

Brooke was the fourth Baronet of Norton, his uncle Sir Richard the fifth, and his cousin Sir Richard is at present the sixth Baronet.

The following general notes are given from Mr. Sandford's memoranda:—

“This ancient family is descended from William de la Broke, who was master of Leighton, in this county, near 600 years ago, living there in good repute, 33 Henry III. anno 1249.”—*From a Baronetage printed in London, 1804.*

“The Brookes were of Leighton, in the reign of Edward I: the elder branch became extinct in the male line, in or about the reign of Queen Elizabeth. A younger branch settled at Norton, of which Sir Richard Brooke, Bart., is the immediate descendant.”—*Lysons' Mag. Brit. vii. pt. ii. p. 363.*

“Norton Priory and the Manor were purchased from the Crown in 1545, by Sir Richd. Brooke, second son of Thomas Brooke of Leighton, in Nantwich, Esq., whose ancestors were seated there “in good repute,” 33 Hen. III. Henry Brooke, Esq., was created a Baronet in 1662, and his title and estates are now honourably and worthily occupied by his descendant, Sir Richard Brooke, Bart.”—*Gastrell's Not. Cest. p. 353.*

The mother of the first Baronet was Katherine, dr. of of Sir Henry Neville of Billingsbere; descended maternally from the first E. of Westmoreland, and by female lines from Edward III. He and his posterity thus claim descent from the Royal families of England, France, and Castile.

From Margaret (Blackburne), sister of Sir Richard Brooke, 5th Bart., is descended the Rev. Thos. Peters, M.A., (her grandson), Rector of Eastington in Gloucestershire.

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#### VISIT OF THE BRITISH ARCHÆOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION.

In July, 1849, the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire determined, at a Special Meeting held in the Town Hall, that it would be highly desirable to welcome the Archæological Association, (about to meet in Chester,) to this part of the country. The Members of Council residing in Liverpool were appointed a Committee for the purpose of making arrangements; and to prevent all appearance of exclusiveness, they were directed to invite the co-operation of all other Societies in the two counties, which embrace the subject of antiquity. The Association had previously arranged to visit Liverpool and some neighbouring points of Lancashire on the 2nd of August.

From the fact that the Historic Society not only took the initiative in this invitation, but was most prominent in all the arrangements, the Council have thought it due to the Members to lay before them a sketch of the day's proceedings. They are glad, at the same time, to reprint certain Papers of local interest, through the kind permission of the respective authors.

On Thursday, August 2nd, 1849, the fourth day of the Chester Congress, the Members of the Association and other friends from Chester were met at the Monk's Ferry Station, Birkenhead, by a Deputation from the Historic Society. The whole party then embarked in the *Wirrall* steam-boat, and sailed leisurely up the river as far as Eastham, returning down the whole line of docks, and viewing the ferry, villages, and public works on the Cheshire side of the river. At twelve o'clock, the party disembarked at the landing-stage; and carriages were in waiting on the pierhead to convey those who wished to join in the excursions. Between eighty and a hundred proceeded to Speke Hall, the ancient seat of the Norris family, but now inhabited by Joseph Brereton, Esq. H. C. Pidgeon, Esq., one of the Honorary Secretaries, accompanied them as local guide. The other section of the party, consisting of about an equal number, proceeded to the ancient Church of Sefton, accompanied by Dr. Hume. After examining its architecture, monuments, &c., they returned to Liverpool by Ince Blundell near Great Crosby, to view the celebrated collection of marbles there, the property of Thomas Weld Blundell, Esq. These were explained by Jos. B. Yates, Esq., F.S.A., President of the Literary and Philosophical Society of Liverpool.

At half-past five,—a reunion of the excursionists having taken place,—about a hundred ladies and gentlemen sat down to dinner in the Adelphi Hotel. The chair was taken by James Heywood, Esq., M.P., F.R.S., one of the original members of the Historic Society, and on his right sat Mr. Pettigrew, the representative of Lord Albert Conyngham, M.P., F.S.A., President of the Association. The members of the Association were the guests of the local gentlemen. After the usual loyal toasts, the following filled up the brief interval till eight o'clock. By the Chairman,—“Lord Albert Conyngham, President, and the other members of the Archaeological Association;” by Mr. Pettigrew,—“James Heywood, Esq., Chairman,” a V.P. of the Association; by the Chairman,—his parliamentary colleague, “William Brown, Esq., M.P.,” by Wm. Brown, Esq., M.P.,—“Dr. Hume and the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire;” by Nathaniel Gould, Esq., F.S.A.,—“Jos. B. Yates, Esq., and the Literary and Philosophical Society of Liverpool;” “the Mayor and Corporation of Liverpool,” responded to by H. Neill, Esq.; “Mr. Roberts, R.A. and the fine arts;” “Mr. Deputy Lott, Conservator of Antiquities to the City of London;” “the Gentlemen at Speke, Sefton, and Ince, who contributed to the convenience and entertainment of the Congress.”

At eight o'clock the carriages were again in readiness to convey the company to the Town Hall, where his Worship the Mayor, (J. Bramley-Moore, Esq.,) gave a splendid soiree to the antiquarians and their friends. Invitations had been issued to the members of the Association and all others forming the Congress at Chester; also to the local antiquarians, including all the members of the Historic, the Literary and Philosophical, and the Architectural and Archaeological Societies, as well as to the Council of the Chetham Society, Manchester. Each gentleman's card was accompanied by one for a lady. The number of the party assembled has been variously estimated, at from five hundred to a thousand; and probably no spectacle so interesting has been witnessed in Liverpool

since the meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, in 1837. The gentlemen connected with the local societies were each distinguished by a white satin ribbon, the members of the Historic Society having the name printed on their badges. The strangers here, as at the dinner, were distinguished by the colour red. In one of the rooms, an extremely interesting collection of antiquities and curiosities had been laid out by Joseph Mayer, Esq., F.S.A., the Honorary Curator of the Historic Society. This showed some of the riches of our own district, and the generous contributions of numerous others.

It had been kindly arranged by the Committee for the Congress, that the Papers to be read on Thursday evening should be read in the Town Hall of Liverpool. An opportunity was thus afforded to many who knew little of archaeological pursuits, to witness something of the nature and manner of the investigations. At the close of the first Paper by Mr. Waller, the large supper-room was thrown open; and at the close of the second by Mr. Fairholt, the presentation of the mazer dish occurred, of which there is a separate notice below. After the reading of the third Paper by Dr. Hume, the company began to disperse. At eleven o'clock carriages were again in readiness to convey the strangers to the landing-stage; and by means of a special boat and train that waited their convenience, they returned to Chester.

The object of the Liverpool Committee,—viz., to free the members of the Association from all expense, from the moment that they set foot upon Lancashire,—was more than realised. They desire to record their grateful acknowledgements to the following gentlemen, the kindness of all of whom contributed much to the enjoyment of the day and the success of the arrangements. The special train from Chester to Birkenhead and back was procured through William Bragge, Esq., the chief engineer of the line. The use of the boat was granted by the Birkenhead Commissioners, on the application of Messrs. Hughes and Mortimer, members of the Historic Society. Joseph Brereton, Esq., of Speke Hall, the Rev. R. Rothwell, of Sefton, and Thomas Weld Blundell, Esq., of Ince Blundell, afforded every facility for the examination of the antiquities in their respective neighbourhoods. An elegant *dejeuner* for all the visitors was prepared by Mr. Brereton, in the principal banqueting room at Speke. Finally, the extended hospitality of the Mayor of Liverpool was worthy alike of his own generosity and of the town which he represented.

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#### NOTES ON SPEKE HALL.

*By H. C. Pidgeon, Esq., Honorary Secretary.*

[This Paper was read in Speke Hall, before the excursionists and visitors, on the 2nd of August. It is reprinted from the Journal of the Archæological Association.]

Among the varieties of the "stately homes of England," few are more interesting than the moated, half-timbered houses, which form so remarkable a feature in the counties palatine of Lancaster and Chester. Of these ancient and curious edifices, in some parts