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The

Kent Archaeological Society.

ABSTRACT OF PROCEEDINGS, 1925.

REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31st DEC. 1925.

The Council has pleasure in presenting its Sixty-seventh Report, and desires first to express its satisfaction that the funds for the purchase of the land adjoining the Roman Castrum at Reculver, alluded to in the previous Report, have been collected and the area saved from the builder. This result has been largely due to the efforts of the President of the Society. The question of the exploration of this site must come up for consideration before long, when it is hoped that finds of importance will be made.

The Spring Meeting of the Society was held in the Museum, Maidstone, on 12 March, and was largely attended. An address was given by Mr. W. G. Klein, F.S.A., on "The More Recent Discoveries at Richborough Castle," and was followed by a description of "The Kentish Yeoman's House of the 15th and 16th Centuries," by Mr. H. J. Cheney.

The Annual General Meeting and Excursion were held at Faversham and neighbourhood on 14 and 15 July. Members met on the first day at Faversham, and were welcomed by the Mayor in the ancient Town Hall, where the Annual General Meeting was held. Sir Martin Conway, President of the Society, presided over a good attendance. In the course of the business the President alluded to the retirement of Mr. Richard Cooke from the office of Hon. Secretary, and spoke in appreciative terms of his fourteen years' successful work for the Society. He proposed that Mr. G. C. Druce, F.S.A., be elected in his place, which was agreed to unanimously. The President then moved that a hearty vote of thanks be given to both Mr. Cooke and Rev. Gardner-Waterman, the latter on his retirement from the office of Hon. Financial Secretary. He said that the Society owed a deep debt of gratitude to both these gentlemen for the care with which they had watched

over the fortunes of the Society. The election of Mr. Charles Stokes as Hon. Financial Secretary was confirmed.

The President made an appeal for an enlarged membership, in order that *Archæologia Cantiana* might be issued at more frequent intervals.

The members then proceeded to Faversham Church, which was described by Mr. C. H. Drake, who traced the various changes in its architectural history. After lunch the party drove to Herne Hill Church, where Mr. Drake again acted as guide and described its principal features from the twelfth century downwards. At Graveney Church, the next visited, Mr. Aymer Vallance, F.S.A., took charge, and gave a most interesting description of the building, special attention being drawn to the screen-work and thirteenth-century chest. Later the party reached Davington Priory, where they were most hospitably entertained to tea by Mrs. Kirkby; the Church, which is partly of twelfth-century date, being afterwards described by Rev. C. W. Kirkby.

On the second day the first place visited was the Maison Dieu, Ospringe, where Mr. W. Whiting showed the members the unique collection of Roman pottery lately unearthed in the vicinity. Mr. Drake described the buildings of the Hospital, which was founded in 1230 and had an interesting history.

After a visit to Stone Church and an examination of its ruins, which were described by Mr. Drake, the party moved on to Doddington, where lunch was served at "The Chequers," and the church visited. The Rev. R. A. Kent, Vicar, welcomed the members, and said the church was the only one in England dedicated to the Beheading of St. John Baptist, as was proved by a will of 1450. Mr. Aymer Vallance then described the church, and drew special attention to the low side window, which was a beautiful specimen, with original hinge-pins for the shutters and stone desk for a book. The two mural paintings of St. John Baptist and St. Francis in the splays of the windows on the north side of the chancel were also worthy of note.

The last place visited was Otterden, where, unfortunately, the church was found to be filled with scaffolding. The Rev. C. E. Woodruff (a former Rector) gave an account of its history, but the present building only dated from the eighteenth century. The members had the privilege of inspecting Otterden Place, being shown over the house by Major George Wheler and Capt. Hastings Wheler in the absence of Sir Granville and Lady Wheler.

In September the members of the Council had, by the kindness of the Dean and Chapter, the opportunity of inspecting the repairs to Gundulf's Tower, Rochester Cathedral, under the guidance of Mr. Cobb, A.R.I.B.A.

Volume XXXVII. of *Archæologia Cantiana* was issued during the year, and is well up to the level of its predecessors in the value of its contents. Volume XXXVIII. is well advanced. It is the desire of the Council, as funds allow, to increase the size of the volume to pre-war dimensions, and to issue the same annually.

Several reports have been sent in by local secretaries. Dr. Hardman, Secretary for Deal and Walmer District, contributes some notes supplied by Mr. Walter G. Klein, F.S.A., on an excavation in Castle Field, Worth. In October 1925 work was started on this Roman site, which appears to be the remains of a square Roman temple like those found at Silchester and also in Gaul, and built over an early-Celtic settlement. The interesting pottery, some dating back 400 to 500 B.C., has still to be examined, and further work is required before a complete report can be made. Mr. Klein states it was never expected that there would be an early-Celtic settlement found here. A rough plan and measurements are appended to this report, and two photographs of the excavation supplied by Mr. John Archibald.

Dr. Hardman also sends a report by Mr. Archibald, that when in July and August 1925 a cutting was made for an extension of the East Kent Light Railway, in the eastern part of the hill on which Richborough Castle stands, some Roman burial remains, pottery, tiles, etc., were found.

Mr. W. Whiting (Faversham District) reports the opening of the Maison Dieu Museum at Ospringe, mainly founded to preserve what remains of the old buildings, and for the keeping and exhibition of the Roman relics from the large Roman cemetery adjoining the Watling Street just west of Ospringe, which was excavated under the superintendence of Col. W. Hawley for the Society of Antiquaries, London.

Mr. Arthur Finn, F.S.A. (Romney), at the last meeting of the Brotherhood and Guestling of the Cinque Ports held at Dover, formally returned to the assembly the long-lost charter of Charles II., which he had had the good fortune to discover among a quantity of old matter removed from an office in New Romney. The charter is inscribed on thirteen skins. On the first is a portrait of the King, and the Royal Seal is attached. Mr. Finn

had the charter cleaned and restored and put in a suitable leather case, and it will in future be kept at Dover. He also, at the same meeting, proposed a resolution, which was carried unanimously, that the Cinque Ports and their members should make a return in a concise form of their charters, deeds, and properties of interest, with the view of such a list being published.

Mr. Lamprey (Ashford) records among local items the finding of a gold coin of Francis I. and a French jeton; and that efforts are being made by local archæologists to trace the road or track from the Roman Villa at Folkestone to Stone Street.

Mr. Cobb (Rochester) reports that the road opposite the west front of the Cathedral is being opened up in the vicinity of the western end of the Saxon Church for main drainage purposes. It is hoped that if any signs of a western apse appear the authorities may be persuaded to make investigations beyond the limits of the trench.

The Rev. H. F. Lord (Sittingbourne) calls attention to the Second Report of the Central Committee for the Protection of Churches so far as it concerns Kent. No less than forty churches, including his own at Bapchild, are mentioned as having benefited by either advice or direction given by the Advisory Committee for the Diocese of Canterbury.

Mr. Amos of Dover has been, as usual, active in watching excavations for pipe-laying or otherwise in his neighbourhood, but records no finds of importance. He refers to the progress made by the Office of Works with the repairs at Dover Castle, and comments that so much of it is closed to the public that his investigations were considerably curtailed.

Gifts to the Library and Museum have been numerous, consisting largely of books and photographs. Among the latter is one of Richborough from the air, from Mr. Klein; others of Richborough and Roman foundations at Farningham, from Mr. Youens; and of stamped tiles from Folkestone and Dover, from Mr. Amos.

Miscellaneous gifts include the will of Elizabeth Gibbons, Marden, 1771, a general summons to attend a Court Baron 1722, and coins, from Mr. Herbert Monckton; twelve rubbings of Masons' Marks by the late Leland Duncan, per Miss Churchill; Catalogue of the Maison Dieu Collections of Roman Pottery at Ospringe, from Mr. Wm. Whiting; Maps from H.M. Office of Works; and the Report of the East Kent Regional Survey, 1925, from the President.

During the year the leaden font at Eythorne, which bears a somewhat puzzling allegorical figure and the date 1628, has, through the joint efforts of the Rector and a member of the Society, been repaired and set upon a suitable stand, where it can be well seen. Leaden fonts of this period are exceedingly rare.

The following Members of Council retired by rotation and were re-elected at the Annual General Meeting:—Mr. L. M. Biden, Major Powell-Cotton, Mr. Western Plumptre, Mr. R. Griffin, Mr. Arthur Finn, Capt. Knocker.

The membership of the Society has been maintained. Eighty-three new members were elected during the year, of whom sixty-seven paid their entrance fee and first subscription within the year. The number of members on the list at 31 December was 814, made up of 111 Life and 703 Ordinary.

GEORGE C. DRUCE,

Hon. Secretary.