Notes

The Meare Lake Village Excavations, 1935

The season's work at Meare Lake Village began on 26 August 1935 and was continued for three-and-a-half weeks (after which the filling-in was carried out). The ground examined consisted of two distinct areas situated south of the datum line. The larger area included Mounds XVA, XVB, and XVIII, and a smaller area lying east of this in which the southern half of Mound XXI was uncovered. The latter work was entrusted to three voluntary workers, *i.e.* Messrs. J. M. de Navarro, Bernard Sturdy and P. G. Summers.

The central part of the east village is covered by an accumulation of lias blocks and rubble, roughly circular in outline and approximately 70 ft. in diameter. During the season's work of 1934 a 10 ft. wide section N. and S. was cut through this stone-work with the object of trying to ascertain the date and the reason of its construction. No satisfactory data were, however, forthcoming except that fragments of early medieval pottery were found near the surface of the stone-work and British pottery below it.

This year's work included a larger area of the stonework and has produced decided evidence as to the date it was placed there. It was dumped down in the depressions over the Lake Village remains sometime during the Roman occupation of Britain, for mixed with the stone were fragments of pottery and a circular bronze brooch of distinctly Roman workmanship.

Among the other interesting features of the past season's work has been the timber foundation under Mound XVB. The excavations exposed a rectangular arrangement of oak mortised planks which were undoubtedly *in situ* (Plate I, frontispiece of the volume). These planks were originally held in place at the corners (where they crossed) by four oak piles driven

vertically into the peat. Only one of these piles, however, remained in position.

Whether this arrangement of timber, which was approximately 8 ft. square (inside measurement), had anything to do with a rectangular dwelling or was part of the timber substructure that surrounded one or more of the earliest dwellings, and similar to the mortised beams that have been discovered surrounding some of the Scottish crannogs cannot be definitely stated at the present time. A like arrangement of beams was found in the Western Village under Mound XXI during the year's work of 1921.

A remarkable series of superimposed clay hearths was found on floor ii of Mound XVB, and a more important series in Mound XXI, but the latter awaits further examination.

Among the smaller objects discovered were the following :—

Antler.—Massive beam of red-deer antler, sawn ; hammer, perforated ; three knife-handles ; two ' cheek-pieces ' ; toggle ; and five weaving-combs.

Bone, etc.—Several worked carpal and tarsal bones of sheep ; four worked shoulder-blades ; two gouges ; five needles, some broken ; worked length of boar's tusk ; perforated canine tooth of dog.

Beads of Glass.—Two clear glass beads with yellow spirals ; another with yellow horizontal lines ; and ten ring-beads of yellow paste found near together.

Bronze.—Three finger-rings ; penannular ring-brooch ; two fibula-pins ; a circular brooch, gilt, Roman (middle of the Occupation).

Iron.—A few corroded objects ; small sickle ; and a La Tène II dagger (broken), similar to that found at Kingsdown Camp, Somerset (*Archaeologia*, lxxx, 85).

Lead.—Part of a ring.

Kimmeridge Shale.—Three parts of armlets.

Whorls.—Twenty-three spindlewhorls (stone, bone, chalk, quartz —not finished) ; also one of tin ornamented with dots-and-circles.

Flint.—A finely-worked arrow- or javelin-head ; two scrapers ; and a chipping from a polished celt.

Stone.—Among the stone objects are two pounders and parts of two saddle querns.

Coin.—One ' third brass ' coin, found at the bottom of the Roman stone-work.

Pottery.—Some of the fragments of the early Iron Age pottery were highly ornamented, and part of a large vessel was decorated with the 'trumpet pattern'; in the stone-work several pieces of pottery of the Roman period, including part of a pitcher, were discovered.

Animal Remains.—These include three cock-spurs.

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GLASTONBURY ABBEY EXCAVATIONS, 1935

THE excavations at Glastonbury Abbey during last summer were chiefly concerned with further investigation of the Chapter House. In Mr. Bligh Bond's report, published in the *Proceedings*, lvi (1910), 62–78, he gives a plan and details of the foundations that he found of the Chapter House. He was of opinion that 'the actual Chapter House will be found to the eastward of this' (p. 74); and the Directors have been engaged in following out this theory. The full report cannot be published until the work is more advanced. The excavations were only carried on for a comparatively short time, as various difficulties that arose prevented the work continuing for the usual number of weeks.

The Excavation Committee has sustained a great loss in the death of Mr. C. E. Clayton, on whom an obituary notice appears in this volume.

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Minehead

Discovery of missing portions of seventeenth-century reredos of the parish church

Minehead Church suffered from a very drastic ' restoration ' in 1886 under the notorious Victorian architect, Piers St. Aubyn, when most of its ancient fittings save the screen and pulpit disappeared. A photograph taken a few years previously shows a reredos extending the whole width of the east end, consisting of a series of round-headed panels. Two central panels containing the decalogue survived in the Church and were fixed at the west end of the nave : these were repainted and one bears this inscription :

> Robert Qvirck The Younger Mariner ·
> Sonne of James Qvirck Gave This *
> To The Chvrch · Anno Dom̄i · 1634 ·

During recent investigations in the loft over the porch some of the remaining panels were found. Two of these contain the Creed and the Lord's Prayer ; the other two are painted with figures of Moses and Aaron. They are hinged, showing that the reredos was made to fold up like a triptych. One bears on the reverse the remains of an earlier painting of the creed in black letter of the sixteenth century. The intention is to clean these panels and assemble them with the two decalogue panels in their original order, placing them on the blank wall in the western part of the north aisle.

This discovery is of some importance, for reredoses of the period between the Reformation and the Great Rebellion are all but unknown. During Elizabeth's reign Puritan feeling was so strong that the wooden altar-tables of the period were often placed at a distance from the east wall. Later on they were sometimes surrounded by rails. As the seventeenth century went on the tendency was to restore the traditional form of the east end and we have a contemporary picture of the high altar of Winchester Cathedral showing the familiar medieval arrangement with two lights standing on it, a frontal

and dorsal of textiles in contrasting colours, and a reredos with inscribed panels above. At Hendon in Middlesex there was found recently a medieval reredos panel repainted with black letter texts in a conventional frame beneath the Perpendicular east window, evidently executed early in the seventeenth century. After the Restoration, under the influence of the Wren tradition so familiar in the London city churches, massive reredoses in renaissance style became the rule. In Puritan London they generally contained the creed, Lord's Prayer and decalogue, with perhaps Moses and Aaron.[1] Here at Minehead was an example of this type dated as early as 1634 showing that it was in use long before the time of Wren. But the hinging of the panels must have come down from earlier times and did not survive the Rebellion : the writer can recall none in England between this Minehead example and those of the gothic revival. The discovery of no less than four of these lost panels is therefore of considerable importance. Such reredoses must be excessively rare even if any others have survived.

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[1] Elsewhere in the eighteenth century one frequently finds a sacred picture in the centre : there was a Crucifixion at Dunster.