

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
SOMERSETSHIRE ARCHÆOLOGICAL AND
NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY
DURING THE YEAR
1933

THE Eighty-Fifth Annual Meeting of the Somersetshire Archæological and Natural History Society was held at Shepton Mallet on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, July 11th, 12th and 13th. The last meeting of the Society at Shepton Mallet took place in 1907.

First Day's Proceedings

Motor-cars and coaches assembled in the Market Place, outside the Council Offices, left at 9.45 a.m. and proceeded, via Charlton, Doultling and Downhead, to

St. Giles' Church, Leigh-on-Mendip

where the members were met by the vicar, the Rev. R. L. Williams.

Mr. F. C. EELES described the building as follows :

The Church consists of short chancel, short nave of three bays, with north and south aisles continued for a single short bay alongside the chancel, south porch, vestry on north side of chancel and west tower. The building is remarkable for its shortness compared with its height and with the size of the tower, which ranks high among the fine towers of the county. The Church is a miniature example of one of the great Perpendicular churches.

There may be a little earlier work in the south aisle of the nave, but no details older than the period of Perpendicular architecture are visible. It would seem that the nave and aisles were rebuilt about the middle of the fifteenth century. Considerably later the tower and clerestory were added, seemingly as part of one scheme of improvement, for the tower-arch is too high to have ever belonged to a church without a clerestory. In order to provide for this splendid tower and at the same time to preserve sufficient space in the churchyard for the Sunday procession to go round the west side of it, the west end of the Church was pulled down and rebuilt, with the western bay of the arcades narrower and smaller. Later still,¹ probably in the early part of the sixteenth century, the chancel was rebuilt with short aisles continuous with the nave aisles, but separated by depressed arches fading into the wall on either side and forming abutments for the chancel-arch, which was rebuilt at the same time. A vestry was subsequently formed in the angle between the east wall of the north aisle and the north wall of the chancel, its north wall being continuous with the aisle wall, its east wall in line with the east wall of the chancel. A remarkable feature is the step down at the chancel arch, the chancel floor being lower than that of the nave. At first sight this seems like one of those cases where this exceptional mediæval arrangement escaped the nineteenth century restorers, as at Boughton Aluph in Kent. But close examination shows that the floor was sunk in the nineteenth century, apparently to make it possible to provide a step for the sanctuary, which does not seem to have existed before. About that time was added a footpace which throws the altar out of place in respect of the east window.

The chancel walls are of ashlar. The east window is of five-lights ogee-headed and cinquefoiled with a depressed four-centred head: a small transom crosses the central part of the tracery, which has trefoiled lights. There is a three-light window in the south wall of the chancel.

There are two small doorways almost opposite each other,

¹ I cannot follow Mr. Bligh Bond in placing the chancel and its aisles much earlier than the nave, viz. before the end of the fourteenth century (*Proceedings*, vol. liii, 1907, p. 41).

that on the north side leading to the vestry. Immediately to the east of these doorways are two angel corbels, one in each wall, which supported the gear for the great lenten veil.

The arcades are of the usual clustered Perpendicular type, with moulded capitals to the shafts. Those in the nave are circular and small: those of the chancel-arches are semi-octagonal and larger. There is a slight difference between the bases of the two nave-arcades, but it is not easy to think there was much if any interval of time between the building of the two.

There are two small piscinas, in chancel and south chancel aisle, exactly alike, with trefoiled ogee arches under square heads.

The windows throughout the aisles are square-headed and have three lights cinquefoiled, the heads ogee-shaped in the chancel-aisles. The window west of the south porch has trefoiled heads to the lights and is probably the oldest. The clerestory windows have depressed four-centred arches to which the cinquefoiled lights run up.

The east window of the chancel has a label with head stops—the only label in the Church, save over the porch doorway.

The porch is contemporary with the nave and has simple moulded doorways. The plain parapet is carried round the gable.

The south walls of aisle and clerestory have open-work parapets of pierced quatrefoils containing leaf ornaments and shields. The parapets in the chancel, and those on the north side are plain. The south clerestory parapet has a second tier of smaller quatrefoils and is therefore exceptionally rich. The aisle parapet has the date 1620 in one of the quatrefoils, indicating renewal at that time in exact reproduction of medieval design—a very important dated instance of careful reproduction of Gothic work long before the nineteenth century revival.

The nave and chancel roofs are very good. That of the chancel is especially rich and can be well seen because it is low. It is a double-framed roof of moderate pitch with tie-beams and king-posts. Small brackets rest on stone angel corbels. The cornices have two orders, the one carved with a running trail,

the other with paterae at intervals. The centre of each beam has an angel on each side at the base of the king-post and a boss below carved out of the solid. On either side of the king-post is a carved panel. Each section of the roof has a moulded brace and purlin with subordinate ribs and bosses in each sub-section, all with carved bosses at their intersections.

In the nave the treatment is similar, but with paterae instead of a trail along the lower cornice member and open trefoil-headed tracery in the trusses on either side of the king-posts. Only the last bay eastwards has the extra enrichment of subordinate ribs and bosses, in honour of the rood below.

The north aisle has a lean-to roof with a central purlin and low-arched braces at intervals. The south aisle roof is modern.

The stone corbels supporting the nave roof are noteworthy. They consist of demi-angels all holding shields, except No. 2 on the south side who holds a crown of thorns. Angels Nos. 1 and 2 from the east on the north side and No. 2 on the south are in surplices with very long sleeves. Nos. 3 on each side have full sleeves but of a narrower type, while Nos. 1 and 4 on the south and 4 on the north are in sleeved rochets, apparently. The two eastmost shields on the north side have the hammer and pincers, the westmost on the south a bend; the rest are blank.

There is a rood-loft staircase in the north aisle, opened out in 1898. The space above the chancel-arch on the nave side is very great, and the rood-loft must have been set high.

Under the window east of the south porch in the south aisle there are what appear to be two stone jambs, but without a sill in continuation of the edge of the splay of the window above. East of this is a piscina with a plain pointed arch. In the east wall of the porch is a niche for the holy-water stoup, enclosing as a base, what appears to be a circular thirteenth-century capital.

There are a number of ancient seats with bench-ends of the rectangular type carved with simple tracery patterns.

The font is Norman; the bowl is of the cushion capital type, set on a plain, circular stem. The base is modern. The cover is a simple but good example of seventeenth-century work.

The appearance of the interior of the Church has been gravely

injured by the removal of the plaster from the rough walls, which cry out for its replacement.

Lying in the south window sill of the south chancel-aisle is part of a figure of St. Katharine with her wheel and sword showing traces of gilding.

The tower, the chief glory of the Church, is closely akin to that of Mells. It is described by Dr. Allen on pp. 38, 41 of his book, *The Great Church Towers of England*, in which a photograph of it is reproduced. To Dr. Allen's description may be added two points, (1) that the tower-arch has clustered responds with moulded circular capitals, and (2) that the west doorway, well moulded, has an ogee-headed label carved with rather unusual shallow crochets.

Prior HORNE directed attention to some roundels of old glass in the west window. He pointed out that they were part of a set of Instruments of the Passion, and that they were of interest as they conformed to a pattern that was common in their day. He showed some photographs of corresponding Instruments in windows in Westwood Church, Wilts,¹ and explained how closely the designs in the two churches followed each other. The scourges, for instance, in each case, were shown as a pair, hanging from the arms of a tau cross, with handles exactly alike. The reed was passed through the rungs of the ladder and in each of the two designs it went under the third rung, which it just touched, having its head or top to the left. In like manner the curious pestle and mortar was the same in both cases, and is a copy from a list of these Instruments that is reproduced in Vol. xii, No. 46, of the *Early English Text Society*. The same vessel occurs in the glass at Malvern Priory, and this reproduction of similar designs in late fifteenth-century glass, was an example showing how products of this kind were ceasing to be the work of individuals, and were becoming 'commercialized'.

A halt was next made at

Moore's Hill Quarry

Stoke Lane, where the leader, Dr. F. S. WALLIS, of Bristol Museum and Art Gallery, mentioned that the members were

¹ *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.* lxxviii (1932) .li.

now standing on the oldest known rock in Somerset. This large quarry is opened entirely in compact pyroxene-andesite, which often shows prominent dark green crystals of augite. The original lines of flow in the lava may often be detected.

This mass of lava has long been known, but was thought to have been forced into the surrounding Old Red Sandstone sediments; in fact, many maintained that the entire Mendip range was due to the intrusion of this rock. In 1907, Professor S. H. Reynolds, of the University of Bristol, found some tuffs and normal sediments containing definite Silurian trilobites and brachiopods clearly associated with this volcanic rock. The age and character of the Moon's Hill mass was thus firmly established, and the leader indicated that the evidence for these conclusions could still be seen in the smaller Sunnyhill Quarry on the west of the road.

The lava at Moon's Hill has been computed to be about 500 ft. thick and must indicate a volcano of considerable size. Near Beacon Hill and Moon's Hill are masses of large blocks of the lava enclosed in an ashy matrix. These rocks may mark the position of the old vents of these ancient volcanoes.

The leader graphically visualised the conditions existing in ancient times, and mentioned that in such word-pictures geology can be of real assistance to students of archæology.

In former times the stone was extensively used as road metal. It is now ground to a fine powder, and, mixed with cement, makes excellent paving- and curb-stones.

On arrival at

Beacon Hill

most of the party left the motors and proceeded along the pathway to the highest part of the hill. While the members were assembling a deluge of rain had to be faced and by degrees they returned to the vehicles. The remainder of the morning's programme had to be abandoned.

Mr. H. ST. GEORGE GRAY has provided the following notes: Beacon Hill stands at an altitude of just over 950 ft., and is situated in the most northerly part of Doultling parish, the boundary dividing Doultling from Shepton Mallet being along the western margin of the Beacon Plantation. This is appar-

ently an ancient site and is encircled by an earthwork (perhaps modern) about 700 ft. in diameter. To the east in the same small wood a curved earthwork is shown in the 6-in. Ordnance Map. The writer in the *Victoria County History* regards this as an escarpment of rock which follows the line of the hill, and he thinks it is 'wholly natural'. However, it is much overgrown at the present season, and should be examined carefully in the winter. In this area there are said to be eight barrows, mostly difficult of identification owing to the denseness of the plantation.

Within the so-called ring-fort, of which there are recognizable traces, are three barrows—one a disc barrow; the largest is surmounted by a large stone. Of this site Collinson says only this: 'About 2 miles N. from Doultong Church there formerly stood a beacon, and there still remains upon the spot a very large stone,¹ which serves as a sea-mark, being seen from a vast distance by mariners navigating the coast.'

There are three tumuli (and two others also traceable) in the next field westwards, in Shepton Mallet parish: all show signs of having been dug into.²

Phelps in his *History of Somerset* recorded that around Beacon Hill are several barrows, one of which was opened by the Rev. John Skinner in 1820, when an urn, about 16 in. in height and 12 in. in diameter across the mouth, was found, but no weapons or other specimens. 'It fell to pieces on being taken up.' Phelps figured the urn, inverted, between slabs of stone. Mr. Balch copied this illustration in his book on *Wookey Hole*. This shouldered urn is ornamented round the rim by a band of chevron pattern, the interspaces or triangles filled with parallel lines.

Rutter, in his *Delineations of Somerset*, stated in a footnote that the Rev. F. Blackburn, rector of Weston, was present when some very rude urns were discovered on Beacon Hill near

¹ No doubt this stone was several feet higher at one time.

² Subsequently to our meeting the Report of the *Wells Nat. Hist. and Archeol. Society* for 1932 came into my hands, and in it Mr. A. T. Wicks describes (pp. 38-40) the digging of some of the barrows on Beacon Hill in 1820 by Bishop Law, Skinner, Warner, etc., to which reference should be made by those interested.—H. ST. G. G.

Maesbury, on which an attempt at ornament had been made by indenting figures with the thumb-nail. The urn excavated here by Skinner in 1820 does not answer to this description.

Reference should be made to the crossing of the Roman roads on Beacon Hill, especially to the Fosse Way, which the Romans drove over hill, over dale, through forest and marsh, straight (or nearly so) from Bath to near Chard and Axminster and beyond. The whole course seemed to have been laid out by sighting on to certain elevated points such as Beacon Hill and Easton Hill near East Pennard. The Fosse Way cannot be described as a whole here, but attention is drawn to the road coming up from Charlton to Beacon Hill and continuing to Bath after having crossed the Ad Axium road described by Sir Richard Hoare, which ran from Old Sarum westward for a distance of fifty-five miles through Maiden Bradley, climbed Mendip, passed the Fosse at Beacon Hill, skirted Maesbury Camp, passed through Charterhouse and over Bleadon Hill to Uphill, and terminated at an alleged harbour at the mouth of the Axe and near Brean Down.

A marvellous view is to be obtained from Beacon Hill. On the north, Dundry, Maesknoll, Lansdown beyond Bath, and the distant mountains of Wales. On the east Bratton Castle (which the Society visited from Frome last year). On the s.e. and s., Small Down Camp, Creech Hill, Cadbury Camp (Came-lot), with the lofty ridges of Pillesdon, Lewesdon and Lambert's Castle in Dorset. On the s.w. the Hood, Burton Pynsent and Wellington columns, backed by the distant range of Blackdown. In the western horizon the Quantocks, and beyond the highest ground in the county at Dunkery Beacon, with the Bristol Channel in the distance. In the vale, one detects Brent Knoll, Glastonbury Tor and Montacute, and immediately below, Wells Cathedral and the town of Shepton, with Maesbury Camp which occupies the western point of this ridge, two miles distant.

Owing to the inclement weather

Maesbury Camp

could not be visited.

Mr. H. ST. GEORGE GRAY prepared the following notes for the occasion :

This Camp, although fairly large—its interior space covering an area of $6\frac{3}{4}$ acres—is not of a rare type; and perhaps it is best known at the present day on account of the extensive views obtainable from it, especially in westerly and southerly directions. Indeed it commands the finest prospect on the eastern Mendips, and was seriously considered as the site for a county memorial to the fallen in the Great War.

Maesbury (meaning *field fort*) falls under Class B of the classification of Defensive Works, namely, 'Fortresses on hilltops with artificial defences following the natural line of the hill'.

The interior dimensions of Maesbury are about 740 ft. by 520 ft. On such high ground (958 ft. above O.D.) it is somewhat disappointing to see no precipitous declivity on either side, although the ground in the immediate vicinity of the Camp on the s. and s.w. is fairly steep. The ascent to the enclosure from the n. and w. is by a gradual slope: but this Camp is weakest on the e. and s.e. sides, and it is surprising that, as there are apparently no outworks, there should be no additional lines of rampart with intervening ditches to defend the entrance of the Camp, as at Small Down. The weak side of an ancient camp is often strengthened by one or more lines of outworks thrown up across the ridge on which the camp is situated. It would be difficult to find better instances than the outworks at Worlebury Camp, Weston-super-Mare, at Winkelbury Camp in S. Wilts, and, in a lesser degree, at Ruborough Camp on the Quantocks.

This entrenchment is divided between the two parishes of Dinder and Croscombe, the s.e. half belonging to the latter. At $\frac{1}{4}$ -mile to the n.e. of the centre of the Camp, the Roman road passes; it runs along the top of Mendip from Old Sarum to Ad Axium; there are tumuli to be seen in a n.w. direction at a distance of 10 furlongs, in Burnt Wood and at Whitnell Corner. Pen Hill stands up conspicuously at a distance of three miles w.n.w., the summit nearly 50 ft. higher than Maesbury. Brent Knoll is seen on the w. at a distance of seventeen miles.

The s.e. entrance appears originally to have been about 45 ft. wide, that is across the causeway separating the encircling ditch of the Camp; and at the foot of the rampart on either

side it may have narrowed to about 35 ft. On the s. side of the entrance the rampart has been partly destroyed for a length of some 90 ft. ; the material was used apparently to fill up the ditch. This work was probably carried out in recent times for agricultural purposes and to facilitate the driving of flocks and herds into the Camp. The rampart, however, has not been reduced to the level of the 'old turf line', except close up to the entrance, and this, therefore, would be an attractive place in which to conduct some excavations. In this part, and on the south, the top of the fosse is estimated to have been about 33 ft. in width, and the crest of the vallum is some 15 ft. high above the surface of the silting of the ditch.

Mr. A. F. Somerville remembers some sixty years ago hearing that there was a well at the s.e. entrance. He thinks it quite probable, as the supply of water for Dinder House comes from a strong spring at the foot of the hill close to Mäsbury Railway Station.

Perhaps the most perfect part of the earthworks remaining is the vallum and fosse on the s.w. Here the outer bank, about half as high as the vallum, has not been disturbed, the intervening ditch averaging 24 ft. wide. It is rather surprising that the ditch here has not silted up to a greater extent. In places the vallum here is high, probably some 18 ft. above the surface of the silting of the fosse. Between the vallum and the fosse in this part there is a decided berme.

It is a question if the present western entrance is ancient, but the point can only be satisfactorily proved by excavation. Along the n.w. the ditch appears to have averaged 30 ft. in width ; but the rampart is not so high as in other parts of the Camp. There seems to be modern alteration here, for the rather wide outer bank is grooved along its summit, and there is a boundary-hedge, in an apparently modern trench, at the foot of the outer bank. In this part and further north, fir-trees have been planted along the ditch and outer bank.

After having walked over the Camp, one goes away with the impression that it was never properly finished. No authenticated archæological remains have been found within the Camp, it is believed, but some fragments of flint found by the late Mr. Jonas Rugg, of Croscombe, are said to have been unearthed

at Maesbury, and a Mr. Cunnington (formerly of Stuckey's Bank, Shepton Mallet) stated some years ago that several flint arrowheads had been found at Maesbury. A flint celt is said to have been found 'near the water at the west of the camp'.

A few remains of interest have been found in the vicinity. In 1893, Mr. Somerville picked up the greater part of a flint celt of Neolithic type in Dinder Wood, to the s.w. of Maesbury (in Wells Museum). In 1842 a labourer ploughed up a perforated stone hammer in a field to the s. of Maesbury, of which there is a good cast in the Museum at Taunton. A bronze knife, also from this locality, may be seen in Wells Museum.

In the *Victoria County History*, Sir William Boyd Dawkins, in the prehistoric map of the county, marked Maesbury Camp with a symbol indicating that it belonged to the Prehistoric Iron Age. Wondering if any objects of that period had been found in the Camp, we wrote him (some twenty years ago) and found that he had no record of any, but he stated that he regarded the Camp as belonging to the Worlebury type, and he believed that the ramparts at Maesbury were composed of dry-walling as at Dolebury, Worlebury, etc. Excavations only can settle these points, and there is at present no walling exposed to view in any part of the Camp.

The Annual Meeting

After luncheon at the 'Hare and Hounds' Hotel, the members assembled in the Hall of the Council Offices for the Annual General Meeting which was well attended. The chair was taken at 2.5 p.m. by the Very Rev. Prior Ethelbert Horne, F.S.A. (*Chairman of Council*), supported by Mr. Arthur F. Somerville (*President-Elect*), the Rt. Hon. Henry Hobhouse (*Vice-President*), the Rt. Hon. Sir Matthew Nathan, G.C.M.G. (*Vice-President*), and Mr. H. St. George Gray, F.S.A. (*Asst.-Secretary, Curator and Excursion Secretary*).

Apologies for absence were announced from Sir Charles Peers, C.B.E. (*outgoing President*), and Sir Frederick Berryman.

Prior HORNE, in introducing the new President, made allusion to Mr. Somerville's conspicuous county work covering a large number of years and to his great interest in the affairs of

their Society, of which he had been President at the last Shepton Mallet meeting in 1907.

Mr. A. J. SOMERVILLE then took the chair as President.

The Annual Report

Mr. H. ST. GEORGE GRAY, Asst.-Secretary, read the Annual Report, which was as follows :

‘In presenting the eighty-fifth annual report, the Council wishes to state that since the last meeting 52 new names have been added to the list of members and associates. Losses by death and resignation for the year 1932–33 have been 61, a net loss of 9, as against a net loss of 39 in the last year. The total membership at the present date is 992, against 1,001 at the Frome Meeting last year, and 1,040 at the Minehead Meeting in 1931. It was in 1920 that the Society first reached a membership of one thousand, and it is much regretted that we have now fallen slightly below that level.

‘The Society has had some serious losses by death during the period under review : Two past-Presidents have passed away, namely Major M. Cely Trevilian who died on 4 December last—an obituary notice of whom, with portrait, appeared in vol. lxxviii of the *Proceedings* for 1932, and Dr. J. Armitage Robinson, F.S.A., Dean of Wells until February last, who died on 7 May at the age of 75 years, the value of whose scholarly, historical and archæological work will long be felt.

‘The list of Vice-Presidents has also been reduced by the death of the Rev. F. W. Weaver, F.S.A., formerly of Milton Clevedon, for many years honorary editor and one of the honorary secretaries of the Society (he died at Oxford on 29 April, aged 81 years) ; and Mr. Charles Tite, an honorary secretary from 1900, who became a Vice-President in 1913 in acknowledgement of his gifts to the Museum and Library. One room in the Castle is devoted to a large collection of Somerset books and illustrations collected by Mr. Tite over a period of years ; he died at Taunton on 16 May in his 92nd year. At the time of writing this report it has been made known that Mr. Tite has bequeathed to the Society the sum of £2,000 to be invested, the interest to be devoted to the purchase of Somerset books and show-cases for the County Museum.

‘ Mr. Henry Symonds, F.S.A., another past honorary secretary of the Society and a well-known numismatist, passed away on 11 February, since which Mrs. Symonds has kindly presented about 150 books from his library to the Society in his memory.

‘ In addition the Council regrets to record a large loss of members by death, as follows : Mr. J. A. Barnes (1923), Mr. W. Harvey Blake (1919), Mr. G. Lawrence Bulleid (1914), Mr. John Bright Clark (1902), who recently became a councillor, the Rev. W. S. Clarke (1929), Mr. S. T. Clothier (1884), the Rev. J. J. Coleman (1882), Mr. Henry Corner (who joined as early as 1876), Brig.-General E. K. Daubeney (1911), Major V. T. Hill (1919), Mr. A. P. Indge (1919), Major E. S. Jackson (1918), the Rev. H. D. Lewis (1909), Mr. F. W. Roberts (1892), for some years the Society’s architect, Mr. J. S. Scudamore (1927), Mr. W. E. Tanner (1907), Mrs. C. Tite (1892), Mr. Charles Wells (1918), Mr. Samuel White (1898), and Lt.-Col. S. H. Woodhouse (1905).

‘ There was a balance of £53 14s. 4d. on the Society’s general account at the end of 1931, besides which £150 was put aside towards the production of *Proceedings*, vol. lxxvii for 1931 ; also £100 for repairs and £50 to the credit of the Endowment Fund. At the end of 1932 there was a balance in hand of £13 4s. 6d., and in addition £125 was placed on reserve to meet part of the cost of *Proceedings*, vol. lxxviii for 1932 ; also £125 for repairs and painting, as part of the £100 mentioned above had not been expended in 1931.

‘ The total expenses of the *Proceedings* for 1932 (recently circulated) amounted to £229 2s. 4d. Part of the cost of the illustrations was defrayed by those mentioned in the preface of the volume. The *Proceedings* cost £234 5s. 7d. in 1931. The *Index to the Papers on Monumental Effigies* was prepared and edited by Dr. A. C. Fryer, F.S.A., and kindly given by him to all the members of the Society.

‘ A recommendation from the Council is to be brought before the Annual Meeting this afternoon that teachers in Elementary Schools should be admitted as ordinary members of the Society at 12s. 6d. per annum with an entrance fee of 5s.

‘ During the time that the new Wyndham gallery on the north side of the Courtyard and adjoining the Great Hall was being furnished with cases last autumn (that is after the opening

ceremony on the first of June 1932), Mr. Wyndham, at the Curator's suggestion, allowed the Museum Committee to use the room upstairs, intended eventually for a schools museum, for a special exhibition of Somerset Bygones,—objects dating from 1700 to 1900. This collection was at once prepared, and it was opened to the public on 9 January 1933. Since that time the collection has been considerably added to by friends of the Museum; and the Bygones Museum will remain as it is for a few months longer. It has proved very attractive, and it is hoped that those members who have not seen it will take an early opportunity of doing so, and bring their friends.

‘But this additional gallery has not relieved the congestion of specimens very appreciably, and knowing that a large series of Early Iron Age remains from the Glastonbury Lake Village is available for the County collections, and that no proper space has yet been found for the collections from the Meare Lake Village, Mr. Wyndham is at the present time considering Museum extension beyond the east end of the Great Hall.

‘The Council has let the excavation site on the east side of the Courtyard of Taunton Castle to the Castle Hotel, on the understanding that the hotel preserves the walls and other ancient features. Members of the Society will be permitted to visit the garden when they wish to do so.

‘A sum of money has been accumulated during the last few years for the special purpose of carrying out some minor repairs and painting the exterior of the Castle. This work was carried out in the spring and early summer.

‘The Museum and Library have considerably benefitted by the acquisition of workrooms, thanks to Mr. Wyndham, and good progress has been made in re-arranging certain sections of the Museum, notably the Bygones series which has largely increased of late years. A part of this collection will now find a more or less permanent home in the Schools Museum, as the whole of the cases provided by Mr. Wyndham will not be required for the schools series of antiquities, etc.

‘The pottery and porcelain collections have been increased by a gift from Mrs. G. M. Fardell of Clevedon, and the whole series has been re-arranged and catalogued.

‘Museum acquisitions also include a large gift of door and

cabinet keys from Dr. W. M. Tapp, F.S.A., and the "Mary Bridge" sword, connected with the Monmouth rebellion and the battle of Sedgemoor, given by Mrs. M. A. P. M. Wright and Miss B. Mary Bridge.¹ The chief accession in the Natural History department is the herbarium formed by the late Miss E. Livett of Clevedon (and formerly of Wells). For the first season fresh wild flowers are being exhibited in the Museum on the initiative of Mrs. Gray.

' A number of portraits, programmes, etc., having reference to Sir Henry Irving (1838-1905), who was born at Keinton Mandeville, have been received lately, and the Curator is anxious to extend the collection.

' In the Library department the card indexing system is being introduced, and in the course of a few months there will be a complete index under authors and subjects. The need for this has long been felt. There has also been a certain amount of weeding-out of books unsuitable for the Library, and some of those have been sold to members at moderate prices. There are still a good many books for sale.

' The Society's library set of the *Gentleman's Magazine* has become much worn and somewhat decayed. This has been replaced to a very large extent by a long "run" of these volumes in good condition acquired, by purchase, from the library of the late Dean Armitage Robinson. The Society has now the greater part of one set and a portion of another set for sale.

' An index of names in the Sherwood collection of manuscripts has been compiled.

' Mention should be made of the English Place-Name Society. It is understood that owing to lack of skilled local help the Somerset volume is not on the list for early publication.

' In speaking of records the formation of the British Records Association last autumn will act as an incentive to societies and individuals to collect and preserve deeds and documents of value which might, in some cases, otherwise be destroyed. Our Society has become a subscribing member of the new organization.

' Since the last annual meeting archæological excavations

¹ *The Connoisseur*, vol. 50 (1918), pp. 95-96.

have been conducted in the county, south of the Mendips, at the Meare Lake Village and Glastonbury Abbey, and also at Camerton in the neighbourhood of Bath, where the Very Rev. the Prior of Downside completed the digging of the Anglo-Saxon Cemetery, since which he has excavated a Roman house near by. The Ham Hill excavations could not be continued owing to the lack of funds.

‘The work at Glastonbury Abbey has been briefly reported upon in the *Proceedings* for 1932, recently issued. Dr. Bulleid and Mr. St. George Gray, continuing the excavations at Meare last autumn, had a very satisfactory season, and nearly finished the examination of the eastern limit of the western half of the village. The investigations will be resumed at the end of August, and as the funds are low an appeal will be issued soliciting donations. Given the necessary exhibition space the Society will soon be in a position to show the finest collection of lake-village remains of the early Iron Age to be found in N.W. Europe.

‘The Society’s Natural History Sections are flourishing. The Ornithological Section, having a large field to cover, is holding its autumn meeting at Bristol. The Botanical and Entomological Sections have a full programme of field-days this season.

‘It is gratifying to the members of the Society to know that the Wellington Monument which stands on the Blackdown Hills at an altitude of 900 ft., the western slopes of Glastonbury Tor (12 acres), and land in the Quantock village of Holford have been handed over to the National Trust since our last Annual Meeting. The Society will also be glad to know that the repair of Muchelney Abbey has been completed by the Office of Works.

‘Attention should be drawn to the formation of the great reservoir by the Bristol Waterworks Company between Axbridge and Cheddar. It is possible that interesting ancient remains may be disturbed in these operations, and the Society has appointed watchers in the interest of antiquaries, etc.

‘The Wyndham Lecture Hall continues to be of great service, and is used by several organizations in the winter season.

‘Taunton Castle was visited during 1932 by 8,869 persons including 1,802 attendances from members, as against 9,404 persons in 1931.’

The adoption of the Report was carried unanimously, having been proposed by the Rt. Hon. Henry Hobhouse, who paid a tribute to the late Dean of Wells, seconded by Mr. Charles E. Burnell.

Finances

The meeting formally adopted the Accounts of the Society for the year 1932, which had already been published in the *Proceedings*, vol. lxxviii, on the proposition of the Very Rev. Prior Horne.