated.

During this period we have received a number of donations of books for the library and I wish to acknowledge especially "700 Years of the Beville Family" compiled and published by Mrs. A. S. Lichliter at Washington, D.C. in 1976 and presented by her in memory of Brigadier Learmont.

"The Falaise Roll" recording prominent companions of William, Duke of Normandy, at the Conquest of England, by M. Jackson Crispin & Leonce Macary, published by Baltimore Genealogical Pub. Co. in 1969. This was also presented by Mrs. Lichliter, herself a descendant of Wm. de Beville, a companion of the Conqueror.

Trevelyan's Illustrated Social History of England, 4 Vols., presented by Mr. W. N. Palmer in memory of Mrs. Palmer.

The Committee have now appointed Mr. A. P. S. de Redman as Honorary Genealogist to the Society. Genealogical enquiries to the Society from members which require more than the minimum of research will, if the members so wish, be referred to Mr. Redman who will charge our members fees at a concessionary rate.

E. G. CREEK,  
*Chairman.*

March, 1979.

## **OBITUARIES**

### **Mrs. Dorothy Palmer**

By the death of Mrs. Palmer on September 15th, 1978 the Society lost a most enthusiastic member who had given many years of service. First elected to the Committee in November, 1967, she became Vice-Chairman in November, 1973 and a Vice-President in November, 1975. She continued to attend Committee Meetings in that capacity so long as her health permitted.

### **Mrs. O. Bindley**

We also record with regret the death in February, 1979 of another former Committee member for several years. Mrs. Bindley first joined the Society in 1959 and was elected to the Committee in November, 1962 and continued a member until she resigned in November, 1971.

## HASTINGS—THE CULTURAL HERITAGE

Prof. Dominica Legge (October 15th, 1976)

Historical research does not stand still, and the Norman Conquest is the subject of constant revision, not only on points of detail, but upon its broader aspects—Harold's failure to fight on two fronts, his annihilation of the invaders in the North and his defeat in the South is common knowledge. But perhaps what lies behind is less well appreciated. I quote from the Introduction to their translation of King Harold's Saga by Magnus Magnusson and Herman Palsson:

"The year 1066 was a convulsive and fateful year for the destiny of England and Western Europe. It was the year that brought together in violent and mortal conflict the three greatest military leaders in Europe of their day—Harald of Norway, Harold of England, and William of Normandy; three powerful and ambitious men who had fought their way to authority in their respective countries and who now, in three weeks of terrible bloodshed in the autumn of 1066, were to fight to the death for the greatest prize of all: the throne of England".

None, be it noted, was an Englishman.

So the background is more international than used to be taught in schools. The triangle mentioned above was a Northern one, but there was another to the South. More and more the conquest of England and that of parts of Italy and Sicily are being compared and contrasted. The crossing of the Straits of Messina is a small problem compared with that of the Channel, yet William may have learnt something about the problem of transporting horses from that enterprise. Once established, the behaviour of the Normans in their new territories was very different.

Who were these conquerors? French-speaking, but with all the restless energy of their Viking forbears, Norman and Bretons from William's dependencies; mercenaries and adventurers from all over France; not, as a rule, men of the first rank. Professor Douglas was able to list only thirty-two possible named "companions of the Conqueror". Besides William's half-brothers and Edward the Confessor's brother-in-law, Eustace of Boulogne, only two were heads of noble families. At least two of the remainder were already settled in England. One was a younger son of a great family. But of all these, named and anonymous, it has indeed been asked "Where are they now?" Mr. L. G.



Pine points out that less than half-a-dozen families can show a male-line descent from someone who was with William at Hastings. "William's own male-line expired at the third generation". Most of the descendants are gentry, not nobility. Successive waves of Normans came over after the Conquest, some in Henry I's reign, but the idea that a foreign aristocracy arriving in 1066 had a lasting influence on the country must be discounted. The Breton contingent ran away at the battle. A few Betrons settled, among them the ancestors of our present Queen, but the French also tended to leave. It was chiefly Normans who remained. But what Normans? Each had a train of humble retainers, and it was these who had a profound effect on our language.

In that remarkable work *St. Edward's Ghost*, the author, J. Hare, desired, in 1642 "That our language be cleared of Norman and French invasion upon it . . . whereby it may be advanced to the quality of an honourable and sufficient language, then which there is scarce a greater point in a Nation's honour and happiness". It will be noticed that he does not scruple to use many words of Norman and French origin. Indeed, he was mistaken in thinking that the present richness of our language is not a blessing conferred by the Conquest. However, historically speaking, one of the major linguistic changes brought about by the Conquest was the substitution of Latin for a vernacular for administrative processes and records.

It is less the Norman aristocracy than the middling anonymous folk of whom I have been speaking who influenced the English language. Very many common words adopted in English are in a dialectal form. Everyone can quote Wamba's remarks on the change of name suffered by farm animals when they appeared on the lord's table. But, as Professor Pope pointed out, the change took place in the kitchen. It was the cook who taught the scullions the dialectal words beef, veal and gammon. Even in the fields, beasts were already cattle. Lawyers later borrowed the French form chattel of this word. The word to pursue was catch. The aristocracy later conceived the French form chase for hunting. We have now given different meanings to these words.

The lords employed carpenters and gardeners, both dialectal words, and the carpenters used chisels (dialect) and planes (French). The gardeners pleached hedges (dialect)

in the North and plashed (French) them in the South. Common words like defend, gently, heir, veil are all dialectal. There are sometimes candles (dialectal) in the Chancel, while the congregation sits in pews, a dialectal form of pay, which originally meant a platform. It is obvious why terms connected with hunting and blazonry should be French—usually old-fashioned French. But swearwords, damn and blast are French, bloody is a translation—and one would go on down the scale. The ploughman uses English words like plough and coulter but in most dialects he stops for bevers, the original infinitive of boire, a word also used in some Public Schools. “No bevering” was a wacry during a Clyde sit-in—meaning no unofficial stops for drinking. Some French words have become disguised, like the words with a hardened lisped s, meddle, medley, medlar tree. New borrowings replace old—valet is respectable, the dialectal varlet is a term of abuse. Caitiff (dialectal) is a joke used in its original sense in the Knight of the Burning Pestle. To cater has acquired a wider meaning than acheter. Words like spirit, school, sponge, have kept an older form than current today in France. Much is made today of “Cradle talk”. Of course, soon after the Conquest, babies picked up English before Norman French, but what English? Did they never hear of tables and chairs, chimneys, pantries and laundries, or stables? And too much can be made of this. My own father’s “cradle talk” was Chinese, but it melted like snow. It became a question of environment, and English dialectal differences militated against its acceptance for universal use—Abbot Samson preached in English as a gesture, and a gesture it remained, for his Suffolk congregations had difficulties with his Norfolk tongue. By the thirteenth century nearly everybody had a smattering of French, which is why it became so bad. By the end of the fourteenth century things were different. Edward II’s judges and counsel used a colloquial French, to say the least of it. Richard II’s used as artificial tongue.

Out of all this, some sort of pattern emerges. Not unnaturally, the Conquest caused a dislocation, and it was only gradually that something new emerged. Nothing except in Latin was written between 1066 and 1100. Art, language, trade, all were redirected from Scandinavia to France. Then there was give and take, and ultimately links with Scandinavia were renewed. This is why, as was pointed out at the beginning, the Conquest must be seen

in a wider context, that of Western Europe. There are few, if any, ordinary English people who have no drop of Norman blood in their veins. Intermarriage and the Black Death have seen to that. The Conquest is a fact. "There is nothing, either good or bad, but thinking makes it so".

## **MEDIAEVAL WALL PAINTINGS**

**Mr. E. Clive Rouse, M.B.E., F.S.A. (January 7th, 1977)**

Mr. Rouse gave a brief history of the wall paintings in Battle Parish Church and said that he was very pleased with the results achieved in uncovering these paintings up to the time of his lecture. He then went on to speak of wall paintings generally, which he described as the mediaeval equivalent of a strip cartoon, intended for the instruction of a congregation who were probably 90% illiterate.

He then discussed the conventions used by the artists in depicting various characters. Tyrannical kings, for example, always had their legs crossed. There were also conventional gestures, for example the arms raised in disputation.

Over the chancel arch there was usually a picture of the Last Judgment, heaven above, hell below, with its special conventions.

The lecture was illustrated by slides of wall paintings in other churches restored by Mr. Rouse and his team.

Unfortunately a text of the talk is not available, but with the permission of the Dean of Battle and of Mr. Rouse we reproduce below an article by Mr. Rouse, published in the Battle Parish Magazine, written when the work at Battle was nearer completion, which we believe will be of interest to our members who have not already seen it. A definitive paper by Mr. Rouse on this subject will shortly be published in Sussex Archaeological Collections.

## **THE WALL PAINTINGS IN BATTLE PARISH CHURCH**

The Church of St. Mary at Battle must at one time have exhibited one of the most impressive painted interiors of the middle ages in Sussex. After being obliterated by lime-

wash at the Reformation in the early sixteenth century, they were re-discovered and partly exposed some 300 years later, and published in Volume 2 of the British Archaeological Association Journal in 1847. From this we learn that the whole area above the chancel arch was painted with the Three Living and Three Dead (a warning of the Emptiness of early rank and riches) and a great Last Judgment with Christ in Majesty and the Heavenly Host, continued on the North and South walls of the nave. There was painting in several areas of the Chancel and the South Chapel; and the whole North wall of the nave above the arcade was also painted, including the clerestory window-splays.

Of this superb display all is now destroyed except for a scrap or two in the chancel, and the remains of the North nave wall series. In recent years there was a revival of interest in the paintings; and as long ago as 1959 I prepared a report on the paintings and their condition, expressing the opinion that they were of great importance and fine quality and that far more remained, when viewed at close quarters from a ladder, than was apparent from the ground.

It took some time to get things moving and raise the necessary funds from grants and otherwise; but during the last three years my team of Conservation Assistants have worked hard and patiently at intervals at an extremely technically difficult task with truly remarkable results. What has been revealed is as follows: At the East end of the North wall, now partly concealed by the new organ pipes, is a great procession of Blessed Souls about to be received into the Heavenly Jerusalem by St. Peter—part of the Last Judgment. Above these there were Saints in painted canopied niches, which have almost entirely perished.

The whole of the rest of the wall is occupied by a series representing the Life of St. Margaret of Antioch in 24 scenes. She is alleged to have lived in the Middle East (Pisidia, not the Greek Antioch) in the fourth century, and was one of the most popular saints in the Middle Ages, being invoked by women in childbirth. The scenes shown at Battle are clearly based on the Life given in the Golden Legend, the *Legenda Aurea* of Nicholas de Voragine who composed a series of Saints' Lives in manuscript in the thirteenth century which immediately became popular in

England and formed the basis of many painted series. It was translated into English and printed by Caxton at the end of the fifteenth century.

The series at Battle starts at the right-hand (East) end with the upper row and reads Westwards to the end, when the scenes return Eastward (to the right) in the lower row, making 24 in all in four groups of six between the clerestory windows. The scenes are somewhat repetitive, showing the birth of the Saint, her handing over to her Christian nurse, the approach of the Roman Provost Olybrius and her subsequent tortures at his hands, culminating in her execution, burial, and her soul received into heaven. The whole is, of course, legendary but teaches constancy, Christian fortitude under temptation and torture and the ultimate heavenly reward.

Unfortunately, in 1847 the whole series was misunderstood and misinterpreted as a Passion Cycle, the illustrations being correspondingly inaccurate except for the Demon at the West End, now proved to be the dragon that swallowed the Saint in prison (the top of her cross, and a protecting angel having just been revealed), her emerging from the dragon and chastising him in picture language for good overcoming evil with the help of the power of Christ. It is strange that almost the whole nave should have been devoted to St. Margaret (the most extensive series in England) when the church is actually dedicated to the Virgin Mary.

The paintings are of extremely fine quality, the drawing exceptional. Doubtless expert artistic work was made available through the great and influential monastic establishment opposite. The Provost, crosslegged on his throne, with crown and sword is an impressive and menacing figure as he appears in a large number of scenes. The Saint is calm, beautiful and resigned; and the tormentors handling her with every indignity are deliberate caricatures, coarse, ugly and bestial. The date of the paintings, using the scrollwork under them, and the costume details, must be of the end of the thirteenth or beginning of the fourteenth century. They are not noticed elsewhere—in Tristram, Keyser or Caiger Smith, though J. C. Wall has a reference.

At the conclusion of the work it is intended to draw out a diagram of the wall and annotate each scene, and event-

ually to publish the whole in the Sussex Archaeological Collections.

FOOTNOTE: A pair of binoculars is a great advantage when viewing the finer details of the paintings.

## **THE HISTORY OF CHRIST'S HOSPITAL**

**Mr. A. E. Allison (February 4th, 1977)**

I expect that the words "Christ's Hospital" conjure up to most of you the picture of our Boys' School at Horsham where the boys still wear the ancient Tudor dress and which is sometimes called the "Bluecoat School", an expression we never use ourselves, since there are several Bluecoat Schools about the country, none of which has any connexion with Christ's Hospital. But there is more to Christ's Hospital. It includes our Girls' School at Hertford, the oldest girls' boarding school in the country; vast properties derived from ancient and modern legacies with a rent roll of over one million pounds a year; various special charities and trusts (we care for certain categories of old people by way of pensions who are actually more numerous than the 1100 children in the schools). The whole is administered from Christ's Hospital in the City of London.

We still possess the annual accounts back from the beginnings in 1552, with a small gap between 1557 and 1561, Court minutes complete from 1561, children's registers from 1563 and ledgers and cash books from late Tudor days.

In the first half of the sixteenth century the religious houses with their appendages occupied about two-thirds of the then City of London and no less than one fifth of the population lived within their walls. Among these religious houses was the Greyfriars—now the site of the G.P.O. and part of St. Bartholomew's Hospital. From 1552 to 1902 it was the home of Christ's Hospital.

The despoliation of the monasteries by Henry VIII set adrift on the City streets a vast number of sick and poor who had previously lived on the alms and hospitality of the Friars.

In 1552 Nicolas Ridley, Bishop of London, preached before the young King Edward VI his famous sermon on Charity, which so moved the King that he discussed with the Bishop his royal duty to deal with the shocking state

of affairs in the streets of the City. The upshot was the establishment of four royal hospitals with a common crest and seal and with the Mayor, Commonalty and citizens of the City of London having their places as Governors.

Christ's Hospital was established for the care of poor children, Bethlehem for the sick, Bridewell for the correction of the idle and vagabonds and St. Thomas' Hospital for the care of the sick.

The City fathers set up a committee of 30, who first set an example by contributing themselves. The King gave his unwanted palaces of Bridewell and the Savoy. The City Livery Companies were asked to subscribe and to this day have rights of presenting children into the schools. The City Corporation transferred various sources of income arising from municipal affairs. Private individuals gave land, buildings and money and have continued to do so throughout the centuries.

For example in the reign of Mary Tudor a poor cobbler left us a few houses in what is now Queen Anne's Gate, of which the rental was about £20 a year. It is true that we have added to them over the years, but the income we now derive must be at least 4,000 times as much. By contrast 130 years later a man gave us £8,000 3% Bank Annuities upon very fussy penal clauses if we even try to sell them. As  $2\frac{1}{2}\%$  Consols they are now worth only £1,300 and the income has fallen from £240 to £200.

Alas, vast as are our assets, in recent days our income has become quite inadequate to our needs. Expenditure in running the two schools in the past two years has exceeded income by £½m. We have never abandoned the ancient principle of not admitting children whose parents are capable of educating them equally well elsewhere.

The earliest children were almost entirely foundlings, some only one day old, taken off the streets. Three hundred out of the first 500 came in that category, though the picture changed substantially with the enactment of the Elizabethan Poor Law.

But from the time of King Edward VI Christ's Hospital was an educational establishment, not merely an orphanage. Charles II chose it for his foundation of a Mathematical School for the training of naval officers.

In the Annual Accounts for 1563/4 are some interesting statistics. In the 11 years 1,916 children had been admitted,

866 had been placed in jobs and 733 had died.

As time went on the conditions of admission crystallised, children must be children of freemen living in the City, not under seven years of age, orphans but not foundlings, none that are lame, crooked or deformed and none that have leprosy, scab or the Evil.

We are proud of our strong connexion with Samuel Pepys, a Governor, who was instrumental in persuading King Charles II to found and endow a Royal Mathematical School within the main school. To this day the R.M.S. exists and 40 boys are sons of naval officers.

Pepys, a very tiresome gentleman, took it entirely upon himself to conduct an enquiry into the affairs of the foundation, which he rightly suspected were not being properly administered and issued a very wordy report. As a result of his efforts the Treasurer resigned and Pepys was elected a Freeman of the City of London.

The School was largely destroyed in the Great Fire of London and the boys and girls were dispersed to various places in Herts. The rebuilding after the Fire was accomplished largely through the efforts of the Lord Mayor, Sir Robert Clayton. There was a major reconstruction in 1795 and those buildings subsisted until the exodus of 1902. The post-fire arrangements in Hertfordshire were finally combined into one school in Hertford where the girls have remained to this day.

In Victorian times Christ's Hospital was investigated by at least two commissions. As a result of the Endowed Schools Act of 1869 a scheme of administration was thrust upon it.

The time had really come to move from the 3½ centuries old home with all its disadvantages of health, space, playing facilities, old buildings, etc. and to move into the country. The departure from London did not however sever the connections with the City. The Schools visit the Mansion House twice in each year and the Lord Mayor always attends both Speech Days in state. He always presides at Court meetings when he attends and with 12 other Aldermen, members of the Court of Common Council and members of the L.C.C. (as it was in 1891) makes up about one third of the managing council of Almoners. Twenty others represent the Donation Governors (mostly Old Blues), the remainder representing various public



bodies including the Admiralty.

The new scheme only came into effect after much controversy and litigation and a final appeal to the Privy Council. The hero of the day whose wisdom and enthusiasm finally led us to the promised land was Dr. G. C. Bell, an old Blue, master of Marlborough, and previously Headmaster of Christ's Hospital.

The new scheme admitted for the first time the principle of a payment by parents and introduced the element of admission by competitive examination for a considerable number of boys and reduced the presenting rights of the Donation Governors.

Our Victorian fathers showed great courage in moving in 1902 when they had only a small building fund. They showed great wisdom too in acquiring 1,100 acres, of which only 110 acres was enough for the school itself, so being able to expand to meet growing needs.

We have turned out many men of distinction all starting with no advantages of wealth or birth. They were great days when Coleridge, Leigh Hunt and Charles Lamb were all in the school together. During my time as Clerk we had five F.R.S. including Barnes Wallis, our Treasurer. We have produced in recent years two famous Presidents of the R.C.S., a Vice-President in a following year and a Foreign Secretary. We seem to specialise in Permanent Under-Secretaries of State. But above all, since the war, in music: Constant Lambert, Sir William Glock, Colin Davis. I could produce you an Archbishop, a burglar or the longest serving England fast bowler probably of all time.

How sad, therefore, that we are now suffering from the politico-dogmatic approach to education and seem likely to suffer more in the future, especially from the threat of losing our charitable status in respect of taxation which would finish us off for good and all.

In 1903 after one year at Horsham our income was enough to bear the cost of clothing, maintaining and educating 1,100 children at £55 per head. Last year our income, including considerable fees, was £1,400,000. The cost of the schools was £1,700,000.

I should like to close by quoting the words of one of the Commissioners who investigated the London School in the 1860s.

"Christ's Hospital is a thing without parallel in the

country, and sui generis—quite unique. It has a long and goodly list of Worthies. It is quite as strong as Eton or Winchester in the affection of those who have been brought up in the School. The affection is well earned by the admirable care and unstinted liberality devoted to the children, the result of which is shown in their singular good health, which we think must be more due to that particular care than to any other cause. Consideration seems to be justly due to the past history of such a remarkable school.

It is a grand relic of the mediaeval spirit, a monument of the profuse munificence of that spirit, and of that constant stream of individual munificence which is so often found to flow around foundations of that character. It has kept up its main features, its traditions and its antique ceremonies for a period of upwards of three centuries”.

## **LOGICAL FOUNDATIONS OF ANGLO-SAXON ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY**

**Dr. H. M. Taylor (October 14th, 1977)**

I hope that the somewhat formidable title of my address will not have unduly alarmed you into thinking that I should ask you to enter into very deep and difficult arguments this evening. What I hope to do is to show you in outline the very great impact which the Norman Conquests made on the building styles of this country, and indeed not only on the styles but also on the extent to which records were left that would enable later people (including ourselves) to understand the history of those styles.

Let us begin by taking a brief glance at two Norman buildings, one small and still standing, the other great and unfortunately pulled down last century but not without a careful drawing having been made and deposited with the Society of Antiquaries. Every schoolboy knows that this first little church at Stewkeley in Buckinghamshire is Norman just by looking at its round arched doorways and windows, all decorated with chevron ornament.

But my purpose tonight is to press you at all stages of my talk to ask “How does the schoolboy know”, or even better “How do we know”.

The answer about our knowledge of the Norman style of architecture is twofold. *First* it springs from the fact

that for a great number of the greater Norman abbeys and cathedrals built very soon after the Conquest there were clergy who wrote down accurate accounts of when they were built, and by whom, and in several instances gave accurate descriptions of their parts so that to this day we can relate the written records to the surviving buildings. *Secondly* our knowledge owes a great deal to the loving care with which architects and historians of last century studied the written records in conjunction with the buildings and elucidated the whole story of buildings like Canterbury Cathedral and Durham Cathedral so that we can now walk round those buildings and many others with detailed descriptions which ascribe reliable dates to almost all their features.

We ought to pause first for a moment to consider in more detail these two basic foundations to our knowledge of Norman and later buildings first the written records and secondly the Victorian study of them in relation to the buildings themselves.

For the greater buildings of this country, cathedrals and abbeys in particular, it is true to say that from the Norman Conquest onward to the present day there has survived an almost complete record of additions and alterations to the fabric. The continuity of these records is essential for our purpose because only from that continuity can we as a rule build up a reliable association of individual surviving features with written accounts of building works. As a rule the records do not describe the works in fine enough detail to settle now exactly what was added. It is only by studying the complete sequence that we can make our understanding of the building really reliable.

And it is at this point that we have a sharp distinction between the Anglo-Saxon period and the Norman and later periods. For the five hundred years of Anglo-Saxon Christianity it is true to say that there is next to no detailed account of erection of churches, and certainly no continuous record. I emphasise *detailed and continuous* because these are the necessary features if we are to be able to build up an architectural history. Of course there are Anglo-Saxon accounts of the building of churches; Bede records well over 50 before his death in 735, and the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle records several score right up to the time of the Norman Conquest. But neither of these gives any detail, nor is there any continuity. In part, no

doubt this was due to the very troubled times, conflict between different kingdoms, and conflict with invading Danes and Norsemen.

By contrast with this total lack of detail and continuity of architectural records in Anglo-Saxon England I emphasise to you that for Canterbury Cathedral alone we have two detailed accounts of building campaigns in the 150 years after the Conquest. The first by Eadmer gives detailed descriptions of the destruction by fire of the Anglo-Saxon church, its replacement by Lanfranc the first Norman Archbishop, and the partial destruction of his church and its replacement by Archbishop Anselm. The second by Gervase gives precise architectural descriptions of the burning of Anselm's church in 1174 and its reconstruction week by week thereafter.

Turning to the Victorian study of all this material we have to thank architects and historians of last century for having produced convenient translations and printed accounts of these early records so that they are conveniently accessible. But even more we have to thank them for studying the buildings in association with the records and for noting how the features of the buildings can be put in groups which change from time to time in such a way that we can associate particular types of features with particular periods. For example round arches with the Norman period, eleventh and twelfth century, sharply pointed arches with the thirteenth century (so called Early English), wider pointed arches and flowing tracery with the fourteenth century (so called Decorated), and flatter arches and rectangular tracery with the fifteenth century (so called Perpendicular). I would like at this stage to do homage to architectural historians of last century Thomas Rickman (1776-1841) whose *Styles of Architecture in England* 1817 was a pioneering work and is still well worth reading and secondly Robert Willis (1800-1875) whose accounts of Canterbury and Winchester and York are still almost without compare.

I turn now to the Norman style once again and I show Buckler's drawing of Lanfranc's tower before it was destroyed. Here we should note not only the round arches but the consistent use of regularly squared ashlar masonry and cushion capitals. The great Norman achievement of scores of abbeys and cathedrals would scarcely have been possible without these methods of mass-production. Con-

versely the Norman consistency in use of these materials gives us one additional useful feature for recognising Norman buildings and distinguishing them from those erected by the Anglo-Saxons in more individualistic and less systematic fashion.

I would draw your attention especially, also, to the double openings in the tower. Note how the main wall is carried on a single broad arch, with two smaller arches recessed beneath it. Note, too, how these arches carry a small piece of wall called a tympanum, which serves to carry the main arch as it is being built. This is a very diagnostic Norman feature.

### **The Existence of an Anglo-Saxon Style**

I turn now to the question of the existence of Anglo-Saxon churches built in stone and to whether or not there is a style of Anglo-Saxon architecture which every school-boy could know just as he knows how to recognise the Norman round arches and the Norman regular ashlar masonry in blocks that are convenient for one man to lift and set in place. First I want to take you to Wing in Buckinghamshire which I first visited in 1932, only four years after I first came to England from New Zealand and before I realised that there were any pre-Conquest churches still surviving in England.

The main arches of the arcades at Wing open to north and south aisles with round heads which don't look quite like normal Norman practice. The usual arches of a Norman arcade are two or more orders rather than the single sweep of these at Wing. But the thing which really puzzled me was the double window over the chancel arch. It does not have a recessed tympanum like those in Lanfranc's tower. Instead it has a single shaft in the middle of the thickness of the wall, and a flat stone beam laid across the shaft to support the full thickness of the wall.

There seemed to me good ground for saying from first principles that this church was not Norman, it was certainly not of any style later than Norman, and therefore it was most probably pre-Norman. My next slide shows the exterior of the polygonal chancel at Wing, with its interesting panelling in pilaster strips. Again I had no knowledge of anything of the sort on Norman buildings and so I was led to wonder whether this could be something typical of an Anglo-Saxon style.

Several years later I first met Rickman's *Styles of Architecture in England* and read his famous argument about the church of St. Peter at Barton-on-Humber, shown in my next slide. In brief he said: 'It is clear that the tower was built in two separate styles. The lower parts have stripwork panelling, they are built of rubble with huge stones for the angles, and they have strange squat double windows. The upper belfry is built later in quite a different style with coursed ashlar and a tall double belfry window not much different from early Norman'. The lower part is sufficiently different in style to proclaim that it is appreciably earlier than the upper part which cannot be later than early Norman. Therefore said Rickman the lower part is Anglo-Saxon.

In 1836 Rickman published details of twenty buildings he similarly claimed as Anglo-Saxon, and he listed features common to them and unknown in Norman buildings. He therefore named these features as characteristic of the Anglo-Saxon style:

- Double belfry windows with mid-wall shafts and through-stone slabs,
- Pilaster strips of tall stones,
- Double-splayed windows,
- Quoining at the angles of alternate upright and flat stones (long-and-short quoins),
- Arches and doorways of megalithic stones, particularly ones that passed through the full thickness of the wall.

It is interesting to turn next to St. Paul's church at Jarrow, where the Venerable Bede spent most of his life. Here we have a four-storey tower which began as a lower and very oblong porch of two and later three storeys. The tower has belfry double windows of typically Norman style such as we saw in Lanfranc's early tower at Canterbury. The earlier double windows below are of the sort we have recognised at Barton-on-Humber and Wing as Anglo-Saxon.

The storey below has double-splayed windows such as we recognised as Anglo-Saxon at Barton-on-Humber. Notice that this double-splayed window is of megalithic construction, a characteristic which we have already noted as specially non-Norman. There are very few double splayed windows in any of the Norman churches of England. A

few are to be seen at Gloucester and one in the north transept at Durham. I show a slide of the Durham one, where you will see that it (like all the Gloucester ones) is of Norman coursed ashlar.

I think it will be convenient to show now slides of a few of the three hundred or so churches which are now accepted on the evidence of their fabric as being Anglo-Saxon.

First Bradford-on-Avon, with strange shallow blind arcading and double-splayed windows.

Next I show Breamore with long-and-short quoins and double-splayed windows. It also has part of an Anglo-Saxon inscription round the arch leading to its south side-chapel, no doubt originally continued over the lost arch to the lost northern chapel.

Next I show Buxworth which has a west tower and circular stair turret, and an apsidal chancel, much rebuilt, with shallow pilaster buttresses. The stair turret has a quite un-Norman winding stair. The nave has wide arches of a single order like those at Wing, and a triple window at the west is of the same Anglo-Saxon construction as we have noted in belfries.

To conclude this quick survey of Anglo-Saxon churches I show a very interesting ruin at Canterbury and then a group of churches where only the towers have survived.

St. Augustine's, Canterbury, is one of the very few churches for which there is very full evidence of its erection. Bede tells that it was begun by King Ethelred at Augustine's request but was not finished when he died. He was buried outside but later his coffin was translated into the north portion of St. Gregory. A later chronicler, by name Jocelin records that the church was greatly modified by the penultimate Anglo-Saxon abbot who joined it to a later Anglo-Saxon church at the East. Jocelin also gives an eyewitness account of the way in which the first and second Norman abbots (Scotland and Wydo) pulled down the whole Anglo-Saxon church, built the new chancel with a crypt on the site of the old eastern church and moved all the archbishops into that crypt. In particular Jocelin records that Augustine's original tomb was in the very spot where the fourth great pier of the Norman north arcade was placed by Abbot Wydo. All this Anglo-Saxon church had wholly vanished below its Norman successor. After the Dissolution the Norman church itself fell into ruins and in 1915 the site having been bought by trustees excavations were begun to

find details of the Norman church. The excavators were astonished to find extensive remains below the floor of the Norman church and these I show, first as an aerial photograph and then as a plan.

The picture of the tombs of the archbishops shows the piers of the ruined Norman north arcade over the area where St. Augustine was originally buried, and Jocelin's account lets us know that his successors Lawrence Mellitus and Justus were the occupants of the graves in the photograph.

Just to show that not all Anglo-Saxon towers go in for double-belfry windows I show Barnack with its marvellous panelling of pilaster-strips and its single belfry windows with gabled heads. I also show internally its majestic tower-arch and a close-up to show how it is wholly through-stones. Finally on Barnack I show the elaborate carved stone on the west face and the wonderful megalithic gable west window.

Next and still with single belfry windows Little Bardfield where the windows are in groups and where the tower is built wholly without dressed stone for quoins or for window-facings. In Norman churches when the walls are of flint or stone rubble the quoins and facings are always of dressed stone.

I turn to the Lincolnshire towers and show one, Harmston, which is often much misunderstood. The parapet and finials are of course Victorian but the double belfry windows are Anglo-Saxon, each one differently treated. Learned colleagues have declared that the tower at Harmston is Norman because the tower arch is undoubtedly Norman. I agree with them about the date of the tower-arch, but I have no doubt that it was moved here in one or other of two drastic rebuildings which this church suffered in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries when the nave and chancel were wholly rebuilt. It was probably the chancel arch of the Norman church which replaced the original Saxon one. The arch is wider than the tower, so that it is awkwardly set into the walls of the tower, and it has a brick and concrete lintel above it as evidence of eighteenth-nineteenth century reconstruction. At the time of the rebuilding a stone spiral stair was built into one corner of the tower, and old monolithic window-frames from some other part of the church were used to provide two small windows to light the stair. I show one of these and I direct



your attention particularly to the drilled holes.

I show next monolithic window frames one of which has survived in situ at Avebury and one was found in excavation of the ruined palace church at Cheddar. The Avebury drawing shows how the drilled holes were used for holding withies round which a basket-work frame was built to serve as centring for holding the mortared rubble of the wall.

Lest my audience may feel incredulous about the claim that basket work would (or even could) be used as a frame for setting a shape in a wall of rubble mortar I show my own photograph of a surviving circular window, blocked but otherwise as built some 900 years ago in the church at Hales in Norfolk, where the basket-work frame can still be seen through the thick coating of cement and plaster.

The use of basket-work frames is still further attested at Hadstock in Essex where there are large double-splayed windows with round heads and wooden frames built into the thickness of the wall. I show two pictures to indicate the general outline of the church and its windows, and then a detailed drawing of the woodwork of one window with holes for a basket-work frame and another to show the door which also seems to date from the Anglo-Saxon period.

While we are on the subject of wooden window frames about a thousand years old, let us return to Barton-on-Humber and look at the woodwork surviving in the circular west window. Here again holes can be seen, but these were probably for a string net to keep out birds or for fastening in place a linen sheet or a sheet of horn to keep out the weather.

To conclude, let us come much nearer home to Sompting in Sussex. I show first the splendid tower, built of flints with its remarkable pyramidal Rhenish helm roof. So far as England is concerned this is a unique survival from before the Conquest, but there are many similar roofs in the Rhineland and several copies in England. In my second slide we see more clearly the long and short quoining, the splendid pilaster-strips which run to the apex of each gable and the projecting stones which form the seatings for the woodwork of the roof at each quoin and each apex.

These arrangements are shown more clearly in the isometric line drawing kindly prepared by Mr. Cecil Hewett who has also allowed me to show you his drawing of the timberwork.

Mr. Hewett's study of timberwork is a twentieth century analogue of the studies made by Thomas Rickman of the masonry last century. Rickman's study of masonry enabled him to recognise the special features of Norman and later masons' work. Similarly Mr. Hewett's studies of carpentry have enabled him to recognise the kinds of jointing used by Norman and later builders of roofs. Just as Rickman was able in 1817 to claim the tower at Barton-on-Humber as the work of masons earlier than the Normans, so Mr. Hewett now claims that the woodwork of Sompting tower is the work of carpenters earlier than the Normans. We already knew from Rickman's work that the masonry was Anglo-Saxon, and now we can confidently claim the roof of the tower itself as being of the same date.

### **SUMMER PROGRAMME 1977**

The five visits arranged were well attended, there not being seats on the coach on two occasions for all who wanted to come and the average total over the whole series exceeding 45.

### **SHEFFIELD PARK HOUSE**

A visit was paid in May to this house which has been open to the public for only two seasons. The estate belonged in the sixteenth century to Godwin, father of King Harold, and changed hands several times before being bought in 1769 by John Holroyd, who became Lord Sheffield. The original building of brick later to be faced with cement dates from the sixteenth century, but additions and alterations were made in the years following the purchase; e.g. ennoblement entitled Lord Sheffield to have the building embattled and a number of turrets were added. The fake Gothic window, such a feature of the east end of the house, was not opened up until 1974 though the suggestion was mooted during the eighteenth century alterations.

The house now belongs to Mr. and Mrs. P. J. Radford who are gradually redecorating and refurnishing the interior. They are both experts and are using their knowledge in choosing suitable colours for any paintwork and wallcoverings and assembling period furniture. What they have completed since they took over in 1972 has given new life and great charm to a beautiful house and visitors seeing the state of some of the rooms not yet renovated are made aware of the tremendous task that is being undertaken with such success.

After tea the party visited Fletching Church previously visited by the Society in 1961 and 1969. (See *Transactions* No. 10.)

### LEEDS CASTLE

Leeds Castle, visited in June, dates from the ninth century when a Saxon nobleman named Led built a wooden castle on an island in a natural lake formed by the river Len. In the early part of the twelfth century Robert de Crevecoeur rebuilt the castle in stone enclosing an extensive inner bailey on the larger of the two islands and it continued in the possession of his family until it became a royal possession and favourite residence of Edward I in 1272. The groundfloor of the Gloriette dates from this reign. It remained a royal residence specially favoured by several of the Queens of England for three centuries. Henry VIII spent lavishly on it and his Banqueting Hall can be seen in the Gloriette on the first floor.

After the sixteenth century the Castle, with some alterations, was the home of a succession of famous families: e.g. the St. Legers, Culpeppers, Fairfaxes. It was bought in 1926 by the Hon. Lady Baillie who renovated it restoring and refurnishing it where necessary with mediaeval furniture. In 1974 she bequeathed it to the nation and it is now administered by the Leeds Castle Foundation.

### HORTON PRIORY AND WESTWELL CHURCH

Horton Priory visited in July is now a private house but it was originally one of the only two Cluniac foundations in Kent. The eleventh century Norman building was enlarged in the Early English period but it suffered the fate of similar foundations at the time of the dissolution of the Monasteries and became derelict until in the following century some of the walls were incorporated in a farmhouse. In 1911 a new owner demolishing part of the old structure to modernise and extend the house revealed the fine buttressed western wall with the unusual arrangement of pairs of double windows and the well preserved Norman archways near the main entrance.

Horton Priory is not generally open to the public and our party appreciated greatly the privilege of visiting it granted to us as members of a Society with "specialist interest".

The exterior of the church at Westwell is plain and unimposing. The narrow tower carries a breach spire and brick buttresses, added in the Victorian period, support the side walls. The interior, however, is most impressive. The many slender pillars, alternately round and octagonal in the arcades, and lofty for the size of the church, give it dignity and beauty. The Early English chancel is stone vaulted and to take the weight of this vaulting the chancel arch is reinforced by an additional pair of columns, a most unusual feature. The mediaeval oak ladder leading up to the belfry is still in position. Richard II and his Queen Ann were among the benefactors of the church.

### **PATTYNDENNE MANOR AND GOUDHURST CHURCH**

Pattyndenne Manor, which was visited by a party in August, dates from 1470 the frame being built of oak with the beams joined together by oak pegs. In the parlour the carpenter's marks numbering the beams so that they would be assembled in their correct order can be seen clearly. The plan was originally typical of the Wealden Hall House with the central open hearth but during the sixteenth century a chimney with inglenook was built and a ceiling inserted to provide more bedroom space. At the top of the house is a room where the king-post can still be seen and the oak rafters are darkened with soot dating from the days when the hall was open to the roof.

When first built the Manor was used for meetings of the Manor Court. Later it was sold to the Berkeley family and Sir Maurice Berkeley was standard-bearer to Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary I and Elizabeth I. It is thought that Henry VIII used Pattyndenne as a centre for hunting and in a stained-glass window of c. 1530 can be seen the arms of Henry and Catherine of Aragon.

Some later extensions were added to the back of the house otherwise little has been changed since the sixteenth century.

Goudhurst Church was last visited in 1967 and there is an article on it in *Transactions* No. 16.

### **ROCHESTER CASTLE AND CATHEDRAL**

In September a party went to Rochester visiting under the instruction of excellent guides the Castle in the morning and the Cathedral during the afternoon. The last visit of the Society to Rochester was in 1963.

## **TWENTY-SEVENTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE SOCIETY**

**held on November 25th, 1977**

The Chairman's report which had been previously circulated was approved. Membership had fallen still further to 288. The lectures in the winter and the summer visits arranged by Miss Frewer had both been well supported. The summer evening party had been held at Telham Hill House at the kind invitation of Sir Peter and Lady Allen and in spite of poor weather was enjoyed by 60 or 70 members. The Commemoration Party was again held in the Abbots Hall of Battle Abbey and was as popular as ever. The Accounts for the year showed a working surplus of £106 and bank balances increased by £60.

The Chairman referred to the Advisory Committee from local organisations set up by the Department of the Environment in connection with the management of the Abbey and said that he would welcome any suggestions from members which he could raise at meetings of the Committee.

The Committee's recommendations for the election of officers were approved as follows:—

President: Miss I. Hope Muntz, F.S.A., F.R.Hist.S. Vice-Presidents: Re-elected—Mrs. E. Webster, Mr. A. E. Marson 1977–79; serving: Prof. D. Whitelock, C.B.E., Prof. Eleanor Searle, Mrs. W. N. Palmer 1975–78, Miss J. E. S. Robertson, the Bishop of Sherwood 1976–79. Chairman: Re-elected, Mr. E. G. Creek. Vice-Chairman: Re-elected, Mr. K. N. Crowe. Hon. Secretary: Re-elected, Mrs. F. M. Cryer. Hon. Treasurer: Re-elected, Mrs. L. Sanders.

Miss Frewer retired as a member of the Committee by rotation and was re-elected. There were two other vacancies on the Committee owing to the resignations of Miss C. V. Cane and Mr. B. E. Martin, but there was only one nomination, Miss B. I. Thomson. Miss Thomson was duly elected and it was left to the Committee to fill the remaining place by co-option.

## **MUSEUM TRUST ELEVENTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**held on November 25th, 1977**

The Chairman, Mr. D. H. Beaty-Pownall presided. The Chairman reported that the number of visitors to

the Museum was 15,322, an increase of 2,774 over the previous year. This total included 26 schools and other organised parties. Among the latter was a party from N. America, all with the surname Courtenay, who visited the Museum and Abbey as a part of a tour of investigation into their history and origins, and who found much to interest them in the Society's library.

Special displays were mounted to mark the Queen's Silver Jubilee.

A valuable collection of documents, largely church and parish accounts, dating mostly from the first half of the nineteenth century, was given to the Museum by Mrs. Beechey, widow of Mr. E. E. Beechey, chairman of the Historical Society 1962-66.

Another valuable addition to the library was "Lordship and Community" by Prof. Eleanor Searle presented by the Rev. V. R. Maxwell.

Copies were purchased for sale in the Museum of a new edition of "The Field of Hastings". Other new sales items were sets of slides of Battle and District and copies of the Abbey Roll.

The Committee recommended the re-election of all the following members who were willing to stand again: Mr. D. H. Beaty-Pownall, Mr. E. J. Tyler, Mr. R. W. Bishop, Miss C. V. Cane, Mr. K. N. Crowe, Mrs. M. Kempton, Mrs. F. Mason and Miss J. E. S. Robertson. Subsequently the following officers were appointed: Chairman, Mr. Beaty-Pownall; Vice-Chairman, Mr. Tyler; Hon. Treasurer, Mr. Bishop; Hon. Secretary/Librarian, Miss Robertson.

At the conclusion of the two meetings slides taken during the summer visits were shown by Mr. L. Shaw.

# BATTLE AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE 1977-78

### *President:*

MISS I. HOPE MUNTZ, F.S.A., F.R.HIST.S.

### *Vice-Presidents:*

MRS. E. WEBSTER      MR. A. E. MARSON, M.B.E.  
PROF. DOROTHY WHITELOCK, C.B.E., D.LITT., F.S.A.  
PROF. ELEANOR SEARLE, PH.D.      PROF. H. R. LOYN  
RIGHT REV. H. R. DARBY, BISHOP OF SHERWOOD  
MRS. W. N. PALMER      MISS J. E. S. ROBERTSON

*Chairman:* MR. E. G. CREEK

*Vice-Chairman:* MR. K. N. CROWE

*Hon. Secretary:* MRS. F. M. CRYER

*Hon. Membership Secretary:* MR. J. E. SANDERS

*Hon. Treasurer:* MRS. L. SANDERS

### *Committee:*

<i>Till 1978</i>	<i>Till 1979</i>	<i>Till 1980</i>
MR. A. C. G. MASON	MR. F. W. KEMPTON	MRS. R. F. FREWER
MR. P. A. W. HOWE	MR. J. E. SANDERS	MISS B. I. THOMSON
MISS J. F. MACKENZIE, M.B.E.	MRS. E. BAY TIDY, O.B.E.	

*Museum Trust (Museum, Library and Excavation Committee):*

*Chairman:* MR. D. H. BEATY-POWNALL

*Vice-Chairman:* MR. E. J. TYLER

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

*Hon. Treasurer:* MR. R. W. BISHOP

### *Committee:*

MRS. F. MASON      MRS. M. KEMPTON  
MR. K. N. CROWE      MISS C. V. CANE

*Hon. Curator of Museum:* MR. D. H. BEATY-POWNALL

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

## A ROYAL VISIT

Miss Joyce Weiner (December 8th, 1977)

As much for his views as for his rank the burly occupant of a coach emblazoned with the Royal arms was greeted, as he entered the town of Battle in late October 1820, with cries of "The Queen and Sussex for ever". The Duke of Sussex, bowing graciously in acknowledgment, had long supported the dead Princess Charlotte, idol of the people, in her opposition to the Prince Regent, her father. Now he was championing her mother, the improbable but abused Caroline, whose struggle to be crowned Queen had become a focus of political strife and popular unrest. In a positive fervour of solidarity the citizens of Battle unharnessed the coach and drew it uphill to the gates of the Abbey.

Once upon a time, a visit from Augustus Frederick, ninth child and sixth son of George III, and his wife would have attracted less notice. The Prince, his wife and small son had spent the summer of 1794 at East Hill House on Tackleway—a tablet still records the fact. They lived there in relative obscurity. Having contracted a clandestine marriage with the Lady Augusta Murray, in defiance of the Royal Marriage Act, Augustus was in disgrace. This did not last long. When affections waned the couple went their several ways, he was officially recognised and reunited with his family. The title of Duke of Sussex was created for him and he was granted an appropriate allowance. Nevertheless, his character and mode of life were ever after influenced by the lean years.

What he did have in common with many of his brothers and sisters was their good looks. He was the tallest member of the family with a commanding presence and an engaging charm. Though attentive to the ladies and attractive to them, loyalty or decorum kept him from marrying again during the lifetime of his wife, even though the marriage had been declared null and void. Nor, unlike three of his brothers, did he join, on the death of the Princess Charlotte, in the matrimonial scramble for a legitimate heir. It was not, in fact, until 1830 that he took to the altar the Lady Cecilia Buggin, née Underwood, a widow to whom he had long been attached. Some time afterwards Queen Victoria, though withholding from her the precedence or title of Royal Highness, created her Duchess of Inverness.



The Duke of Sussex was educated abroad at the University of Gottingen which was known for its progressive teachings, but he himself jocularly stated that his belief in the rights of man was due to his having been a rebel from birth. A considerable linguist, a bibliophile and a collector of note, he was far and away the most intellectual member of a family not without its talent.

With his brothers he was a frequent attendant at the House of Lords, but, unlike theirs, his speeches—long and learned—were always in support of Opposition causes. Like George IV he was an ardent Freemason and a patron of several hospitals—the only statue of him that I can trace is one which stood in the courtyard of the old Royal Free in Grays Inn Road. He presided over the meetings of countless institutions for science and the arts, and laid foundation stones up and down the country.

One of his visits on October 30th, 1820, took him to Battle Abbey. After the citizens' noisy welcome the reception at the gates was formal and ceremonious. A military band provided music and what were known as the Abbey guns let off a salvo of artillery. Sir Godfrey Webster, fifth Baronet and his lady came forward to welcome the illustrious guest and his party. Sir Godfrey's immediate reason for the invitation to the Duke of Sussex was to act as godfather to his second surviving son, two before him having died in infancy. This godson bore the Duke's two names and was the direct ancestor of the family which has just said farewell to the Abbey.

The host was the son of the fourth Baronet and that West Indian heiress, who, in Mitford parlance, had bolted with and subsequently married Lord Holland. She had hated Battle and was estranged from her son—even as a baby her flippant description of him betokened no great tenderness. "Webby" as she called him was such "a phenomenon of littleness that she thought it unjust not to pickle him and send him to a medical museum". Brought up by two elderly relatives and normal in size and appearance the young baronet's wild oats were sown early and in profusion.

Wildly extravagant and a compulsive gambler he had undoubtedly been influenced by his brother officer, the heir to the throne, but like as not these habits were among the few genuine legacies bequeathed by his father, the fourth baronet. Even though, in default of a Married Women's

Property Act, on her elopement his wife's large fortune had become his own, attempts at solvency on his part had failed lamentably. For years parts of the Abbey Estate were sold off and finally he contemplated pulling down the ancient monument itself, to rid himself of a building falling woefully into neglect and disrepair. He might indeed have done this, had he not decided at the age of 52 to rid himself of all burdens by taking his own life.

By 1812 Byron mentioned that the fifth Baronet had just obtained a seat in the House and that his "senatorial duties would be manifold". A political career in those days was a bucking horse, and if a tenacious one, Sir Godfrey was an unlucky rider. This was not surprising since, though elected as a Tory, once in Parliament he supported liberal measures and voted with the Whigs. After the solution of some electorally confused issues he was in 1818 again elected member for Sussex, then one constituency, this time as a Whig. Though to the end of his days his political ambitions never lessened, this was the last time he was to be successful. When the death of George III in 1820 necessitated a General Election Sir Godfrey was induced to stand down in favour of Charles Cavendish, son of the Duke of Devonshire.

To his credit Sir Godfrey did engage in extensive restoration of the Abbey and the Park, though not always with the taste, discrimination and respect that they deserved and with obviously too little consideration of the resources which were available. As a result he was forced to take the same road as that taken by many of his contemporaries and to go abroad to evade his creditors, leaving trustees in charge of the Estate.

The tolerance of the age towards financial embarrassment and the absence of any great stigma attached to insolvency is demonstrated by the fact that, in spite of his position, which cannot be thought to have greatly improved, but a few years later Sir Godfrey was able to muster not only a collection of influential political cronies, but a member of the Royal Family and to entertain them in great style.

The high jinks at Battle Abbey did not, however, get much space from the *Sussex Weekly Advertiser*, as sparing in its account as some of its modern successors might be and confined itself diplomatically to a description of the *mise-en-scène*. "The ancient hall of this splendid mansion", it ran, "was splendidly illuminated, and on Battle Tower a flag was flying, with history recalled by the great picture of the Battle of Hastings covering one end of the wall . . .".

Luckily, two of the guests left more enlightening accounts. Both comment on the lavishness of the hospitality, particularly of the dinner on the first night which was French with wines "to satiety". Only one servant waited at table. (Not surprising, since there is evidence that during a hard-up period Sir Godfrey had given instructions to his man of affairs to dismiss all the staff which had originally been engaged by the ladies of the household.) Next day, in contrast, twelve keepers richly attired in green and gold livery attended at the shoot. One can safely surmise that tenants, farmers, labourers and other good citizens of Battle rose to the occasion.

Information about the hostess other than that she was a very charming woman, a noted beauty painted by Sir Thomas Lawrence, is not available. Sir Godfrey had married early but his matrimonial history was not a happy one. In spite of reconciliations the couple lived mainly apart.

Though highly condensed, the record of those few October days in "Recollections of a Long Life" by Lord Broughton gives a vivid picture of the occasion. Better known as John Cam Hobhouse, man of the world, politician, scholar, and wit, he was a recently elected member for Westminster who had, it appears, been at Cambridge with Sir Godfrey.

Meeting the Duke at close quarters, apparently for the first time, he is vastly intrigued to see him join the shoot in his carriage, to be lifted afterwards on to a grey pony, a "Jaeger" carrying his gun while the Duke himself has a bottle of brandy tucked under his arm, and a servant brings up his greatcoat and stick. Though it seems he had many tries, only one shot hit its mark. His reaction was typical. "I know I made a damn ridiculous figure, but I don't care a farthing for it."

Remarks of like candour coupled with a capacity for well-meaning bungling caused Augustus Frederick to be regarded as an eccentric or worse. In fact he was utterly unselfconscious. The ability to laugh at himself was both antiseptic and civilised and lost him not a whit of the respect of posterity.

The Duchess of Cleveland mentions that the suite which was reserved for him was composed of the rooms that terminate the gallery and correspond with the servants' hall below. These were in her time called the painted rooms.

It is time now to make the acquaintance of some of the other guests who contributed to the brilliance of the occasion. Beside the Earl of Albemarle and John Cam Hobhouse, were present the Duke's future wife, Lady Cecilia, with whom at that time he was not often seen in public, his attendants a Mr. Keppel and a Mr. Gore, Sir Francis Burdett, Edward (Bear) Ellice and his wife, Douglas Kinnaird and a Mr. Cullen, one of the Trustees.

Hobhouse was so much the firebrand in 1820 that he had only recently emerged from prison which was where his attack on Lord Erskine for miscalling the Radicals had landed him, the offence being that of a breach of privilege. It was, nevertheless, typical of the man that, while the original charge had been laid against the printer implicated, he had elected to go to Newgate in his stead.

His friendship with Byron, alternately affectionate and reproving, survived to the dying day of each of them, and Hobhouse has retained his place in history as much for his loyalty to the poet in his reversals of fortune as for his notable achievements as a politician.

Another member of the coterie was Douglas Kinnaird, who, in Byron's later years acted as his banker. Like Moore and other of his cronies he acted as liaison between him and his publishers.

His name occurring more frequently in contemporary memoirs and letters than anyone else, Sir Francis Burdett, was, according to Hazlitt "a plain, unaffected, unsophisticated gentleman, a prodigious favourite of the English people; one of the few remaining examples of the old English understanding and old English character". Yet he was so much a man of his time that his curiosity took him to France during the Revolution and he came back imbued

with some of its tenets. These, however, were no obstacle to his marriage shortly afterwards to Miss Angela Coutts, the banker's daughter, and attaching his name to hers. A violent attack in 1797 on the Government then in power for its abuse of Habeas Corpus was rewarded by a prison sentence. In 1802, after his release he was elected member for Westminster. Afterwards (a not uncommon thing in those pre-Reform Bill days) this election was declared null and void. The same thing happened in the following year, but in 1807 he reached the top of the poll and was given a public dinner by his supporters in celebration, not before he had fought a duel with his opponent. Honour was satisfied since both contestants were wounded, but travelled back to London in the same coach!

This election proved a triumph for the Reformers, no less than for Sir Francis who sat continuously for Westminster for the next 30 years.

The last guest to be singled out is Edward Ellice, originating from another world but completely accepted by this one. He was the grandson of a New York merchant, and, after schooling at Westminster, he entered the fur trade, which, rather than a fierce temperament, gained him the soubriquet "Bear". After several costly elections he became M.P. for Coventry and in 1820 had been top of the poll. Though he resigned office as Secretary of the Treasury and had decided not to seek it again, he was subsequently persuaded to become Secretary for War. More than any other man he was considered to be instrumental in carrying through the Reform Bill. The Reform Club in Pall Mall is his permanent memorial.

When the last coach had disappeared from view and the huzzahs had died on the air, did Sir Godfrey's prospects measure up to the effort he had made? They must briefly have seemed worth while. Not for long. The attempts to get back into Parliament in 1820, 1823, 1826 and 1831 availed him not at all. The last glimpse I can give you of him displays the old panache — it was Sir Godfrey who brought down to Hastings the news of the passing of the Reform Bill in 1832, riding in a private carriage which flew the royal standard.

By now his private affairs were in a poor state, no efforts being sufficient to render his land more profitable nor to avoid disposal of his personal estate.

Sir Godfrey's actual passing seems to have given rise to the same mystery and comment that had surrounded him all his life, for the Times, copying an obituary from the Brighton Gazette, hastens to deny a rumour that he had been buried privately with little respect from the outside world. On the contrary, it states, his remains were removed from the York Hotel in London where he had lived for the past eight months, and, next day, a hearse drawn by six horses attended by mutes feathers and a morning coach and four had arrived at Battle Abbey transporting them to the great hall which was lighted up and some hundreds of persons were permitted to pass through. Next day a great concourse of people assembled to view the procession from the Abbey and the church was crowded.

When he died Sir Godfrey was only forty-six — six years younger than his father.

### **"THE VICTORIAN HAROLD"**

Taking an academic historian (E. A. Freeman), a romantic novelist (Bulwer Lytton), a historical painter (Daniel Maclise) and a dramatic poet (Alfred Tennyson), Dr. Dewar showed how Harold Godwinson appeared to these Victorians as a man of their own century rather than of his own eleventh century.

They were distinguished men in a most distinguished age. Freeman was a Gladstonian Liberal, whose portrait of Harold's father resembled "the old man eloquent" more closely than it did Earl Godwin. The five stout volumes of his *History of the Norman Conquest* (1869-76) were the noblest memorial ever raised to Harold's memory, but they do honour to a demigod rather than to a human being, and Harold II was human to the marrow.

In writing his magnum opus the Oxford Professor was strongly influenced by Lord Lytton's novel, *Harold, Last of the Saxon Kings* (1848), which appeared twenty years before his own first volume. In the prominence given to Harold's nephew, "Hakon son of Sweyn" (Haco), about whom virtually nothing is known, Freeman showed his indebtedness to Bulwer, especially in his account of the battle at Senlac. The novel is heavily Gothick in style, with a strongly supernatural element.

Both Lytton's influence and the Bayeux Tapestry (master-piece of Norman propaganda) are evident in Daniel Maclise's forty-two pencil sketches, entitled "The Story of the Norman

Conquest", published by the Art Union of London in 1866, the 800th anniversary of the year of the three kings. These may be seen on application at the Whitworth Art Gallery of the University of Manchester, from which some of them emerged in 1972 to grace the artist's centenary exhibition in London and in his native Dublin. Maclise, a thorough Celt and "an artist if ever there was one", saw the Norman Conquest as the destruction of a simple and humane civilisation by a ruthless despotism. His frieze-like picture series served as a preparation for his more famous "Death of Nelson" and the "Meeting of Wellington and Blücher".

Written in 1876, Lord Tennyson's "Harold, a drama" was not staged until 1928 by the Birmingham Repertory Company at the Court Theatre, London, and with the young Laurence Olivier in the title rôle. It lacks vigour and took over half a century to reach the stage. Its strongest part is the opening poem, entitled "Show Day at Battle Abbey" in which the striking lines occur:

"Here rose the dragon banner of the realm,  
Here fought, here fell, our Norman-slandered King."

But here (as in Freeman's early poem "Harold and Edith", Lytton's novel, and by implication in Maclise's drawings) a characteristic Victorian veil was drawn over Harold's relations with Edith Swansneck, who was clearly his "handfast" (or "Danish") wife, and the mother of his children.

"Sleeps Hector by Scamander side,  
Or Harold by the Sussex sea,  
Or Egypt's awful eyes undried  
Above the bones of Anthony?"

There is no sure answer, said the lecturer, to the questions raised by G. K. Chesterton. In conclusion he paid tribute to three recent writers who have made Harold live afresh for the twentieth century, the late Professor Sir Frank Stenton, Mr. Dennis Butler (author of "1066, the story of a year"), and our President, Miss Hope Muntz.

## **THE ENGLISH ROLL OF HONOUR IN 1066**

### **"BRAVE 13 OR FIRST 11"**

Dr. Dewar said that he had drawn up and designed a Roll of Honour of the Englishmen known or believed to have fought and died at the Battle of Hastings. One copy had been presented to the Battle Museum, one to the Hastings

Town Hall and a third to the Dean of Battle for hanging and dedication in the Parish Church.

Professor David Douglas had done great service by reducing the spurious Roll of Battle Abbey from some 300 names to scarcely 30. This had come as a shock to some of the alleged descendants of "the Companions of the Conqueror", whose "simple faith" had proved stronger than their "Norman blood".

The lecturer was prepared to admit that his possible fifteen Englishmen might be reduced, like the apprentice boys of Londonderry, to a brave thirteen. It might be safer, in a first class cricketing county, to reduce it still further to an English First Eleven.

It is very unlikely that Hakon, son of Swegn, was present at Hastings. The "evidence" seems to rest solely on Lord Lytton's novel. Snorre Sturlason in *Heimskringla* claims that Waltheof, a younger son of Earl Siward, was in the battle. He lived to marry the Conqueror's niece, and was beheaded in 1075 at Winchester.

It seems difficult to identify Eadric and Eadnoth, two co-tenants from Sudberie in Hampshire with two unknown Hampshiremen from Tytherley who died about this time.

Apart from the King and his two brothers, Gyrrh of East Anglia and Leofwine of Kent and Essex, a Swedish scholar (S. Korner) has even disputed that the Abbot of Newminster, Winchester (Aelfwig), who also fell with twelve of his monks, was the Earl Godwin's brother.

Undoubtedly Leofric, Abbot of Peterborough, returned to his once "Golden Borough" to die of wounds.

Ausgar (Esegar) the Staller and Sheriff of Middlesex was so badly wounded that he could neither ride nor walk. But he survived to negotiate with William of Normandy over the surrender of London, which played such an important part in the events of the year 1066.

Of the Fyrd of Wessex there is no doubt that Godric of Fyfield, Sheriff of Berkshire, and Thurkill of Kingston Bagpuize, in the same county, died at the head of their shire levies.

Of the Fyrd of the Eastern Counties we know of a thegn, Aelfric of Yelling and Hemingford in Huntingdonshire, in Waltheof's Earldom. From Suffolk came Breme the Freeman of "Dagaworda"\* and also Eadric the Deacon, who died with King Harold, formerly Earl of East Anglia.



A comprehensive epitaph for these and other unknown warriors of 1066 is provided by the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle for that year.

"There fell King Harold and Earl Leofwine his brother, and Earl Gyrth his brother, and many other good men, and the Frenchmen held the place of slaughter, as God granted them for the sins of the nation."

\* Otherwise unknown (Domesday Book).

### **SUMMER PROGRAMME 1978**

Five visits were arranged, one for each month from May to September. The attendance this year was not quite as good as it was last year. This may well have been due to the unsettled weather though we were in fact fortunate in our choice of dates. It is to be hoped that this falling off in numbers is only temporary as a reduction in numbers causes additional cost to those who take part and to the Society.

### **STANDEN, EAST GRINSTEAD AND PRIEST HOUSE, WEST HOATHLY (May 18th)**

Standen belongs to the National Trust and was first opened to the public in 1977. It was built in 1894 to the design of Philip Webb as a country house for a Birmingham solicitor, James Beale, by whose daughter Miss Helen Beale, it was bequeathed to the National Trust in 1972. A 15th century farmhouse now used as an entrance to the forecourt was incorporated in the plan and the old and the new make up a pleasing and varied whole.

The interior decoration and the furnishings show the influence of William Morris especially in the choice of wall-papers and the general effect is of a comfortable and unostentatious home much lighter and less cluttered than the typical Victorian house of the middle of the 19th century.

The steep south-facing slope from which the stone for the house was quarried now forms part of a beautiful garden rising up from the forecourt, this tree- and shrub-planted area contrasting with the terrace and level flower beds to the front of the house.

Priest House is a 15th century house, one of the properties of the Sussex Archaeological Trust containing a most interesting collection of Sussex bygoness. It was previously visited by the Society in 1960. (Trans: no. 9.)

## **DOVER, THE ROMAN PAINTED HOUSE AND THE CASTLE (June 13th)**

The Roman Painted House was first discovered as recently as 1970 during excavations at Dover for the construction of a new road and a multi-storey car park. The interest aroused as the work developed encouraged not only enthusiastic volunteer archaeologists but the local authorities both of Dover and Kent County and in due course the Department of the Environment to support a scheme to open the site to the public and preserve it for posterity.

Built about 200 A.D. on a site where an earlier Roman building had stood, the Painted House placed as it was so near to the naval dockyard may well have been the residence of some official. It was commandeered for military purposes about 270 A.D. and part of a defensive wall with a large bastion was driven through one end of the house. The survival of such a considerable amount of painted plaster on the inside walls of the house is unparalleled elsewhere in Britain and gives the house its name. The survival is due to the fact that when the defensive wall was built the house walls were only partly demolished and the rubble from the demolition raised the level of the floors sealing in the painted plaster on the walls in some places to a height of 6ft. thus saving it from damage by exposure. The house was heated by an elaborate underfloor and wall heating system of which the general plan can now be seen.

Work is continuing on restoring broken plaster and on a display of other "finds". We have reason to be grateful to the enthusiasts whether working as individuals or organisations whose efforts secured the preservation of this so far unique relic of the Roman occupation.

## **GREAT DIXTER, NORTHIAM AND PEASMARSH CHURCH (July 12th)**

These had both been visited previously, Great Dixter in 1957 (*Trans.* no. 6) and Peasmarsh Church in 1959 (*Trans.* no. 8).

## **TANYARD, SHARPTHORNE AND TUNBRIDGE WELLS, THE PANTILES AND THE CHURCH OF KING CHARLES THE MARTYR (August 16th)**

Tanyard is a house in private occupation which has been opened to the public for only a few years. In mediaeval times it served as a tannery. To the original small stone

building have been added half-timbered Tudor extensions and in the 17th century a further tile-hung wing. The site was good for its purpose because of the easy availability of water and oak bark both of which are essential for the tanning process. The old tanning pits are now filled in and planted as flower beds and inside the house is a display of skins and tools used for the work. The house is interesting both for its original use and architecturally.

The Church of King Charles the Martyr celebrated its tercentenary in 1978. It was built by public subscription in 1678 when Tunbridge Wells until then a very small village became a fashionable resort. At that time the Church was open only in the summer and there was no regular appointment of clergy for the first hundred years. Framed lists of the subscribers hang in the church and these include the names of Samuel Pepys (his contribution £1 1s. 6d.) and John Evelyn.

The church is a spacious building with galleries and fine plaster work especially in an octagonal dome. The summer visitors having attended the church would then take exercise, meet their friends and no doubt find refreshment as they promenaded along the Pantiles. A brass tablet marks the place where the young Princess (later Queen) Victoria sat for the services when staying in Tunbridge Wells.

### **ST. MARY'S BRAMBER AND STEYNING CHURCH** **(September 14th)**

These had both been visited previously by the Society, Bramber in 1962 (*Trans:* no. 11) and Steyning in 1960 (*Trans:* no. 9).

## TWENTY-EIGHTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE SOCIETY

held on November 24th, 1978

The Chairman, Mr. E. G. Creek, presided. The Chairman's report which had already been circulated was adopted. Membership now stood at 294, a slight increase on the previous year. The Chairman begged all members to do their best to enrol their friends and any newcomers to the town to keep up our membership.

The Treasurer reported that there was a deficit on the year's accounts of £90. This was mainly due to a large increase in the cost of printing *Transactions* which had risen to £210. It had also been necessary to put up the charge for the outings. As a result the coaches had not always been quite full and a small loss was incurred over the season.

The Committee's recommendations for the election of officers were approved as follows:—

President: Miss Hope Muntz.

Vice-Presidents: Re-elected, Professor D. Whitelock, Professor Eleanor Searle and Professor H. R. Loyn for 1978-81. (Professor Loyn had been co-opted during the year.) Serving: Miss J. E. S. Robertson, the Bishop of Sherwood 1976-79, Mrs. E. Webster, Mr. A. E. Marson 1977-80.

Chairman: Re-elected, Mr. E. G. Creek. Vice-Chairman: Re-elected, Mr. K. N. Crowe. Hon. Secretary: Re-elected, Mrs. F. M. Cryer. Hon. Treasurer: Re-elected, Mrs. L. Sanders.

Mr. P. A. W. Howe and Miss J. F. Mackenzie retired by rotation as members of the committee, but being willing to continue were unanimously re-elected. In two vacancies caused by the retirement of Mr. Mason for reasons of health and of Mr. Hobson owing to pressure of other duties the meeting elected Mr. K. M. Reader and Mrs. Chapman, the only two candidates who had been nominated.

The Chairman explained that in view of the loss on the year's workings, which owing to inflation was likely to get bigger, an increase in subscriptions appeared inevitable. An alternative course suggested was a separate charge for *Transactions* which would be supplied only to those members who wished to receive it. After some discussion it was agreed that it would be impracticable to ascertain the wishes of all members and it was unanimously agreed that

the committee be empowered to raise the annual subscription with effect from 1979-80 to the extent necessary to cover expenses.

**MUSEUM TRUST**  
**TWELFTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
**held on November 24th, 1978**

The Chairman, Mr. D. H. Beaty-Pownall, presided. The Chairman reported a small drop in the number of visitors to the Museum, to 14,284 including 28 organised school and other parties.

Additions were made to our exhibit of old weights and measures.

Over the years the Museum has acquired a considerable number of documents of various dates. We have, however, neither the space nor the resources to catalogue and store them in an accessible manner. The Committee proposed to transfer some, at least, of these papers to East Sussex Record Office.

By the death in August of Mr. R. J. Power-Berry the Museum lost a good friend, and the Committee wished to place on record its gratitude for his help.

The Committee met four times during the year. Its composition remained the same during the period and was:—Mr. D. H. Beaty-Pownall, Mr. R. W. Bishop, Miss C. V. Cane, Mr. K. N. Crowe, Mrs. M. Kempton, Mrs. F. Mason, Miss J. E. S. Robertson and Mr. E. J. Tyler. All were willing to stand again and there being no other nominations were duly re-elected.

At the conclusion of the two Annual General Meetings Mr. L. Shaw kindly showed slides taken by several members during the summer visits.

A. H. Butler Ltd., Hastings 434814 (STD 0424)