

NOTES ON THE LIFE AND LABOURS OF BROWNE  
WILLIS, ESQ., LL.D., OF WHADDON HALL, COUNTY  
OF BUCKS. BORN 1682. DIED 1760.

BY REV. H. ROUNDELL.

Descended from a family, eminent for their attachment to the Church of England during the troubled times of the Commonwealth, Browne Willis was born at Blandford in Dorsetshire, the residence of his mothers' parents. Soon after his birth his father occupied as tenant the Hall at Beachampton, near Buckingham, and Willis received the rudiments of his education in the free school founded in that parish by Sir Simon Benet. Thence he was removed to Westminster, and afterwards entered as a Gentleman Commoner at Christ Church, Oxford, in his 17th year. By his father's early death, he came, when of age, into possession of a share of the large estates in this county, which his grandfather, Dr. Willis, had purchased in common with Mr. Selby, and found himself the owner of Manors or lands in Bletchley, Whaddon, and Brickhill, together with the advowson of Bletchley, and the old manorial mansion at Whaddon, then called Water Hall. In this house he spent the greater part of his long and useful life; here he accumulated the valuable MSS. collections bequeathed by him to the University of Oxford, and the library of printed books, which ultimately descended to the family of Fleming, and only within the last ten years have been dispersed by Messrs. Christie and Manson; here too, the greater part, if not the whole, of his published works were prepared for the press, and to this hospitable dwelling he was wont to invite all, whose high qualities had won his esteem, or whose love of kindred pursuits rendered their companionship useful or agreeable.

Even in early life Willis possessed a remarkable taste for ecclesiastical antiquities, and his friend and correspondent, Dr. Ducard, in a Memoir of him read before the

Society of Antiquaries, has traced his love for these studies to the associations created and developed in his mind by the neighbouring Abbey, during his school career at Westminster. At Oxford certainly he had imbibed it strongly. By the good offices of Thomas Hearne the stores of the Bodleian library were open to Willis during his under graduate career, and he availed himself of the opportunity to copy out in his rooms at College the then unpublished Itinerary of Leland, writing at the rate of sixty pages daily, and finishing his self-imposed task in nine days.

After four years' residence Willis left College without offering himself for a degree, and placed himself under the tuition of the Rev. W. Wootton, Rector of Milton Keynes, near Newport Pagnell. In 1705 he was chosen member of Parliament for the corporation of Buckingham, and two years afterwards, being then in his 27th year, he married Catherine, only child of Daniel Elliot, Esq., of Port Elliot, in the county of Cornwall, a lady of considerable fortune, by whom he had a family of five sons and five daughters. Mrs. Willis died in 1725, and was buried at Bletchley.

Willis's Parliamentary career was short and unmarked with any event of importance. He never addressed the House, but attended in his place, often voting against his party, and frequently served upon Committees. For him however, a public life had no charms, and when at the next election in 1708, his return to Parliament might have been secured for £100, he preferred to express his sense of the honour that had been conferred upon him, and to decline the proffered re-election.

From this date his whole time, fortune, and energies were devoted to the study of antiquities, chiefly ecclesiastical, the reparation or building of Churches in parishes in which he was interested, and the general welfare of his own neighbourhood. His MSS. collections were to a great extent the fruits of his personal observations, and in the course of his journeys, pilgrimages as he was wont to call them, he visited all the Welsh and English Cathedrals, except Carlisle, taking their measurements, and monumental inscriptions, and investigating their libraries. It was a main object with him to obtain full lists of the Deans, Precentors, Chancellors, Treasurers, Archdeacons,

and Prebendaries of Cathedrals, the dedications of Churches, the number of bells, the names and revenues of chapels attached to religious houses, with catalogues of the principals of Monasteries, from their foundation to the Dissolution, and in this particular branch of ecclesiastical study, Willis remains without an equal in patience, research, or success. Once settled down, he was fully absorbed in his books, and it is related of him that on one occasion, after a long and hard morning's study in the rooms of a friend at Cambridge, when his attention was momentarily interrupted by the arrival of the College servant to remind him of the dinner, a slight noise was heard outside the door, and his friend asking "what noise is that," Willis starting up exclaimed, "Oh I quite forgot, it is only one of my daughters whom I left on the staircase."

To enter into any review of the published volumes of Willis would be beside the purpose of this paper, which professes to give only an outline of his general occupations. His works embrace a wide field of literary and antiquarian research, and in forming a judgment upon them, the difficulties of imperfect indexes, unarranged and missing MSS. and incivilities from officials, all which he had to contend against in no small degree, must be taken into account, together with his own continued ill health. Besides carrying on an extensive correspondence, he was constantly engaged in the preparation of some work for the press, and the following list comprises, it is believed, the whole of his publications with their dates of issue.

In 1710 he communicated to Mr. Gale, "*The History of Hyde Abbey*," together with "*Lists of the Abbots of Westminster and Hyde*," which that author inserted in his "*History and Antiquities of Winchester Cathedral*," published in 1715.

1712. Willis issued "*Queries for the History and Survey of the County of Buckingham*;" one sheet folio.

1715-16. "*Notitia Parliamentaria; or an History of the Counties, Cities, and Boroughs in England and Wales, with Lists of all the Knights, Citizens, and Burghesses*." Two vols. 8vo., price 10s.\*

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\* The portion of this Work relating to the Boroughs in Buckinghamshire has been recently reprinted by Mr. Gibbs of Aylesbury.

1717. "*The whole Duty of Man, adapted for the benefit of the Poorer Sort.*"

1717. "*A List of the Priors of Worcester.*"

1717-21. "*The History and Antiquities of the several Welsh Cathedrals, viz.—St. David's, St. Asaph,\* Llandaff, and Bangor.*" 4 vols., price £1 2s.

1718-19. "*An History of the Mitred Parliamentary Abbies and Conventual Cathedral Churches.*" 2 vols., 8vo., price £1 5s.

1720. Willis assisted Strype in a fresh edition of the "*History of London.*"

1727-31. "*A Survey of the Cathedrals of York, Durham, Carlisle, Chester, Man, and others, with Parochiale Anglicanum.*" 3 vols., 4to.

1730. He reprinted with additions the first volume of "*Notitia Parliamentaria,*" and added a third volume, entitled "*The third Part of Notitia Parliamentaria, containing an account of the first Returns and Incorporations of the Cities, Towns, and Boroughs of England and Wales, with Lists of the Representatives in the several Parliaments from 1541 to 1660.*"

1733. A Table of the Gold Coins of England.

1743. "*A Series of Principals of Religious Houses,*" published in Bishop Tanner's "*Notitia Monastica.*"

1745. Willis edited "*Ecton's Thesaurus,*" 4to.

1749. "*Proposals for Printing a Journal of the House of Commons.*"

1750. "*Address to the Patrons of Ecclesiastical Livings.*" A single sheet, 4to.

1755. "*The History and Antiquities of the Town, Hundred and Deanery of Buckingham.*" London: 4to., £1 1s.

The MSS. volumes of Willis, which contain besides the materials for his published works, very considerable historical collections, were deposited according to the terms of his will in the Bodleian library at Oxford. They consist of fifty-eight volumes folio, forty-eight quarto, five small octavo; and have been recently rebound in strong and useful covers. A catalogue is in the course of publication

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\* The Survey of St. Asaph was reprinted with some additions, and a brief memoir of the author by the Rev. E. Edwards, in two volumes, 8vo., 1801.

which will make known more widely this valuable collection.\*

In his life time Browne Willis was a considerable benefactor to the University. He had amassed a fine cabinet of coins. It contained a curious and almost perfect series of tradesman's copper tokens, ranging from 1649—1672, and was rich in early English and Saxon money, and gold and silver of a later date. Vertue, the celebrated engraver, writing under date of July 29th, 1732, says, "I have lately seen Mr. Willis's collection of English coins, which are very perfect and in great number, especially among his silver he has a great many scarce pieces." This cabinet was given by Willis to the University, and Mr. Francis Wise, who examined the coins soon after Willis's death, corroborates the opinion of the collection expressed by Vertue, and adds some additional information respecting the circumstances of Willis's gift. "I believe Dr. Willis's cabinet of English coins is as complete as has ever been collected by one man, though it wants many of the Gallic coins, which have been since discovered. All the silver and the brass he freely gave to the University, but he told me that the University thought it too much for him who had then a large family to give the gold, and therefore they would purchase those. I waited on the Vice Chancellor, and desired him to seek out the University accounts for twenty years backwards, and there he found under the year 1741, Dr. Hodges, V.C. that £150 was paid to Mr. Willis for 167 English gold coins, being at the rate of £4 per ounce weight, and even in this way the gold coins are a considerable benefaction." It was the wish of Willis that his collection should be annually inspected on the 19th of October, being St. Frideswide's Day, by the Vice Chancellor and the Dean of Christ Church, or their deputies, and this was accordingly done for several years, Willis himself attending, and generally making some addition to the cabinet, which remains in the Bodleian, labelled "Numismata Willisiana" and still contains the coins, catalogued in his own handwriting. In acknowledgment for his many merits, the University rewarded him with the Degree of

\* This statement is authorized by the Rev. Dr. Bandinel, Keeper of Bodley's Library, to whom the contributor of this Paper desires to express his obligations for much courtesy and information.

Master of Arts, bestowed by Diploma August 23rd, 1720, and advanced him to the further dignity of L.L.D. on the 10th of April, 1749.

Concurrently with his other pursuits, Willis engaged himself from his early years to the repair and preservation of Churches. The Church of Bletchley, of which he was patron, had become greatly dilapidated, and Willis from the time of his leaving Oxford commenced its repair, expending upon it during his life upwards of £1200. He gave an entire service of Communion plate, and in 1760, the year of his decease, this church possessed two coverings for the Lord's Table, one of crimson velvet, for Sundays and Festivals, the other of purple velvet used during Lent, which were probably gifts of Willis, or Dr Benson, afterwards Bishop of Gloucester.

Within the parish of Bletchley is the hamlet of Fenny Stratford, a place which had a considerable population even a century and a half ago. The town is nearly two miles distant from the church, and once had a chapel, dedicated to St. Margaret, consisting of two or three aisles and an embattled tower, which was destroyed, and the burial ground attached desecrated, during the Civil Wars. Willis possessed himself of the site on which this chapel had stood, and in 1724 commenced a subscription for building a church, to which it was intended to annex the district of Fenny Stratford with a resident clergyman. With great difficulty a sufficient sum was raised in four years to complete the walls and roof, leaving the internal fittings unprovided. The work was then stopped; but by dint of renewed exertions, Willis contrived to complete the church, which was six years altogether in building. It was consecrated by the Bishop of Lincoln upon the 27th of May, 1730, Willis himself presenting the petition for consecration; and on the morning of the day following the Triennial Visitation of the Bishop of Lincoln was held at Fenny, when ninety Clergy of the Diocese were present, and in the afternoon about 1000 Catechumens from the Deaneries of Bucks, Newport, Waddesdon, and the larger division of Mursley, were admitted to the ordinance of Confirmation within the newly founded Chapel.

To commemorate the erection of this Chapel, which Willis calls "his chiefest and most real worldly comfort and happiness," he directed that annually on St. Mar-

tin's day, the 11th of November, Divine Service should be performed, and the Eucharist administered, and that afterwards an assembly should be convened at some house within the hamlet, at which the deed of endowment should be read. For the perpetual maintenance of this Festival, he settled a yearly rent-charge of twenty shillings to be given to the Preacher of the day, chargeable upon a pasture at Bletchley, not inappropriately named "Parson's Piece;" but when this field together with a messuage and other lands at Bletchley was demised for the endowment of St. Martin's Chapel, this payment was merged in the rent due to the Incumbent. This commemoration is alluded to in an inscription underneath an engraving by Vertue of the picture of Dr. Willis, framed and glazed, and now hanging upon the south wall of the chancel-space in Fenny Church, where it was placed by Willis in memory of his grandfather—

In Honour to Thy Memory, Blessed Shade,  
Was the Foundation of this Chapell laid  
Purchased by Thee,—Thy Son and present Heir  
Owe these Three Mannours to thy Art and Care  
For this may all Thy Race Thanks ever pay  
And Yearly Celebrate Saint Martins Day.

This festivity was maintained by Willis during his life, and is thus noticed by the Rev. William Cole, rector of Bletchley.

"Browne Willis used to carry a handsome silver cup, weighing 75 oz. 10 dwts, to the Bull Inn, at Fenny Stratford, on St. Martin's Day every year, and celebrated the day after Divine Service with such company as he could get to meet him from the clergy and gentry of the neighbourhood. The cup was an heir loom given him by Dr. Benson, formerly rector of Bletchley, and then Bishop of Gloucester." The same Dr. Benson provided for the maintenance of the yearly dinner, settling in trust for this purpose a house in Fenny Stratford, known as "St. Martin's House," and returned in 1836 to the Charity Commissioners, as then let in two tenements, and producing about five pounds per annum, expended in an entertainment to the inhabitants. It is pleasing to record that the anniversary of St. Martin's Day is still celebrated at Fenny Stratford. In the morning, Divine Service with Sermon, is held in the Chapel, and at two o'clock in the afternoon the principal residents in the town assemble at the Bull Inn, under the presidency of the Rev. T. P.

Williamson, the present Incumbent, to a substantial repast, extending a hearty-welcome to their visitors, while the rest of the inhabitants mark their observance of the Festival, by repeated discharges of six little pieces of ordnance, of curious size and shape, used from time beyond memory, and well known in the neighbourhood as the "Fenny Poppers."

The Church at Fenny Stratford was originally sixty-seven feet in length from east to west, and twenty-five in width. In 1823 it was enlarged, by the addition of a south aisle, rendered necessary by the increased population, but remains substantially the same as built by Willis. Its architectural style must not be criticized with too severe an eye. Those who are acquainted with the views of Horace Walpole's Gothic edifice at Strawberry Hill, or the Gothic Temple at Stowe, will form some idea of the knowledge of this style possessed by the best architects of the last century. At Fenny Stratford, a country builder, named Wing, resident at Aynhoe, near Brackley, was employed. He sent plans, drawn according to the prevailing taste of the day, for an oblong building with square-headed doors and windows, surmounted on the centre of the roof by a "kupalo on a hexagon," which he said in his accompanying explanatory letter, "would become the place well, though 'twas plain." These plans were adopted, and Gothicized under Willis's directions, who left the doorways as designed, but arched the windows, and cutting away the 'kupalo,' added at the west end a small tower, and finished off the walls with a battlemented parapet of some height. Withinside, the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments are inscribed on the heavy wood work at the east end common to that period, the ceiling is ornamented with coats of arms of benefactors to the building, and the whole fabric, which is quite unique, affords a curious example of the amount of knowledge of Gothic architecture which Willis had acquired. It stands within a quarter of an hours' walk of Bletchley, and will well repay a visit to any traveller who may be detained at that uncomfortable station. May the chapel long remain for the spiritual welfare of the inhabitants of Fenny, and to be a memorial of its pious builder.

Shortly after the completion of this chapel, a disastrous

fire occurred at Stony Stratford, followed six years later by a second and still more calamitous one. In the last fire the church of St. Mary Magdalen, which stood on the east side of the town was destroyed. Great losses fell on the inhabitants, but Browne Willis shall give the history of this fire, and the assistance he rendered in his own words.

“ May 19, 1736. 53 houses were burnt down, and May 6, 1742, 113 houses, together with the church of St. Mary Magdalen. There were large collections made for this last fire, the loss of which was estimated at £10,000. Towards this was collected in the several counties of England by 11550 briefs £4293 15s. 2d., besides which by letters of bequest in the neighbourhood, and private charities near £3000 more; so that after deductions the clear receipt to the sufferers amounted, as I have seen it cast up, to £6487 6s. 11d., by which I presume they suffered not very much on the whole. Had the town of Bucks met with such success their losses had been well repaired. I, B. W. besides upwards of £20 which I contributed myself, going to London in August, 1742, got for Stony Stratford of friends there, £64 11s. 6d., which I brought down and paid to the treasurer \* \* \* \* And also at near £30 expense set up, and leaded, and new roofed the burnt down tower of St. Mary Magdalen, in order to preserve it, to have the church rebuilt to it again. I got for this good work above 20 guineas, and saw it expended in about two months after the fire, and pointed the walls withinside and without, and filled up the arches to prevent its taking damage, insomuch that the tower is made as firm as ever.”

Always zealous for the House of God, our antiquary's next efforts were directed to the rebuilding of the spire at Buckingham, which like that of its mother church of Lincoln, had been blown down in a violent gale of wind. In this undertaking he fell short of ultimate success. Unfortunately for his own advantage, Willis had opposed himself to the powerful family at Stowe, whose influence in the town of Buckingham was then paramount, and accordingly he could obtain no assistance from that quarter. Nevertheless he made an application to Lord Cobham,

addressing him in verse, and alluding to the family motto of the Temples. *Templa quam dilecta.*

On Buckingham—depressed County Town,  
From Stowe's ennobled altitude look down ;  
Worthy of being parent to a shire,  
Let it by your munificence appear ;  
That clamorous faction may no more upbraid  
Its humble dwellings, loss of friends and trade,  
There fix your Castle, there let Columns stand,  
Emblems of love raised by a grateful hand ;  
Oh, look on it as first it looked on you,  
Exalt again its Spire to crown your view,  
And ancient Magisterial Rights renew ;  
All ages then the Patriot shall record,  
And sing, How amiable are Thy Temples, Lord.

To Judge Denton of Hillesden, Willis wrote in prose, and the following extract from the letter, will serve as a specimen of his style, and to show the improvements he contemplated.

Whaddon Hall, Oct. 3. 1737.

My Lord Judge,

" I here enclose to you a draught of the steeple for the County Town Church. My daughter Molly has drawn it out from what I sketched, " if you like it it may be soon done by a masterly hand ; it is to be a " superstructure erected upon the present tower, after taking down the " monstrous balcony, in place of which a new altitude like St. Clements, " the London Parish Church, is to be raised, and the bells mounted and " then the ropes may not longer dangle indecently in the Church, or else " carried to be drunk in the middle of it, or other acts which breed and " instil into youth future irreverence to the place. The octangular dome " may be more spread and widened as it must extend itself from the " foundation on the basis of the tower, and then the pinnacles may be " coupled by traces which will have a good aspect. I presume the " charge will be £5 per foot, and it will be done for little more than " double the charge of new-founding the bells. The breadth of the " tower I take to be 25 feet, and this is proportioned to twice that scale, " viz., 30 foot to the top of the smaller pinnacles, except the middle one " which is to arise about 6 foot above the rest with its vane designed to " be the town or County Arms. About £250 will I presume execute it, " and it will be a work most honorable and glorious to its patrons, and " stir the whole town and country into gratitude and admiration, and " like Absalom's Pillar perpetuate the raisers' name to all generations " beyond all other achievements, buildings, and monuments, and no " greater standing monument of affection and zeal for good works can in " this town for so small a charge be produced. And it will also redound " to the grandeur of the gentry, clergy, and community in the county " all interested in the same, to have their Capital town set off in so mag- " nificent a manner, and exalt its head as indeed it did for ages in our " memory above all other towns in the County, parallel to what Virgil " describes of Rome and Mantua

Verum hæc tantum alias inter caput extulit urbes  
Quantum lenta solent inter viburna cupressi.

" But alas it is not so now. How is it fallen. How mean its ap- " proach. With what low, degrading notions do travellers depart ;

" their expectation damp't, their contempt raised ! Nothing to strike the eye, nothing to awake attention." \* \* \* \*

Such was his affection for the town of Buckingham, that he lost no opportunity of bringing it into notice. He was very urgent with the Archdeacons of Buckingham to hold their Visitations there, but not always with success, and his disappointment on one occasion amusingly peeps out in a letter to his friend, Dr. Ducarel.

Whaddon Hall, April 30, 1766.

" The Visitation was held on Monday last at Stony Stratford, that terrible stormy day. It should have been at Bucks, and I hoped I had secured it. But your neighbour, Dr. Bettesworth, the Commissary and Official would not agree to go there, but would come to Stony Stratford, where the waters were so out that several were drowned, especially the two churchwardens of Stoke Hammond parish, 4 miles off here, and several places, houses, and mills were laid under water, insomuch that several persons were forced to live in chambers, and a neighbouring miller was obliged to carry his sow and piggs into the same room with himself and family. But I hope Dr. Bettesworth will come the next time to Buckingham."

But if Dr. Bettesworth was not prevailed upon to hold his Visitations at Buckingham, he materially aided Willis in the preservation of the Church of Bow Brickhill. This Church after disuse of 150 years, had become ruinous, and the rector and patron had agreed that it should be taken down and the materials sold. Willis having a small estate in the parish interfered, and obtained from the Ecclesiastical Court an order to repair the Church ; he gave himself about £30, out of the £100 required to repair it, and secured the good services of Dr. Bettesworth in recommending a petition to the clergy of the Newport Deanery and surrounding districts, to promote collections within their parishes.

This, with the exception of an effort to establish schools in several of the towns of the county, in which Willis labored single-handed, was the last public act of his life. His health, never very robust, began to fail, and his constitution was still more shaken by a severe cold which he caught by the overturn of his carriage at some distance from home in the inclement month of January in 1759. This rendered him so feeble that he could not apply himself to antiquities, and in May he had not strength to reach down and turn over books, yet he continued to amuse himself by entering a list of bells in the county of Lincoln, which Dr. Reynolds had sent him, in the Paro-

chialè Anglicanum. Towards the close of the year he was sinking fast, and after a painless illness in which he was comforted by an affectionate letter from his relative the Archbishop of Canterbury, he expired upon the 5th of February, 1760, in the 78th year of his age, and was buried without ostentation in the chancel of the church at Fenny Stratford. Over his grave was placed a white marble stone, on which was inscribed the epitaph he had written for himself.

HIC SITUS EST  
 BROWNE WILLIS, ANTIQUARIUS,  
 CUJUS AVI CLARISSIMI, ÆTERNÆ MEMORIÆ,  
 THOMÆ WILLIS, ARCHIATRI TOTIUS EUROPÆ CELEBERRIMI  
 DEFUNCTI DIE SANCTI MARTINI A.D. 1675.  
 HÆC CAPELLA EXIGUUM MONUMENTUM EST.  
 OBIT 5 DIE FEB. A.D. 1760  
 ÆTATIS SUÆ 78.  
 O XTE SOTER AC JUDEX  
 HUIC PECCATORUM PRIMO  
 MISERICOR AC PROPITIUS ESTO.

The character of Browne Willis in private life is in many respects very estimable. He was peculiarly sober and temperate in his habits. Daily were his household assembled for family worship, and he seldom omitted to retire to his own chamber in the afternoon for prayer and meditation. A constant communicant, he missed no opportunity of attending the Church Service on week days. He took great care of the poor of his own neighbourhood, and mainly supported three village schools at his own charge. Unfortunately for his own happiness he was exposed often to peculiar disadvantages from the temper of the times in which he lived. Himself a man of strong feelings, and of a somewhat morbid, if not impetuous disposition, "loving his own pursuits not wisely but too well," he was not always able to check these infirmities of temper, which are apt to arise in the minds of men whose feelings and opinions are diametrically opposed to those of the world around them. The day star of his life which under happier auspices and a more prudent zeal might have led to emolument as well as honour was regarded by almost all by whom he was surrounded as nothing more than a delusive meteor, a sort of 'Will o' the wisp,' which could lead to no good. Hence he was cut off from many social intercourses and sympathies, which while they

might not have greatly affected his character, would have smoothed his passage through life, and rewarded his efforts with a more easy success. As an author, Willis notwithstanding great merits, was unquestionably deficient in some important qualifications. He wants more clearness of arrangement, terseness of language, and greater mastery of his subject. These deficiencies, while to a large extent compensated for by his general accuracy, arise partly from the immensity of the task imposed on himself, and partly from a want of early training. Like Dodsworth, he amassed vast stores of material, adding to his collections any new fact he could pick up, without much regard for its relative bearing on the rest of the heap, or whether it was in itself worth keeping. The quarryman rather than the sculptor, the labourer of the hod and spade rather than the master builder, it is no disparagement of Willis's merits to say that had he been left in youth less entirely to his own guidance, had he even entered upon his antiquarian pursuits later in life, or relinquished them during his college life, for the sake of the mental training which an University education is calculated to impart, he would have stood still higher than he does on the roll of successful antiquaries. Let not however, this Society be slow to acknowledge his great deserts. He exhibited in his self-chosen occupation, an industry, a patience, disinterestedness, a love of study for knowledge sake, which it would be hard to parallel. He was one of the first of English Antiquaries who placed our ecclesiastical history and antiquities upon a firm basis by grounding them upon Records and Registers—the only true authorities and accurate sources of information. By his labours he has preserved sketches and descriptions of buildings which the finger of time, or the more ruthless hand of man has mutilated or swept away; and in this age of increased facilities of communication, and more extended interest in Architectural and Archæological studies, while the advance of science is year by year laying bare and not unfrequently destroying many a monument of secular and ecclesiastical antiquity, no better wish can be expressed for the welfare of our Association than that it should seek to follow in the steps of one who may be truly called, the Father and Founder of our County History.

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