

No. 13,006. SUFFOLK BOOKS, etc.
No. 1,009.

Anon., 1843.—“A Short Statement of the Origin of the Churches in Stowmarket and Stowupland, and the Consecration of the Latter by the Lord Bishop of Norwich, On August 30, 1843, With Verses on the Presentation of the Ancient Font of Creeting All Saints to the New Church in Stowupland.”—Size, 8½ by 5. Pp. 8.

The author may well have been the Rev. A. G. H. Hollingsworth, whose “History of Stowmarket”—Suffolk Book No. XIX. (see No. 5,239 of 1918)—was published in 1844. Page 7 of the Statement has this “On Sunday, the 3rd. day of September, divine service was held for the first time in the New Church, the Vicar officiating to a crowded congregation of 350 persons . . . Two children were admitted into the bosom of the Church of Christ by Baptism in this Font after the second lesson.” Compare the “History”: “In 1843 . . . the two parts of this ancient font were presented . . . to the Holy Trinity (sic), Stowupland, where it now again admits infants into the bosom of the Church.”

The font in question had been put to secular uses for about 40 years before 1843, the pedestal as the support for a sundial in the garden of Creeting St. Mary Rectory, and the bowl as a basin for water in the garden of Ringshall rectory, where it first served in that capacity the poetical Rev. Henry Rowe, who is the subject of H.R.L.'s notes in Nos. 12,394, and 12,398 of 1952.

—Editor.

No. 13,059.—CREETING “TWO CHURCHES”.

(Continued from No. 13,054.)

Richard Keeble, churchwarden at the time of the addition of the new aisle to St. Mary's Church for the congregation of All Saints' has left on record details of the cost of the work. The largest items (how they were made up is not specified) were:

Buxton's Bill £68:1:5.

Robt. Lockwood's Bill £58:4:6.

Mr. Morris's Bill for Slate £23:19:2.

Was the raising of the wherewithal to settle the various accounts thirsty work? So it would seem if this entry means what it appears to mean: “Charges for raising at Black Horse and Buckshead £3:5s.”

The gross cost was £198:18:4. This included 7s. “for Weighing Bells”: the three of them were disposed of for £31:19:0. They weighed 17 cwt. 3 qrs.

Brasses, presumably bell brasses, were sold to T. Abbott for £1:0:6. Buxton allowed £10 for “old Tiles”, Hayles £2:9:9 for “old Iron”. So the net cost of the “New Ayle” was £103:9:1. Old timber, sold for £8:8:8, had already been allowed for in Lockwood's bill. An account came in later for “52 loads of Stone for the Church . . . £1:19s.”

Henceforward All Saints' infants would be made children of grace at the font belonging to St. Mary's. This with its sculptured bowl and its lions sejant flanking the pedestal was evidently preferred to the older and utterly plain (apart from fluting at the edges of the stem) octagonal font belonging to the demolished church. The bowl of this discarded piece of church furniture found its way to the garden of All Saints' Rectory, the stem migrated to Ringshall.

Forty years later, the Rev. George John Dupuis, rector of the consolidated parishes of Creeting St. Mary, St. Olave and All Saints and the Rev. Charles Frederick Parker, immediate successor at Ringshall to “the ingenious,” and unhappy, Henry Rowe, put their heads together and then decided, to put the halves of the font together and present the whole to the new church at Stowupland. At the breakfast on the morning of the consecration of that church in September, 1843, Latin verses concerning the restored font were circulated. They were the work of Mr. Dupuis and Mr. Parker. The last-named provided an English version of his stanzas, in the form of a monologue by the font itself. Its degradation was described thus:

“my pedestal

Was borne to moated Ringshall,

Became a dial stand to show

The shadows which the gnomon

drew,

To give the Parish clerk the time

When bells should either toll or chime,

And I a water-vase became . . .”

For the past 113 years this reclaimed font has served the needs of Stowupland parents and godparents. It is in an excellent state of preservation.

—H.R.L.

(To be continued.)

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