

Monday, August 25. [1856]

The members of the several committees assembled at half-past one, p.m., in the Grand Jury Room of the Town Hall of Bridgwater, where a small museum, consisting of antiquities belonging to the neighbourhood, had been, by the kind attention of the local committee and Somersetshire Archaeological Society, collected. The mayor (W. D. Bath, esq.) and several members of the corporation, attended by the mace-bearers and other officers, received the members and visitors upon their arrival, and presented to them refreshment. The mayor observed that the town and corporation fully appreciated the honour which their distinguished and learned visitors had conferred upon Bridgwater by selecting it as their central point for holding their thirteenth Congress. He believed that the Association would find in the county many valuable archaeological objects of interest ; and he assured them, on his own part and on the part of the town, that there was but one feeling animating him and it, and that was to make the visit of the Association as interesting and agreeable as possible. Mr. Pettigrew acknowledged the courtesy of the mayor, and the kindness of their reception by the town.

Arrangements were then entered into in regard to the order of business ; and at three o'clock the general meeting was held in the Town Hall, the chair being taken by T. J. Pettigrew, esq., vice-president and treasurer, who commenced the business by expressing his regret at the absence of the president, who was in Ireland, and compelled to remain there upon business of much consequence. Mr. Pettigrew then read an " Introductory Discourse on the Antiquities of Somersetshire". (See pp. 291-311 *ante*.)

A large mass of ancient charters, deeds, rolls, books of expenses, etc., having been laid upon the table, Mr. Black rose, and observed that he had spent the morning in an examination of the contents of the strong room belonging to the corporation, which, by the kind permission of the authorities, were now produced by Mr. Carslake, the town clerk. He observed, it might naturally be expected that, in the archives of a corporation so old as that of

Bridgwater, there should be found a number of original grants of privileges and possessions from the sovereigns of this country, or from those who exercised sovereign rights in the neighbourhood. He had not, however, yet discovered the original charter. Taking the parchments in the order in which he found them, he produced an ancient charter of one of the early kings (Edward I), and others, reciting the inspection of the former charter, and confirming its stipulations. The charter was granted to one William Briwere, of the town of " Burgewater"; and it provided that the town should be a free borough, with a free market; and a free fair, to last eight days ; the burgesses to be free of "lastage and stallage throughout our whole land, except the city of London." Next he found a charter of Edward II, confirming this grant; and another, further confirming the charter, by Henry III, " king of France", etc., dated in the " 45th year of our reign, and of our reign of France the 32nd" (1372). Another deed, of Henry VIII, was a simple confirmation of charters given by the Edwards and king John. There were letters patent — and there was great difference between letters patent and a royal charter — confirming also letters patent by Henry VII, and contained some privileges which were not contained in the former charters. In the charter granted by Edward IV it was stated that complaint had been made to the king, that, " from ancient time the town has been accustomed, both by foreigners and natives of this country, and used for all manner of merchandize ; and whereas the town had fallen into great ruin and decay, by want of reparation, so that the merchants had withdrawn themselves, and failed to come with their ships to the port." And this grant was for the purpose of restoring the town to its former degree of prosperity. To accomplish this, the boundaries of the borough were extended in a remarkable manner, the confines of the town being duly set forth in the charter.

Mr. Gabriel Poole remarked that the corporation had ever since exercised the right over the river as far as the boundary mentioned.

Mr. Black proceeded to remark that the charter provided for the appointment of a recorder, who, with the mayor, should be a justice of the peace for the borough ; and gave besides various other privileges. There was also attached to it a writ of allowance, directing that the privileges contained in this charter should be allowed everywhere ; and the writ had been enrolled in the Exchequer, the writ being dated the 11th year of Henry VII, and the charter the 3rd of the same reign (8th March). Mr. Black also translated passages from an original charter of the second Edward ; one of queen Mary, with a finely ornamented top, and a picture of the queen sitting on her throne ; a royal charter of Elizabeth, made in the 29th year of her reign; one by James I, reciting and confirming all the foregoing charters ; also one of Charles I, with a picture of the king most miserably limned ; and another charter, of Charles II, with the usual engraved border, and that remarkably fine, engraved portrait of his majesty which is found on almost all the corporation charters of that reign. Having gone through the royal charters, Mr. Black mentioned the existence of a great variety of documents, which he would now only lay before the Congress ; but on some future occasion, possibly, he might return to them. They were all very valuable, as they strikingly illustrated the localities and historical features of this ancient town. He then proceeded to lay before the meeting some other interesting documents : such, he observed, as it seldom fell to the lot of an antiquary to unfold on such an occasion. These consisted of rolls found among the muniments in the corporation chest, containing the accounts of the churchwardens at the time of Edward II : the earliest church wardens' accounts on record, and, therefore, deeply interesting. The town was described as the " town, or borough, and parish of Bridgwater"; and from these documents it would seem that the corporation had considerable rights and powers, which they exercised over the ecclesiastical affairs of the town. On one of the rolls he saw the cost of labour for building the church tower ; and, what was more important still, he ascertained the time it was built, — a circumstance now made a matter of certainty, instead of, as heretofore, mere conjecture and

speculation. Having briefly alluded to the records of the corporation courts, in matters of debt, presentments of persons for ameracements, and fines for neglect, the court of *pie-poudre* (which, Mr. Poole remarked *en passant*, was held in Bridgwater down to within a few years ago), and " dorne-day courts", he postponed his observations on the remainder of the documents until the evening meeting.

Further examination of the city muniments being postponed, the mayor proposed a vote of thanks to the chairman; after which the company, about eighty in number, departed to view the antiquities of the town. Several, formerly of considerable interest, were no longer to be seen ; but by the kindness of colonel Tynte of Halswell, Mr. J. Collins of Bridgwater, and Mr. Clarke, artist, of Taunton, various views of places which distinguished ancient Bridgwater were exhibited in the Council Chamber. The old bridge and the market cross¹ have entirely disappeared. The former, over the river Parret, dated from the time of king John. It was commenced by William de Briwere ; but not completed until the reign of Edward I, by sir Thomas Trivet, a native of Cornwall. On the bridge a " trivet", carried in his armorial bearings, was affixed to the copings of the structure. In a historical point of view the bridge is renowned from having been the spot of great resistance offered to Cromwell in July 16, 1645. Its massy piers, however, occasioned serious, and some times even dangerous, obstruction to the river traffic ; and in 1795 its place was substituted by the present cast iron arch. It is probable that among the Bridgwater archives some notices connected with the bridge may be found.

The market cross of Bridgwater served also as a conduit for the supply of the town with water, and was removed about half a century since. At this cross the duke of Monmouth was proclaimed king, and his declaration read. An inscription then upon it was remarked as being not altogether inapplicable : it read, " Mind your own business."

The church of St. Mary was visited, in which various restorations have been attempted ; but much remains to be done. Viewed from the east end an unsightly

mass of masonry presents itself ; and a peculiarly ugly vestry-room has been appended to the building. The east window is blocked up, to admit a large picture of the descent from the cross, obtained from a vessel taken as a prize during the war with France, and presented to the town by a member of the Poulett family. It is of considerable merit ; but the artist is unknown. He was of the Italian school. The north doorway of the church is highly interesting, being a fine specimen of the geometrical period, and of peculiar arrangement. There are recesses with monumental effigies ; but of those whom they were intended to represent, we have now no information.

Quitting the church, the Water Gate, the only remain of the ancient castle (the site of which is now King-square), was inspected, together with an ancient house on the Quay, and the house in Mill-street, in which the celebrated admiral Blake was born, in 1594. He was educated at the free grammar school of this place, and purchased a small estate in the neighbourhood, where he resided for some time after quitting the university of Oxford, and was returned to represent the town in parliament. A few remains of the Elizabethan structure of his house are well preserved, and were very courteously shewn to the Association. It is now occupied as a ladies' school.

After this inspection the members and visitors assembled to an excellent ordinary at the Clarence Hotel, whence they repaired again to the Town Hall, to hold the evening meeting. The thanks of the Association are due to the proprietors of the gas works of the town, who had generously introduced gas into the building for their accommodation ; and it was well lighted up. The number of members and visitors arrived since the morning meeting had considerably increased, and upwards of a hundred were present when the chairman called upon Mr. George Parker, of Bridgwater, to read some notices he had drawn up on his native town, of which the following is an abstract : —

Ancient Bridgwater. The first notice we have of Bridgwater as a town is to be found in Domesday Book. From this authority (1080-1086), we learn that at the

time of Edward the Confessor, about the year 1041, it constituted the private estate of Merle Swain, a Saxon thane, from whom it was taken and given by the Conqueror to one of his followers, Walter de Dowai, from whom the place derived its additional name,² Walter being since corrupted into Water, to distinguish it from another bar or burgh close by, now East and West Bower. According to Domesday, Bridgwater was held by Merle Swain the Saxon in the time of king Edward, and was assessed to the geld for five hides ; the arable land is sufficient for ten ploughs ; there are in the demesne three ploughs, five bondmen, thirteen villeins, nine bordars, and five cottages who have eight ploughs. There is a mill (which is even now on the stream, and probably also on the spot) which yields five shillings annually, and ten acres of meadow, one hundred acres of coppice wood, and thirty acres of pasture. When Walter Dowai received it, it was worth one hundred shillings, but now seven pounds. Walter had thirteen neat cattle, seven hogs, and sixty - one sheep. Such was Bridgwater eight centuries ago.

Walter Doway, a Norman knight, was of a family deriving its surname from Doway in Flanders, he having attended the Conqueror into England, and for his services rewarded with numerous manors in Somerset, Devon, Dorset, Wilts, and Surrey. His chief residence was at Bampton in Devonshire. At his death he left issue one son, Robert de Baunton or Bampton, who, dying without male issue, bequeathed his estates to Julian his only daughter, who became the wife of William Paganel, a considerable baron of that period. For some offence committed by a member of the family, he was necessitated to quit the country, and his lands were bestowed on William Bardolph, who conveyed the lordship of Bridgwater to William Briwere. The baronial family of Briwere held large possessions in the counties of Devon and Somerset in the reign of Henry II. With the sovereigns Richard and John, Wm. de Briwere was in great favour, and the latter monarch confirmed to him the manor of Bridgwater, obtained from Paganel, with the knights' fees and advowsons of the church, and gave him also license to build three castles, in Hampshire, at Stoke, and

at Bridgwater. The king, at the same time also, granted to him a charter for the lordship of Bridgwater, as we learn from the following :

" John, by the grace of God, etc. Know ye that we have given and granted, and by this our present charter confirmed to our beloved and faithful William Briwere, that Bridgwater shall be a free borough, and that there shall be a free market and a fair."

Although the earliest historical information regarding Bridgwater is, as we have stated, to be obtained from Domesday, we cannot but regard it as one of the colonies or homes of the ancient Britons some ages before that date. We find it accessible by means of its river;³ there are coppices and forests near to it ; one large forest was at North Petherton park, renowned for the quantity of game there. It was, however, insignificant in its buildings and subject to thralldom, and it was not until the thirteenth century that its freedom was established and a castle erected. Since the 23rd Edward I (who died in 1307), it has returned two members to Parliament. The castle was built by William de Briwere in 1202. It must have been of considerable strength, for after being subjected to a series of vicissitudes, it was in 1645 nearly levelled to the ground during the civil wars between Charles I and his Parliament. At this time forty guns were mounted on the walls, which were in many parts of the thickness of fifteen feet, and the fortifications were regular and powerful ; the moat was thirty feet in width, of great depth, and was every tide well filled with water. The castle bayle, bayley or ballium, is a space situated immediately within the outer wall, a kind of court where, within the remembrance of Mr. Parker, the spot was used as a playground, enclosed by wooden palings, and called the Bayley or Castle Baily, but now occupied by King-square. A quantity of loose stone and deep holes pointed clearly as the marks of old foundations, and bits of the old walls around the castle are still to be found near Little Chandos-street.⁴ When the castle was first erected, it was probably rather to ensure the security of the lands around to the chief who erected it than for any other purpose, for it appears that, as the feudal system gathered strength, those castles multiplied in number ; each castle was a

manor, and its castellain owner or governor became the lord of that manor ; markets and fairs were directed to be holden there, not only to prevent frauds in regard to the king's duties or customs, but also as they were esteemed places where the laws of the land were observed, and as such had a very particular privilege. This good order, however, did not long continue, for the lords of the castles began to arrogate to themselves a royal power, exercising it not only within their castles but also in their environs, maintaining jurisdiction both in civil and criminal cases, coining money, and arbitrarily seizing forage and provisions for the subsistence of their garrisons ; which they afterwards demanded as a right. Their oppression at length extended to such a degree that, as we learn from William of Newbury, there were in England as many kings, or rather tyrants, as lords of castles ; and Matthew Paris styles them, " nests of devils" and " dens of thieves". Castles which belonged to the crown or fell to it either by forfeiture or escheat by the non-fulfilment of the duties by which the land was held, circumstances frequently happening in those distracted times, or feudal reigns, were generally committed to the custody of some trusty person who seems to have been indifferently styled governor and constable ; sometimes they were put into the possession of the sheriffs of the county, who afterwards converted them into prisons. The castle of Bridgwater cannot be presumed to form an exception to the general rule, and as circumstances occurred became therefore a comfort or a scourge to the surrounding inhabitants. It, however, gave an importance to the town, and constituted an asylum to many mighty barons at a period when towns were increasing in magnitude and value, and when interest with royalty was exerted from time to time as opportunity occurred to obtain various grants and privileges.

The Briwere family were the principal patrons of the town of Bridgwater. By them was built and endowed the hospital of St. John, which stood at the bottom of Eastover, and is described as having been built and endowed to the honour of God and St. John the Baptist, for the health of souls, for a prior, master, and brethren of the order of St. Augustine, who were to

superintend and maintain thirteen poor and infirm persons, besides religious men and pilgrims. The charter for the foundation of the hospital bears date 16th John, a.d. 1214.

This institution was confirmed by Joceline, bishop of Bath, in 1219, who ordained the said hospital to be free, pure and perpetual for indigent persons only ; that it should enjoy the same liberties and free customs with other houses of the same class from episcopal charges ; that the brethren should have power to elect a master or warden out of their own society, who, with the concurrence of the brethren, should dispose of all offices whatsoever belonging to the house ; that they should wear clerical apparel, such as was common to hospitallers, but with the distinction of a black cross impressed on their mantles and outer garments ; that they should see the parish church of Bridgwater served by some one or other of the society, and by another secular chaplain as curate or assistant ; that one of the brethren, or some secular chaplain in his place, should celebrate mass every day in the chapel of the castle, and also when the lord of the castle should be there and require it to be celebrated at canonical hours ; that the master and brethren should have all profits and oblations arising from the chapel of the castle, and the lord thereof, for the time being, should find books, vestments, utensils, lights, and all other necessaries for the said chapel ; that some of the brethren should have the care of the poor and sickly persons in the infirmary, under the direction of the master of the hospital, and provide for them competently, according to the custom of the house and their own ability ; that two or three women of good fame and conversation should be admitted by the master and brethren to wait upon the poor and infirm, and have lodgings in a cell or chamber in the infirmary near them, and be supported and maintained at the expense of the master and brethren, the said women to be always ready night and day to assist such sickly persons, in every other office except prayers.

In the course of a few years following the death of the founder, the resources of the hospital were found insufficient to relieve the necessities of the great number of needy and infirm persons who crowded

thither to obtain relief. Robert Burnett, bishop of Bath and Wells (1292-95), enabled the master and brethren to administer a greater portion of aid to the poor by appointing the rectory of Wembdon, with all rights and appurtenances to the same belonging, to be holden by the said master and brethren and their successors, and the profits to be applied by them in relieving the said needy and infirm persons. Various other charitable gifts were from time to time added to the hospital property at Chilton, North Petherton, Bovey Tracy in Devonshire, Durlough, Isle Brewer, Northower, Ower Stowey, Stoke Courcy, etc. There were eleven masters from 1298 to 1524. The last was Robert Welsh, who surrendered the hospital after subscribing to the supremacy on Feb. 7, 1539.

Another religious house was founded at the west end of the town by the successor of Wm. de Briwere, who, following the example of his father, established a priory of Minorites or Grey Friars, which he dedicated to St. Francis. Leland notices it in his *Itinerary* (vol. ii).

" In the west part of this town was a college of Grey Friars. Wm. Briwere jun. builded the house; it seems to have been built a.d. 1230. Briwere jun. died 1232. The site of the priory was granted during the reign of Henry VIII to Emanuel Lukar. The accoustomer of Bridgwater hath translated this place to a goodly and pleasant dwelling."

This is now owned by John Sealy, esq., and as you pass down Silver-street from the church gates on the right hand side, is to be seen an arched doorway, which appears to be a relic of the ancient priory. There is also a field near Friars-place, called the Friars, commanding a good view of the distant hills. Where remains of old religious establishments have been found, the site is generally found to have been well selected, either on account of the richness of the ground, abundance of water, or some other estimable advantages.

The only building in the town of Bridgwater now remaining, and linking it as it were with the past, is the parish church. This is an oblong structure, consisting of a nave and chancel, with a quadrangular tower, surmounted by a lofty spire at the west end ; the height

being about one hundred and twenty feet from the tower. There are two rows of fine clustered columns without capitals, supporting six bluntly pointed arches. The windows on the south side of the nave west of the porch appear to be of the time of Edward III or Richard II, from 1327 to 1377. The tracery is formed of quatrefoils and segments of circles. There are also windows of the same time on the north side, and a remarkable one over the north door, composed of two intersected triangles within a circle, the spaces of the inner circle and the angles being filled with trefoils. The north porch is of the same period and interesting. With few exceptions, the other parts of the church have been built or altered about the year 1420, or some time during the reign of Henry V, the tracery of the windows being that of the Perpendicular period. There is a fine monument in the chancel belonging to the family of Kingsmill. Sir Francis Kingsmill is here buried ; he was the younger son of Sir Wm. Kingsmill of Sidmanton, Hants, and also near to Newbury, Berks. Francis and his brother George served in the army of the reign of Elizabeth in 1601, and were in Ireland, when they assisted in suppressing the rebellion of O'Neil, earl of Tyrone. Francis Kingsmill died July 25th, 1620. The old parsonage house is still in existence, and occupied by the clerk of the parish.

William de Briwere not only built the castle and the hospital of St. John, already noticed, but he caused to be made the haven at Bridgwater, and commenced the structure of the stone bridge of three arches completed by sir Thomas Trivet. Briwere married Beatrice de Valle, and by her had issue two sons : Richard, who died in his father's life time, and William, who succeeded him and built the priory. He also had five daughters : Grecia or Griselda, married to Reginald de Broase ; Margaret, wife of William La Feste ; Isabel, married to Baldwin Wake ; Alice, to Reginald Mohun ; and Joan, to W. de Percy. He died in the 11th Henry III (1227), and was buried before the high altar in Dunkswell. William, his successor, married Joan, daughter of W. de Vernon, earl of Devon, and died 16th Henry III (1232) without issue. Upon the division of the estates of the Briwere family, the castle, manor, and borough of Bridgwater,

with the manor of Haygrove, fell to the eldest sister, Grecia, whose husband, Reginald Braose, lord of Brecknock, Radnor and Abergavenny, died in the 6th Henry III (1222), leaving issue William his son and heir, who was assassinated by Llewellyn, prince of Wales. His eldest daughter, Maud, married Roger de Mortimer, to whom the castle of Bridgwater fell. One of the Mortimers became at length earl of March, the last of whom married Ann, the daughter of Edward, earl of Stafford, who died Jan. 19, 1424, without issue, being only twenty-four years of age ; whereupon Richard, duke of York, son of Ann, his sister, was by an inquisition found to be his next heir. The lands and lordships of which the earl of March died possessed, Dugdale says were in the counties of England and Wales, " many and great". Among them, the castle and the third part of the borough of Bridgwater, with the manor of Haygrove and North Petherton. The duke of York married Cecily, daughter of Ralph Neville, earl of West moreland, and was slain at Wakefield in 1460, leaving issue Edward, afterwards Edward IV, who inheriting his estates, the castle and third part of the manor of Bridgwater, with other lands, thus became vested in the crown. In subsequent periods, they were sometimes held by the queens-consort of England, and in this right they enjoyed a share in the patronage of the hospital of St. John, which in 1524 was divided into three parts, one of which belonged to Katharine, queen of England, and the remaining two parts to Henry, lord D'Aubney.⁵ King Charles I, by letters patent bearing date 11th July, second year of his reign (1626), granted to sir W. Whitmore, knt., and Geo. Whitmore, esq., and their heirs, the manor and castle of Bridgwater. The Whitmores sold the manor of Bridgwater, castle, manor of Haygrove, etc., to Henry Harvey, son of Wm. Harvey, esq., of Bridgwater, which Henry Harvey had issue two sons, Henry and John; the elder inherited the estate, but having no issue, bequeathed it in 1669 to his uncle John. The castle of Bridgwater was leased by Henry Harvey in 1643, two years before the siege by the Parliamentary army under sir Thomas Fairfax, to Edmund Windham, the king's governor.

Bridgwater and its neighbourhood at this time bear a prominent position in the history of England. The great changes and events dependant on the military movements in 1645 are recorded by our historians. One of these, Oldmixon, was a native of Bridgwater, and his tombstone is to be seen in the churchyard of St. Mary.

A century later, and Bridgwater began to exhibit increase in its population and advancement in improvements. The old buildings, especially the noted Swan inn and the King's Head inn, were removed for modern erections. A very old building is still standing, called the Market House inn, with its date imbedded in the wall towards the Pig's Cross, in the centre of which street a cross formerly stood. A portion of an other old building is to be seen in Silver-street; it consists of an old wood archway, which formerly led to the priory. Within the last century, nearly every shop between the church and the bridge was without glazed windows. Many of the shops within the last half-century had outside laps or folding shutters of wood, which were lifted up in the morning and closed at night; one of these was very recently to have been seen in the upper part of St. Mary-street, and a large open drain ran from the top of West-street down Mount-street to North Gate, along by the back of the north part of King-square to the river. There were not then above a dozen houses from North Gate, opposite the national school where the old gate stood, to the Brick-yard. The archways of South Gate, West Gate and East Gate, were then standing, and their hinges were apparent. The present gaol is one of the oldest buildings in the town, but it has a new front built to it. Behind and around the present custom house are some remains worthy of notice, particularly in the bonded cellars, and an entrance near Mr. Sealey's bank, being portions formerly belonging to the old castle.

The thanks of the meeting were given to Mr. Parker for his notices of ancient Bridgwater, and a conversation ensued in regard to some of the localities mentioned. To the notices of Mr. Parker succeeded a paper by J. R. Planche, esq. "On the Succession and Armorial Bearings of the Earls and Dukes of Somerset." (See pp.

312-328 ante.) The remainder of the evening was occupied in a further examination of the municipal records.

Mr. Black resumed his observations upon the researches he had made among the corporate papers of the town. He particularly dwelt upon the interesting character of an Exchequer, or "taxation roll", which contained the name and residence of the inhabitants, and mentioned every place in each hundred, hamlet, parish, etc., in the county, and the amount of taxation contributed by them. In reference to the assessments of the several townships, it mentioned that the assessment for the whole of the county amounted to £1,357 : 19 : 2½. It also stated the fact, that whilst Bath was assessed at £13, Bridgwater had to pay double the amount : thus shewing that the town was at one time a place of much greater importance than the present "Queen of the West." Taunton was assessed at £10. Mr. Black strongly recommended the printing of this document entire, by the Somersetshire Archaeological Society, as of great local interest.

[The following day, 26 August, the Association left in 10 carriages for Glastonbury. On the way they visited the museum of William Stradling at Polden Hill.]

Editorial note: The foot notes were numbered anew on each page. These have been re-numbered consecutively here as end-notes.

End Notes

- 1) Of these objects views may be found in the *Proceedings of the Somerset shire Archaeological Society*, vol. i, together with a description of them by Mr. William Baker, pp. 63, 64.
- 2) Burgh Walter. or Brugge Walter, the burgh of Walter of Dowai
- 3) The river Parret runs, in a circuitous course, a distance of about fourteen miles, from the sea to Bridgwater. At spring tides, the head, or "bore", as it is called, rushes up with peculiar power, with a wave of five or six feet, — after a brisk wind from the westward, very much beyond that height, so that often very many vessels are floated.

4) Colonel Tynte very kindly submitted to the Association some interesting drawings of the Castle as it existed in former days.

5) See Savage's *Collection of Ancient Events. History of Taunton.*

Editorial Note:

Mr Black who examined the Borough Archives

BLACK, WILLIAM HENRY (1808–1872), antiquary, was the eldest son of John Black of Kintore, in Aberdeenshire, and was born 7 May 1808. From his mother, who came of a good family (the Langleys), possessing estates in Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire, he imbibed his love of religion, and also his thirst for antiquarian knowledge. He was educated at a private school, and at seventeen years of age became himself a tutor among families residing at Tulse Hill and neighbourhood.

As a reader at the British Museum he became acquainted with many literary men, through whose influence he obtained a situation in the Public Record Office, attaining at last to the position of assistant keeper. It was during the time he filled this post that he corrected the errors in Rymer's *Fœdera*. He was a prolific writer, especially on antiquarian subjects. He prepared an edition of the British part of the *Itinerary of Antoninus* (never issued), and contributed to Samuel Bentley's *Excerpta Historica*. He catalogued the manuscripts of the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford, the Arundel MSS. in the library of the College of Arms, and Colfe's library at Lewisham, and left behind him a monograph on the Roman mile, which still awaits editing and publication.

At the time of his death he was in nomination for, and would have been elected on, the council of the Society of Antiquaries. He was one of the earliest members of the British Archæological Society, the Surrey, London and Middlesex, and Wiltshire Archæological Societies, and the founder of the Chronological Institute of London, Palestine Archæological Association, and Anglo-biblical Institute, besides being a member of the Camden Society.

His religious views were somewhat peculiar. He was the pastor of a small sect called the Seventh Day Baptists, whose

chapel is in Mill Yard, Lemon Street, Whitechapel, and maintained that Saturday was the Sabbath. Black died 12 April 1872. As a conscientious and painstaking antiquary, he has had few equals in the present century.

Source: 1st ed DNB, 1905.

Edited by Tony & Jane Woolrich, 30/09/2019