

Leicestershire

Architectural and Archæological Society.

10th January, 1855.

A MEETING was held in the Town Library, Guild Hall, Leicester, for the purpose of establishing this society. The Venerable the Archdeacon of Leicester was in the chair.

He requested Mr. Ingram (the honorary secretary, *pro tempore*) to read the letters received from various persons who had signified their desire to become members.—The first was from the Bishop of the Diocese, who also expressed his willingness to promote the objects of the society. The second was from Earl Howe, regretting his inability to attend. In a previous letter his lordship stated “I shall be very happy to be enrolled a member, and I assure you I take a decided interest in your proceedings.” Letters from the Rev. G. E. Gillett (mentioning that the Duke of Rutland would accept the office of Patron); from Sir F. G. Fowke (excusing his non-attendance on the ground of ill health, which confined him to his room); and from Mr. Geoffrey Palmer (apologizing for his inability to be present)—were also laid before the meeting.

This part of the business being concluded, the venerable Chairman called on

Mr. W. Perry-Herrick, who rose to move the first resolution. He expressed his gratification at being able to take part in the formation of a society which he felt certain would be attended with many beneficial effects, in conducing to the study of ecclesiastical architecture and general antiquities in the county. He stated his regret that he was so little acquainted with either Archæology or Architecture; but that he knew sufficient to enable him to appreciate the value of the labours of those who had leisure to devote themselves more particularly to these interesting pursuits, and he hoped, by associating with them at the meetings of the society, he might improve his knowledge, and receive much information and instruction. He said there was no doubt but that there were many archæological and architectural remains of deep historical interest in this county, still unexplored; some of

them mouldering fast into decay. It would be the object of the society to call attention to, and preserve from oblivion, these relics of the olden time—these memorials of the past; to preserve them from spoliation and neglect, and from the destruction to which they at present seemed doomed by the ruthless hand of Time, and by the equally ruthless hand of Man.—Mr. Herrick concluded by expressing a hope that the formation of the society would be unanimously agreed to, and that it would be placed on such a basis as would ensure its future success; and that, as soon as it became more generally known, the number of the members would greatly increase, and that it would be the means of affording much gratifying interest and instruction—not merely to its own members, but to the public at large, for many years to come.

The Rev. G. E. Gillett seconded the resolution; and in doing so he remarked that this society was no experiment, since they had the experience of other societies of like character in neighbouring counties to guide them in their proceedings. Some of these societies were in union with each other, publishing volumes of their papers jointly. He trusted that under the rules which would be laid before them (modified from those of other societies) the society would flourish, and all parties might be brought together for the preservation of the ancient remains in the county from desecration, and to promote an improvement in the style of architecture generally.

The resolution was put and carried unanimously.

The Chairman then read through a draft of the proposed Rules, and they were successively discussed and amended, or omitted.

The Hon. and Rev. John Sandilands then moved the adoption of the entire set, as follows:

RULES.

1. That the Society be called "The Architectural and Archæological Society" of the county of Leicester.
2. That the objects of the Society be to promote the study of ecclesiastical architecture, general antiquities, and the restoration of mutilated architectural remains within the county; and to furnish suggestions, so far as may be within its province, for improving the character of ecclesiastical edifices, and for preserving all ancient remains which the committee may consider of value and importance.
3. That the Society be composed of patrons, presidents, treasurer, and secretaries; and honorary and ordinary members.
4. That members of the Society be privileged to propose new members, either by letter or personally, to be elected at the committee meetings; and that honorary members be elected only at the nomination of the committee, at a general or special meeting.
5. That rural deans within the county of Leicester be *ex officio* members of the committee, on their signifying an intention to become members of the Society.
6. That each member shall pay an annual subscription of ten shillings, to be due on the first day of January in each year.
7. That the affairs of the Society be conducted by a committee, composed of

the patrons, presidents, rural deans, and not less than twenty ordinary members; of whom four, at least, shall have been members of the committee of the preceding year.

8. That a general meeting of the members be held in the autumn of each year, previous to the public meetings; and that at such meeting the committee be elected, the accounts be passed, and the yearly report presented; and such new rules, or alterations in the rules, proposed and made, as may be thought necessary.

9. That the committee (of whom five shall be a quorum) have power to add to their number, and to elect from the Society the requisite number of secretaries.

10. That the members of the committee in any neighbourhood may associate other members of the Society with themselves, and form committees for local purposes, in communication with the central committee.

11. That the public meetings of the Society be holden in the autumn of each year, at such times and places as shall be appointed by the committee.

12. That the committee meet at the times and places which they may themselves appoint, and that their meetings be open to the members of the Society and their friends, after the despatch of routine business.

13. That the secretaries be empowered, on the requisition of five members of the committee, to call a special meeting of the Society.

14. That donations of architectural and antiquarian books, plans, &c., be received; that the committee be empowered to make purchases and procure casts and drawings, which shall be under the charge of the secretaries.

15. That when the committee shall consider any paper, which may have been read before the Society, worthy of being printed at its expense, they shall request the author to furnish a copy, and shall decide upon the number of copies to be printed, provided always that the number be sufficient to supply each member with one copy and the author with twenty-five copies. All other questions relating to publishing plans and papers, and illustrating them with engravings, shall be decided by the committee.

16. That the committee may every year publish, or join with other architectural and archæological societies in publishing, for circulation among the members, transactions to contain descriptions and papers connected with the objects of the Society.

17. That on application being made to any member of the committee, or to the committee collectively, for the advice of the Society, in the restoration of any church, a sub-committee be appointed (of which the incumbent or resident minister be one) to visit the church, and submit a report in writing to the general committee.

18. That all plans for the building, enlargement, or restoration of churches, schools, &c., sent for the inspection of the committee, be placed in the hands of one of the secretaries of the Society, at least fourteen days before the committee meeting, for the secretary to prepare a special report thereon.

19. That the committee have power at any meeting to make grants towards the objects of the Society, provided that if such grant exceed 30s. notice be given in the circular calling the meeting.

The Rev. J. M. Gresley seconded the resolution, which was carried unanimously.

Mr. A. Griffith then moved, and Sir Arthur Hazlerigg seconded the motion for the appointment of the following list of officers and committee :—

Patrons.

His Grace the Duke of Rutland, and the Bishop of the diocese.

Presidents.

Earl Howe, Sir F. G. Fowke, Baronet, Sir Arthur G. Hazlerigg, Baronet, the Venerable the Archdeacon of Leicester, and Mr. William Perry-Herrick.

Committee.

The Hon. and Rev. J. Sandilands, Mr. Geoffrey Palmer, the Rev. J. M. Gresley, Mr. E. B. Hartopp, Mr. Edward Dawson, the Rev. E. T. Vaughan, Mr. Geo. Norman, the Rev. R. Burnaby, Mr. T. T. Paget, Mr. Isaac Hodgson, Mr. Halford Adcock, the Rev. T. Jones, Dr. Shaw, Mr. Robert Brewin, jun., the Rev. S. G. Bellairs, Mr. George H. Nevinson, Mr. Thomas Nevinson, Mr. James Thompson, Mr. Arthur Griffith, and Mr. Richard Luck.

It was then moved by Mr. Herrick, and seconded by Mr. William Parsons, that the rules be printed and distributed among the members. Carried unanimously.

It was further resolved that Mr. Isaac Hodgson be requested to become the Treasurer; that the resolutions be advertised; and that the thanks of the meeting be given to the Archdeacon for his kindness in presiding on the occasion—a kindness which was the more esteemed, as it involved personal inconvenience to the venerable Archdeacon in coming so great a distance to attend the meeting.

The business of the general meeting being now at an end, the committee remained behind, and adopted the following resolution, in conformity with the rules:—

“That the Hon. and Rev. John Sandilands, the Rev. J. M. Gresley, and Mr. Thomas Ingram, be appointed the three secretaries of the society.”

The following names of new members were here handed in: Hon. and Rev. A. G. Campbell, Mr. R. W. Wood, Mr. Robert H. J. Heygate, Mr. Geo. C. Bellairs, Narborough, Rev. J. H. B. Green, Normanton, and Rev. M. Webster, Netherseal.

The committee then separated.

26th February, 1855.

A MEETING of the committee was held in the Town Library. The Rev. G. E. Gillett in the chair.

The minutes of the last meeting having been read, Mr. Ingram laid before the committee a letter from the Rev. Thomas James, of Theddingworth, corresponding secretary of the Northamptonshire Architectural Society, proposing that the Leicestershire Society should unite with the Northamptonshire, and others, in printing Architectural and Antiquarian Papers, and also inviting the members to take part in a meeting of several similar societies, to be held at Peterborough in May next, at the request of the Dean.

It was suggested that an Order of Business, for the guidance of the committee in its future meetings, should be agreed on;

and a plan was adopted, under which arrangements the meetings will commence at *eleven*, and at *twelve* the more *general business* will be entered upon. This will consist of the examination of any architectural plans for the erection of new churches or repair of old ones, which may be submitted to the committee; the introduction to their notice of any antiquarian remains falling to decay and requiring a protecting hand; the reading of papers on architectural or general antiquities; and the exhibition of relics of antiquarian interest. The members of the society and their friends will be admissible to the proceedings when the general business comes under notice, on which occasion it is hoped many subjects will be brought forward calculated to please and to instruct those present.

The Order of Business having been determined upon, the Chairman said it was now competent to any member of the committee to propose new members.

Mr. Sandilands and Mr. Gresley proposed, and Mr. Tertius Paget seconded, that the following names be added to the list of members:—The Right Hon. the Earl Ferrers, Sir George Howland Beaumont, Bart., Rev. Mr. Gamlen, Mr. William Adcock, Mr. Edward Bright, Mr. E. H. M. Clarke, Mr. Claude Fernely, Mr. T. Hickson, Mr. Joseph Hickson, Mr. Winter Johnson, Mr. John Keal, Mr. George Marriott, Mr. Frederick J. Oldham, Mr. Warren Sharman, Mr. William Thorpe Tuxford, and Mr. Thomas Newton Wing,—the latter thirteen all of Melton.

On the proposition of Mr. George H. Nevinson, seconded by the Rev. S. G. Bellairs, it was resolved that the Rev. J. E. Denton, Mr. E. H. M. Clarke, Mr. Edward Fisher, jun., Mr. Gamlen, and Mr. Ingram (whose name had before been inadvertently omitted), be added to the committee.

The next part of the business was financial—the members of the committee paying their yearly subscriptions, which will in future be due (in advance) on the 1st of January every year.

It was then moved by Mr. Thompson, seconded by Mr. Thomas Nevinson, and unanimously carried, “That the members of the committee be requested to collect the subscriptions in their respective neighbourhoods.”

The Rev. T. James’s letter was next brought under consideration, and its proposals (above mentioned) agreed to; the secretaries being requested to communicate with Mr. James to that effect.

Mr. Thomas Nevinson then offered some observations on the propriety of finding a place of deposit for the objects of antiquity, drawings, books, &c., which might be presented to the society. He considered the purposes of the society would be thereby greatly promoted, and he had various casts, rubbings, and fragments of ancient art, which he should be happy to offer by way of a beginning.

A conversation arose on this subject, in the course of which it was observed that such a collection might prove serviceable to students in architecture. A member of the committee remarked that a collection of ancient stained glass, *unique* in character, and very interesting in design, was in the possession of a clergyman living not far from Leicester, and probably would be open for the examination of the members. It had, he believed, been offered once to a college in one of the universities, but he hoped it would not be removed from Leicester.

Eventually a sub-committee (consisting of the Secretaries, with Messrs. G. H. Nevinson, Thomas Nevinson, and J. Thompson) was appointed to enquire respecting a place suitable for such a collection, and to report thereon at a future meeting.

Mr. Thompson then brought under notice the contemplated destruction of the old school-house at Billesdon, Leicestershire. He stated that according to Nichols' History of the county,* the celebrated George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, and George Fox, the originator of the "Society of Friends," were instructed under that foundation. The present building, though not of earlier date than the middle of the seventeenth century, was an example of the style of institutions then prevailing, and was probably worthy of preservation.—It was agreed that enquiry should be made respecting it previous to the next meeting.

The Committee Meetings for the year were then fixed for the last Mondays in February, April, June, August, October, and December. These of course do not interfere with the General Meeting of the Society in the Autumn.

30th April, 1855.

A MEETING was held in the Town Library. The Rev. S. G. Bellairs in the chair.

The minutes of the preceding meeting having been read, the subject of the joint meeting at Peterborough of the Architectural Societies of Northamptonshire, Lincolnshire, Bedfordshire, and Leicestershire was discussed. The first day of meeting is fixed for Wednesday, May 23rd, when papers will be read upon the Cathedral, by Rev. G. A. Poole, and upon the West front of it, by Rev. O. Davys. On the next day, excursions will be made to the Abbeys of Croyland and Thorney. Particulars of the intended proceedings will be sent to every member of each of the Societies; and upon their informing the secretaries of their intention to be present, arrangements will be made for their reception by a local committee at Peterborough.

A Letter from Lord John Manners was read in which his Lord-

* Gartree Hundred, p. 435.

ship notified his desire to become a member of the Leicestershire Society.

The report of the sub-committee, appointed to enquire respecting a suitable room to be used as a library and museum for the Society, was received. Several very eligible rooms were mentioned, but it was deemed advisable not to engage one immediately.

The Rev. J. L. Petit, the Rev. Canon Vavasour, rural-dean, and Mr. Marshall, were admitted members of the Society. The Rev. R. Stephens was added to the committee.

The Rev. J. Denton mentioned that it was in contemplation to rebuild the chapel of Blackfordby, (a hamlet in the parish of Ashby-de-la-Zouch,) now in a lamentable state of dilapidation, and totally incapable of being repaired. It is also much too small for the present number of inhabitants, the population (principally consisting of families engaged in the neighbouring collieries and potteries) having increased to between five and six hundred; for one-sixth part only of whom there is sufficient church accommodation. Mr. Denton was requested to lay the plans, which are being prepared by J. P. St. Aubyn, Esq., before the committee at their next meeting.

Mr. T. Nevinson exhibited several tokens such as were used for counters in the middle ages, recently found near St. Mary's church, Leicester. Also, from the same locality, a penny of Henry the Third's first coinage, a half-groat of Henry the Sixth's, minted at York, and a few others, together with a noble of one of the Henries, found in an old wall at Oadby, Leicestershire. Several specimens of ornamented bricks from Leicester Abbey garden were shewn by the same gentleman. They were supposed to have been used to form borders for flower-beds, and are well worthy of being again manufactured for that purpose.

Mr. J. Thompson read the following remarks upon an ancient spur found at Battle-Flat, near Bardon-Hill, and upon two matrices of seals, one with the arms of Paget, and the other (of silver) bearing a coat of arms and crests:—

MEMOIR ON AN ANCIENT SPUR AND SEALS.

I BEG to lay before the committee for examination three relics of antiquity well deserving notice. One of these is an ancient spur, found many years ago on the ground known as "Battle Flat," near Hugglescote, in this county. As the site is one concerning which we have little, if any, information, the relic might be supposed to throw light on the origin of the name by which the spot is known. The spur is small, and seems to have been intended for a lady or a youth. It has been washed with silver. The ornamentation consists in the repetition of a grotesque face—whether that of man or of one of the lower animals is not evident. The