

evident to all who had given even a cursory attention to those memorials, that they had not been treated for many generations,—even if ever they had been so treated—with the respect we should expect to see bestowed upon the memorials of the dead in a Christian country. In all ages their destruction had been going on. In taking down S. Martin's tower, at Leicester, they found a number of stone coffin lids; and in reading a list of articles sold in the time of Henry the Eighth, they saw a number of brasses were sold, the proceeds going to the coffers of the king. It was evident that owing to various causes that memorials were now being daily destroyed. To prevent the continuance of that, it behoved them all to watch with vigilant eyes, especially when any restoration or rebuilding is going on in our churches, and to impress the same necessity upon the architects and builders employed. At Braybrooke Church they would to-morrow see a monument of which a little story was told. Many years ago, when all the men of Braybrooke were at Harborough fair, two men went and attempted to carry off a wooden effigy. A woman of the village saw it, and roused her neighbours, and they went to the rescue and prevented the robbery. Now, when churches were being restored, and similar acts of spoliation were attempted, if the ladies would all imitate the women of Braybrooke much mischief would be prevented.

The motion was seconded by MR. BLOXAM, who also alluded to the same subject.

THE CHAIRMAN briefly returned thanks, after which the meeting broke up.

#### FRIDAY: THE EXCURSION.

ON Friday morning an excursion took place to several churches in the neighbourhood of Market Harborough, which was accompanied by most of the gentlemen attending the proceedings of the Society. The vehicles were provided by Mr. Roberts, of the Angel Hotel, who also superintended the arrangements throughout to the great satisfaction of the excursionists. The *cortege* started about a quarter to nine for

#### FOXTON.

This church, dedicated to S. Andrew, was the first one visited. Its plan consists of nave, north and south aisles, chancel, north porch, south porch, and tower at the west end. On the party entering the sacred edifice, the Rev. G. Ayliffe Poole, Vicar of Welford, who acted as *cicerone*, described the architectural features of the church. He said it was a very good church, and was, in fact, one of the best they would see. The base of the tower was late Early English, of the same date as the chancel, and was

doubtless in existence as at this moment about the year 1200. The extent of the church was thus plainly marked. The nave and aisles were, however, Perpendicular, and of very good character. Not far from the same time as Market Harborough, the old nave was taken down; the present one was built, and the clerestory added. The roof was very good. The north-east window of the south aisle was Decorated, having been removed, probably, from some other part of the church. The four-light east window of the chancel was Perpendicular, the porch Decorated, and the font, a fine Norman one, with rich mouldings. There was a lychnoscope, or low-side window, in the north wall, its situation, like that of the porch, being ruled by the position of the chancel with relation to the village. The lychnoscope, he might explain, was an external opening of the wall, generally close to the angle, between the chancel and the nave. It was generally thought to be an opening through which the lights on the altar, or the elevation of the Host, could be seen, but, in his opinion, the lychnoscope was a place for receiving the confessions of the people outside who came there and confessed, and went away absolved. The opening was on the north side of the church, and evidently had relation to the people who lived in the village, which was also to the north of the church. He should not have to mention a lychnoscope again, but yesterday, a small church was mentioned where there were two. At S. Mary Magdalen's, at Ripon, there were three, and that confirmed his opinion, as there was there a chapel for lazars, who were not admitted inside.

Mr. BLOXAM said, he quite agreed with Mr. Poole that the lychnoscopes were places for confession. There was a passage in Elles's "*Letters on the Reformation*," which considerably strengthened that view, for allusion was there made to an order that the confessional windows should be blocked up. These windows were frequently found blocked up with the stones laid outside. In this church there was a Decorated piscina.

#### GUMLEY.

This singularly arranged church is dedicated to S. Helen. It consists of nave, chancel, south porch, with tower and spire at the west end. The chancel is modern, its walls being in a line with the mediæval work westward. More recent work also exhibits very questionable taste. A gallery here of a late Decorated character blocks up the tower arch. The sittings are fairly good, but the new font was severely criticised. The Hall, of red brick, was commenced in 1764 by Joseph Cradock, Esq., who was well-known in the literary world, and in it Garrick occasionally performed, it having been built (after the style of Leicester Infirmary) with the view of giving private theatrical entertainments.

## SADDINGTON CHURCH,

Also dedicated to S. Helen. At no place in the route were the excursionists more kindly welcomed than at Saddington—church doors not only opened, but bells ringing, the Communion plate set out for inspection, and the old parish registers laid out, opened at the most interesting part. Here again the Rev. G. A. Poole pointed out the most interesting features of the fabric. The history of this church, he said, was pretty clear. The arcades, the porch, and the chancel are of the Decorated style, probably about A.D. 1300. Some of the windows have been since inserted. These and the tower arch, which is very fine, are of the later Decorated period, probably about 1350. The clerestory was Perpendicular. The piscina and sedilia were worthy of inspection as being without partitions. The most peculiar circumstance in connection with this church is its parish register, which dates from 1538, the year in which they were first enjoined to be kept in every parish by the Chancellor, Cromwell. The Communion cup is of the date of Charles I., and within the Communion rails is a curious sepulchral monument, an incised alabaster slab, dated 1620. Mr. M. H. Bloxam, F.S.A., pointed out the peculiarities of this effigy. He said that slabs of this kind—dated after the Reformation—representing clergymen in their surplices, were very rarely found. There was only one other effigy, with cassock, surplice, and chasuble, with which he was acquainted, of post Reformation date, viz., that of Archbishop Sands, in Southwell Minster. In respect, however, of alabaster slabs, there are more of them in Leicestershire than in any other county. The tracery of the windows in this church he considered to be very good.

## MOWSLEY CHURCH.

This church, dedicated to S. Nicholas, was small, but admirably proportioned, and was one of those churches which proved that it did not require much money to be spent to make a thoroughly good ecclesiastical building. It consisted of a nave, with bell gable, north and south transepts, a chancel, and south porch. This church and Laughton were originally of the same date, for in each they had everywhere the character of late Early English. Mowsley was, however, the better church, the bell gable being a very good feature, and the cross form giving interest both to the exterior view and to the interior arrangement. The only insertion was a decorated window in the south of the chancel; there was a piscina in each transept, indicating in each the former existence of an altar.

MR. BLOXAM called attention to the ancient altar stone, which was laid upside down. Generally speaking altar stones were cham-

fered off, and were very rarely found moulded. This was, however, moulded all round.

This church was divided off by a modern wooden screen into two parts. The Communion cup was of the year 1663.

#### LAUGHTON CHURCH.

This was of the same date as the last church. There was a nave, formerly with north and south aisles, with bell gable and chancel of late Early English. The whole church was in that state which promised much of interest, or, at least, of curiosity, but there was not a single feature in it worth noticing. Outside the north of the chancel was a piscina.

#### MARSTON TRUSSELL CHURCH.

MR. POOLE said the tower of this church was exceedingly good, and at a little distance was even imposing. The church was of the same series as Laughton and Desborough. The belfry windows were in pairs, with the mason's work still apparent in the masonry between them at the west side. The tower was the only feature worth noticing except the porch, which, for the convenience of the village, was on the north side, and which had a wooden outer doorway. It might be observed that the oldest remaining portion of the church was the west end of the south aisle, which was Decorated, the chancel and the north aisle being Perpendicular. The greater part of the south aisle was the most gratuitously awkward seventeenth century bogging. The tower arch was fine, but half hidden, and marred by an unsightly western gallery. There was a lychnoscope to the south of the chancel, and there were a few remnants of original glass in the windows.

THE RECTOR (the Rev. W. Law) called attention to the churchwardens' accounts, which existed in a high state of preservation from the year 1634, and which contained items of a most curious kind.

MR. BLOXAM called attention to a very fine monumental effigy of a Russian merchant in doublet and hose. It was the effigy of a benefactor of that church (he having bequeathed money for the purchase of a bell), who, in the reign of Elizabeth went over to Russia, and was put to the torture for some offence against the Russian laws.

The Rector thought the story was somewhat apocryphal.

Mr. Poole again called attention to the tower arches, which he said were exceedingly beautiful work of about the year 1210. The pillars were of the Early Decorated period, and were perhaps about one hundred years later.

## LUBENHAM CHURCH.

MR. POOLE described the tower of this church as Perpendicular, but without any merit, and the rest of the exterior had been strangely hacked about at divers periods, but never with any addition of beauty or of interest. The oldest portions externally were Decorated. The interior had more interest. The north arcade had one perfect pillar, and another without its capital, of Norman date, indicating a near affinity between that church and the church at Theddingworth. The changes also, as there, were most of them made during the Decorated period. There was a north chantry chapel containing a sedilia. A squint or hagnoscope opening from this chapel into the chancel enabled the worshippers to see the elevation of the Host at the high altar. The altar was old, but the principal ecclesiological feature was the Easter Sepulchre, on the north side of the chancel, which was of rude workmanship but of the most elegant and elaborate design. It was Decorated in date. The Easter Sepulchre was a mock sepulchre which was used for peculiar services typical of the Resurrection of our Lord on Easter Day. This sepulchre was probably erected by the Monks of Sulby, when the advowson of Lubenham was given to them in 1324. Mr. Poole then called the attention of the inhabitants to the small cost at which the west galleries could be removed and the tower arch opened. It would add much to the beauty of the church.

The party now returned to Market Harborough to lunch, after which Rothwell and Desborough churches were visited.

## ROTHWELL CHURCH.

In describing this church Mr. POOLE said Henry I. gave the church and advowson of Rothwell to his recently founded Abbey of Cirencester. There can be little doubt that after the erection of their own church, which would be the first work of the Abbey, they proceeded to rebuild the church of Rothwell. Accordingly, while we have nothing earlier than this, we may attribute the church, as a whole, to that time. The existing exterior traces and indications of the size and character of this church are the turret, which formerly flanked the north corner of the west end of the nave, the north-east buttress, pinnacle of the north choir aisle, and a great part of the south wall of the chancel.

In the interior, the traces of the original church are much more numerous; indeed, they give to the whole the general character of a transition church from Norman to Early English.

Beginning, as before, at the west end, we have the inner door of the north-western pinnacle, four bays on either side of transition piers and arches, certain portions of the piers to what was formerly

the intersection of the cross, and in the chancel three arches on either side, with a perfect clerestory to the south, carried to the full extent of the original choir.

But notwithstanding the general prevalence of transition details, there is, especially in the nave, an air extremely unlike that of a transition church; the height and the span of the piers and arches are far greater than we should expect in that style.

The aisles, too, are much wider than those usually found in churches of that style. They are now 18 and 19 feet respectively; but the aisles of

	ft.	in.
Fountains are - - - - -	12	0
Kirkdale - - - - -	12	0
Furness - - - - -	14	6
Byland - - - - -	12	6
Jervaulx - - - - -	12	0
Whitby - - - - -	12	6
Netley - - - - -	9	0

So that we have here in a church of much smaller proportions than any of those, aisles twice as wide as some of them, and half as wide again as any. Even Furness falls far short of Rothwell. And again, the cross or intersection of the transept with the nave and choir is much less confined here than usual.

I must account for all this. I have no certain proof of the fact, but I suggest that a tower which primarily surmounted the cross, became by its fall the central and departing point of a great modification.

That there was a central tower I infer from analogy; from the certain absence of a western tower; and from portions of its abutment still remaining. That it fell during the second quarter of the fourteenth century is no difficult solution of our question, for so great a number of towers of that date fell that those which did not fall are rather the exception.

At the restoration of the church, then, at that time, if the tower did fall (which, however, is not absolutely necessary to our theory) the whole proportion of the nave and aisles was altered. The piers were raised by nearly half their height, as appears from the fillet on the half rounds above the central band. There is also a string course cut through by the arches which could never have existed if the piers had been originally of the present height.

At the same time the span of the arches was increased, for if of the same width as now, even though with piers of only twelve feet high, they would have cut the string before mentioned; moreover they are now so irregular in width as strongly to suggest a change of plan. I should suppose that there were originally six bays instead of four.

The north and south tower arches were, I believe, much widened also at the same time, so as to trench upon the proportions of the choir.

Finally, one bay was added to the east end of the choir, and a very good tower and spire were built at the west end. Still later, not indeed as a part of the same reconstruction, a Perpendicular clerestory was added to the nave and to the choir.

In 1660 the spire fell, and the upper part of the tower was poorly rebuilt.

In 1673 the transepts were reduced 17 feet each way.

At the close of his architectural notes on Rothwell church, Mr. Poole ventured to remark on the exceedingly mischievous effect of the west gallery on the beauty of the church, and on its fitness for its sacred purpose. The gallery not only hid a very fine tower arch, and otherwise injured the effect of the nave, but it destroyed as many seats beneath it as it supplied, and made it very difficult for those who sat in them to worship with comfort and devotion. This was something worse than an error in taste, it was a moral fault; it was even worse than a moral fault, it was a sin against the souls of Christian men and women.

As for the organ, which was the probable excuse for the erection of the gallery, its best and right place was in the north aisle of the chancel, the little perch or loft which now stops the arch into the transept being removed.

There need be no difficulty, with the great space which the church affords, in giving much better accommodation to most, and as good to all, as is now provided.

MR. BLOXAM then went up to the chancel, and pointed out the interesting objects there, first the effigy of a priest—William de Rothwell—a very handsome specimen of the fourteenth century, habited in cope, &c. There were two other brasses in this church; that of Edward Saunders and his wife, 1514; and that of Owen Ragsdale, 1591. In the chancel was the singular piscina with three basins, said by Mr. Bloxam to be the only instance of a triple piscina to be found in this country. He could not explain the uses of the triple piscina; the one basin was used for the priest's ablutions, another for the relics of the sacred elements, but what the third was used for he could not say. He next pointed out the quadruple sedilia, and the *domus inclusi* over the chapel, which had most probably been the residence of a recluse, and a large stone coffin was shown in one of the chapels. In respect of the charnel vault below the south aisle, Mr. Bloxam said that Major Whyte Melville might as well have said that the bones contained in it were pre-Adamite, as to have advanced the absurd theory he had advanced. These charnel vaults are not uncommon, and are of the fourteenth century. He gave several instances of these, but dwelt more particularly on the one at Cologne, where bones are

similarly found in immense numbers. He believed that these bones in every instance had been dug up and deposited here, as enjoined in the clergyman's *Vade mecum*. There is nothing extraordinary in this charnel vault, especially when the extensive alterations in the church during the fourteenth century are considered. Many visited the crypt, which is beneath the south aisle, and Mr. S. Sharp, F.S.A., showed that though the quantity of bones contained there is vast, it has been very much exaggerated. He had very carefully measured them, and tested his measurement, and he believed the number of human skeletons was considerably under 3,000. At the eastern extremity of the crypt is a defaced fresco of the Resurrection, and on the south side a blocked up window, which led to the supposition that the charnel house was once a chapel. Besides the church, Rothwell abounds with objects of antiquarian interest, and it is to be much regretted that more time, earlier in the day, was not allotted to this visit; as it was, the market house, the place of next importance, could not even be noticed. As truly remarked by the lecturer, it would take a week to do justice to Rothwell, so a little more time might profitably have been spent there.

#### DESBOROUGH CHURCH.

The excursion now returned through Desborough. On alighting at the church, Mr. POOLE pointed out the peculiar features of the edifice. The oldest remaining portions, he said, are Geometrical, and traces of this style appear throughout. But the only architectural portions worthy of notice are the tower and spire, which belong to the same series as Langton, Brampton Ash, Kelmarsh, Stanion, Welham, Fotheringhay, &c. Church Langton is the mother church of the whole lot, the towers and spires of which were probably built by Wm. Harwood, freemason, of Fotheringhay. This spire is remarkable for an arrangement of pinnacles and pseudo battlements; the buttresses of the tower and the belfry windows are peculiar. It is probable that the tower, &c., were erected about 1424. In the interior there is not much worthy of notice. There is a lychnoscope, blocked up, in the chancel; there are three sediliæ and a piscina with two water drains; the rood stairs remain, and there are traces of two altars, one in each transept. Mr. BLOXAM also pointed out a peculiar projecting stone, carved, in the north transept, near the pulpit, behind which, he said, there was very probably an enshrined heart or other relic. Wherever these sculptured stones are found in the walls of churches there is invariably some relic behind them, as at Yaxley and many other places.

Braybrooke Church was in the programme for inspection, but time did not allow of a visit to that village.

*July 30th, 1866.*

THE REV. J. H. HILL in the chair.

The following gentlemen were elected members:—Mr. Charles Baker, architect, Leicester; Mr. Henry Freestone, and Mr. W. Allen, both of Market Harborough.

MR. JOHNSON, of Leicester, photographer, exhibited some very fine photographs of the present buildings standing on the site of Leicester Abbey (two views), of the ancient wall of the Newarke, Leicester, recently demolished (two views), and of the Victoria Road Nonconformist Chapel, Leicester, shewing the north-west view and the elaborate carving of the principal entrance. These views were much admired as specimens of high photographic art.

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*September 24th, 1866.*

THE REV. J. H. HILL in the chair.

The Rev. W. C. Hodgson, Rector of Sweptstone, was elected a member of the Society.

The following antiquities, &c., were exhibited:—

By MR. WEATHERHEAD: The following series of engravings executed in 1730 by Samuel and Nathaniel Buck, viz.: South View of Leicester Abbey; East View of Belvoir Castle; South View of Olveston or Owston Priory; North View of Ulverscroft Priory; and North View of Ashby-de-la-Zouch.

By the REV. E. TOWER: The following antiquities from the collection of the late Rev. J. M. Gresley, sometime Honorary Secretary of this Society: A cinerary urn (marked with the slight striated pattern so generally found upon urns of the Roman period), found in a field outside the north wall of the gardens of Leicester Abbey, about the year 1846. A jug-shaped vessel of the Early British period, rudely made of sun dried clay, found on the 28th February, 1859, near St. Margaret's churchyard, Leicester. A cannon ball from the breach at Ashby-de-la-Zouch Castle. A circular vessel of unglazed light coloured clay, of good manufacture, apparently of the Roman period: this vessel was, perhaps, used as a funnel; it was seven inches in diameter at the top, and one inch and a quarter at the opening in the bottom, to which no neck had ever been attached. Also an unusually large flint celt, locality unknown. It was stated these curiosities would be added to the large collection of local antiquities in the Leicester Town Museum.

ACCOUNTS OF THE CHURCHWARDENS OF MELTON  
MOWBRAY.

MR. NORTH laid upon the table the following copious extracts made by him from the accompts of the Churchwardens of Melton Mowbray in this county, ranging from the year 1547 to the end of the sixteenth century. The original documents were found a few years ago in an old box in a cellar in Melton Mowbray. Mr. North stated their contents to be most curious and valuable, as giving a vast fund of information relating to a period of intense interest—that of the Reformation. In addition to that, their value was of course enhanced by their local character, and the insight they gave into the state of feeling and action in this neighbourhood during those eventful times. The ecclesiologist would gain much and curious information from them as to the fittings and furniture of the English churches at, prior to, and subsequent to, the Reformation. Mr. North further stated that the original documents (many of which were in a tattered condition) were now carefully preserved in the church chest in the vestry of Melton Mowbray Church. He had not thought it necessary to add any lengthy explanatory notes, because in his recently published "*Chronicle of the Church of S. Martin in Leicester*,"\* he had elaborately described all the various vestments, sacred vessels, mediæval customs, &c., &c., referred to in the extracts now given; and had further therein traced by means of similar documents relating to S. Martin's, the progress, the growth, the temporary check, the revival and final consolidation of the Reformation of the Church of England in the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

Copy of an ancient MS. relating to Melton. Apparently an Inventory or Schedule of Deeds formerly belonging to the town of Melton Mowbray. The character of the handwriting points to the time of Edward IV. as the date of the document.

"Julyan̄ Wydowe of Nycolys Cementary did geve to the worke of the Churche of our blessed Lady in pure devocōn & almesse one Rode & halffe arrable Land and one chenet of medowe linge in the marshe as appithe by the dede.

"Thōms Dalbye clicus did geve to Joh̄n Smythe one tenement with apptence in Spetilgate.

"Itm. a Relesse of Izabell sumtyme the wyfe of Renald Tav̄ner did geve to Roger Barnard & Emme his wyfe & to theyrrs† of theyr bodyes lawfully begotten all the Right & claym of her in a certen pese of ground seit‡ betwene the tenement of Roger

\* London: Bell and Daldy. Leicester: Crossley and Clarke. † The heirs.

‡ Situate.