

Wednesday.

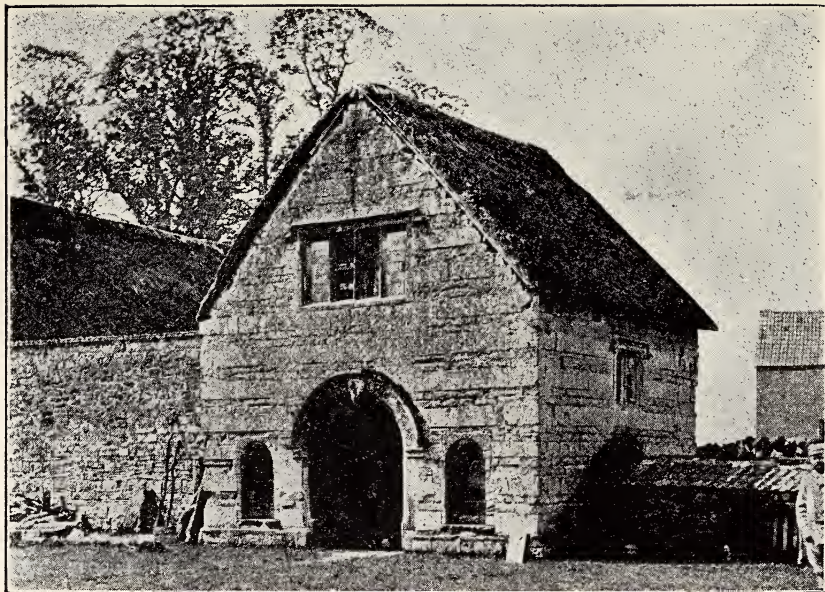
A large party started punctually, under the able direction of the Hon. Sec., Col. BRAMBLE, at 9.30, and after a pleasant drive, halted first at

Cathanger Manor House,

where the most striking feature was the remarkable gatehouse, the principal entrance to the courtyard. Mr. Buckle pointed out that it was extremely small. But in the Elizabethan and Jacobean period the ordinary practice was to mount and dismount outside the courtyard; horses did not commonly go into the courtyard. A curious point about the gate was the outside circular arch, with a little classical character, but with Gothic detail. In the middle of the gatehouse was a square doorway, and here the door was hung. One half of the porch was outside the door and the other half inside, so that there was a covered place outside the door in which people could wait for admittance. Mr. Buckle also pointed out what beauty had been got merely by a systematic arrangement of the lias stone. He said the gate was built more for ornament than anything else. It could not have been for defence; anybody could have got over the low wall at the sides. In conclusion, Mr. Buckle drew attention to the inscription on one of the walls of the house, to the effect that John Walsh built it in 1559.

Isle Abbots Church

was the next stopping place. Mr. Buckle said that the tower of this church was perhaps the finest of its own particular



GATEHOUSE AT CATHANGER



ILE ABBOTS

character in the county. The arrangement of the buttresses was more or less similar to that at Huish. The parapet had been altered, and the alteration was very clear. The diagonal buttress was carried through the parapet, but on the top was another pinnacle, which had no relation to anything below it. The tower had been taken down, as far as the top of the west window, and rebuilt in recent years; but it appeared to have been rebuilt in such a way as to absolutely reproduce the original tower. It was small, but very elegantly finished in all its details, and had the advantage of having almost the whole of the niches filled with the original figures. The general idea of these seemed to be a representation of the triumph over sin. On the west side, in the upper row, were St. Peter and St. Paul, below B.V.M., and a curious piece of sculpture representing our Saviour stepping out of the grave. Underneath his feet were Roman soldiers, on one of whom he was treading. On the east side there were two niches. The one on the dexter side contained the figure of St. John the Baptist, with the *Agnus Dei* in his hand. On the other was Pope Clement, with the papal tiara and double cross, and in the right hand an anchor, his symbol. On the south side St. Margaret, St. Katherine, and St. George on horseback, and on the north side St. Michael with a star for coat armour. The eastern part of the church was a beautiful example of Early English work. It had a large chancel, and charming side windows. In the east end there was a very poor window, and underneath, three panels of quatrefoil outline, apparently without reason. He would suggest that these were panels prepared for the consecration crosses. If this were so they must believe that the church was not consecrated, because the crosses were not there. They knew that churches were for a very long time unconsecrated.

The Rev. F. W. WEAVER said the church belonged to the Abbey of Muchelney, and that was the reason why it had not been consecrated, and therefore why no figures were there.

Mr. BUCKLE, continuing, said inside the church the beautiful Early English carving in the chancel was a conspicuous feature. The piscina and the sedilia were of a remarkable character. The work about the former was very fanciful; while the latter consisted of three semi-circular stone stalls, so to speak, which stood right out and were not under the canopy at all. The benches were interesting because they were not of the ordinary Somerset pattern. Just inside the church was a small space intended for a font, and why it should have been moved from there was difficult to see. It was now hidden behind one of the piers. Yet this font was one of the most remarkable things in the church. It had a square basin at the top, and the four sides were carved with quaint figures of birds, dragons, and foliage of a very early character. It seemed to have been altered in the 13th century. There was also in the church the lower part of the screen. The nave roof was decidedly peculiar: pointed in the centre instead of being round. It was very late in date. On the bosses were some of those characteristics of Flemish style which were often met with in wood-carving of the 16th century. There was a Jacobean screen in the tower arch, and some Jacobean oak work around it.

The party then drove to

Langford Manor House,

an interesting Elizabethan house, the residence of Mr. R. Barrington. There were some curious and well-preserved inscriptions on the walls of the porch, dated 1773. The first was: "Have a care with whom you talk, to whom, and what, and where." The other was: "A powerful attachment to a fine woman is not easily reducible within the rules of reason."

Swell Church and Court House

were the next places visited, the site of Lord Chatham's house (Burton Pynsent) and monument being passed on the way. Swell Church was very small, but, Mr. Buckle said, very inter-

esting. It had been allowed to go into a state of decay, but that added to its picturesqueness. Except the Norman doorway and the font—which was probably a Norman one pared down—there was nothing left earlier than the fifteenth century. The rest of the church was Perpendicular. The windows and the roof remained very much as originally built. The benches were very plain, merely rough carpenter's work ; but in character they resembled those at Isle Abbots. In the east window there was the shield of Beauchamp, plain vair. On each side of the east window was a niche, the front of which had been destroyed. In the floor of the chancel were two brasses to the Newton family, who in the fifteenth century occupied the Court House. There was a very pretty chalice and paten, dated 1573 ; and the register books started from 1559. On the outside the bell turret at the west end was entirely modern. The pulpit and reading desk were Jacobean, as were also the altar and rails. The church was dedicated to St. Catharine.

Mr. Hallett's residence, called the " Court House "—a fine old building—was also inspected both inside and out.

Luncheon.

At the kind invitation of the President, Mr. CELY TREVILIAN, the party then proceeded to Midelney Place, where they were heartily received by Mrs. Cely Trevilian, and sat down to a welcome luncheon, served in a large marquee.

After cordial thanks to the host and hostess for their kind hospitality, offered on behalf of the Society, by the High Sheriff of the County (Mr. SPEKE), a move on foot was made to

Curry Rivel Church.

Mr. BUCKLE said the church was divided into two parts. From the centre they would see nothing but late Perpendicular, but in one corner there was a beautiful and interesting old chapel. The whole of the church seemed to have been rebuilt in the time of Henry VII or Henry VIII. On the outside of the porch

over the doorway there was a portecullis and the three feathers of the Prince of Wales, on bosses. The church was really a very fine one indeed. There were some magnificent windows, similar to those they had admired so much at Langport. The heads of the windows were entirely filled with Somerset tracery, and what added to its dignity was the transom and the tiny quatrefoils. Some parts of the church were built of Ham Hill stone, and other parts of the local lias, with only Ham dressings. The tower was about the same date as the rest. It was tall, and had recently been rebuilt of lias stone with Ham Hill dressings. It looked as if it were designed for a spire, and if a spire were put on the top he believed it would be magnificent. In the porch was a very nice vault, and outside were three gurgoyles, representing musicians: a fiddler, a man with the bagpipes, and a third whose instrument had perished. Many of the gurgoyles on the building were not true gurgoyles, being only used as a decorative feature. Amongst the furniture of the church perhaps the principle thing to be noticed was the benches, many of which were old and very finely carved. Another great feature was the screen, the central part of which had unfortunately been destroyed. The two parts remaining were very fine specimens. It was unfortunate they had not got the central part of the rood screen, because that would add so much to the dignity of the church. There were in the windows considerable remains of the original glass. Among the figures, Mr. Buckle pointed out one similar to that referred to at Langport, as having two jugs in his hand. In this case the head-dress was missing. There were also badges and coats of arms, which Mr. Buckle described, and he drew attention to a curious aumbry on the north side of the chancel. The sedilia were of a form often met with in the mediæval period, merely consisting of a bench below the south window of the chancel. The only evidence of an earlier church than the present, was the chapel on the north side of the chancel. That belonged to the thirteenth

century, and appeared to have been built by one of the L'Ortis. Later, considerable alterations were made in the walls of the chapel, and the interior arches, which had the nail head in their capitals, and the ball-flower over, were then inserted. Later still the windows seemed to have been altered again, because there was Early Perpendicular tracery in them. Then came a time when the rest of the church was rebuilt. The external buttresses were carried up, the late buttresses growing out of the early ones; and a parapet was put round to match the parapet on the rest of the church. Still later there were additions to the monuments in the chapel, and these additions extended from that time to this. There were four arches in a row over figures along the north wall, and at a later period another was added. Underneath the arch which divided off the chapel from the chancel, there was a magnificent Jennings monument of Jacobean date. Unfortunately it was much broken, and a good deal of the decorative work was missing. Inside the chapel there was more than one classical monument. They had probably been brought from elsewhere. On one was an inscription to one person on the front, and to another on the back. Mr. Buckle also drew attention to the very fine Early English piscina on the north side of the earlier chapel.

CANON CHURCH mentioned that in the registers at Wells (R. 3, fo. 20), there was this entry: "The church at Curry Rivel was appropriated to the Canons of Busteleham, diocese of Sarum, by Bishop Ralph, by consent of the Dean and Chapter, June 14th, 1391."

Muchelney Church.

An adjournment was then made to Muchelney Church, where the Rev. S. O. BAKER read a paper dealing with the parish and church of Muchelney, which appears in a book entitled "Local Legends," etc., published by G. H. Hemmel, Langport (price 1s.) A large number of relics from the

Abbey were to be seen in the church, and also in the old rectory opposite.

Muchelney Abbey.

In the churchyard some of the foundations of the Abbey Church were clearly defined. Mr. Buckle was asked to describe them, and he said he could not help feeling that he was encroaching upon Mr. Baker's prerogative, for it was largely owing to Mr. Baker's exertions that anything of the Abbey Church was now to be seen, and he knew more about what had been discovered than anybody else. They were now standing inside the Abbey Church of Muchelney. There was a chapel or transept reaching out from this Abbey Church to meet the little transept of the parish church, and the two were only separated by a very few feet. From that chapel they could trace the outer wall of the church clearly to where they were standing. Then two walls became visible, the lower one curving round to form an apsidal termination, the upper and later wall carried straight on. Connected with the apse there was a small apsidal chapel. Judging simply from the shape of the lines, it appeared to be Norman. This church was rebuilt in the fifteenth century, and was much altered. The east end was taken down and rebuilt, when both the main apse and the little apsidal chapel were entirely obliterated. The east end was then built with a square termination, and beyond the east wall there projected another square chapel.

The Rev. S. O. BAKER drew attention to a stone coffin just outside the wall of the apsidal chapel. They came upon this when excavating, and found the lid upside down. It was now in the tower. When the men got the lid up they found tiles under, and upon excavating further nearly the whole of the apsidal chapel was found to be covered with tiles. These were now in the parish church, because people appropriated them.

By the kind permission of Mr. Westlake, the interior of the cloister, as well as the whole exterior of the building, was open to inspection, after which a return was made to Langport.



MUCHELNEY ABBEY

The Evening Meeting

was held at eight o'clock in the Parish Room, the PRESIDENT in the chair.

The Rev. DOUGLAS HAYWARD, on behalf of Mr. W. Bond Paul, read a paper on "Langport Church," printed in Part II.

On which COL. BRAMBLE differed respecting the niche in the south porch. Instead of being of Early English date, he considered it to be either fifteenth or beginning of the sixteenth century.

Mr. A. S. BICKNELL read a paper on "A Forgotten Chancellor," printed in Part II.

CANON CHURCH said that Thomas Bicknell had asked in his Will that an ancient door in the nave of Wells Cathedral should be closed, in order that his monument might be placed at that spot. It was strange such a request should have been made, still more so that it should have been granted. The chapter had done their best to discover the right name to which the monument belonged. and if it were now brought to light it ought to be restored.

Mr. ARTHUR BULLEID read a paper upon the recent discoveries at Godney Moor, near Glastonbury, printed in Part II.

Mr. JOHN MORLAND referred to Mr. Arthur J. Evans's remarks upon the pottery exhibited at the British Association Meeting at Oxford, that it was that of the Belgæ, and that they had evidently come under Greek or Phœnician influence at a very early period. The supposed date was about 300 B.C.

Mr. F. TUCKET remarked upon both the pottery and wood-work.

COL. BRAMBLE would not criticise anything said by Mr. Bulleid, but would express the great obligation the society and the public at large are under, for his care, his unremitting attention, and his labour of love in this important matter. Not only did he thank him in cordial terms for his paper, but

for his close investigation of everything done and found since he first made the remarkable discovery. To his patience and unwearied industry everything we now know of this ancient village is practically due.

Mr. BULLEID modestly attributed the results obtained to the generosity of his friend, Mr. Bath, who had not only given every facility, but the land itself.

The DEAN OF WELLS remarked that Mr. Bulleid's discovery was unique. There was no other British village in the three kingdoms. Those who went to Glastonbury would see there what had been accomplished almost entirely by one man. It was a work of which the whole county ought to be proud.