

Mr. H. Elgar issued the tickets for the meeting, and the carriages were under the direction of the Rev. W. Gardner-Waterman and the Hon. Secretary.

The fifty-first Annual Meeting was held at Ashford on the 8th and 9th of July 1908.

Local Committee: Revs. A. H. Collins, M.A., A. H. Harrison, M.A., and Canon P. F. Tindall, M.A.; Messrs. H. F. Abell, E. Ballard, H. Hamilton, George Harper, C. Igglesden, C. Stokes, H. Thompson, J. T. Welldon, George Wilks, B.A., J.P., and John Broad (Hon. Local Secretary).

After the preliminary meeting, held in the Old Grammar School by the invitation of Dr. Wilks, Lord Northbourne presiding, the members were received by Canon Tindall at the Parish Church, where Canon A. J. Pearman read a descriptive and historical Paper, printed in this Volume.

After luncheon the members drove to Singleton Manor, where they were received by Mr. and Mrs. R. S. Strouts, who shewed their beautiful house. Thence the members proceeded to Great Chart Church, which was described by the Rev. G. M. Livett, F.S.A. On their return journey to Ashford the members were received at Godington by Mr. and Mrs. Ashley Dodd, where they were kindly entertained to tea, after listening to an interesting Paper on the house, written and read by Mrs. Ashley Dodd.

Dinner was served at the Saracen's Head. The President, in proposing "Success to the Society," gave an interesting review of the pursuit of archæology by our forefathers; and Canon Pearman in reply remarked on the value of the Society in preventing vandalism. Mr. George Harper responded to the toast of "Prosperity to the town of Ashford," proposed by Lord Northbourne; and Mr. J. Broad replied for "The Local Committee," proposed by Mr. W. Essington Hughes. Mr. Livett proposed the health of the Chairman, which was received with acclamation.

On the second day, which was fortunately fine, the company started at 10.30 A.M. in carriages for a round of churches to the west of Ashford, visiting Sevington, Mersham, Smeeth, Sellinge, Brabourne and Brook in the order named. For the most part the architecture was described by Mr. Livett, while Mr. Woodruff dealt with the glass and other features, Sevington Church was

illustrated by a ground-plan specially prepared by Mr. Alfred J. Burrows, F.S.I.

Smeeth was lucidly described by the Rector, the Rev. F. C. Timins, M.A. At Sellinge, Brabourne, and Brook the Incumbents, the Revs. H. Stevens, M.A., T. S. Stack, M.A., and J. N. Arkell, M.A., delivered introductory addresses of interesting character. At Mersham Sir Martin Conway discoursed at sight upon the design of the mutilated glass of the west window, and Mr. Aymer Vallance, at Brabourne, Brook, and elsewhere, gave the Society the benefit of his expert knowledge of roods and rood-screens. The Vicar of Sellinge and Mrs. Stevens entertained the company to tea.

The carriages were under the direction of the Rev. W. Gardner-Waterman, and the issue of tickets for the meeting was undertaken by Mr. H. Thompson of Ashford.

ASHFORD CHURCH.

PAPER READ BY CANON A. J. PEARMAN AT THE
ASHFORD MEETING.

It is, you will readily believe, with mingled feelings that I appear to-day for the third time before the President and Members of the Kent Archæological Society for the purpose of describing Ashford Church. I performed the task to the best of my ability at the meeting of 1866; again at the meeting of 1883; and I am about to perform it once more in 1908 with, it may be, a truer insight into the history of the fabric—the result in great measure of a conversation with our worthy Editor, Rev. G. M. Livett.

For the sake of clearness I shall arrange what I have to say under two heads. I will speak first of the *building itself*, trying to shew how it became what it is; and then I will, secondly, call attention to the more *interesting objects* it contains.

You will agree with me that, whether viewed from without or from within, this is one of the more noticeable churches in the county. Externally, its situation on rising ground and its lofty tower render it a conspicuous feature in the landscape. Internally, no one who takes his stand at the western entrance and slowly advances towards the east can fail to be impressed by the prospect before him, as arch after arch comes gradually into view. The church, you see, is cruciform, consisting of a nave with north and

south aisles, transepts (each with an eastern aisle), a chancel with an aisle of equal length on either side, and rising from the point of intersection a central tower, supported by massive columns, and containing a clock, ten bells, and a set of musical chimes. In length it measures 136 feet, and in breadth at the widest 100 feet. The height of the tower is 120 feet.

When seen from the outside the building appears to be a Perpendicular edifice, somewhat late in the style, but no sooner do we enter it than we perceive how inadequate such a description would be, though true in a general way. Let us try to make out the facts.

There are two possible references to Ashford in Anglo-Saxon documents—one in 835 and the other in 858—but no mention of a church until 1086, when Domesday records the existence of a church and a priest. How much farther back that would carry us than the time of Edward the Confessor we do not know. Nor do we know what that church was like, whether of wood or of stone—a material of which there was an abundant supply in the neighbourhood. The next fact we know is that in the former half of the twelfth century, as appears by a charter of King Stephen, who reigned from 1135 to 1154, the church of Ashford was part of the possessions of Horton Priory, by the gift of Norman of Ashford. We may, therefore, conclude that, whether as the successor of a *Saxon*, or as the original, there was here a small *Norman* church, of which the side walls of the nave stood upon the lines of the present arcades. The vestiges of such a building, the only vestiges that now remain, may perhaps be seen in a few (Caen) stones, shewing the characteristic Norman diagonal facing, in the quoin adjoining the north transept and the nave aisle, and on the south also. The same quoins contain also a few stones (Firestone) of Early English date. In the *south transept* the superior order of the three arches of the eastern aisle seems to be made up of Early English material, and *may be* the remains of Early English arches *in situ*, indicating some enlargement of the building in the thirteenth century. If this be so, we must imagine in place of the Norman an *Early English* church, well developed but of no great size, consisting of a nave with narrow aisles, a central tower, transepts with eastern aisles, and an eastern arm of unknown plan. There was evidently a considerable amount of reconstruction in either the fourteenth or the earlier part of the fifteenth century. The remains of this, the Decorated, work are to be seen in the existing choir and nave

arcades and in the arcade of the south transept, the earliest portion of it being apparently the columns of the arcade on the south side of the chancel, the arches themselves having been built at a later time. Accidents were continually happening to churches in the Middle Ages, frequently from fires, and it is not unlikely that fire was the cause of some of the peculiarities to be noticed here. It would seem that old materials were re-used, as far as good and uninjured; but much *new* stone was required, the newer stones being of larger size, especially in the arches. This reconstruction of the arcades took place before the building of the present central tower. Had it been done at the same time, the arches which abut on the tower piers would not have been left irregular. Lastly, the whole church was renovated in the fifteenth century (*c.* 1475), when Sir John Fogge raised the height of the aisles, inserted new windows, added battlements, and rebuilt the tower—not, however, altogether “from the foundation,” as is stated in the inscription on his tomb. For when in 1868-9 a new roof was placed on the chancel by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, their architect, Mr. Christian, on a close examination, came to the conclusion that the older piers had been left and carefully cased round. This is shewn to have been the fact by the capitals of the tower piers which support these arches being at a higher level than the original caps of the pillars which take the other side of the arches. The upper part of the tower was, no doubt, entirely rebuilt.

We have, then, in the fabric as we see it to-day traces of all the stages through which it has passed—Norman, Early English, Decorated, Perpendicular.

So the building remained until 1827. In that year, in order to provide accommodation for the growing population, the aisles of the nave were widened. This, of course, involved the destruction of the outer walls and the obliteration of traces of windows which Warren, writing about 1712, seems to say had survived Sir John Fogge’s alterations, and brought the belfry staircase *within* the building instead of leaving it *without*, as it appears in Neale’s view, published in 1826. It had also the effect of making the nave almost square. In 1860, however, an additional bay in Kentish ragstone was thrown out to the westward, whereby 230 new sittings were obtained and the former proportions restored, while the acoustic properties of the edifice were improved. Since then a vestry has been built on the north side of the chancel on a spot where indications were found of a small chamber having formerly

existed—perhaps the “new vestry,” toward the making of which William Pembill gave 12*d.* in 1521, and Stephen Bull 3*s.* 4*d.* in 1525. The chief entrance to the church, we may add, was not, as now, by the north transept, but through a porch of Perpendicular character in the middle of the north wall of the nave. (The porch bore two shields of arms—one three quatrefoils, the other Fogge’s. I may add that over the west door, removed in 1860, were three shields—a lion rampant, double-tailed, in the middle on the point of the arch; on the south side the arms of Leeds Priory, to which the advowson of Ashford had been granted by Edward III. in 1374; and on the north something obliterated impaling a chevron.) In 1897 stone jambs and arches were substituted for the plaster work in the windows of the nave aisles of 1827, and the plaster roofs replaced by stained-oak ceilings corresponding with those put up at the west end in 1860. The battlements have been continued round the building from the addition of that date, and the appearance of the church thereby greatly improved. More recently it was found necessary to repair the roofs of the south chancel aisle and of the Smythe chapel (the eastern aisle of the south transept). In removing the ancient timber—of which some pieces were literally powder, only the outside shell remaining!—it became apparent that the large moulded beams were of the fifteenth century, and that the roof had been repaired in the eighteenth century, as indicated by the chamfered timbers used, one of which bore the date 1772. In order to make the repair a genuine “restoration,” every portion possible of the ancient timber has been re-used, by fitting and splicing together after cutting away defective parts, and all the old moulding strictly preserved. The north chancel aisle has been treated in the same way.

In the wall of the south transept the staircase to the rood still remains. The screen and loft have both perished. Warren, I think, tells us *when* they finally disappeared, for he writes: “Before the setting up of the altar the partition between the chancel and that part of the church which is under the steeple consisted chiefly of old-fashioned, strong, carved-work folding-doors, etc.—particoloured, green, gold, etc.—but about the year 1697 that partition was taken away in a great measure.” In this instance, as in some others, the loft and screen extended across the aisles the whole width of the church. This is proved by the will of William Whyte of Ashford who, November 6, 1472, bequeathed 40*s.* “to the new work of the rood loft in the two aisles of the said church: 20*s.* for each aisle.”

The eastern end of the south chancel aisle, handsomely paved and fitted up by the present vicar in 1895, is probably the chapel of St. Anne. In 1344 Edward III., at the request of William, Earl of Huntingdon, husband of Juliana de Leybourne, and in her right patron of the living, granted to Henry de Sodynton, clerk, licence to "found a Chantry in a certain chapel in the Church of the Blessed Mary of Eshhetesford in honour of Mary the Virgin and of Saints Anne, Elizth, and Katharine, and All Saints, and to endow it with 4 acres of land, 30 acres of meadow, 30 acres of pasture, and a rent of 100s., with the appurtenances," in Ashford, Willesborough, Charing and Kennington, Kent, "for the support of two chaplains." In 1416 the Archbishop collated Robert Pomer to the "perpetual chantry of St. Anne, founded in the Parish Church of Ashford, then vacant." Thomas Bery in 1474 left "to the new beam before the image of St. Anne, when it shall be made, 20*d.*;" and Henry Kenett in 1478 the like sum "to the reparation of the Image of St. Anne;" while William Deen, 1477, willed to be "buried in the church-yard near the wall of St. Anne," William Hartwell, draper, 1518, to be "buried in the church before St. Anne," and John Burgess, clerk, 1538, to be buried "without the chapel door of St. Anne, next to the Quire, and a stone 2 ft. broad to be laid on my grave."

A portion of the church, I cannot say *what*, was known as the "Jesus Chancel" or the "Jesus Aisle." Richard Woodward in 1517 gave "24 ozs. of silver to be made into a Chalice, with the sign of Jesus and the name of Edward engraved at the foot, to be used at Jesus altar." And Edward Woodward in 1528 willed to be "buried in the church, next the grave of my father in the Jesus Aisle." There was also a chapel of St. Nicholas; for Thomas Wylmot, vicar, and first master of the college, who died in 1493, desired to be buried there, and bequeathed to the church an image of St. Nicholas then standing in it. I have always thought, I hardly know *why*, that the site of this chapel was the eastern aisle of the south transept—the Strangford Aisle, as we now call it.

The church once abounded in ancient stained glass, of which the last fragments were in the great west window, taken down in 1861. They consisted of two yellow squares—each the counterpart of the other—a head with the hair as seen in portraits of Edward III., surrounded by a nimbus. Weever says, "Here are many goodly portraitures in the windows." In the great west window was the figure of Edward III. Probably in other windows were Rd. Horne,

Sir John Peche, Roger Manstone, Guldeford, the Black Prince, Rd. Duke of Gloucester (afterwards Richard III.), Lord Hastings, Sir Wm. Haute, Lord Scales, Rd. Earl Rivers, and Jacquetta, Duchess of Bedford—all (except the lady) in coat armour. They had all disappeared before 1712.

In the north transept was formerly a memorial of Sir John Fogge, kneeling in full armour at his devotions, before him an open missal on a table covered by a cloth diapered with roses, at the side the representation of a church, the badge of a founder.

Hasted says that in the south transept was once the figure of a Valoignes kneeling at an altar, and opposite to him, in the same attitude, two women in their surcoats of arms, on the one those of Haute, on the other of Fogge.

II. And now with regard to the objects of interest the building contains.

1. In the chancel is a brass which Weever says "presenteth the greatest glory and antiquitie to this church." When complete it represented a woman under a canopy surmounted by the arms of England. She held in her right hand a banner bearing the coat of Atholl, in her left a banner bearing that of Ferrers, while four other shields were placed, two on each side of the figure. The inscription in old French, which partly remains, ran, "Here lies the Lady Elizabeth, Countess of Atholl, daughter of the Lord Ferrers, whom God pardon. She died 22 Oct. in the year of grace 1375." She was the wife of David Strabolgie, fourth and last Earl of Atholl of that family. The fragment of a brass which after long lying in the parish chest has been fixed to a neighbouring stone, is either that of John Goldstone, parson of Ivychurch, who died in 1503, or of Henry Burgess, who died in 1538.

2. The tomb of Sir John Fogge, in the place of honour, on the north side of the altar. It is still handsome, though stripped of many of its ornaments. These consisted of brass effigies of himself and his two wives, Alice Crioll and Alice Haute. "He was attired in rich plate armour and decorated with the Yorkist collar of suns and roses, with the white lion of March attached. His head reclined on his helmet, adorned with mantlings and crest. At his feet sat an Italian greyhound. On either hand lay his two wives. Their mantles were fastened with roses, at the feet of each crouched a dog with knotted leading strings. On the south side of the tomb, which was enriched by panelling of Gothic arches, were three shields of arms—Crioll, Haute, and Valoignes impaling Fogge.

On the north side the centre ornament was an angel supporting an inscription-plate within an endless circle, formed of rose sapling sticks firmly bound together, perhaps to represent the stability of family unity, the vitality of which is indicated by four small sprouts of rose branches with leaves and blossoms. Four large bosses of the united Roses proclaimed a Yorkist's acquiescence in the peaceful conclusion of intestine commotions." The plate bears an inscription which may be thus translated :—

“ Here follows more at large what things this John had done :

At his own charge this Church he hath restored

Along with the Bell-tower, which from the foundation he hath reared.

Here through him the Choir with many a Book and Ornament Adores : the Altar of God he decorates,

Enriching the entrance thereto and many gems bestowing thereupon

(As it is clearly to be seen) for after ages to be told of,

To the glory of the Lord, to Whom be praise both now and evermore. Amen.”

The memorial was completed by an inscription round the margin of the slab, of which only part remained in 1631 : “ Edwardi quarti regis specialis Amator, semper Catholicus, Populi vulgaris amicus, et sic decedens a mundo mente.” The head of Sir John and the inscription-plate are the only portions of brass now left. The tomb formerly had a wooden canopy, which being much decayed was taken down in 1697. Sir John, who lived at Repton, held the office of Keeper of the Wardrobe to Henry VI., but in the Wars of the Roses he sided with the Yorkists and soon took a high place in the favour of Edward IV., who made him a Privy Councillor and Comptroller of the Household. Under Richard III. he fell under a cloud, but was restored to most of his possessions on the accession of Henry VII. He was a great benefactor to Ashford, for besides founding the college and renovating the church, he bequeathed lands and tenements for the repair of the fabric, which have from time to time enabled the trustees to carry out repairs and improvements without cost to the parishioners. Sir John died in August, 1490. In the vault beneath, and near the monument, twenty members of the family are said to have been buried, including Sir John's great-grandmother, Anne, Countess of Joyeux. “ However,” writes Warren, “ when it was opened about thirty years ago (*c.* 1670),

according to the account which I have had from those y^t descended into y^e vault out of curiosity, which is common at such a time, when it had not been opened in the memory of men then living, it appeared that ye bodies of all those y^t had been there deposited were shrunk into a very narrow compass.

“ ‘ Mors sola fatetur
Quantula sint hominum corpuscula.’ ”

Small pieces of bones and small pieces of coffins, an old sword and a pair of spurs, and not much dust appearing at their entering into it.”

3. On the north wall of the Repton chapel hangs a tilting helmet, *interesting* as identified with Sir Fogge, and *remarkable* both for its size and for a circular aperture on the side, which was probably intended for the purpose of hearing, as the helmet is supplied with the usual means of ventilation. It weighs 23 lb. 15 oz.

4. In the north transept a complete set of brasses once existed, representing Thomas Fogge and Eleanor his wife, with two children and four shields of arms. The principal figures are missing, but the legends issuing from their lips, an appeal for mercy to the First and Third Persons of the Holy Trinity, remain, as do the effigies of the children and the inscription, “ Here under this stone lyeth the bodyes of Thomas Fogge, Esquyer, lately Sargeant Porter unto the most famous princes King Henry the VII. and the VIII., and Eleanr his wyf. The whiche Thomas deceased the xvi. day of August y^e year of our Lord M^cV^eXII., and Elinor deceased the day of the year of o^r Lord M^cV^e. . . ., on whose soules J.H.V. have mercy.” He was Sir John Fogge’s son by his second wife, Alice Haute. His wife was a daughter of Sir Robert Browne of Betchworth, and re-marrying Sir Wm. Kempe of Olantigh was doubtless buried with him at Wye, which explains why the date of her death was never inserted here.

5. The south transept contains three very handsome monuments of the Elizabethan or Jacobean age to the memory of the Smythe family, formerly Lords of the Manor of Ashford.

(1.) The first in date commemorates Thomas Smythe, Esq. He is represented with Alice his wife lying at length under an arched canopy, composed of a rich entablature supported by two Corinthian columns, surmounted by a compartment filled with the arms of Smythe. Two other shields give the impalements and quarterings of the family. At the angles are small obelisks on pedestals. On

the base of the tomb are the six sons and six daughters of the deceased kneeling at desks with open books. The "Customer," as he was generally called, was "Farmer of the Customs of the Port of London," and amassed a large fortune. Born at Corsham in 1522, the younger son of a yeoman, "stout-hearted, quick-witted, with the frame of a giant, adventurous and enterprising, he sailed on voyages of discovery, opened up new fields of commerce, and discovered a silver mine." "To his energy and foresight we owe the introduction of the copper trade into this country." In time he bought the estate of Westenhanger. The striking remains of the manor-house belonging to it may be seen from the South Eastern Railway near the junction for Hythe. There Queen Elizabeth once honoured him with a visit. He died June 7, 1591. His wife Alice was the daughter and heiress of Sir Andrew Judde, the founder of Tonbridge School. She was buried here 1593.

(2.) The next monument represents Sir John Smythe, son of the Customer, who died in 1609, and Elizabeth his wife, daughter and sole heiress of John Fineaux of Herne. They are kneeling on cushions at a desk; *he* in armour with a ruff, *she* with ruff and large hoop. In front are figures of their three surviving children.

(3.) The third, which formerly stood under the arcade, represents Sir Richard Smythe, of Leeds Castle, fourth son of the Customer, who died 1628. He is lying on a cushion and mat; in front are his three wives and five children. Each wife was a widow when he married her. The inscription says, "He was Receiver of the Duchy of Cornwall, and Commissioner for the revenues assigned to Prince Charles. He was a juste officer in his accompts, which he p . . fected with much contentment where he was trusted. His love to his wyfes, children, and frends was extraordinary, and he tenderly did respect them. His bounty to the poore was very great. He lived piously, and having an assured hope of a joyful resurrection by a lively faith in the merits of Jesus Xt, he rested from his labours, 21 July, 1628, in the 63 yeare of his age."

It will be observed that two of the ladies and one of the children are represented with a skull in their hands. This denotes that they died before the husband (as of course the ladies must have done) and father. All these memorials were repaired at the cost of Chief Baron Sir Sidney Stafford Smythe, a descendant of the "Customer," and the great-grandson of the Lady Dorothy Sydney, so celebrated by the poet Waller as Sacharissa.

On September 7, 1839, Lord Beaconsfield, then on his wedding

tour, visited Ashford, and wrote of it to his sister, "The church is quite a Minster in appearance. There is a small chapel lately and richly renovated by Lord Strangford; very beautiful, full of the tombs of the Smythes. He has re-purchased part of the family estate in the neighbourhood. He has inlaid in the wall a bold brazen tri-partite tablet, one side containing an inscription to the memory of his wife, who died at Constantinople, the other to his second son, and the centre left blank for himself."* Lord Strangford, who was famous for his literary attainments and was Ambassador to Portugal, Brazil, Sweden, Turkey, and Russia, died in 1855, and is buried here. The plate also commemorates the seventh viscount, George Smythe (the Coningsby of Disraeli's novel), and Percy, the eighth and last viscount, who died in 1869, and their sisters, Philippa, wife of the Right Hon. H. J. Baillie, and Louisa Marchioness of Sligo, all of whom lie elsewhere. I may remark that the western portion, the transept proper, was at one time fitted up as the Archdeacon's Court; while the eastern, the aisle, was railed off as the Smythe chapel.

6. The high chancel has a double row of stalls, with the returns, of excellent design. Some of them are old, and the remainder are in a style to correspond. The seats in the upper row, usually called "Misereres," instead of being fixed, turn upon hinges, and when turned up exhibit on the under side a mass of carving, fruit and foliage, the "pelican in her piety," and swine feeding on acorns.

The existing reredos was presented by the late Mr. Robert Furley in 1882. The upper portion is of mottled alabaster, excepting the centre, which is of white alabaster, the figure of our Lord being carved out of a special block. The pavement of the sacrarium consists of a mosaic of fine specimens of porphyry, Sienna and Paverno marbles, blended with excellent effect.

The pulpit was presented by our member, Mr. Robert Elliott, and his sister in 1897, the Diamond Jubilee year of Queen Victoria. It was designed by Mr. Pearson, and is constructed of Hopton-Wood stone. The chief figure represents Christ, the Good Shepherd; the other figures, two on each side of the central, are those of the Four Evangelists.

To one more object I must call your attention. It is on the exterior of the church immediately under the great west window. It is a figure, so decayed as hardly to be made out, which has been

* Hibernian Strangford, with thine eyes of blue,
And boasted locks of red or auburn hue.—BYRON.

generally considered to be that of the Blessed Virgin, in whose name the church is dedicated. On closer examination it seems to be intended for the Holy Trinity. The sitting form is scarcely that of a woman, and more nearly resembles the conventional representation of the Father as the "Ancient of Days." At any rate, we know that John Tredant and Henry Kenett in 1478, and Stephen Bull in 1525, desired to be "buried in the church-yard of our Blessed Lady in Ashford before the Image of the Holy Trinity."

RESEARCHES AND DISCOVERIES IN KENT, 1905—1907.

COMMUNICATED BY GEORGE PAYNE, F.S.A.

ROCHESTER.—During the extensive works connected with the laying of cables for electric lighting, telegraph, and telephone, the whole length of the High Street was cut through in the year 1905. At Eastgate the remains of massive masonry connected with the drawbridge over the moat were met with. In front of Leonard's shop rock-like masonry occurred on the site of the Roman gate. Towards Star Hill several trunks of elm trees, neatly bored out, which had served the purpose of a water conduit, were found, having been in use up to quite recent times. These wooden pipes measured from six to over seven feet in length and fifteen inches in diameter, the orifice being six inches in diameter at one end, diminishing to four inches at the other, each pipe being shaved off at the smaller end to enable it to fit in the next. The Roman road was found to have been much cut about by successive trenchings for mains of various sorts opposite the Cathedral Green. The section exposed—the best obtainable throughout the operations—is shewn on the next page.

About ninety paces beyond the spot where this section was taken, the ancient way, on its course to the river Medway, seems to run a little to the north side of the High Street, as it was not met with between Jenkins' shop and the bridge. In front of