

Second Day's Proceedings.

On Wednesday morning, the members left the Plume of Feathers Hotel in brakes for Worthy, where they alighted, and walked to Culbone Church through the beautiful woods of Ashley Combe, *viâ* the lower private road following the coast. Permission to make use of this route was obtained through the kindness of the owner, the Earl of Lovelace.

Culbone Church.

Arrived at Culbone, the large party inspected the Church, which took some time, as its very limited proportions only permitted the entrance of small groups.

Mr. F. BLIGH BOND, F.R.I.B.A., mounting the steps of what was once the old churchyard cross, gave a brief description of the Church, which takes its name from the dedicatory saint, Culbone or Culbon, who, according to an old local tradition, was a priest who crossed over from Glamorganshire with St. Dubricius, and built a chapel here. The ancient name of the place was Kitnore, a name derived from the Anglo-Saxon words *cyta*, a cavern, and *ore*, the sea-shore. The Church is thirty-three feet long, the nave being twelve feet eight inches wide, and the chancel rather under ten feet, the walls being about two feet six inches thick. It is claimed that this is the smallest church in England, though there is some doubt on the point. The building, though so small, is perfect, consisting of nave and chancel and south porch. A small slated spire surmounts the roof over the west gable. Internally the fittings are very complete, consisting of old benches, chancel-screen, and font. The oldest feature in the Church is the little two-light window on the north side of the chancel, evidently pre-Norman, and cut out of a single stone. It is ornamented with a moulded baluster between the lights, and an animal's head is carved above. At this point is the mark of an ancient doorway, now built up, leading to a former chamber for the priest, or for an anchorite, the foundations of which were extant not long ago. The walls of the Church are Norman in date, though the rest of the windows are later; and the font is also Norman, though it has been spoken of as Saxon. The screen is interesting, and its carving bears a resemblance to the Devonshire type. It is one of the earlier variety of screens, and originally supported a rood-loft projecting on the westward side, like some of those still standing perfect in Wales. The small light set low in the north wall illuminated the dark space beneath the loft canopy. Some of the screen panels and bench-ends exhibit the linen pattern.¹

1. Mr. Bligh Bond has kindly amplified his notes on Culbone Church since reading the Rev. Dr. J. C. Cox's article on "The Churches of the Hundred of Carhampton" in *The Athenæum*, Sept. 15th, 1906.

Returning from Culbone by the higher private road, the gardens of Ashley Combe were thrown open to the visitors, who lingered willingly for half-an-hour in those pleasant precincts, until the imperative whistle set them again on their travels. Porlock Weir was soon reached, whence the brakes conveyed the party to Porlock, where luncheon was served at the Victoria Church Room.

Porlock Church.

After luncheon, the Church was visited, the principal features of which were described by Chancellor CHADWYCK-HEALEY, C.B., K.C., F.S.A., Chancellor of the Dioceses of Bath and Wells, Exeter, and Salisbury, who said it bore traces of three architectural periods, the earliest building that stood on the site being possibly earlier than the twelfth century, and from marks of fire on the stones it was suggested that it might have been destroyed by fire. The Early English period was evident in the tower window, three lights in the east window, and a beautiful piscina in the chancel, which, up to the restoration in 1888 to 1890, had been concealed behind a mural tablet. The south wall of the aisle had a lean-to roof, which was common in Early English churches, and in the same wall the windows showed evidence of that period, the sill of one of the Early English windows still remaining in position, as might be seen from the outside. The south aisle dated from the time of the Haringtons, lords of the manor in the fifteenth century, at which time alterations were made and the place fitted up for chantry purposes. A parclose screen separated the parish church from the Harington Chantry, which was founded by John Lord Harington, who went to France with the second expedition after the battle of Agincourt, and died there in 1418, but, though it was contemplated so long before, the chantry was not actually founded until 1476. Why it was delayed is not known, but it had been suggested that it might,

if done during the widow's lifetime, have deprived her of her revenue. The effigies, which were those of John Lord Harington and his wife, probably originally stood on the floor of the south aisle, and they were earlier in date than the canopy under which they lay, and were in existence before. The sculptor of the effigies was unknown, but there was a strong resemblance, from an artistic point of view, between the statues and that of Hugh Luttrell, at Dunster Church, who died in 1425. One reason for believing that the figures were not in their original position was that, by order of the founder, six candles were to be placed around the tomb, but if it was then where it was now some of the candles would have been in the parish church, which would have been unthinkable. Another reason was that during the restoration fragments of a Purbeck marble plinth, of fifteenth century work probably, used for the figures were found, and it was the custom to put effigies on the ground raised only by a plinth. Later they were removed and placed under the canopy, which was then highly coloured and gilded. The figure in the recess in the wall near the south door had given rise to a good deal of discussion. It was commonly called the Crusader's tomb, because the legs of the figure were crossed, but it was a misconception that every cross-legged figure was the effigy of a Crusader, and this effigy was probably that of Sir Simon de Roges, the date of whose death was unknown, though it was certain that he was dead in 1306. Those interested in armour would notice that the links of the mail hauberk were not shown, which indicated that the figure was originally painted. It was probably the figure of a knight of from 1250 to 1300, if not earlier. What the other recess in the south wall was for was not known. Another feature of interest in the Church was the priest's vestry, which might have been a chapel, but it was quite a small building, with no piscina, though on each side of the window, which faces the east, there were stone brackets for images. It was entered by a door behind the

curtains near the altar. There had been a good deal of controversy about it, some considering it to be a mortuary chapel, and others a vestry. Another curious feature about the Church was the gutter between the aisle and the nave, which was of wrought stone throughout, instead of being of lead as was usually the case. He pointed out other features—the doorway to the rood-loft, and the old parvis or room over the porch, which was opened at the time of the restoration and the external eighteenth century entrance closed, and he pointed out a deep niche in one of the pillars, the purpose of which was unknown. The screen and rood-loft were taken down in 1768. Some of the steps to the rood-loft still remain.

He also directed attention to the Easter tomb, or rather stone base for the Easter tomb, standing within the altar rails on the north side. It bears upon its front the sacred wounds and on the east end four scourges, a reed and a spear. All these emblems appear, similarly treated, upon the font in Dunster Church. The design and execution of these details in the two churches seemed to lead irresistibly to the conclusion that they came from the same hand. Illustrations of this tomb are to be found in Mrs. Halliday's work on "The Porlock Monuments"; Preb. Hook's "History of Porlock Church" and Parker's "Glossary of Architecture."

The CHANCELLOR then drew attention to the altar tomb standing in the porch, which originally had stood on the west side of the north porch, but had suffered so much from weather that it had been brought inside. It had the five sacred wounds on the front, with a portcullis at the one end, and a Tudor rose at the other, a similar tomb standing outside the porch at Selworthy Church. Several suggestions had been made respecting it, one being that it was once the high altar of the Church, and another that it was a dole-table for the distribution of the "sufficient bread and cheese and the ten gallons of good beer" which, by the foundation deed of the chantry, were to be distributed in the Church, while yet

another suggestion was that it was an Easter tomb, which he did not think likely, and he believed the first suggestion to be the correct one, or that it was the chantry altar.

Colonel BRAMBLE said he put down the figure in armour as being about the year 1280, and it was very similar in appearance to the well-known Sir Roger de Trumpington brass, the period of which was settled. Mail armour differed so much in course of a few years that one could not dogmatize. He agreed that the figure having its legs crossed did not necessarily indicate that it was the effigy of a Crusader, the attitude, he believed, being simply that of rest and repose.

The Rev. E. H. BATES thanked the CHANCELLOR for his remarks, and after the company had further inspected the Church and churchyard, a move was made to

Doverly Court,¹

an ancient house at the east end of the town. Here Mr. CHADWYCK-HEALEY pointed out the chief features. The building stands on the site of an earlier house, some fragments of which remain. Mr. Buckle, under whose direction the house was restored for Mr. Chadwyck-Healey, has described it as "an example of a remarkably small manor house of the fifteenth century. Although scarcely more than a cottage in size, in style and finish it is not inferior to many a larger house. The hall has a handsome oak ceiling, a stone fire-place, and a large and richly traceried window. The window has four lights in width with a square head and label. It is crossed by a transom having two small quatrefoils over each light, a favourite device in the south and west of Somerset. The head is filled with tracery of a rare and quaint design, the characteristic feature of which is that the cusped arch at the top of each light is incomplete, appearing as though the joint

1. There are illustrations of Doverly Court in Mr. Chadwyck-Healey's "History of part of West Somerset," pp. 297-301.

of the arch had been cut away, and the glass runs up without a break into the central batement-light over. Similar tracery may be seen in the south aisle of Old Cleeve church and in the east window of Queen Camel, for the chancel of which Cleeve Abbey was responsible; in the east window of St. John's at Glastonbury, the west window of Wellington, and in two windows at Holcombe Rogus in Devon, the east window of the chancel and the east window of the south aisle. Over the hall is a chamber approached by a stone vice. It has an open roof of oak, a small fire-place and four small windows destitute of tracery. Adjoining the chamber, over the stairs, is a garderobe, the stone drain from which still exists." The southern portion of the building included kitchen and offices. The buttery-hatch is in position. The kitchen appears to have had an oak screen across it separating it from the buttery. A small squint is near the fireplace looking out on the road which was formerly a court, the pitching of which still remains buried under the road. The hall was at one time hung with tapestry and two or three of the hooks still remain. Those which have been broken away can still be traced at regular intervals round the hall.

Selworthy Church.

After walking up the hill out of Porlock the members rejoined the conveyances and drove through Bossington and Allerford, their attention in passing being directed to Lynch Chapel, no stop being made. Proceeding to Selworthy, the company seated themselves in the Church, which was described by the Rev. Preb. HANCOCK, F.S.A.

Before dealing with the Church, Preb. Hancock drew attention to an interesting feature with regard to the parish, viz: the number of chapels it possessed. They had just passed West Lynch Chapel, which had a good window and a fine roof, and one or two of the original bench-ends had been recently

found. The chapel had formerly been used as a barn, but had been restored for its original purpose as a chapel. About two miles to the south-east was a smaller chapel at Tivington, dedicated to St. Leonard, which also had been used at one time as a shed, but was repaired fifty years ago and converted into a dame's school. It had also of late years been restored and was now used entirely for religious purposes. There were ruins of yet another chapel by the side of the road on the way to Cloutsham, which he was inclined to think had been a votive chapel erected by some pious person to commemorate his escape from great peril. The other chapels he believed to have been built by owners of manors at a distance from the parish church, as places where their families and tenants might worship, and to have been served by resident or peripatetic chaplains. Coming to the parish church, he pointed out that the porch had two storeys, and on entering the edifice they would notice the font, with its curious movable cover of oak, carved with a linen pattern. When the Society had come there some years ago, they assigned the bowl of the font to the Saxon period, but the font, if old at all—it had been much reworked—was not earlier than the end of the XII or the beginning of the XIII Century. The greater part of the Church was of the Perpendicular period, and the south aisle had the date 1527. There were some fine windows in that aisle and a beautiful oak roof of waggon-shape, the ribs of which sprang from behind a deep and elaborate oak cornice which had been until recently much decayed. It had been well restored by the Selworthy Wood-carving Guild who had also carved the bench-ends and the bosses of the roof of the north aisle. The chancel of the Church was approached by two steps, but the height of the piscina on the south wall of the south aisle indicated that this part of the Church had been raised one step, probably for making the vaults which exist under the east end of the aisle. During the restoration of the Church, in 1875, a painting of the Virgin and Child was discovered under the east

window of the south aisle, and round the window were found floriated designs and portions of inscriptions in black letter, but it was found impossible to recover these paintings. Not only the walls of that aisle but the whole Church was evidently covered with fresco-painting when built, as painted devices had been found on all the walls. Mr. J. Sedding, the late well-known London architect, considered the sacarium to be the oldest part of the building. The visitors would observe the niches for figures of saints on each side of the east window. The post-Reformation altar-table had been removed to Lynch, and the present carved one put in its place, some years ago. A beautifully-carved oak screen, of which a few fragments had been found, ran at one time across the Church. The north aisle, the date of which Mr. Sedding regarded as being about 1390, had a waggon-roof, the present bosses having been executed by the Selworthy Carving Guild; and below the chancel step a doorway gave access to the turret-staircase, which originally gave access to the rood-loft. Close to the south entrance, steps led up to the chamber over the entrance porch, which was a lumber-room at one time, but was later fitted up as a pew by the Hon. Mrs. Fortescue, grandmother of the present Sir Thomas Acland. The room was now used as a vestry. The tower, which was 40ft. in height and very massive, was part of the Early English church.

Prebendary Hancock drew attention to the fragments of early painted glass in some of the windows, especially those in the east window of the north aisle, where were depicted the arms of St. John impaling Jew and of Arundell of Trerice. He also pointed out as worthy of notice the quaint bosses in the nave and chancel. Those in the chancel were of especial interest as they had coats of arms carved on them. One of those coats was that of St. John, which is repeated more than once. The speaker stated that the advowson was at one time in the possession of the St. John family and that possibly the chancel was rebuilt by a member of that

family, perhaps by Alice, the widow of the last male St. John of Luccombe, who died in 1488. Other arms in the chancel were he thought, those of Huish. Mr. Hancock also drew attention to the old chest for the receipt of the parish documents and alms and to a carved stone of Perpendicular character at present outside the Church, which might have been an altar cast out from the Church at the Reformation, or an altar tomb. He also asked those present, as they went down the hill from the Church, to observe the little window in the tithe-barn which they would pass, through which in old days the tithe corn was put into the barn, and on which were represented the emblematical figures of the three principal kinds of tithe, viz: the sheaf of corn, the lamb and the pig.

The Rev. E. H. BATES having thanked Preb. Hancock, the party proceeded through Selworthy Green to the tithe barn in the rectory grounds, by kind permission of the Rev. A. E. Buchanan, Rector, where tea was partaken of. A little rain fell here, and mists settled on the hills, obscuring the grand view from the church and village.

Bratton Court.

The journey was resumed viâ Bratton, where, at Bratton Court, an old manor house recently restored by its owner, the Earl of Lovelace, another halt was made, and by kind permission of the tenant, Mr. T. Lovelace, the house and buildings were inspected.

The Rev. E. H. BATES made a few remarks, and described the building as one of the few now remaining specimens of manor houses as they used to be, when the dwelling-house was as near as it could be to the farm-yard, instead of being put as far back as possible. In those days everyone farmed his own land, and when the house was situated as that was they could look from the dining-room window and see what was going on in the yard. It had a large gateway to admit a full load,

with a small door in the larger one for people to pass in and out, the owner of the house no doubt keeping a porter who lived in the room above the gateway. The whole building was of a square formation, so as to preserve the utmost security to the occupier in olden days. That house was on a larger scale than most of the other houses they had seen, and it reminded them of a very interesting building of the kind they had visited at Poyntington in 1896. A distinctive feature was the large amount of woodwork used instead of stone. Inside the large hall was now cut up into rooms for convenience sake, which made it more difficult to picture what it was like originally. The hall ran the whole length of the house, and on the left-hand side was a portion of the wooden screen, while on the right-hand side there had probably been the buttery. At the time when the place was built it was the idea of every English gentleman to have a chapel of his own, and there was one in this case. As to where it was tradition fixed it as being on the upper floor on the left-hand side looking at the building from the outside. It had since been turned into a living-room, and everything ecclesiastical about it had been swept away. The tradition was that the house was the birthplace of Judge Bracton, but of that he had nothing to say.

The party then went through the house, which was inspected with great interest, Mr. T. H. Andrew, agent of Lord Lovelace, the owner, explaining the principal apartments.

Before leaving, the Rev. E. H. BATES returned the thanks of the Society to the tenant, Mr. Lovelace, for his kindness, and the party then returned to Minehead.

Mr. T. H. ANDREW has sent the following notes on the interior of Bratton Court:—

The central feature of the house was the hall, 37 feet long, 25 feet wide, and 28 feet in height to the apex of its massive oak roof. Though now sub-divided into two floors and many rooms, the original proportions of this hall, with its walls 4 feet in thickness, are easily traced. The early stone fireplace

remains almost intact ; but unfortunately the huge oak principals have disappeared from above the level of the bedroom ceilings. At the south end of the hall was a long low apartment or cellar. Over it was the lord's chamber or solar, the floor of which was supported lengthways by the heavy oak beam and the roughly hewn oak pier. The windows of the solar faced south. Its fireplace and traces of the newel staircase have recently been discovered. At the north end of the hall fragments of the oak screen remain. Beyond it were the buttery and a passage to the kitchen quarters, now the higher barn.

The eastern wing has two stories, and is somewhat later than the hall. Its upper room, 30 feet by 14 feet, has an open timbered roof of oak in excellent preservation, and is traditionally known as "The Chapel." Doubts have been expressed as to whether so large a room would be devoted to the purposes of a chapel ; but it is significant that its orientation is due east and not in alignment with the main building. Evidences remain of a partition or screen beneath the easternmost principals ; and possibly a portion only of the room was used as a chapel. Among recent discoveries here are fragments of a piscina, the gothic doorway in the east wall, and the fireplace in the south wall.

Gratitude is due to Lord Lovelace for his care that nothing of interest should be removed or covered up.

Conversazione.

The Local Committee entertained the Society in the evening at the Public Hall, by a *Conversazione* with Folk-songs and Morris-dances. The names of those who formed this Committee were as follows :—The Rev. F. Etherington (chairman), the Revs. M. Alford, C. H. Heale, and Preb. Hancock, with Colonel H. Moore, Major R. F. Moore, Dr. T. Ollerhead, and Messrs. T. Andrew, C. Birmingham, J. Burgess, J. Davis,

J. Leather, W. Ludlow, C. N. Welman, and C. Kille, assisted by Mrs. Alford, Mrs. Andrew, and Mrs. Etherington.

The Rev. C. L. MARSON spoke upon the interest and wonder of the Folk-Songs, lately found in Somerset by Mr. Cecil Sharp and himself, of which over a thousand melodies have now been noted down, many of which are in the old modal scales, which went out in 1600. He pointed out, that as Art Music is grafted upon Folk-Song, the fact that there is no English School of Music is easily accounted for by the fact that our Folk-Song has been allowed to die ungarnered. He then sketched the opposition which Church Councils had offered to the *Ballimathix and Carmina Amatoria* of the people and the more successful opposition of County Councils, who have killed Folk-Song by their so-called education. The present day perhaps sees the last, not only of Folk-Song tradition but of all tradition, for the old peasant repeats his tale always in the same words and with the same gestures. Hence the trustworthiness of peasant tradition, which soon will be non-existent and then no one will believe there ever was such a thing.

Several of the Folk-Songs were sung by the Rev. G. Peppin and a trained party of Minehead school-children, and the children also danced Morris-dances discovered by Mr. Sharp in Oxfordshire.

The Rev. S. BARING-GOULD then spoke, with enthusiasm, on the delights of Song-collecting, and told stories to illustrate the fact that often an old folk-singer knew an almost incredible number of songs.

The Rev. E. H. BATES proposed a cordial vote of thanks to the local committee and all their helpers. He said that the conversazione was one of the most interesting and successful the Society had ever had in going to and fro through the length of Somerset.