

REPORTS OF PROCEEDINGS, 1932.

SUMMER MEETING.

THE Summer Excursion took place on Tuesday and Wednesday, July 26th and 27th, in the neighbourhood of Maidstone. The weather was unfortunate, heavy showers generally predominating over the bright intervals. Nevertheless a large number of members attended, and the whole programme was carried through without serious delay. The arrangements were made by the Hon. Excursions Secretary, Mr. F. Godwin, who provided an interesting and varied programme.

On the first day the party assembled at **Addington Church**, at 11.0 a.m. Mr. V. J. Torr, to whom the task of describing the church had been allotted, was unfortunately prevented from attending, but Mr. F. C. Elliston Erwood, F.S.A., kindly took his place.

Members next walked to the remains of the Stone Circles near the church, and then drove, or walked across the fields, to the more complete circle at **Coldrum**. At both places Mr. Erwood gave brief addresses.

After lunching at "Hillside", Wrotham, the party visited **Aylesford Bridge**, the features of which were briefly pointed out by Canon Livett, and then made their way to **Allington Castle** where they were received by the President, Lord Conway of Allington. There was no formal description here, but members were free to wander at will about the grounds and over the roofs of this magnificent building, Lord Conway's reconstruction of which, after twenty-five years of loving care, is virtually complete; the last piece of scaffolding had indeed been removed only a day or two before this visit. A full account of the fabric from the pen of Lord Conway, illustrated by photographs of its condition twenty years ago, and by complete plans,

appeared in *Arch. Cant.*, Vol. XXVIII, while in Vol. XXIX is an article by Miss Conway (now the Hon. Mrs. Horsfield) on the owners of the Castle between 1086 and 1279; an interesting view of the Castle in 1847 appears opposite page 30 of Vol. XXXVI.

Tea was served, by the President's permission, in the Banqueting Hall, after which the party dispersed.

On the second day the members assembled at **East Farleigh Bridge**, where Mr. C. R. Ashbee delivered a most interesting address on the subject of mediaeval bridge construction in general, and of the Medway Bridges in particular. He drew attention to the ingenious and pleasing way in which the south end of this bridge had been adapted to the needs of the modern road, and warmly praised the architect, Mr. Ruck, for a piece of work which at least one recent writer had credited to the mediaeval builder.

A short pause was made at **Teston Bridge** on the way to **Nettlestead Court**, which was visited by kind permission of Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Vinson. Canon G. M. Livett, F.S.A., conducted the party through the 13th century undercroft and the remains of the 15th century house, and described the features of manor houses in general.

Nettlestead Church was then visited, but unfortunately there was not time for Canon Livett to do more than very briefly indicate a few salient facts regarding the unsurpassed collection of early heraldic and other stained glass, the proper display of which was the purpose of the entire rebuilding of the church about 1420. The architecture of the building is described by Canon Livett, and the glass is dealt with in great detail by Mr. W. E. Ball and Canon Livett, in *Arch. Cant.*, Vol. XXVIII.

On the way to Wateringbury a short halt was made at **Twyford Bridge**, where Mr. Ashbee again spoke. The party lunched at the "King's Head" at Wateringbury, and at the end of the meal Canon Livett gave a brief account

See also a rough plan of the church in a paper contributed by the Canon, with illustrations by Colonel G. W. Stockley, R.E., in *A History of the Parish Church of West Malling*, compiled by the Rev. A. W. Lawson, Vicar of West Malling, and Colonel Stockley (1904).

The only possible adverse criticism that could be passed on the meeting as a whole was that perhaps too much was attempted. But when it is considered that the district covered is so full of archæological interest that half a dozen excursions of this nature would not exhaust it, one is more than ready to sympathize with Mr. Godwin in his embarrassment as to what to leave out. The warmest thanks are due to him for his excellent and catholic selection, and for his thoughtful and unobtrusive arrangements—not the least of which was a useful sketch map on the Programme.

AUTUMN EXCURSION.

The seventy-eighth Autumn Excursion was held on Tuesday, September 13th, in East Kent, between Boughton Aluph and Smarden. The excellent arrangements were in the hands of the Hon. Excursion Secretary, Major T. M. Osborne.

Coaches left Ashford Station at 9.45 a.m. for **Westwell Church**, which was described by Canon G. M. Livett. Canon Livett drew particular attention to the well-known stone screen of trefoil-headed arches, which takes the place of the usual chancel arch; the only other post-Conquest screen in Kent which can be compared with this example is that at Capel, near Dover. A discussion upon the relation of the screen to the nave arcades, which run continuously from east to west of the church, led to the expression of a hope that some expert might be found to plot an exact plan of the church and to illustrate this relation by carefully measured drawings.

The party then proceeded to **Boughton Aluph Church**. Here Captain Herbert Knocker, Steward of the Manor,

gave an address on "The Manor and Manorial Rights", after which the church was described by Mr. V. J. B. Torr. The chancel is of the 13th century and is divided from a chapel on the north side by an arcade of two bays. The nave, with four-bay arcades is of the 14th century. Canon Livett drew attention to the similiarity of the general design and moldings of these arcades to the work of the same date in the neighbouring church of Great Chart. The curve of the arches at Boughton Aluph displays the same peculiar kink which is referred to, and illustrated, in Canon Livett's paper on Great Chart Church in *Arch. Cant.*, XXVI, pp. 101-110. It is evident that at that period the same architect was at work in both churches.

A return was made to Ashford for luncheon at the Masonic Temple, after which a visit was paid to **Pluckley**, where the Rector, the Rev. R. B. Pyper, described the church, famous for its many brasses of the Dering and Malmaines families.

From here the party proceeded to **Smarden Church**, of which the Rector, Canon L. H. Evans, gave a description. It is a simple building consisting only of a 14th century chancel and nave, with a 15th century western tower (see *Arch. Cant.*, XIV), but contains several interesting features, such as a recess near the east end of the south wall of the chancel, which has been taken to be a mediæval wafer oven; this has been described by the late Mr. Halford Mills in the Parish Magazine for 1925.

The village of Smarden is remarkable for a number of timber houses which, being small and inhabited, could not be entered for inspection. They were however described by Canon Evans, and their exteriors were admired. Many of them are described by the late Mr. H. S. Cowper, in *Arch. Cant.*, XXIX, or by the late Mr. Halford Mills in *Arch. Cant.*, XLIV.

Tea was taken, by kind invitation of Professor and Mrs. E. P. Stebbing, at **Romden Castle**, formerly the residence of Mr. W. Basil Worsfold.

Professor Stebbing described the history of the house and Mr. Worsfold's restoration of it between 1909 and 1919, which formed the subject of a paper in *Arch. Cant.*, XLIII.

This brought to a pleasant conclusion a short, but very enjoyable excursion.