

RESEARCHES AND DISCOVERIES IN KENT. xcvi

ROCHESTER.—During the adaptation of old premises to modern requirements at No. 166 High Street, a sixteenth-century wing with gabled roof, in rear of the shop, was cleared out. In an upper room the seventeenth-century pitch-pine panelling on being removed revealed some interesting distemper wall painting upon the plastered walls behind it. A small portion only remained of the original decoration, and this I was allowed to cut out, together with one of the oak quarterings, upon which the design was continued.* The quarterings measured $5\frac{1}{4}$ inches in width, and were placed 2 feet 6 inches apart. The whole room had been painted, including all the quarterings, corner timbers, and wall-plate; which must have been a most laborious task.

Obituary Notice.

GEORGE MATTHEWS ARNOLD, F.S.A.

By the death of Mr. George Matthews Arnold of Gravesend, which occurred at his residence there on the 28th May last (1908), the Society have lost one of their original Members—one who had been for many years on the Council, and who had in every way in his power shewed himself an active and zealous Member of our Society.

Mr. Arnold was born on the 4th July 1827 at Gravesend, where his family had been long settled, and throughout his life he devoted himself to the service of his native town. He was no less than eight times Mayor of the Borough; he presented it with many gifts, and did a great deal to raise the dignity and importance of the town.

For the County at large Mr. Arnold was also a hard and zealous worker. From the institution of the Kent County Council in 1888 until his death he was one of the Aldermen. He acted as Chairman first of the Technical Education Committee, and, after the Education Act of 1902, of the Kent Education Committee, until he resigned that office about two years later.

* Reproduced from a drawing kindly contributed by Miss Smetham, Assistant Art Teacher, Rochester School of Art. (PLATE III.)

Mr. Arnold was a solicitor. He had been articled at Rochester at the office in which the Bishops' Consistory Court was held, and it was there that he made the acquaintance of the Rev. Lambert Larking, the respected founder of our Society, who was often there examining the archives of the registry. After he had been admitted Mr. Arnold practised his profession at Gravesend, beginning in 1848 in conjunction with Mr. Hilder, the Coroner for the Borough. About seven years afterwards this partnership was dissolved, and Mr. Arnold, first at Gravesend and afterwards in London, carried on his business on his own account until a few years before his retirement in 1889, when he associated his son and three of his sons-in-law with him. His practice was very extensive, and no doubt very lucrative; he was greatly supported by the Roman Catholic body, whose Church he had joined about 1858. For thirty years he was the District Auditor for the Poor Law Unions in West Kent, the duties of which office took him twice a year all over the county. The district was from time to time considerably enlarged, and he had become very well known in this capacity in nearly every part of Kent. He was universally acknowledged to be an excellent auditor, very quick and expert in figures, very firm with transgressors, but always courteous and willing to take any trouble for those who deserved it.

Mr. Arnold contributed several Papers to our transactions, all relating to Gravesend or places near it. He also published (1883) *The Life of Robert Pocock, the Printer and Topographer, of Gravesend*, a very interesting and valuable work. He wrote and published separate pamphlets on Gravesend, Denton, and the old church at Dode, besides other papers on municipal matters. He did a very praiseworthy work also in acquiring, and afterwards restoring, the old Chapel of St. Katharine's at Shorne; another Chapel at Denton, near his own residence; and the old church at Dode before mentioned. He also restored the old rectory-house at Northfleet, and many of the timber-fronted cottages at Chalk and Shorne. In the latter year of his life he was a vigorous collector of local antiquities, and erected several buildings to contain and exhibit them. This museum was a never-ending pleasure to him, even up to the very last days of his life. By his will he bequeathed it and the contents to his son Bernard, subject to this qualification, viz., "unless I shall have bestowed the same upon the Corporation of Gravesend before my death," so that it would seem that he had half formed the intention to make it public property. There are

many things in it (such as the Roman "miliare"—the mile-stone found at Springhead with the figure X engraved on it—often adduced as a proof that Springhead, which is ten miles from Rochester, is the *Vagniacæ* of the Antonine itinerary), which ought not, perhaps, to pass altogether to private ownership.

Mr. Arnold was in the Commission of the Peace for the County, and also Deputy-Lieutenant, to which office he was nominated by our former President, Earl Stanhope. He was also a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries. In 1897, on the occasion of his "golden-wedding" anniversary, he and his wife were presented with valuable testimonials of the esteem in which he was held by numerous friends and neighbours, and in the year preceding his death he was made a Freeman of Gravesend. He lost his wife two years before his own death. There were nine children, six of whom survive him—Mr. Bernard Arnold, his only son now living, and five daughters. He was himself the eldest of four brothers, the second brother being the late Sir Edwin Arnold, M.A., K.C.I.E., well known as an author and poet, and for his labours in Oriental literature; the third brother was the late Sir Arthur Arnold, D.C.L., also an author of several well-known works, M.P. for Salford 1880—85, and afterwards Chairman of the London County Council; the fourth brother is still living, and is a Member of our Society.

RECENT BOOKS ON KENTISH ARCHÆOLOGY.

NOTES BY GEORGE CLINCH, F.S.A. Scot., F.G.S.

In the following list of books on the Archæology of Kent, or containing matter more or less intimately relating thereto, there is no attempt at completeness. The aim has been rather to bring together the titles of the more important Kentish archæological publications that have appeared during the past three or four years; and the accompanying notes, more in the nature of appreciation than criticism, have been added in the hope that they may be of service to students of the archæology of the county.

The activity of writers on Kentish antiquities and topography is at once an interesting and encouraging feature of recent years, and affords abundant proof of the well-nigh inexhaustible wealth of a county which deserves to take front rank amongst the historic counties of England.