

Glastonbury Abbey.

SIXTH REPORT ON THE DISCOVERIES MADE DURING THE EXCAVATIONS.

BY F. BLIGH BOND, F.R.I.B.A.

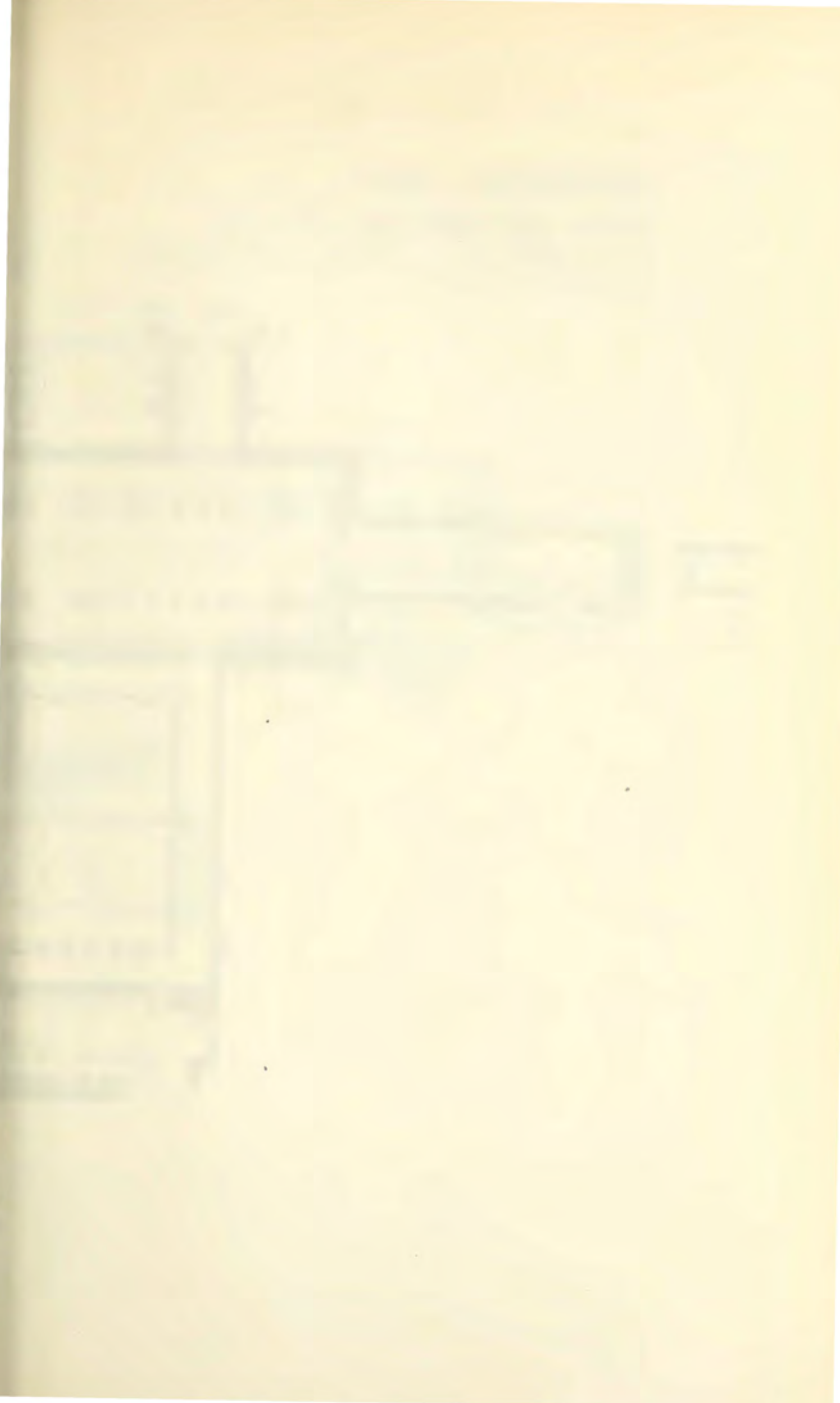
I. DISCOVERY OF THE DUNSTAN CHAPEL, 1910.

G LASTONBURY vied with Canterbury in claiming the relics of the great Dunstan, Abbot of the former place from 940 to 962 A.D., and afterwards Archbishop. An interpolation by a later writer in the Chronicle of William of Malmesbury tells us that King Edmund Ironside, after the destruction of the metropolitan church by the Danes, gave his consent to the then Abbot of Glastonbury to have the relics of the saint transferred, and that his bones were accordingly found and carried to Glastonbury, the removal being effected in the twenty-fourth year after the death of Dunstan.

These bones, it is said, were hidden in a secret receptacle beneath a stone near the water-stoup on the right hand of the church door.

Professor Willis points out that about a century after the alleged transfer, the monks of Glastonbury began to boast that the relics were in their possession, occasioning a protest from Canterbury, which claimed to have them still.

When the Abbey Church and all the other buildings at Glastonbury were burnt down in 1184, it is said that the relics of St. Dunstan were re-discovered, and the case which con-



GLASTONBURY ABBEY

GENERAL PLAN CORRECTED TO DATE (1912)
WITH SQUARES OF 74 FEET (888 INCHES) OVERLAID.

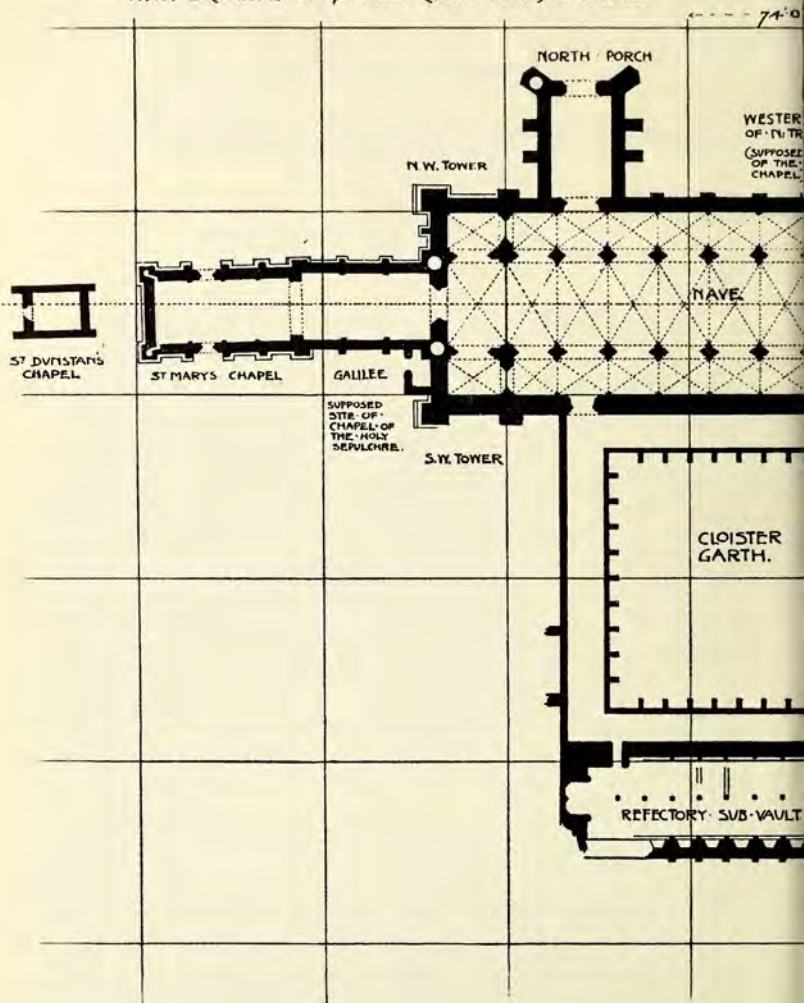
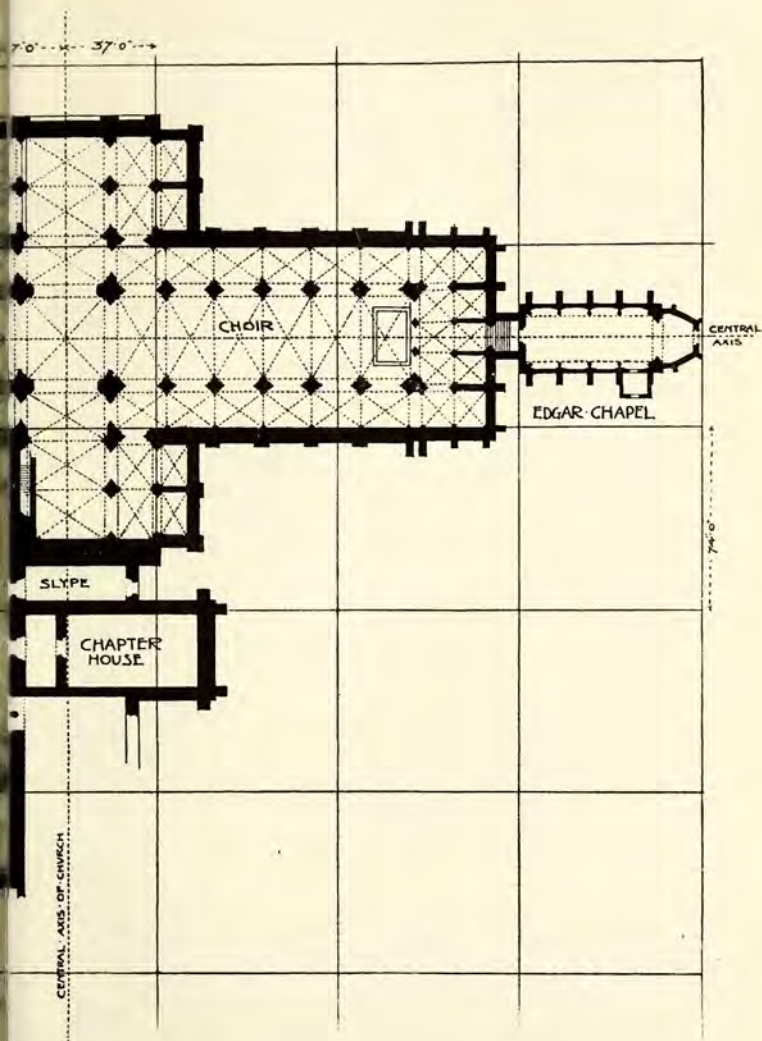
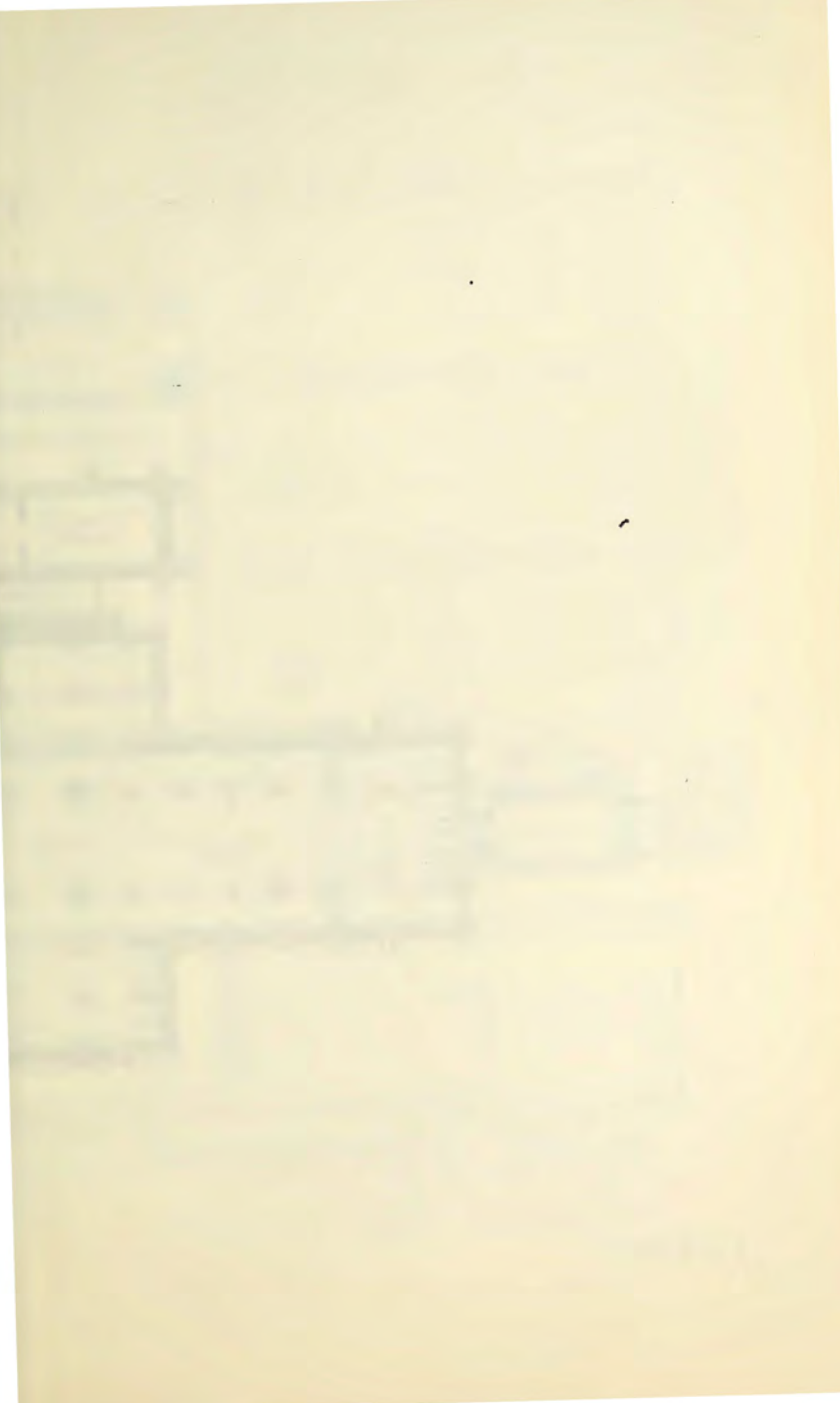


PLATE I.





tained them opened up by the Prior in the presence of all the brethren. They were then collected and placed in a new shrine. A period of pilgrimage to the relics then began, and many cures were alleged, the repute of the saint's power remaining great throughout the subsequent history of the Abbey. There was bitter controversy in the early years of the XVI Century, ending at last in a formal scrutiny of the shrine of St. Dunstan at Canterbury, which took place in 1508.

Canterbury claimed to have found the bones, but Glastonbury replied that the bones found must have been some left behind by those who carried out the removal. An inventory of the bones in the possession of Glastonbury is in the Cotton MSS., and is printed by the historian Hearne.

We have thus a record of the building of a shrine to St. Dunstan, but the evidence of a *separate* chapel to his honour is not so clear. Our authority is John of Glastonbury, who carries on the chronicle of the Abbey after Adam de Domerham.

From this writer we learn that Abbot Michael de Ambresbury (1236 to 1255) caused the head of St. Dunstan to be incased in a very costly manner (*caput sancti Dunstani honestissime ac sumptuose fecit incassari*); also that he caused to be made, and gave towards the making of, a "feretory" or shrine, forty gold pieces, and all oblations offered to the same relic (*et ad ejus feretrum faciendum dedit quadraginta bisancias et omnes oblaciones ad idem caput provenientes*). The same abbot was responsible for the erection of no less than one hundred buildings within and without the monastery walls, and he did much towards the completion of the church.

The next Abbot of whom building work is recorded is John de Tanton (1274-1291), in whose time a good deal was done. He completed the west end of the Nave, and the Galilee or western porch of the great church. In his time comes an interesting entry in John of Glaston's Chronicle, to the effect that Adam de Eyr de Sowwy gave by deed to the Abbey

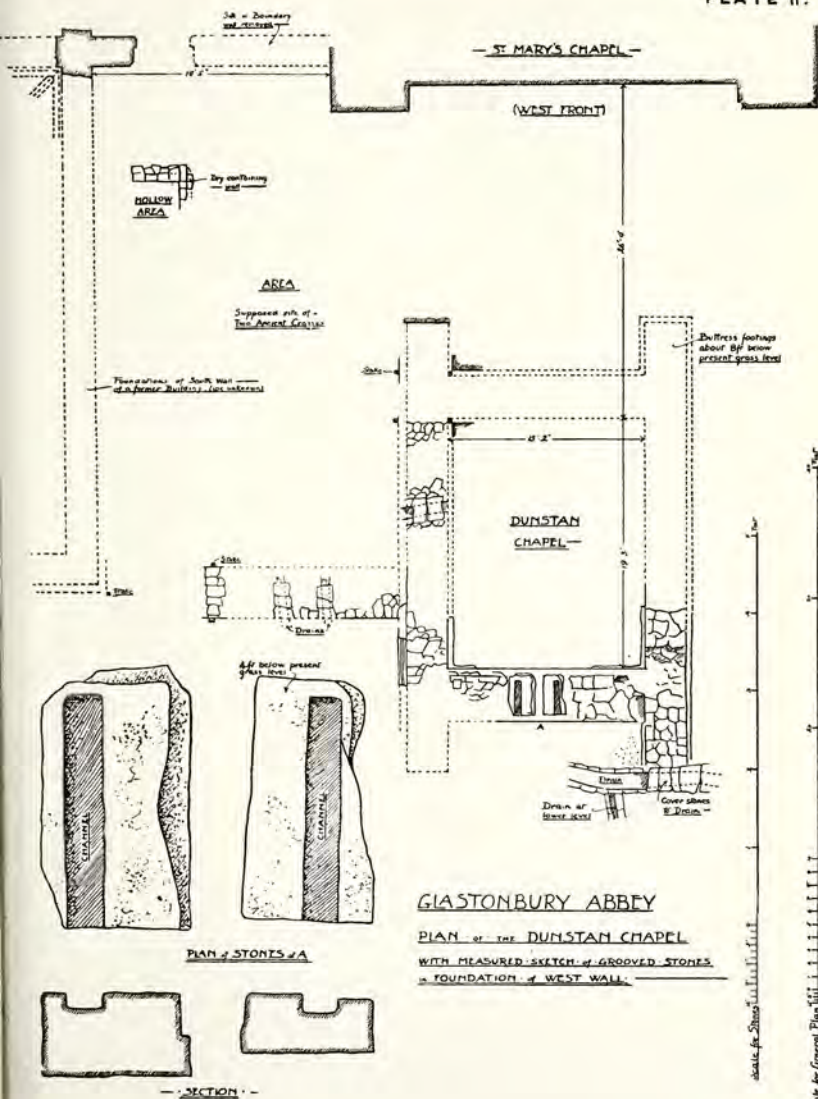
certain sums of money for the maintenance of lights in the chapels of St. John, St. Benignus, and St. Dunstan.

The parish church of Glastonbury is dedicated to St. John, and what was formerly the chapel of St. Benignus is now a sister church. Both, it will be observed, are buildings separated structurally from the Abbey. Assuming that these were the chapels named in the deed, it seems a reasonable inference that the chapel of St. Dunstan mentioned in the same connection by this writer would have been likewise an independent building, and it is perhaps not going too far to consider that a building in process of adornment, as this appears to have been, would be one of comparatively recent foundation at the time of the gifts. Nothing further is told us by John of Glaston about this chapel until the time of Abbot Adam de Sodbury (1323-1334). This Abbot made a substantial endowment to St. Dunstan's shrine, and his successor, Abbot de Breynnton, completed his work by contributing further moneys to the treasury of the same.

Neither Hearne nor any of the other antiquaries of the XVII and XVIII Centuries seem to give us any light on the subject. Local tradition preserves some faint memory of a chapel dedicated to Dunstan, and the name has survived in connection with a house built upon land at the west end of St. Mary's chapel.

During the summer of 1910 there came to light in the MS. Diary of John Cannon (Schoolmaster, of Meare, b. 1684), an incidental mention of St. Dunstan's Chapel. This writer, in speaking of the total length of the Abbey ruins, says they were at one time 638 feet long, *including the Chapels of St. Joseph and St. Dunstan*. This would suggest that the missing Chapel of St. Dunstan was in line with the other buildings, and probably adjoining that of St. Joseph (more properly St. Mary's) at the west.

An endeavour was made in the latter part of the year 1911 to test this conclusion. A measurement was taken, and the



GLASTONBURY ABBEY

PLAN OF THE DUNSTAN CHAPEL
WITH MEASURED SKETCH OF GROOVED STONES
IN FOUNDATION OF WEST WALL

PLAN OF STONES A



ground opened at the prescribed distance west of St. Mary's west wall, and at the exact point chosen, the angle of a stone foundation-wall was exposed. This was soon found to be the westward extremity of a small building.

The precise correspondence between Cannon's measurement and the fact is worthy of special notice, since the calculation of his 638 feet is based upon the whole length of the Abbey, including the Edgar Chapel, whose dimension of length receives additional corroboration from this circumstance (Plan, Plate I).

The whole plan of this little Chapel of St. Dunstan has since been proved, though it has been found necessary to fill in the greater part on account of the great depth of the footings, which made it inconvenient to keep them open. As will be seen by the Plan, Plate II, the building is a rectangle standing apart from the rest, and measuring internally between the footing 20ft. by 16ft. There are buttress projections at the east and west extremities, but none on north and south. The western buttresses are longer than the others. The most considerable remains of walling are on the north side; the east wall has been almost entirely cleared away, only sufficient being left to mark its position. The masonry is of local blue lias, with two or three stepped footings on the north side, fairly well formed. In the lowest stratum are some of the rough sandstone boulders from the Tor, found in the older foundations in the Abbey. There are practically no remains of architectural features, and it is evident that the ground here has been much disturbed. All over the middle part of the site a hard layer of pebble concrete was encountered in digging, having the appearance of a former road-bed. There are many evidences of fire.

A curious old key was practically the only loose object of interest found on the site. But in spite of the wholesale removal of dressed stonework, and the lack of architectural traces, there remain *in situ* two objects of peculiar interest in the two squared freestone blocks which lie parallel across the

middle of the west wall of the Chapel. As will be seen from the sketch of these stones (Plate II), both have shallow grooves running east and west along their upper surface. Each stone is about 3ft. long, and 18ins. wide, and the grooves are rectangular, 6ins. wide and 2ins. deep, or thereabouts. The grooves start from the west end of the stones, and run to within about 6ins. of their eastern ends, where they terminate with a square return. From their position and character they cannot be regarded as architectural features. They must assuredly have been covered by the soil, if not indeed buried in the thickness of the wall. The shallow grooves are suggestive of receptacles, either as sockets for the reception of upright slabs,—such as will be recalled by those who have examined the ancient oratories of Ireland, where the western entrance of this form is a familiar object,—or, possibly, as repositories for relics, since their shape and size would suggest that they would most conveniently hold arm- or leg-bones. The former seems, however, the most probable explanation, and the suggestion to which it gives rise, namely that of a pre-Conquest chapel on this spot, of the Irish type, seems not one to be lightly dismissed.

The peculiar form of the Chapel with its buttress-like prolongations at east and west, making it like a little *templum in antis*, must be taken into account. Instances of this plan are probably by no means rare in the sister island.

These remarks all, however, refer to the foundation work of this chapel. Historical records point to a later work, perhaps a superstructure on the footings of the older work, and the following would be the writer's tentative conclusions.

(1). That a chapel or shrine of St. Dunstan stood on this spot in the late X Century, after the reclaiming of the saint's bones.

(2). That this was destroyed by fire probably in 1184.

(3). That the chapel was restored in the time of Abbot Michael of Ambresbury (1236-1255).

In Hollar's bird's-eye view of the Abbey enclosure, a building with a sharply-pointed roof is indicated within the walls in a position nearly corresponding to that which has been located for the Dunstan Chapel. (See Fig. 2 of the last Report, *Proceedings*, vol. LVIII). In the Powell MS. in the British Museum there is a sketch, made in 1816 or thereabouts, of the Chapel of St. Mary, and this sketch shows the walls of the Dunstan Chapel (or what appear to be such) standing about breast-high.

II. PRE-NORMAN REMAINS AT GLASTONBURY ABBEY.

Extract from a Letter from Professor Boyd Dawkins to the Rev. C. H. Heale, Chairman of the Glastonbury Abbey Excavation Committee, dated 23 July, 1913.

"The pre-Norman remains which I noted at Glastonbury at the close of the Society's meeting at Wells in 1909, and after the addresses by the Bishop of Bath and Wells and Mr. Bligh Bond had been given, are as follows:—

"1. Slab of stone in a room close to the present entrance to the ground which I examined with the Bishop. It was found in the recent diggings. It bore an incised equal-armed Celtic cross of the type with which I am familiar in Ireland and in the Isle of Man; and was probably a tombstone. It was probably used by later builders in the walls of the Abbey. It is in my belief a relic of the early British church, and in date pre-Norman.

"2. Two fragments of a cross with the interlacing rope-pattern characteristic of Anglo-British times, which I examined with Mr. Bond in a shed close to the excavations then going on. They were found in the remains of a Norman wall and, as is so often the case in other places, they had been used for building materials.

"These two crosses are proved by their association in

Ireland and the Isle of Man to belong to the same pre-Norman date. They are the oldest relics as yet discovered of the pre-Norman establishment at Glastonbury that reaches back probably to the time when Christianity was introduced into Roman Britain, and as such deserve a prominent place in the records of our Society, along with illustrations, and with details more minute than those in my possession."

Mr. F. Bligh Bond's Notes on the pre-Norman Remains.

(1). I have nothing to add at present to what is said in Professor Boyd Dawkins's letter about this stone.

(2). The two fragments of an Anglo-British cross (referred to in the same letter) were found in course of excavation at

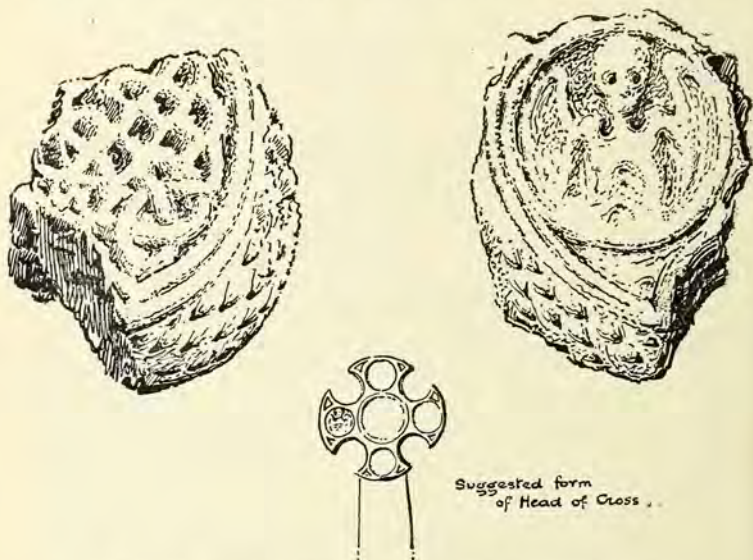


Fig. 1. Fragment of Head of an Anglo-Celtic Cemetery Cross.
Found at Glastonbury Abbey in 1909.

the extreme south-west corner of the nave, and just outside the line of the foundations of the great tower which stood at this point. This would therefore bring the site of the dis-



C.



D.



E.



F.



CARVED STONEWORK, now in private hands, said to have been found in GLASTONBURY ABBEY. (Carved in blue lias).

C. D. Apparently Romano-British.

E. F. Romanesque, probably from Herlewin's Church.

covery into the area of the monks' graveyard. The fragments are of coarse-grained freestone of the Doultong type, their surface being much disintegrated from action of water or salts in the soil. From the shape of the fragments they would appear to be parts of the head of a cemetery cross, having four equal arms, terminating in circular segments, and separated by circular hollows (Fig. 1). The larger fragment bears on its face a circular sunk panel containing a symbolic figure, having the appearance of a winged skeleton. The eyes of the figure are deeply hollowed, as for a skull. On the reverse is the rope-plait, and the sides have another rope ornament.

I would add to the above a preliminary mention of the following additional remains discovered within the last four years.

(A). Part of a stone bearing traces of what appears to be Romano-British work, in the form of an architrave mould of two faces. This has been re-worked on the back with features of Romanesque type, suggesting its use by the builders of the Chapel of St. Mary.

(B). Two small pre-Norman graveyard crosses, now in possession of the Trustees, which were used as corbel-stones in the same XII Century chapel. Their lower ends have been worked with the large double roll characteristic of the corbelling.

One of these crosses has a fine sunk panel with the six-pointed cross in circle.

(C). Particulars have been recovered of a portion of a flat stone now in private hands, and said to have been found on the Abbey site. This stone is incised with volutes (Plate III).

(D). Portion of a panel, possibly part of a frieze, with conventional foliage and fruit in flat relief (debased classic). This stone is in the hands of the same owner (Plate III).

(E, F). Two pieces of finely carved blue lias (Plate III).

These are in the same hands. They are probably relics of Herlewin's church, built about 1110 A.D., and survivals of the great fire. A large number of similar stones were turned up in the course of excavation under the crossing of the great church and round about the same area. Some were found built into the later XII Century footings of the restored pier in the North Transept. These are in the custody of the Abbey Trustees. The two fine stones figured by Warner (Plate xiii in his work) are of the same order. The smaller of these, with figure of horse, cannot be traced, but the larger has been found, and is built into the stable wall of the Abbey House, whence it should be recovered, as it is perishing from exposure. I am of opinion that all this series of lias-stones are from a presbytery wall-arcade in the earlier church, whose eastern limit probably came under the central tower of the later church.

III. THE "EGG-STONE," GLASTONBURY ABBEY (Plates IV and V).

(a) *Discovery and Description of the Stone.*

When the work of excavation on the site of the east alley of the cloister had reached its limit, a cut was made eastward along the line of a stone water-channel, now to be seen running from the south-east angle of the cloister. A short distance along this a huge boulder stone of the sort locally known as the "Tor Burr" was encountered. This was lying in the bank on the south side of the drain, in an irregular position, on its side. It appeared to be roughly egg-shaped, but flattened, the measurements being approximately 3ft. by 2ft. 4ins. by 1ft. 4ins. One of the flat sides was exposed, and this was found to be artificially levelled over a considerable area. In the centre was a cavity, roughly hollowed.

The stone was left as it was found until the summer of 1913. Beyond the surmise that the cavity might have been formed

as a socket for a post or shaft, for which so large a stone would form a stable footing, no theory was at that time advanced to account for it.

Many of these stones are found to have been utilized in the foundations of the Norman or other earlier walls exposed.

The boulder naturally enlisted the interest of visitors, and was a subject of speculation. Among suggestions thrown out was one which may be worth recording, namely, that the flat surface may have been formed for the rubbing of grain, but it cannot be said that this would make a satisfactory quern.

On July 11th, 1913, I called upon a friend who was staying at the hotel for two or three weeks, and was much interested in the history and antiquities of the place. He introduced the subject of the egg-stones used by the various primitive cults, and I was struck by his remark that such a cult-stone must necessarily have existed at any place bearing the name of "Avalon."

He then, as I well remember, asked me whether I could recall having seen such a stone in the neighbourhood of Glastonbury.

I replied that there were many natural stones of this shape found locally, and one in particular of remarkable size and character (as above-mentioned), over which I told him I had been keeping a jealous watch since its discovery about three years before.

I said I had never examined this fully, but that if he wished we could meet to inspect it, and have it turned over, to ascertain whether any definite indications of its former use, either as a cult-stone or for any other purpose, existed on the lower side.

We went to see the stone, and made a brief inspection of it as it then lay. On removal of the moss and earth with which the cavity was filled, it was found that this cavity was flattened on one edge and roughly curved for the rest of the margin. The recess was deepest on the flat side, and from its inner point were seen several chisel grooves radiating outwards to-

wards the curved periphery. This gave the recess the rough similitude of a hollow pecten-shell.

Of the other visible markings we could make nothing very definite, though it was obvious that many of these were artificial. Most of the marks were obscured by clay.

On July 16th we had the stone turned over, when it was at once evident that the whole of the under surface and most of the sides were covered with markings, many of them natural,—*perhaps* the result of glacial action, whilst others were palpably artificial. The markings were of the following order:—(a) small circular holes; (b) parallel grooves; (c) convergent grooves like star-points, and grooves with X-shaped intersection; (d) chisel-marks and artificially flattened areas; (e) other incised marks of peculiar shape.

At the centre of the lower surface was found another hole, back to back with the first. This showed a square sinking, or mortise, such as would be formed for the tenon of a shaft or pillar—possibly for a cross or other standard. Two sides of this mortise were found to be broken away to a considerable depth, and it appeared that some object formerly united with the stone at this point had been broken away with violence, inasmuch as a large flake had been split off the stone on one side of the mortise. The cavity was found to contain a small remnant of what appeared to be cement of greyish colour.

On July 19th, the stone was brought out and set up in the south cloister-alley in an erect position, where it remains at this time. The surface was carefully cleaned, and my friend proceeded to make a minute examination of it. On my return after a short absence, he pointed out a peculiar marking or group of markings which, he said, might be suggestive of hieroglyphs, and he handed me a rough sketch of these as they appeared to him.

At present it seems safe to say:—

(1). That the stone is a natural boulder, with remarkable surface-features.





"EGG-STONE," GLASTONBURY ABBEY.

W. Tully, Photographer, Glastonbury.



"EGG-STONE," GLASTONBURY ABBEY.

W. Tully, Photographer, Glastonbury.



(2). That it has been worked upon artificially in a variety of ways.

(3). That it would appear to have been used for various purposes, and possibly at various dates widely removed.

(b). *Report on "Tor Burrs" at Glastonbury Abbey.*

By W. A. E. Ussher, F.G.S.

The Egg-stone is a large elliptical boulder-like concretion of micaceous calcareous sandstone of pale buff or brownish colour.

On one side (Plate IV) the original surface is shown—except for an artificial hollow as if to fix a post, and a broken part in which a part of the smooth test of a fossil shell (quite impossible to identify) is seen. On this, the convex side of the mass, there are a good many longitudinal grooves, frequently bifurcating, but there are no signs whatever of glacial action. The markings or grooves are in my opinion due to the weathering of lines of fissility in the stone owing to the arrangement of the particles, which suggests an imperfect tendency to current bedding, or irregular sifting after deposition.

On the other side (Plate V) the stone exhibits an artificially flattened surface, in which a rude hollow or niche has been excavated (as if with the intention of making a small shrine)—abandoned through the refractory nature of the stone, which would naturally be harder in the interior.

On this surface there are two, perhaps more, artificial cuts or grooves somewhat suggestive of rays. In one place at the upper end of the stone there are three or four shallow parallel grooves, which may be due to the ribs of a large pecten or other shell.

As the name "sand burrs" is locally applied to concretions in the Midford Sands elsewhere,¹ and the local name for the

1. "The Geology of England and Wales," by H. B. Woodward, 2nd edition, p. 287.

Egg-stone and similar stones in the Abbey ruins is "Tor burrs," a local derivation seemed almost certain. I therefore turned to such descriptions of the geology of Glastonbury as I could find, and, before visiting Glastonbury, was led by these descriptions to expect that the counterparts of the boulders would be found in the micaceous sands of the Middle Lias, exposed in a deep road cutting [leading to Bove Town] on the north of Chalice Hill, as they contain concretionary masses of calcareous sandstone.

After inspecting the Egg-stone, however, I preferred to visit the Tor Hill first, and ascertain how far the concretionary masses of calcareous sandstones in the Midford Sands, which in the description were said to have yielded no fossils, would resemble it. Mr. Bond accompanied me, and the result of our investigations leaves little to be desired.

We found that the sands were indurated in impersistent broken beds and irregular boulder-like masses. One broken mass, as far as visible, at about 10ft. from the summit, is 5ft. long by 2 or 3ft. broad. We also found traces of fossils here and there, including Ammonites, although tolerably scarce; and markings on the boulders like those on the Egg-stone. In the best exposure, at 50ft. or so from the summit, the induration of bed masses is well shown, and in them well marked ovoid calcareous sandstone concretions, some of large size. Two of the smaller ones we disengaged, and let them roll down, expecting to recover them on a terrace about 40ft. below, on which two large boulders of similar material rest. In this, however, we were disappointed, as they raced over it and were finally brought up by a hedge at the foot of the steep slope—giving us an object-lesson of the facility with which these ovoid masses could be brought down to the higher part of Glastonbury.

The explanation I have given of the rude markings on the Egg-stone was suggested by smashing a few of the smaller calcareous concretions, when a rough dovetailing is generally

noticeable in the fractures. Traces of fossil grooves, and of pittings and circular markings, due to annelid burrows, were also observed on their surfaces. The concretions effervesce briskly with hydro-chloric acid, as is the case with the Egg-stone, and the sand-stone is identical in character, containing numerous particles of white mica (Muscovite). In places cracks or veins filled with calc-spar may be seen, and where this is the case the concretion often weathers more quickly than the veins, causing them to stand out in relief. I mention this as Mr. Bond tells me he has met with veined stones of this nature in the ruins.

To prevent arriving at a too hasty conclusion, it was necessary to visit the best exposures of the Middle Lias sands near Bove Town. In the geological succession² these sands are placed about 60ft. below the base of the Midford Sands, and a thickness of 60ft. has been assigned to them. They form the upper part of Wearyall Hill, but, as far as I could see, afford no good exposures in the neighbourhood of Chalice Hill, except in the road east of Bove Town, which has been cut in them. On the following day we explored this road-cutting and the vicinity. The sands are finer grained, and seemed to be more distinctly bedded than the Midford Sands. The flakes of mica are as a rule so small as not to be conspicuous, and ferruginous infiltration in bands accentuates the bedding planes, and imparts an orange tint to the sands in places. They contain ovoid concretions and irregular indurated masses. The softer ones are often due to ferruginous concentric segregations, whilst the harder masses under a thin brown weathered surface are bluish-grey, extremely hard, and very calcareous. It is quite possible that the early inhabitants might have used the harder boulders in these sands, but those I have seen in the ruins I have no hesitation in tracing to the Midford Sands.

2. *Proceedings, Geologists' Association*, Vol. XI, no. 9; Report of Excursion to the Mendip Hills, pp. ccii, cciii.

The geological map of Glastonbury was constructed before my time, and has not been altered since. It shows a considerable extension of Lower Lias clays over the lower slopes of Avalon, which would now be considered Middle Lias. This is notably the case as regards the town of Glastonbury, as later geological descriptions³ give about 200ft. of Middle Lias (Laminated sands and shales 140ft. on 65ft. of clays) below the micaceous sands, with concretions which are exposed in the road-cutting near Bove Town. Consequently, without a high easterly dip, for which there is no warrant whatever, the difference in level being less than 100ft., it is hardly possible that the Lower Lias clays could crop out between Bove Town and the moor levels in the direction of Glastonbury Railway Station. The Abbey foundations would thus appear to have been constructed upon the Laminated sands and shales of the Middle Lias.

(c). *Ancient Examples of Egg-stones and their Symbolism.*

A brief note on the subject of "Egg-stones" may be of interest to readers, since the subject is one which has received comparatively little attention, and on which it is difficult to gather much information. For a succinct account of such as are known to have existed in connection with early religious foundations, readers are referred to Lethaby's "Architecture, Mysticism, and Myth."⁴

This author shows the almost universal occurrence of such stones, which were held to mark the centre or "navel" of the world, and hence called by the Greeks *omphalos*. Delphi was to them the earth's true centre, and here was the famous and ancient temple of Apollo, the god who, according to Plato, "sits in the centre on the navel of the earth." I understand that there is a passage in the works of Pausanias in which allusion is made to the preservation of primitive cult-stones in

3. *Proc. Geologists' Assoc.*, ante.

4. Percival and Co., London, 1892.

the primitive sites of the worship of Apollo, and it is said that a remarkable specimen of the kind was discovered at Delos under the statue of the god.

On Greek vases of early date are many drawings of the

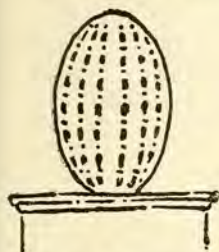


Fig. 2.—“Egg-stone”—
from an ancient Greek
vase (see *Journ. Hellenic
Soc.*, vol. ix—T. H.
Middleton).

omphalos, one of which is here reproduced from Lethaby (Fig. 2), and this, not only from its form, but from the affinity which exists between its markings and those cruder, and to a large extent natural, ones seen in the photographs of the Glastonbury stone (Plates IV and V), presents a certain parallel, and suggests that a more critical study of the latter might be productive of interesting results, since such a stone might be chosen for its natural features and sub-

sequently worked upon. The sacred stone in the later temple at Delphi is described as a marble ball, which was garlanded. Sometimes the *omphalos* was a flat circular slab. There is one on the floor of St. Peter's at Rome, of antique porphyry, upwards of 8ft. in diameter, on which certain official acts were performed. Ducange mentions another at Santa Sophia, just under the dome. Sayce (Hibbert Lectures) says that the great temple of Bel at Babylon was called “The house of the Foundation Stone of heaven and earth,” and the Talmud speaks of “the foundation stone in front of the Ark in the Holy of Holies, which was in the centre of the Temple, of Jerusalem, and of the world.”

The Arabs venerate their “Caaba” of black marble as the *omphalos* or world-centre. Curzon, in speaking of the church at Jerusalem, says that in the centre of the choir is a globe of black marble on a pedestal, under which they say that the head of Adam was found, and you are told that this was the exact centre of the globe.

The circular pavement in the east part of Canterbury

Cathedral will be recalled by those who have seen it. There are possibly other traces or records of the *omphalos* in this country.

The Egg as a symbol of Creation has an equally venerable use as a pendent ornament, and may be seen in Greek or Coptic churches at the present day. The symbol was used by the ancient Egyptians, being shown on monuments and referred to in texts. M. Dognée has traced its symbolic use in his work "*Le Symbols Antiques—L'Oeuf.*"

(d). *The word "Avalon."*

The name "Avalonia" was applied by the Romans to several places in which a primitive religious culture existed. But the roots of the word are much older, and very widely found, since they exist not only among the early Mediterranean dialects, and those of the ancient civilizations of the nearer East, but are found also in the Celtic. *

The old name of the Sun-god, the *Baal* of the Hebrews, and the *Bel* of the Septuagint, are connected with the Cretan word *afelios* or *abelios*, meaning "the sun," and this with the Greeks became *Helios*. With the god Helios, the Greeks have since the time of Æschylus, identified their "Apollo." The origin of this name is, however, said by scholars to be uncertain.⁵ Avlona in Thrace is however associated with a more ancient "Apollonia." On the west of the Adriatic we have Apulia, spoken of as the garden of Italy, and Avellinum, or Abellinum, in Campania, whence, according to Cormac's *Glossary*, the Celtic word *aball*, meaning "apple-tree," is derived. Whitley Stokes's translation of this rare work gives the following:—

Aball (apple-tree)=Abellano oppido Campaniae.

Uball (apple)—quasi *aball*=Aball autem, from a town in Italy whereunto is the name Abellanium: thence they brought the seed of the apple.

5. See Nettleship and Sandys, "Dictionary of Antiquities."

Avalon in Burgundy marks another ancient centre of the primitive cult.

The termination *On* of the words Avalon, Avlona, etc., is again reminiscent of the names of many of the great cities and temples of antiquity. The root in the Celtic implies a stone.

Cormac's *Glossary* gives the following :—

Onn (the double N gives a long vowel)=Stone. This he terms the “inexplicable” name for a stone, the ordinary one being *cloch*.

This description would seem to imply some special, and possibly symbolic, meaning for the word, and it would be interesting to discover its origin. Whether, as my friend supposed, the occurrence of such a term in the place-name “Avalon” denotes the possession of a cult-stone in these localities is a point which demands enquiry. Whether, again, the root is in any way akin to certain Greek words implying “Being,” or the embryo of Being, I must leave to others to determine. There seems, at least, no doubt that stones of a globular or egg-shape did, in early days, and among primitive races, figure the genesis of creation, and mark the symbolic centre of the world.