

NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE

Naturalists' Field Club.

ANNUAL REPORT.

1874.

NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE

NATURALISTS' FIELD CLUB.

President :

C. LYNAM, ESQ.

Vice-Presidents :

R. GARNER, ESQ., F.R.S.

J. T. ARLIDGE, ESQ., A.M., M.D., LOND.

REV. J. S. BROAD, M.A.

T. WARDLE, ESQ., F.G.S.

JAMES YATES, ESQ.

JOHN FRASER ESQ., M.D.

W. MOLYNEUX, ESQ., F.G.S.

J. B. DAVIS, ESQ., M.D., F.R.S., F.A.S.

W. S. BROUGH, ESQ.

E. EARL, ESQ.

J. WARD, ESQ.

REV. THOS. W. DALTRY, M.A.

W. CHALLINOR, ESQ.

A. W. HOLLIS, ESQ., F.R.A.S.

Treasurer :

W. DUNNET SPANTON, ESQ.

Secretary :

REV. THOS. W. DALTRY, M.A.

Local Secretaries :

BURSLEM AND TUNSTALL, ...	MR. H. WOODALL.	... MR. T. BLACKHAW.
HANLEY, ...	MR. J. L. CHERRY.	... MR. E. BRUNT.
LEEK, ...	MR. W. S. BROUGH.	... MR. J. B. BLADES.
LONGTON, ...	MR. J. WARD. MR. T. M. GODDARD.
NEWCASTLE, ...	MR. A. LEECH. MR. E. EARL.
STOKE, ...	MR. R. GARNER.	... MR. F. ADAMS.

Committee :

MR. J. W. EDGE.

MR. S. EDWARDS, JUNR.

MR. W. HARRAP.

MR. L. H. JAHN.

MR. J. KIRKBY.

MR. W. LITCHFIELD.

MR. T. A. POTTER.

MR. A. SMITH.

MR. T. TURNER.

MR. W. WOODALL.

REPORT

*Read at the Ninth Annual Meeting held at Stoke-on-Trent,
March 19th, 1874.*

During the past twelve months the North Staffordshire Naturalists' Field Club has been quietly and, it is to be hoped, usefully pursuing the even tenor of its way, and accordingly your Committee in this their Ninth Annual Report, feel that they are once more in a position to congratulate the Members on the efficiency to which the Club has already attained, and to look forward hopefully to its future prospects. Together with a large popular element in the composition of the Club your Committee have the satisfaction of knowing that it has inscribed upon its rolls the names of nearly all the Scientific men of the district, some of whom have by their researches and writings achieved a reputation extending far beyond the limits to which it is confined, and of whose Membership it may fairly be proud.

The Excursions and Evening Meetings announced for the past year have all taken place in due course, and have generally been fairly attended: the most successful excursions in every way were those at which we were joined by the two Manchester Clubs: the most conspicuous failures in point of attendance were those of August and September, this being the time of the year at which it is probable that many Members are away from home, enjoying for the most part their well earned holiday.

The Excursions were eight in number including one by-day; the Evening Meetings have been, as usual, three. The places visited were the following:—

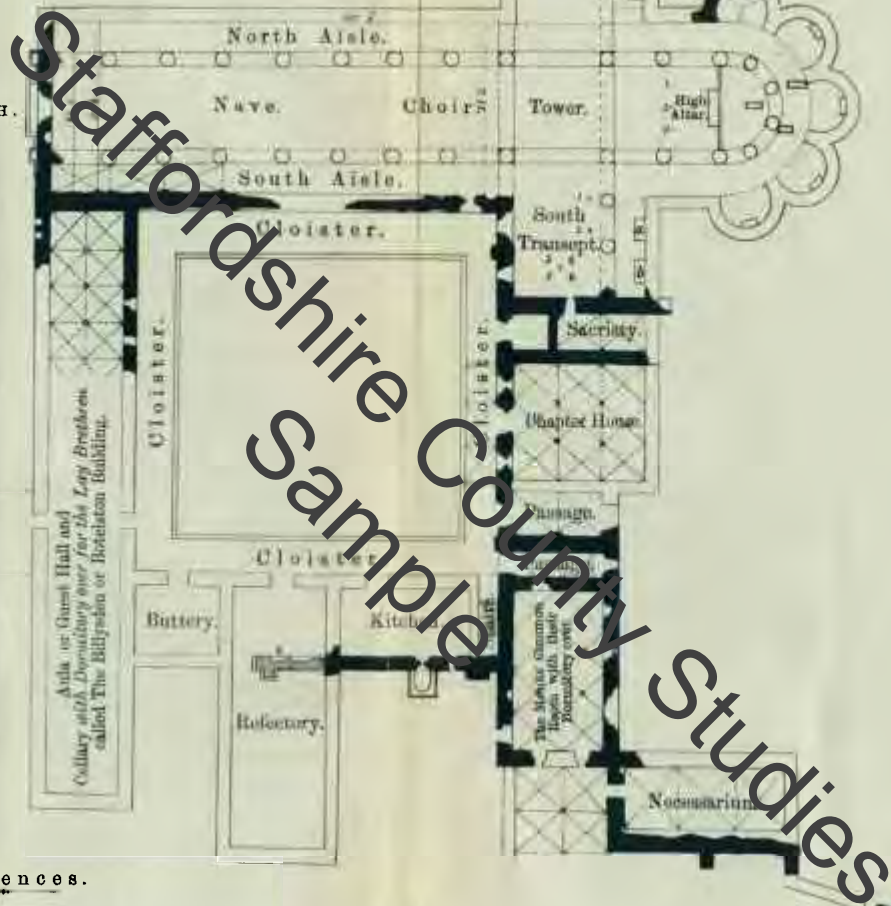
1. New Brighton, on Saturday, April 19th.
2. Croxden Abbey, on Tuesday, May 20th.
3. Pickwood, on Thursday, June 5th.
4. Rushton and Rudyard, in conjunction with the "Manchester Scientific Students' Association," on Saturday, June 21st.
5. Mow Cop and Biddulph, in conjunction with the "Manchester Field Naturalists' Club," on Saturday, July 26th.
6. Buxton, in conjunction with the "Dudley and Midland Geological and Scientific Society," on Wednesday and Thursday, August 20th and 21st.
7. Welshampton and Ellesmere, on Saturday, September 20th.
8. Hanbury and Tutbury, on Monday, October 20th.

CROXDEN ABBEY—GROUND PLAN.

CHURCH.

WEST.

EAST.



References.

- a Altar of the Holy Trinity.
- b Altar of St. Benedict.
- c Wall constructed in modern times out of old materials.

Note.—The black shews the existing ancient walls.

SOUTH.
SCALE.
Foot

CROXDEN ABBEY:

Its History and Architectural Features:—a paper read before the North Staffordshire Naturalists' Field Club, at Croxden Abbey, on Tuesday, May 20th, 1873, by C. LYNAM, ESQ., V.P.

I propose first to give a slight sketch of the History of the Abbey, and secondly to describe its Architectural features.

The sources whence my information is received, are, a copy of the Annals of the Abbey, mostly kept by a Monk of the House named William de Schepished, and given me by Mr. Garner. The journal of the British Archæological Association for December, 1865. And the buildings themselves, as they have been known to me for many years past as they now exist.

Croxden is one of the later Cistercian Abbeys of England, and was founded from the Norman Monastery of Alnet or Aulney, near Bayeaux, in Normandy. The Annals of William de Schepished, and their continuation extend from William the Conqueror to the year 1174. Like all the Monastic Annals, the contents are very miscellaneous, but in this instance they may be roughly classified as follows:—

1st—Events concerning the Kings of England and the Royal Family, and narratives relating to wars, both at home and abroad.

2nd—Dates of taxes imposed on the laity and the Church, and regulations respecting the coinage.

3rd—The succession of the Bishops of Lichfield and Coventry down to 1322. An imperfect series of the Archbishops of Canterbury down to 1333 and occasional mention of other Bishops &c., &c.

4th—The foundation of several Cistercian Monasteries. The erection and destruction of various Churches, &c.

5th—Records of eclipses, earthquakes, comets and stars, storms, years of famine and plenty, and seasons of drought and of wet.

6th—A complete series of notices of Abbots of Croxden for the first 200 years of the existence of the Abbey, in which the date of the erection of its buildings is accurately defined, and a genealogy of the family, de Verdun the founders of the Monastery is given.

7th—Some account of the Author of the Chronicle and of some members of his family.

William de Schepished took his first vow in A.D. 1288, and was ordained Priest of Walsall, by the Bishop of St. Asaph, on the 26th February, 1294, so the annals after this date could not have been compiled by this Monk. Some of his relatives were Monks, and some of them in his own Abbey.

We learn from the Chronicle that in 1176, Bertram de Verdun, from pious motives, gave to the Monks of Alnet, or Aulnay, the land of Chotes to found an Abbey to Saint Mary, but, says the Chronicle, it was ordained they should praise the name of the Lord in another place. Chotes is supposed to be the place now called Cawton or Cotton, not far from Croxden. In 1178 the first Monks of the Monastery must have been brought together. They were all from abroad; but one Thomas an Englishman was elected first Abbot. In the next year the removal from Chotes to Croxden took place, and in 1181, the *place* of the Abbey was dedicated. Thomas, the

THE LITERATURE OF BOTANY:

A Paper read before the North Staffordshire Naturalists' Field Club, at Leek, on Thursday, November 20th, 1873,
by W. S. BROUGH, ESQ., V.P.

Not less many persons are disinclined to the study of Botany, from an idea that it consists solely in the learning and committing to memory a number of very hard names, and know nothing of the delightful pleasure an acquaintance with some of earth's brightest treasures brings. It has been truly said that the most lasting pleasures are the simplest and nearest the reach of all. With what joy does a botanist recall his hunts after varieties. The ramble in the meadows, the exhilarating tramp over the breezy moorland, the quiet saunter in the shady woods, the pleasure of the recognition of familiar friends, the common species; and beyond all, the intense delight of a discovered rarity, cannot be described by words of mine. We have so many books now-a-days, all placing the study in such an attractive aspect, and each showing the easiest way to a mastery of system, that no one need be at all alarmed by the dryness of details, but each may gain so much interest in its acquirement that the hard words themselves almost become a pleasure. But there is another side—an attractive one, and one perhaps too little considered—the human interest and literature of Botany. It lies in the lives of the remarkable men who not only originally found, collected, and catalogued, the plants, but also devoted their days to the drawing, and describing, and publishing to the learned world, the plants they had searched for and secured. The names of these early botanists are scarcely known to the world of general readers. I propose to introduce a few. I do not wish this paper to be looked upon as an exhaustive description of the early botanists and their labours, but rather a few notes, the result of a slight acquaintance with some of the earlier English Herbals and Historic of Plants, (copies of which I am glad to be able to show you,) and a brief glance at the strides made in later years towards reducing Botany to a complete science, and a mention of the more noticeable works of modern times.

I may first mention (omitting all notice of the Botanists of ancient times, Kings Solomon and Cyrus, Dioscorides, Theophrastus, Camerarius, &c.) the name of William Turner, the father of British Botany, and the author of a new Herbal, printed in London, 1551. His biography is full of interest. He became Latimer's disciple. An enthusiast in the principles of the Reformation, he travelled about England preaching, was imprisoned, subsequently released, and obliged to leave England. He did not return until after the death of Henry VIII. The new king favoured him highly, and made him a Prebend of York and a Canon of Windsor. The incidents in his history are quietly romantic, and there is a short account of his life in the "Sketch of the Progress of Botanical Investigation in Middlesex," in the Flora of Middlesex." A work of great merit and research, by Henry Trimen and William Dyer, highly reviewed in the Athenæum, a few years ago, and to which review I am much indebted for my statements concerning these worthy botanists. It says "Turner was in his way a truly great man of whom the world is nearly altogether ignorant. He died in 1614, and was buried in the South Aisle of St. Olave's Church, Crutched Friars. A stone erected by his Widow, is let into the corner of the East wall, bearing an

The British Herbal, by John Hill, M.D. A work much to be praised, based upon the labours of Ray, Tournefort, and others. Illustrated by beautiful steel plates. Fine tall copy here, 1756.

In *Alibone's Dictionary*, I find mention of no less than seven hundred and ninety works on Botany.

I may be excused for mentioning the name of an eminent man who, though but little known as a Botanist still takes no mean place among the ardent and proficient students of this important science. I refer to the late John Stuart Mill. He says in his Autobiography, "his strong relish for accurate classification was brought about by his study of Botany." His short communications on Botany were chiefly, if not entirely, published in a monthly Magazine called the *Phytologist*. In the early numbers of this periodical will be found frequent notes and short papers on the facts of plant distribution, brought to light by Mr. Mill during his botanical rambles. He was a keen searcher after wild plants. It is believed from the mass of notes and observations, it was his intention to have printed them as a foundation of a Flora at Avignon, the place where he so long resided and where he is laid. Mr. Mill left his Herbarium to the Gardens at Kew.

I must in concluding my list of worthies, mention two names of gentlemen in our county, members of our Club, who have contributed in no small degree to the Literature of Botany. Mr. Bateman in his valuable work on *Orchidaceæ*, and our esteemed friend Mr. Garner, our companion and mentor in many of our pleasant botanical rambles, in his charming book the *Natural History of Staffordshire*, and other works.

I may perhaps in this paper have dwelt too long upon classification, and the growth, as a science, of Botany, to the exclusion of a more attractive and deeply interesting phase of the subject, I mean the poetic and legendary interest that is so closely attached.

There is hardly a familiar wilding in our hedges and brook sides, that does not call to mind some poem or fragment of folk lore; indeed many of the old English names, which I hope may never be lost, often tell their own story. If I have succeeded in interesting you at all in Botanical studies from the side especially taken to-night; the relation of the results of my acquaintance with the tall folios of earlier Botanists, (which I now invite you to inspect), will not altogether have been in vain.



ON SOME LEPIDOPTERA NEW TO THE DISTRICT, TAKEN IN 1873 :—

A paper read before the North Staffordshire Naturalists' Field Club, at Stoke, on Tuesday, January 20th, 1874, by the Rev. THOS. W. DALTRY, M.A., V.P., Hon. Secretary.

From the fact that this district of North Staffordshire has not hitherto received much attention in an entomological point of view, it is not surprising that each year, as it comes, adds somewhat to our knowledge of its insect treasures, and fresh discoveries among the Lepidoptera continue to be made. It is with the object of bringing before the notice of the Club a few insects new to the lepidopterists of the district, that have turned up during the past season, that I propose saying a few words to-night :—and it is not a little remarkable that after the very wet year of 1872, no fewer than five new butterflies and moths should have been taken last year, and all these by one collector. I, however, ought to say, that there is no doubt, that as Entomologists increase in numbers in this district, as increase they certainly will, if at least we may form an opinion to that effect from what is going on all over the kingdom :—I say, as Entomologists increase in number in our county, so most certainly will there yet be many additions to the list of North Staffordshire Lepidoptera, for fresh localities will be worked. At present I should say Entomology is with us in its infancy. Few as yet have taken it up, and those who have, have almost exclusively confined their researches to about half a dozen localities ; *e. g.* Swynnerton, and the Burnt Woods,—Chadlock's Moss, and Chorlton Moss, have been so far the principal places of resort. Indeed there is no saying, what may not be yet discovered in the neighbourhood—the field is so wide, and there are so many ways of taking insects—some for instance being only taken in their larval stage—some again only in the pupal stage—whilst of others the imago alone is seen, and their larvae as yet are undescribed. Again some insects only fly by day, others again only at night, whilst some scarcely ever fly, and some, as the Apterous females of certain species, never fly at all. To give an instance of what I mean, I would ask my brother Entomologists, which of them as yet has worked such places as the bog at Wybunbury at twilight in July. Doubtless the undertaking would be no pleasant one, but there can, I imagine, be little doubt that it would be attended by the discovery of several additions to our list : there are many good things that are only to be taken at such times and in such places. I would particularly instance that very interesting and beautiful little moth *Acidalia Emutaria*, which only flies for about half an hour after sunset, in the marshy places in the New Forest, and which, so far as I know, has never been met with at any other time of the day.

Then again many insects are extremely local ; a patch of ground a few yards square will contain an insect, for which you will in vain search elsewhere : this, as you will naturally imagine, arises from the fact that its food-plant is local also : but although this will in the generality of cases hold good, still it is not always the right explanation : it may happen for instance, that the excessive localization of an insect may arise, not from a scarcity of the food-plant, but from a bit of ground being left wild and uncultivated from some cause or other in the midst of a well-tilled district—this probably accounts for the six-spot Burnet moth *Zygœna Filipendulæ* being only found in this neighbourhood in the railway cutting through Grafton's Wood at Madeley : generally, you are aware, the plate-layers on a railway mow the grass on the railway banks, which would soon effectually put an end to any of the *Zygœna* class. In this particular cutting, however, a growth of gorse and sallows has sprung up in the clay soil, which has made the mowing of what patches of grass remain no easy

it is described by Newman as "scarce at Burton-on-Trent, one at Wolverhampton:" but I am not aware that it has been before observed in this district, its food-plant is chiefly the different species or varieties of *Ulmus*, or Elm, although it is sometimes found on the Aspen (*Populus Tremula*), white beam tree (*Pyrus aria*), Sallow (*Salix Caprea*), Osiers (*Salix viminalis* and *vitellina*): and in gardens on cherry and pear trees. This butterfly hibernates, and in the spring of the year both sexes may be seen in the South of England, in favourable seasons, flying together in lanes and outskirts of woods: the eggs are laid in May, sometimes as many as 40 in number: they are crowded together on small twigs of the elm, sometimes completely surrounding the twig, and forming what in the instance of the Lackey Moth is called a necklace. The Caterpillars are hatched in a fortnight, and are full grown about midsummer. They change to Pupæ suspended by the tail soon after attaining full size, and are often found under coping stones of walls, on the trunks of trees, and on park palings. The perfect insect appears about the middle of July, and as has been already remarked, lives through the winter, as do so many of the *Vanessidæ*.

The second insect, to which I have alluded as a member of the *Norturni* group, is a little moth called *Nola Cristulalis*, a single specimen of which I saw, but alas! only saw on the trunk of an oak tree in the Burnt Woods last June—as you will have conjectured, I was unfortunate enough to miss the insect, but I had a good long look at it, and knowing the insect well I could not be mistaken. The family of the *Nolidæ* contains but five species as yet found in Great Britain, the commonest of which is *Cucullatella*, which has already been taken at Madeley. They are all of small size, and somewhat triangular in shape: they sit on the trunks of trees in the day time, and fly out in the evening and during the night. The Caterpillars are hairy and feed on the leaves of trees: they spin a silken cocoon in the crevices of the bark of the trees in which they feed. *Cucullatella* feeds on sloe, *Cristulalis* on oak.

The third discovery is that to which I have already alluded as having been found on the banks of the Dan, *L. Sylvata*, the waved Carpet. It is a member of the large class *Geometræ* so called from their larvæ appearing "gen metrein"—to measure the earth as they loop along. The *Asthenas* are closely allied to the *Acidalidæ*: this particular one is probably an alder feeder, but I believe its larva is undescribed.

The fourth is a *Noctua*: *Calocampa Vetusta*; it was taken at sugar late last August, in Swynnerton Old Park; the others species of *Calocampa*, viz *Exoleta*, occurs commonly in this district, but I believe this to be the first *Vetusta* that has occurred. These two species are at first sight almost alike, but on placing them together you will find several points of divergence. The Caterpillars of these two species are very beautiful, the ground colour being of a rich green, with yellow and orange markings—they are often said to be the most beautiful of all British Caterpillars. They feed on many low plants—sometimes on those that grow in our gardens.

The last insect is a *Pyralis*: *Ebulea Sambucalis*—of which I have little to say, except that it feeds on alder, *Sambucus Niger*, and on *convolvulus*. This insect hibernates as a full grown larva, turning to chrysalis in the spring. This specimen was taken in the Vicarage garden at Madeley last June—doubtless it will turn up some day in more profusion in the district. It is a night flyer.

Such are the discoveries of last year. Let us hope, that the season which will now soon begin may be quite as prolific in new discoveries—and if the Entomologists of our Club will only work, I have no doubt, there are plenty of discoveries to be made in North Staffordshire which will well repay their labours.