



TRULL CHURCH, NEAR TAUNTON.

Stained Glass Window, representing SS. Michael, Margaret and George,
in south side of Chancel.

From a Photograph by J. Reginald H. Weaver.

Fourth Day's Proceedings.

Trull Church.

The first place visited on Friday morning was Trull Church (the Rev. R. Y. Bonsey, Vicar), which Mr. BLIGH BOND described as a peculiarly interesting little church—he said ‘little,’ because, though very complete in all its parts, it was on a small scale. The greater portion of it was XV Century work, or advanced Perpendicular, but at the tower end they had a much earlier archway and a window which was XIII Century. This seemed to be all that was left of the earlier Church, and he believed all the rest was Perpendicular. The main roof contained some fairly good work, but the chief glory of the Church was the rood-screen, with the continuing screens north and south,¹ and the beautiful set of bench-ends of the XVI Century, one being dated 1510.

The rood-screen was very massive and of the Devonshire

1. See Mr. Bligh Bond's paper on "Screens of the Taunton district," pt. ii of this vol.

type. There was one something like it at Brushford, and another, now in Holcombe Rogus Church, which was formerly at Tiverton. One peculiar feature about this screen was that it did not run right across the Church, and never had, but almost all the West Country screens in churches of this type ran right across the nave and aisles, and the rood-loft was from end to end. In this case there was a most extraordinary contrivance: just behind the north aisle screen there was a sort of staircase, or ladder, in the pillar, and the acolytes or who-soever went into the rood-loft would have to climb it. The screen in the aisle seemed to have been some special gift. It was very beautiful, and contained ornaments which were not usual in the county. The whole construction and arrangement seemed much more like some of the East Anglian ones. One of the most beautiful features was the perforated tracery in the dado rail—quite a rare feature. He was sorry that a deplorable amount of damage had been done by the scholars who sat against one portion of the screen. The children evidently amused themselves with their pocket-knives during the service, and one boy's initials were accompanied by the date 1908. On the other side the occupant of the pew had screwed a large hook into the linen-fold panel. The mouldings of the cill were also getting quite worn out by the boots of those who sat in the pews. It was a great misfortune, as well as an eyesore to the Church, having the pews erected right against the front of the screens.

Mr. Bond also drew the attention of members to a piece of wainscoting, with eight linen-fold panels, at the end of the north aisle, bearing the inscription: "John Waye, Clerke here. Simon Warman, maker of thys worke. Año Dni 1560."

The pulpit (*see frontispiece to the volume*) with its fine series of statuettes, received particular notice.

The Rev. E. H. BATES drew attention to the exceedingly good ancient glass in the chancel. The east window, with figures of Our Lord, and SS. Mary and John, was ancient,

and he regarded it as about the same age as the building. The three-light window on the south side of the chancel (of which an illustration is given) contained representations of three saints, SS. Michael, Margaret, and George trampling upon a dragon, symbolical of the spiritual victory over the powers of evil. He remarked that the churchyard contained the ancient stocks, close to which was the grave of Mrs. Juliana Horatia Ewing, the writer of the delightful tale, *Jackanapes*, and others.

Attention was drawn to a monumental inscription, which has been copied by the Rev. R. Y. Bonsey :

“In memory of Hannah, dau. of Mr. John Baker, who died 29 Dec. 1658.

A spotless child lies here within,
Whom fate allowed not time to sin.
But after death had given it rest,
Christ took into His arms and blest ;
Where now among that quire on high
It sings its own sweet lullabie.
The mother to its earthlie bed
Bequeathed this stonie coverlet.”

Since the meeting, the following notes have been sent by the Rev. J. H. SOUTHAM, formerly Vicar of Trull :—

“The five figures on the pulpit are intended to represent, first, St. John, who is depicted with flowing eastern robes, and holds in his left hand the chalice and the dove,—or, as some think, the serpent representing the going forth of the poison from the cup he was ordered to drink, before being placed in the cauldron of boiling oil when before the Latin Gate. The other four figures represent the four doctors of the Western Church ; St. Gregory in the centre, a Pope having a *double* crown (the third, I believe, was assumed in 1406) ; St. Jerome, who gave us the Vulgate, in the dress of a cardinal with a book in his hand ; the other two, St. Ambrose and St. Augustine, always closely associated, the latter having been baptized by the former in the cathedral at Milan ; these are both in ecclesiastical dress. It is also noticed that the small

figures in a double row between the large ones are what is technically called 'defaced,' *i.e.* their faces are cut straight off. So are the faces of the angels on the ribs of the screen. The story goes that when the order for the removal of images from the churches in Edward VI reign came down, the larger figures, which do not form part of the structure of the pulpit, were removed and buried; the smaller ones, which were part of the structure, were defaced. After some years the larger figures were taken up again and replaced.

"A medieval procession of a somewhat unusual character is depicted upon five of the bench-ends. They are not now in their proper order, but when the Church was 'restored' in 1862 were placed in wrong positions by people who did not understand their significance. The first is a peasant bearing the parish cross, which is nearly as big as himself; the second a man bearing a processional torch; the third a man bearing a monstrance with a maniple over his left arm; the fourth a deacon with a book in the corner, signifying that he is saying the office as he goes; the fifth, and last, a priest, also with book like the fourth figure, who is clothed in an elaborately embroidered chasuble.

"There are also two interesting specimens of Jacobean work in the Church; one, a bench-end with a figure-head with a pointed beard and wearing armour; the other, a panel near the place where the organ-loft used to be (which was erected in 1805 and taken down in 1889-90). The west window in the tower is also interesting, being a specimen of the first deviation from the pure lancet form, having three lancets with a small heading over the two smaller ones; it is of very late date. The south aisle was added about 1520, and has a battlemented parapet,—very different from the simple unadorned character of the exterior of the north aisle."

Mr. H. St. G. GRAY contributes the following note:

In digging foundations for the new vicarage at Trull this year, in 5ft. of clay soil, a "second brass" coin of the early Roman Empire, in a bad state of preservation, was discovered.

Poundisford Park.

Poundisford Park, the residence of Bishop Moorhouse, was next visited. The exterior was first inspected, an object of great interest being an old lead tank bearing the initials "H. W. H." and the date 1671.

The Rev. E. H. BATES said all he knew about the house was derived from the magnificent book now being published in parts on *The Domestic Architecture of England during the Tudor Period*, two parts of which were to be seen at Taunton Castle. Poundisford, which was part of the lands of the Bishop of Winchester, seemed to have been let to a family of the name of Soper in the time of Henry VIII. Then it came into a family of the name of Hill. One of the sons went abroad, and eventually the property came to a younger brother. The other brother returned, and built another house close by. The Hills improved the house very much. As at Nettlecombe, the house possessed a very high hall. In the hall they would see what were the domestic arrangements for a family in the latter part of Queen Elizabeth's reign. There were staircases on the south side into the living rooms.

The hall was then inspected. The woodwork and the ceilings were very fine ; the pilasters on some of the woodwork of the hall being in design like those on the outside of Cothelstone Manor.

The Rt. Rev. BISHOP MOORHOUSE, D.D., explained that the coat of arms in the hall, to which he drew attention, was a very curious example of the Royal Arms, put up at the time when the leopards of England were used in the English arms before the ridiculous unicorn with a bit of sugar over the horns was adopted to face the lion. The screen under the minstrels' gallery appeared to be *temp.* Charles I.

He pointed out a little squint window in a corner of the hall which he thought looked out from the ladies' bower ; the ladies in those days were generally allowed to look down while festivities were going on in the hall.

A photograph of the party was afterwards taken by Mr. H. St. G. Gray, and then the Rev. E. H. Bates thanked the Bishop for his courtesy in allowing the Society to visit his beautiful residence.

Pitminster Church.

A move was next made for Pitminster, where the Church was visited by the Society for the first time. The Vicar, the Rev. W. R. HARTWRIGHT, gave a description of the Church. He said :

The name, Pitminster, was a curious one : it was called Pipeminstre in Domesday Book. It seemed that the manor of Pipeminstre was given by Hardicanute to the church of Winchester, and continued vested in the bishopric of Winchester until the time of Henry I, when it was given by Bishop Giffard to the Priory of Taunton. At the time of the Dissolution it was presented by Henry VIII to Humphrey Colles, Esq., who made Barton Grange his principal residence, and whose tomb now rests in the chancel within the sacrarium. The general theory seemed to be that previous to the erection of this Church there was on the present site a Saxon church of which we had no remains, unless the square base of the tower was Saxon. The dedication of the Church—to SS. Andrew and Mary—was curious and was the only one with this strange combination in the diocese. The Church was a beautiful specimen of the Gothic style of architecture (88 feet long, 40 feet wide) consisting of nave, chancel and two aisles. The tower-arch was especially admired and thought to be early XIII Century ; and the chancel-arch either late XIII or early XIV Century. The tower was peculiar, having a square base, with octagonal top, surmounted by a wooden spire covered with lead. On the south side there was an old sun-dial. The monuments on the north and south of the chancel were of alabaster and of the early XVII Century.

The one on the north side had a circular arched canopy divided into square compartments, coloured blue with gilt roses in the centre. On this monument was a recumbent figure of a man in complete armour, with his lady by his side; on the panel there were three boys and three girls kneeling on cushions, and at the head and feet of the female figures two infants; on the south side was a similar monument—both belonging to the Colles family. The chapel on the north side was evidently the lady chapel of the Church, and contained a piscina with the remains of a pedestal upon which probably the figure of Our Lady once rested. On the north window of this chapel there were some fragments of ancient glass, and also in the tracery of the east window. The stained glass window in this chapel and the west window were by the late C. E. Kempe, while the three in the south aisle were by Clayton and Bell. The baptistry contained an interesting font with carved panels, representing on the north panel St. George vanquishing the dragon, on the east Christ blessing little children, and on the south a pilgrim with two kneeling peasants. The tomb was probably, from its style, about the same date as those in the chancel and might belong to the Colles family.

The Registers were in excellent preservation, and dated back to 1545. There were six bells, the oldest, the fourth, bearing the date 1630; the second, 1692; the third, 1752. The Church plate was interesting, the chalice bearing the date 1652, the paten 1725, and the flagon 1728. The Church was restored about 1869, by Sir Gilbert Scott, during the incumbency of the Rev. S. R. Lawson.

Mr. Hartwright in conclusion informed the members that Mr. Harvey Treat,¹ of America, wished to place a chancel screen in the Church in memory of his mother.

[The form of the name Pipeminstre suggests that this manor and also Pipe Ridware in Staffordshire, and Pipe and Lide in Herefordshire, may originally have been held at a peppercorn rent. A.S. *piper*, pepper.—EDIT.]

1. Mr. Treat, a life member of the Society, died on Nov. 8, 1908.

Mr. BLIGH BOND remarked with reference to the date of the building, that it had, of course, been rather heavily restored, so that there was not a great amount remaining of the original work. They might, however, fairly suppose that the architect had been careful to reproduce the ancient features. The chancel-arch, he thought, was entirely new, but the responds at the end of the south arcade certainly seemed ancient, the probable date being about the middle of the XIII Century. There was a good deal of XIII Century work in the north porch and doorway, and at the west end of the Church. The window in the chapel on the south side of the tower was distinctly XIV Century, and that on the north side was a little doubtful in date, but its external dripstone was XIV Century. As to the evidence of Saxon work in the tower which had been spoken of, he could not at present see anything definite of that kind. There were none of the distinctive peculiarities of facing associated with Saxon masonry. The octagonal belfry was a regular Somerset feature, and could be found at South Petherton, Ilchester, Stoke St. Gregory, and many other churches. With regard to the proposed screen, he was of opinion that the Church did originally possess a rood-screen, as the survival of the rood-loft staircase proved. There were plenty of good examples of screenwork from which they might make a selection, either of the arcaded and fan-vaulted type as at Bishop's Lydeard, or of the earlier and simpler type with horizontal coving along the head, which they could easily reproduce. The bench-ends were worthy of notice, although they had been a good deal mutilated. They partook in character of a good many of those they had seen, and dated about 1500 or 1520.

Luncheon at Staple Fitzpaine.

VOTES OF THANKS.

The party afterwards drove to Staple Fitzpaine (*viâ* Corfe and Park Gate), where luncheon was partaken of at the School.

The Rev. E. H. BATES, Excursion Secretary, presided, and at the conclusion of the repast he said he hoped that they had all experienced a pleasant and instructive time during the Diamond Jubilee celebrations. They owed a debt of gratitude to a very large number of landowners, clergy, etc., for facilities for visiting buildings of archæological interest. First of all he would mention the Marquess of Bath. They felt that in him they had an example of one who did credit to the various positions in which he happened to be. As chairman of the Wiltshire County Council, Lord-Lieutenant of the County of Somerset, and in connection with the Territorial Army he had a great deal to do, and it was difficult to know how he found time to act as their President; but he had done so, and they greatly appreciated all he had done. Mr. Bates mentioned the names of the gentry who had thrown open their houses for inspection, and the clergy who had so kindly explained their churches, and thanked them on behalf of the Society. There were several also who had helped them all along. Mr. Bligh Bond, for instance, had been of much assistance to them. Then there was Mr. Gray; they heard what Prof. Boyd Dawkins said about his energy in dealing with the ancient Britons, and he (Mr. Bates) could testify to his ability in dealing with modern Britons! The success of their Diamond Jubilee had in a great measure been due to their Assistant-Secretary and Curator.

The Rev. F. W. WEAVER, in proposing a vote of thanks to Mr. Bates, for his hard-working efforts in connection with the organization and in the preparation and carrying out of the programme which they had now nearly completed, ventured to prophesy that in occupying the presidential chair that day, in the absence of the Marquess of Bath, Mr. Bates was enjoying a foretaste of an honour yet to come. He thought it was owing to Mr. Bates' great exertions, coupled with those of Mr. Gray, that they had had such a successful Diamond Jubilee.

The Rev. E. H. BATES, in responding, said he did not suppose he would be disclosing a secret when he said that next year the annual meeting would be held at Wells. It was twenty-one years since they had visited that place, and as it was the millenary of the foundation of the See of Wells, it would be most appropriate that they should go to that city.

Staple Fitzpaine Church.

A brief inspection was made of the Church, the Rector, the Rev. E. B. Brown, pointing out a place on the north side where, according to tradition, a Roman doorway, which was brought from Bickenhall Church, once existed. The interior of the Church, which had been ruined by tasteless repairs, and despoiled of almost every feature of antiquity, yet retained a little woodwork of good character in the shape of some remains of screenwork, which is described, with illustrations, by Mr. Bligh Bond, in his paper on Screens of the district, in Part II.

The following notes by Dr. F. J. ALLEN, on the towers of Staple Fitzpaine and Kingston, were read :

“ These two towers are almost identical in design, their chief differences being in the form of the gurgoyles and in the kind of stone used, Kingston being built of the New Red sandstone, and Staple Fitzpaine of blue lias and brown Ham Hill stone. They are late in style, as is evident in the discontinuity between buttress and pinnacle, also in the profusion of ornament. One of the best features in these two towers is the beautiful spirelet of the stair-turret. The single corner-turret, which prevails in most English towers, gives usually a more beautiful outline than the four equal turrets of exceptional towers like St. Cuthbert's, Wells, and St. Mary Magdalene, Taunton.”

A visit was also paid to the Portman Almshouses, which date from 1600, and were formerly the kitchens of the residence of the Portmans, destroyed by fire.

Sarsen Stone at Staple.

At this point the party divided, in order that those desirous of doing so might catch early trains at Taunton. Many of the members drove to Castle Neroche, and stopped by the roadside to inspect a large Sarsen Stone, a description of which was given by Mr. A. C. G. CAMERON. His paper on the subject is printed in Part II.

Castle Neroche.

Mr. H. ST. GEORGE GRAY, who directed the excavations at Castle Neroche on behalf of the Society in 1903, and which are fully recorded in the volume of *Proceedings* for that year, conducted the members round the earthworks, and gave an account of the results of the excavations. With regard to the main part of the earthworks he said that the paucity and character of the relics found were insufficient to enable him to assign the more southerly parts of Neroche to a definite period ; but he observed that nothing pre-Roman or Roman had been discovered. A pit in the central area had produced nothing but Norman or early mediæval pottery, not only near the surface but also at a considerable depth. Before touching "The Beacon" he felt convinced that in Castle Neroche we had a large and elaborate type of Norman fortress of the motte and bailey type. If any part of Neroche was constructed in early British times, the antiquities produced by the excavations of 1903 had provided us with no material for proving it. He thought that it was possible that the earthworks on "The Beacon" might have been erected during those troubled days of anarchy when Stephen was reigning, but not ruling. If that be the case, Neroche would be of much about the same date as the Keep of Taunton Castle, and the Castle at Castle Cary held against Stephen by William Lovel in 1138. This would probably be the latest date for Neroche ; but the earth-

works might have been thrown up rather earlier. He might mention that a church or hermitage of Neroche existed early in the XIV Century. "The Beacon" appeared to represent the *motte*, or mount, of a Norman stronghold, and that owing to the natural strength of the position a moat of water was neither necessary nor possible. Then, as they saw, the inner bailey or court was protected by three ramparts with intervening ditches, and the outer bailey further to the south was bounded by a single line of earthworks. That class of earthwork was introduced into Britain by the Normans. The Bayeux Tapestry depicted several notable examples in Normandy itself, and showed such a "castle" as actually under construction at Hastings. These "castles" were found in England in almost every place where a Norman lord fixed the *caput* of his fief.

Mr. Gray expressed his pleasure at seeing that Lord Portman's steward was now having the excavations of 1903 filled in.

Before proceeding to Thurlbear, the party were provided with tea at Castle Neroche Farm.

Thurlbear Church.

The early party finally visited Thurlbear Church, where they were received by the Rector, the Rev. H. F. B. Portman. The other members, who included Castle Neroche in their programme, inspected the Church later in the afternoon.

Mr. BLIGH BOND said they had here a Norman nave, which was all that remained of the original church. There were evidences of an early arrangement at the east wall of the nave which provided for lateral altars flanking the chancel-arch on the north and south. Now they saw remaining on one side an arched recess with a hagioscope towards the chancel, dating probably from the XII Century. The doorway pierced on the north side was a XV Century insertion, provided for the rood-loft staircase.

Previous to the XII Century the chancel arches had been narrow. The more ancient rite had followed the Oriental custom in that the act of Consecration was veiled from the people, but when the Elevation of the Host was introduced, the chancels were opened up, either by the introduction of hagioscopes, or by widening the arches.

The chancel here, originally Norman, had been almost entirely rebuilt about 1850. The font was of the period of Henry II.

An inspection was made of the exterior of the Church and attention was drawn to a Norman buttress of curious form remaining on the north wall of the chancel. Norman buttresses were most frequently of pilaster form—square in section—but this one was semi-cylindrical. Mr. Bond believed the work to be original—the base undoubtedly so.

This visit concluded the meetings and excursions of the Diamond Jubilee Celebration, and the members returned to Taunton after one of the most successful series of meetings in the annals of the Society.