

M.A., F.S.A., and the site was a Roman building at Catsgore Farm, south-east of Somerton, recently discovered by Mr. H. S. L. Dewar. The course would be for a fortnight in early September and the fee £3 3s. The Secretary appealed to members to subscribe towards the cost of the excavations in order to ensure the success of a scheme which was the first of its kind to be sponsored by the Society.

Sir Cyril Fox appealed for more publicity to be given the campaign to bring home the need for farmers, foresters, quarriers and other landworkers to exercise more care in the use of bull-dozers and suchlike implements at the sites of barrows and other earthworks. He called for every effort to be made to prevent the destruction of antiquities at the present pace. The President also emphasized the need for competent people to take charge of excavations and of the necessity in training young people for this work.

## The Presidential Address

AFTER coffee had been served to members, Sir CYRIL FOX, D.LITT., F.B.A., F.S.A., delivered his Address, illustrated by lantern slides, entitled 'Somerset from a South Wales Viewpoint'. It is published with illustrations in the second part of the *Proceedings*, p. 53.

Members then adjourned for cold luncheon at the George Hotel.

## CHARD

In the afternoon members assembled at the entrance to Manor Court House where the Secretary, Mr. W. A. SEABY, read some notes on the history of the house and the fine Elizabethan plasterwork (see *Proceedings*, xxviii, i, 23, and lxxiii, Pls. I and IV). Members were perturbed to see that one wall face of plaster had collapsed since the last visit to the house in 1927. Mr. Norrington, the owner, said that since the disintegration of this portion of the plaster work he had had the wall repointed and made waterproof, and that he hoped no further trouble would occur. As, however, this fine room is only used as a hardware store it does not receive the care

and attention it would as a living-room. In discussing the detail of the Renaissance decoration the President, Sir CYRIL FOX, pointed out how very debased were the Renaissance forms both in the figures and floral work after the rich Gothic sculpture of the fifteenth-century.

From here members proceeded to the parish church of St. Mary, where the party was welcomed by the vicar, Rev. A. Hapley. In the absence of Major-General Evans, Mr. VIVIAN-NEAL gave some notes on the church (see *Proceedings*, xxviii, i, 17; xlix, i, 19; lxxiii, 26). Amongst various features pointed out were the charming Jacobean dormer windows of domestic type in the clerestory of the nave, and the arrangement of the arches in the walls by the chancel arch, indicating that a rood-screen and gallery were intended when the nave arcades were built and were not introduced as an afterthought.

The next place to be visited was the Grammar School, where the headmaster, Mr. L. POWELL, conducted the party round the building giving notes on the history of the house and school. Mr. A. W. VIVIAN-NEAL has contributed the following about the builder and first owners of the house.

#### CHARD SCHOOL

The Elizabethan house, which is the main building of Chard School, has a well-preserved façade. It appears that the house was erected about 1583—the date on a lead rain-water head which seems contemporary with the building—by William Symes,<sup>1</sup> a merchant of Chard, who had already acquired the Poundisford Lodge estate in Pitminster by his marriage to Elizabeth, daughter of Robert Hill. John Symes, the eldest son of this marriage, became a man of some note, using both Poundisford Lodge and the house in Chard, referred to by Gerard as ‘an handsome house the inheritance of Mr. Symms who many times makes it his dwelling’. In 1636 he encouraged Taunton to protest against the assessment of ship money. He became, however, an ardent supporter of the royalist cause, and in 1647 was obliged to pay a fine or capital levy of £945.

<sup>1</sup> His arms were registered at the Visitation of 1591: *Azure, three escallops in pale or.* Crest—*A demi hind salient erased or.* *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.*, lxxxiv, 89.

Latterly he lived in obscurity at Frampton Cotterell in Gloucestershire, where he was buried, and his story is well told in his epitaph.

Here lyeth the body of John Symes, of Poundisford, in the parish of Pitminster in the County of Somerset, Esquire. He was born on the 4th day of March, 1572, in the 12th year of Queen Elizabeth. He lived soberly, righteously and godlily, and died on the 21st day of October, 1661.

Reader, thou treadest on the sacred ashes of John Symes, Esq., who, in the late unhappy times of rebellion, was forced (for his signal loyalty to his Prince) to leave his former habitation at Poundisford, in the parish of Pitminster, in the county of Somerset, and to seek a repose for his old age in this parish. He was a man greatly renowned for wisdom, justice, integrity and sobriety, which talents he did not hide in a napkin, but religiously exercised, in the whole conduct of his life, especially in the Government of that County wherein he bore all the honorable offices incident to a Country Gentleman as Knight of the Shire (elected *nem. con.*) for the Parliament held at Westminster, in the 21st year of King James, High Sheriff, Deputy Lieutenant for many years, and Justice of the Peace for 40 years and upwards, and as he was careful and solicitous to discharge his duty to God, his Sovereign, and his County, so God was pleased to bestow on him several badges (also) of his special favour, as length of days, accompanied with a most healthy constitution of body for above 80 years, and of his mind to the last, as also a numerous posterity, even of children's children to the number of a hundred and upwards descended of his loynes (by his only wife Amy, the daughter of Thomas Horner, of Cloford, in the County of Somerset, Esquire), and when he was full of days and honors, having lived 88 years 7 months and 17 days, and seen the safe return of his Prince to his Crown and Kingdoms, after a long and horrible exile, and thereby the flourishing condition both of Church and State, having finished his work on earth, he cheerfully resinged his soul to God that gave it, the 21st day of October, Anno Domini 1661, in full assurance of a joyfull resurrection.

Among the properties owned by John Symes was a house at Ham in Creech St. Michael, where he placed his eldest son on his marrying Abigail Arscott who came of the old Devonshire family of that name, and at Ham in the winter of 1622-3 it is presumed was born the grandson, William, who became the heir of the Symes estates and was eventually the founder of Chard School.

Poundisford Lodge was held from the bishopric of Winchester on copyhold tenure, and during the Commonwealth John

Symes' cousin, Roger Hill of Poundisford Park, a staunch parliamentarian and a personal friend of Cromwell, having acquired the manor of Taunton, became the owner of the property. The situation in the family circle must have been difficult. Sampson, the sequestrator, was also a cousin. On the restoration of Charles II the manor was returned to the bishopric by Roger Hill, and the Symes family came into their own again.

We have no knowledge of the part taken by young William Symes in the civil war. After his grandfather's death, in 1661, he went to live at Poundisford Lodge, and in due course married Rachel Blewett. Her father, Francis Blewett, the cavalier squire of Holcombe Rogus, had been killed at the siege of Lyme Regis in 1644.

William Symes took some part in local affairs and was appointed Treasurer of the Hospitals of the Western Division of Somerset in 1670, but he does not appear to have been a justice until 1683. The reason for his generosity in giving his house in Chard for use as a school is unknown. It does not seem that he was a rich man. No record has been found that he had children, but he had many relations who were the natural heirs of the property. The gift, however, of the house in Chard was made in 1671 while he was still in middle life. He died in 1687 and was buried at Pitminster. To one of his Blewett brothers-in-law he left his 'silver hilt sword', to another his 'young strawberry mare', and to his wife, who survived him until 1692, a life interest in his estate. The school which he founded has suffered various vicissitudes but has survived as a centre of sound learning, and many west countrymen and others from further afield have been proud to have received their education there.

Tea at the Oaklands Hotel, Crewkerne Road, was followed by a coach trip to Winsham, where the Vicar, the Rev. T. J. CHILDS, spoke to members about the church of St. Stephen with its interesting wooden tympanum. The following notes have been compiled by Mr. A. W. VIVIAN-NEAL.

## WINSHAM

It is clear from the entry in the Domesday Survey that there was a church of some importance at Winsham before the Norman conquest. During the reign of the Confessor, Harold, who had for a time almost unlimited control in Somerset, gave away certain manors belonging to the Bishop of Wells while the bishop was on a journey to Rome. Winsham, which had long been an endowment of the bishopric, he gave to a certain Elsi, who was compelled by the Conqueror to restore it to Bishop Giso.

The nave of Winsham Church has an early character, and may be of the eleventh-century, but the insertion of a Decorated window in the west wall, surmounting a doorway in the same style, and of windows in the side walls with deep reveals and Perpendicular tracery, have given it superficially an appearance of much later date. The lower part of the tower may be Norman, but the whole tower was reconstructed in the fifteenth-century. The chancel was rebuilt in the thirteenth-century, and still contains window mouldings of that period.

The most remarkable features of the church are the tympanum,<sup>1</sup> now placed on an interior wall of the tower, and the carved rood-screen which seems to be contemporary with it. The tympanum is constructed of flat boarding, and on it is painted the Crucifixion with the two Marys standing between the central cross and the crosses on which hang the two thieves. The manner of the painting, as far as can be ascertained in its present faded condition, is very late. One of the badges on the lower part of the screen is that of the falcon and bundle of sticks, said to have been used by Catherine of York, Countess of Devon, d. 1527, and her son, Henry, Marquess of Exeter, beheaded 1539. It may well be that the date of the tympanum and the screen is *circa* 1530.

The day ended with a visit to Leigh House, the attractive early seventeenth-century home of Mr. and Mrs. C. H. Lawley, members being conducted round by Mrs. LAWLEY. The history of the house will be found in *Proceedings*, xlix, i, 42 and lxxiii, i, 39.

<sup>1</sup> Illustrated, *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.*, xlix, ii, 56.

## Second Day's Proceedings

### WHITESTAUNTON AND CASTLE NEROCHE

After the brilliant day on Tuesday the morning of Wednesday was dull, while later rain and a heavy storm somewhat curtailed the programme. Motor-coaches left Chard at 9.45 for Whitestaunton, where Mr. and Mrs. A. E. Dobell kindly threw open their house for inspection. On the lawn at the back of the house, the Secretary, Mr. W. A. SEABY, read some notes on the descent of the Manor, the history of the house, the Roman Villa in the grounds and the church; after which members made a tour of the house, noting the charming Elizabethan frieze of the library and the great stone overmantel in the drawing-room (see *Proceedings*, xxviii, i, 40; xlix, i, 34; lxxiii, i, 43). A vote of thanks was given to Mrs. Dobell for her kindness in allowing the party access to all the more interesting parts of the house and for her hospitality in providing coffee and biscuits. In the church the Vicar of Combe St. Nicholas, Rev. W. T. TAYLOR, gave some further notes on the bench-ends, tiles and screen. In view of the wet weather Mr. H. ST. GEORGE GRAY, O.B.E., M.A., F.S.A., described his excavations at Combe Beacon barrow in 1935, a full report on which is given in *Proceedings*, lxxxi, 83-107. On leaving Whitestaunton the party did not stop to inspect the Beacon but saw the mound from the windows of coaches and cars, since the rain was by this time heavy. Nor did they descend at Castle Neroche, but ate a picnic lunch in the vehicles during a torrential downpour. Accommodation was at length found for members in the skittle alley of the Castle Inn, where the proprietress, Mrs. Dix, kindly allowed the party to shelter, while Mr. H. ST. GEORGE GRAY described his excavations at Castle Neroche in 1903. The report of this interesting earthwork and the finds made there are fully set out in *Proceedings*, xlix, ii, 23-55. His address was followed by a vote of thanks from Mr. A. W. VIVIAN-NEAL, who added notes on the early history of Neroche Deer Forest and put forward the interesting suggestion that part of the earthworks, which were unlike any other Norman

work, might have been constructed by Danish overlords of the eleventh-century.

### ASHILL

In the afternoon the sun came out with prospect of fine weather and the company made for the Church of St. Mary, Ashill (Rev. A. A. Wren, Rector), where Mr. H. M. BOOKER, M.A., Headmaster of Jordans School, spoke on the history and architecture of the church. Its most remarkable features are the triple arcade of Norman work dividing the chancel and the nave, and the Early English window, north-east of the pulpit, with its two shafts and cusped arch flush with the nave wall. The church is described in some detail by A. W. Vivian-Neal in *Somerset and Dorset Notes and Queries*, xxiii, pt. cci (June 1939), no. 24, p. 29; also by H. M. Booker, *The Church of St. Mary, Ashill*, a pamphlet sold in the church.

The party drove on to the neighbouring village of Broadway, where they were welcomed at the church of St. Aldhelm and St. Edburga by the Vicar, Rev. W. H. Allen. Mr. A. W. VIVIAN-NEAL described the church and gave notes on the manor :

### BROADWAY AND ILMINSTER

To the north of the earthwork, which is all that remains of the castle of Neroche, lies a stretch of country known formerly as Neroche Forest. The area of the forest was small; its origin and uses are mysterious. That so diminutive a forest included two villages—Ashill and Broadway—within its boundaries at an early date seems surprising, for such settlements were not conducive to the preservation of game. Ashill and Broadway, however, are both mentioned in Domesday, although their situation within the bounds of a royal forest might well have been expected to have removed them from the scope of the Survey. Although the church at Broadway has no surviving features earlier than the thirteenth-century, its dedication to St. Aldhelm and St. Edburga implies a very remote origin, and may even be taken to imply that there was a village here before the surrounding country could have been afforested, for dedications to early Saxon saints are rarely

found except in places where they preached or with which they were personally associated.

The activities of St. Aldhelm (d. 709) in Somerset are too well known to require recapitulation. He is believed to have been connected with the younger branch of the royal house of Cerdic to which King Ine belonged. St. Edburga (d. 751) was daughter of Centwine (d. 685), king of the West Saxons, who conquered the Quantock Hills and was a benefactor of Glastonbury. She was, therefore, a representative of the senior branch of the house of Cerdic, and it may be that the royal power passed to the junior branch because she was only a child at the time of her father's death, and probably not of marriageable age. Eventually she became abbess of a nunnery in Thanet, and was the friend and correspondent of St. Boniface and an authority on the art of poetry. A dedication to her in Somerset is found only at Broadway.

The chancel and transepts of Broadway Church are of the thirteenth-century, and still contain some Early English moulding of fine quality. This work is attributed to the influence of the energetic Henry de Urtiaco, or de Lorti, and his wife Sabina Rivell.<sup>1</sup> In 1306, a later Henry de Urtiaco, who was summoned to parliament as a baron, obtained a market for Broadway, and a fair to be held on the feast of St. Aldhelm. The church was largely reconstructed in the fifteenth-century, and the nave and tower are characteristic local work of that period.

At Ilminster Parish Church (St. Mary) the vicar, Rev. G. G. HICKMAN, gave a short account of the 'Mynster of the Ile'. The main features of this beautiful church are: the fine tower, 90 feet high; the well-proportioned Perpendicular chancel; the beautiful north transept also in Perpendicular style (St. Katherine's Chapel), with its tombs to the Wadham family including the magnificent brass of Sir William Wadham and his mother (see present volume of *Proceedings*, p. 127); the fifteenth-century font with traces of colouring; and the 'three-decker' Jacobean pulpit of about 1620 (see further, James Street, *The Mynster of the Ile*; *Proceedings*, xlix, i, 36 and lxxiii, i, 51).

<sup>1</sup> 'De Urtiaco Family', *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.*, xlii, ii, 26-55.



## WHITELACKINGTON

At the church of St. Mary, Whitelackington (Rev. G. C. Hickman, Vicar), an address was given by the former Secretary, Mr. H. ST. GEORGE GRAY. He described the church (Wislagetone, Wyslagetona, in Domesday) and read his and Mr. P. Sturdy's account published in *Proceedings*, lxxiii, i, 52-4, to which he made the following additions :

'There can be little doubt that the tomb is the monument to Sir George Speke, whose father, Sir Thomas Speke, was buried in St. Dunstan-in-the-West.

'Sir George in his will, 25 February 1582-3, expressed a desire to be buried in the "Ile of White Lackington Church in the tomb I have prepared for that purpose". Sir George died in 1637 and the tomb, judging from its design, was probably erected a good many years before his death.

'Sir George had married Elizabeth, daughter of Sir Andrew Luttrell, and the arms, Speke impaling Luttrell, occur on the tomb. The slab was probably intended for a recumbent effigy. The two close helmets are of the third quarter of the sixteenth-century. There are two swords now resting on the top of the monument—one c. 1475 with late sixteenth-century blade, the other made for a funeral.

'The font is of the transition from Norman to Early English, 1154-89.

'In the chancel is a tablet to Henry Stuart Johnson, son of a vicar of the parish, who assisted his uncle, Rajah Sir James Brooke, in Sarawak.

'The earliest of the four bells is dated 1699 and inscribed "C. Wardens : W. Speke and G. Ilett". In the ringing-chamber the remains of a clock, dated 1770, are preserved.

'The plate consists of a tall Jacobean cup, 1616, and a plain paten, 1712.

'The registers date from 1578, but they do not contain any Speke marriages.'

Mr. St. George Gray finished his address by reading his short paper on 'Whitelackington and the Duke of Monmouth in 1680', published in the *Proceedings*, lxxiii, ii, 35-9.

The party then walked the short distance to see the remains of the sweet chestnut known as 'The Monmouth Tree' in

Whitelackington Park, which was blown down in the storm on Ash Wednesday, 3 March 1897. A photograph of the tree may be seen in the Society's Museum.

After tea at Oaklands Hotel, Chard, an evening excursion was made to Cricket St. Thomas, the home of Mr. A. A. Hall, and the building with its adjacent church set in lovely parkland was described by the Secretary, Mr. W. A. SEABY, before members made their way over the ground floor of the house and through the gardens.

### CRICKET ST. THOMAS

Mr. W. A. SEABY said the grounds were first visited by the Society in 1891, when Lord Bridport, the great-great-nephew of Alexander Hood, 1st Viscount and Baron Bridport, threw open the park to the Society's inspection. In 1903 the Society again visited the house when it was the home of Mr. Francis J. Fry, President for that year, and members were on that occasion entertained to luncheon. This was therefore the third visit.

In the reign of Edward the Confessor, Cruche or 'Cruca' (Cricket St. Thomas) was held by Syrewold and paid a due of six sheep with their lambs and one bloom of iron from each freeman to the king's manor of South Petherton. This payment of iron is interesting, since iron-working must have been very local in Somerset.<sup>1</sup> At Domesday, Turstin held Cricket of Robert de Mortain, the half-brother of William the Conqueror and wealthiest landowner in England. Besides the six hides of land, four of which were in demesne, there was a mill paying 12 shillings, one and a half acres of meadow, and woodland seven furlongs by two. The manor was then worth five pounds.<sup>2</sup>

After the battle of Tinchebrai, Cricket was forfeited by William, Count of Mortain, for being on the losing side, to the Lovel family. It may have been held by the de Crickets, or Crukets, in the twelfth-century but Collinson records that in Edward I's reign Richard de Contevyle held two knight's fees and a half in Cricket of Sir Hugh Lovel. Sir Thomas de Cricket married Jane, daughter and co-heir of Phillip de Sarumville of Newton Surmaville, whose son, William, died

<sup>1</sup> *V.C.H., Somerset*, i, 423.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*, i, 435, 473.

in 1313.<sup>1</sup> William's son, Michael, and grandson, Richard, sold the manor to Sir Walter de Rodney,<sup>2</sup> who was lord of the manor in 1325.

About 1342 it was held by Elizabeth, widow of Sir John St. Lo of Clevedon, while in 1412 the manor and advowson of the church belonged to Margaret, widow of Sir John St. Lo and widow of Sir Peter Courtney, who held the same of Lord St. Maur as of his manor of Castle Cary.<sup>3</sup> Margaret's daughter, Elizabeth, by her marriage to William Botreaux (d. 1412) handed on the property to her son, and it remained in this family until sold or leased by Margaret, Lady Hungerford and Botreaux, to Stephen Preston in 1466. Locke, however, states that Henry, third Earl of Huntingdon (great-grandson of Lady Hungerford and Botreaux), sold Cricket to John Preston (grandson of Stephen Preston), but perhaps this was only the manorial rights.<sup>4</sup>

From the Prestons, who held the manor for nearly two hundred years, it passed by marriage to the Hipplesleys and to the Hipplesley Cox family of Ston Easton.<sup>5</sup> In 1757 Richard Hipplesley Cox sold it to Sir Alexander Hood, later Viscount Hood and Baron Bridport, second in command of the British Fleet to Earl Howe in 1794.<sup>6</sup>

Before the present mansion was built, in the late eighteenth-century, the Elizabethan house of the Prestons stood about two hundred yards to the north, in the area of the kitchen garden, and was said to have been burnt down. The house, as seen to-day, differs from that redesigned by Sir John Soane at the end of the eighteenth-century. Extensive alterations were made and the enclosed staircase vestibule was constructed, possibly with the addition of a fourth side to the main structure.<sup>7</sup> Mrs. Skarratt Hall decided on a complete

<sup>1</sup> *Somerset Record Society*, xv (1900), 71 and 171; *Cal. Inquisitiones*, v, 254, where it is stated amongst other property in Dorset and Somerset William de Cruket died seized of Cruket held of (Richard ?) Lovel by service of  $\frac{1}{2}$  knight's fee (6 September, 7 Edward II). <sup>2</sup> *S.R.S.*, xii (1898), 133, 138.

<sup>3</sup> Collinson, *History of Somerset*, iii, 116.

<sup>4</sup> Ward, *Supp. to Collinson* (1939), 71.

<sup>5</sup> Weaver, *Somerset Incumbents*, 346 and *Visitations of Somerset, 1531 and 1575*, 51.

<sup>6</sup> Various sources, including notes supplied by Mr. A. A. Hall.

<sup>7</sup> Truman Press, *Somerset Country Houses and Villages* (1909), 91, and notes supplied by Miss Dorothy Stroud of the Soane Museum.

restoration of the roof of the central hall and staircase in 1931.

Amongst the antiquities, pictures and furnishings now at Cricket certain items deserve mention : a charter granted to Stephen Preston by Edward IV in 1466-7, authorizing an annual fair to be held on 7 May and the day following at White Down <sup>1</sup> (where the old chapel was destroyed by lightning on 2 August 1740) ; the portrait of Margaret of Austria (1480-1530) ; the paintings by Giovanni Francesco Grimaldi in the dining-room ; the Chinese screen from the Winter Palace, Peking ; and the massive mahogany doors to all the rooms on the ground floor.

Timber has always been a noteworthy feature of the park and an estate book shows that between 1814 and 1860 planting was renewed with deodars, Wellingtonia, cypresses and forest timber. During the great gale of 1930, no fewer than four hundred trees were lost. Much of the timber is now in poor condition.

The original church appears to have been built in the Decorated style of the fourteenth-century, but it has been so much rebuilt that few of the former features remain. The church was a domestic chapel belonging to the manor and had its own parson. There is a monument to Alexander Hood and another to the Rev. William Earl Nelson, brother of the famous vice-admiral, whose daughter was Lady Bridport. The Hoods came from Mosterton in Dorset whence the two sons of the Rev. Samuel Hood, Samuel and Alexander, entered the Navy at an early age, both becoming admirals and reaping high honours. Alexander married first Mary, daughter of the Rev. Richard West, prebendary of Winchester, and after her death in 1786 married Maria Sophia, daughter of Thomas Bray of Edmonton. By neither wife had he any issue, the English titles becoming extinct on his death and the Irish barony passing to the younger branch of his brother's family.<sup>2</sup>

The coaches returned to Chard which was reached at approximately 6.30 p.m.

<sup>1</sup> The confirmation of this grant to John Preston, Stephen's grandson, by Queen Elizabeth, is also exhibited in the hall.

<sup>2</sup> *Dict. Nat. Biog.*, xxvii, 253-6.

## Third Day's Proceedings

This day was spent entirely in Devon ; the weather was on the whole fine and bright. The party was particularly fortunate in having Sir Cyril and Lady Fox to show them two of the important earthworks and other antiquities of the county.

The first stop was at Membury, where a climb was made to the summit of the camp. Here the President, Sir CYRIL FOX, described the principal features as follows :

### MEMBURY CAMP

‘ Membury is a single ramparted fortress, 290 yards in length and 100 yards greatest breadth, sited on a steep-ended spur of Upper Greensand surmounted by plateau material (clay with flints and chert)  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles N.N.W. of Axminster. The little valleys which define it represent faults running axially, the strata on either flank having dropped. Its narrowness and the position of the valley floors which define it is thus determined by these lines of weakness.<sup>1</sup> The streams flow west and south respectively into the Yarty (west) and Axe (east) ; looking due south for the dominant south-facing rampart the junction of these rivers can be seen, as can the sea at Axmouth and Seaton. A ridgeway leads from the river junction northwards past the fortress to Whitestaunton, Combe Beacon and the east-west Blackdown ridgeway at Castle Neroche. Small as Membury Castle is, it was well sited for defence and for traffic, as well as pasture and a primitive agriculture.

‘ The capping of chert is seen as a backbone within the fort ; the curious and unexpected nature of the defences, steep-faced chert walling (with an earthen core ?) with little or no evidence for ditches, is thus determined as usual by the geology. Damp hollows on either side of the backbone are spoil trenches whence the chert came. One portion of this spoil trench near the entry,

<sup>1</sup> *Geological Survey: Exmouth and Sidmouth and Lyme Regis* (1902), 65, fig. 34.

isolated by an improver's hedgebank and ditch, has foolishly been regarded as a guard chamber.<sup>1</sup>

‘Membury should be seen in the early spring: the growth of bracken in summer prevents its major problems, those of the two entries, one centrally placed on the east flank the other at the southern end, west side, being studied by the members. I and my wife have seen it under conditions better than to-day, but not the best; it is fairly certain that the east entry was of normal inturned character, though unusually broad. Hadrian Allcroft's imaginative reconstruction is unlike any known Early Iron Age structure, and as it incorporates an early nineteenth-century bank and ditch (probably an enclosure for tree-planting) it can be safely disregarded. The structures of the west entry extend outside the line of the defences and suggest an outer gate thrust forward because of the extremely constricted area of the fortress at this part. An inturn would be impracticable. It should be noted that the eastern curtain on either side of the entrance has been rebuilt and straightened (in the early nineteenth-century?) when the field boundaries which extend its alignment a long way to north and south were constructed.’<sup>2</sup>

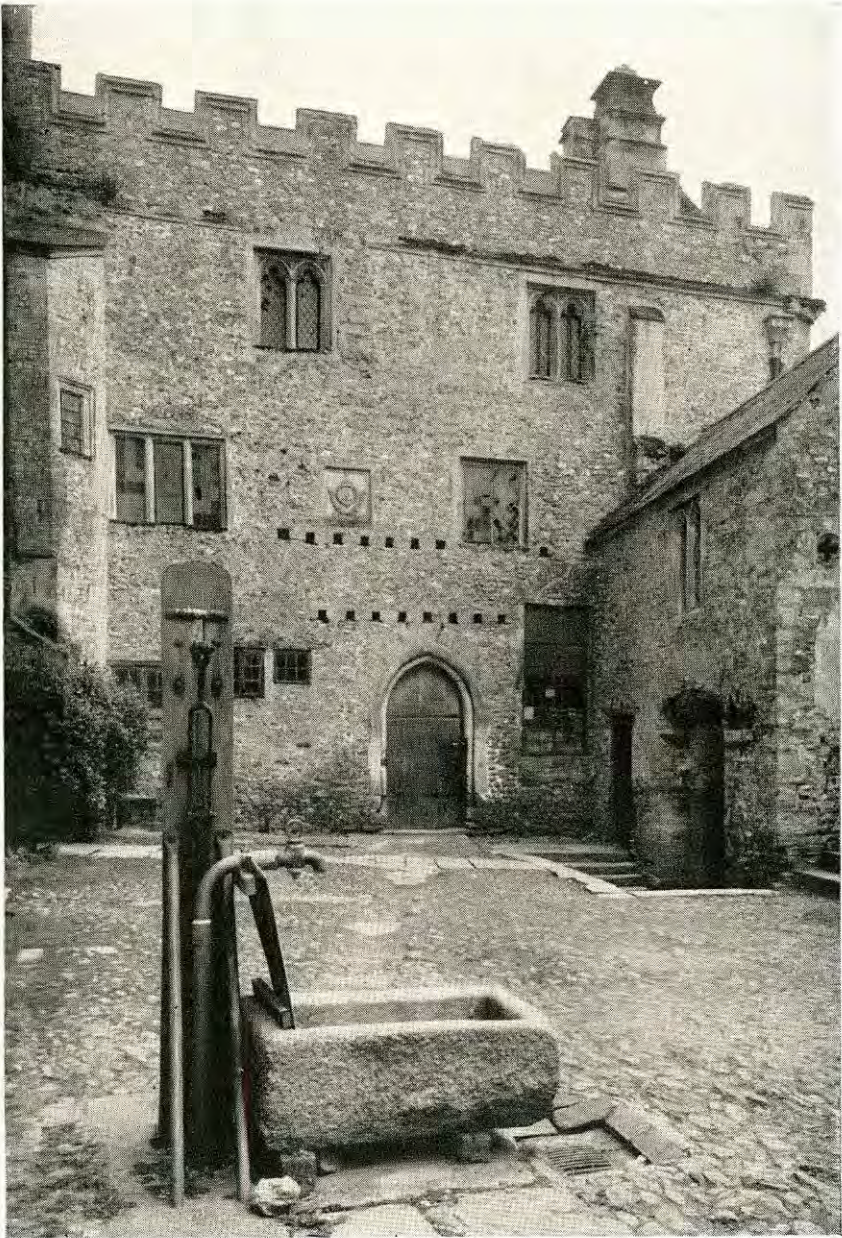
### MUSBURY AND COLYTON

Owing to lateness in starting the party did not visit Membury church, as planned, but made across country for the church of St. Michael, Musbury, where the Rt. Rev. Bishop R. DYKE ACLAND described the remarkable small medieval Beer stone superaltar or *mensa*, let into the wooden altar top. Members also admired the Elizabethan Drake monument of exceptional size, with three pairs of kneeling figures, probably attributable to the work of Exeter sculptors.

After visiting the beautiful Church of St. Andrew, Colyton, where a short history was given by the vicar, the Rev. W. G. Wilson, and where the President described in some detail the the decorated Saxon cross shaft of early tenth-century date, the coaches left for Shute House, which was visited by permission of Sir John Carew Pole, Bart.

<sup>1</sup> See Hadrian Allcroft, *Earthworks of England*, 201, fig. 72, and the *V.C.H., Devon*, i, 583.

<sup>2</sup> See the 6" O.S. map sheet, LX. S.W.



*Courtesy Country Life Ltd.*

**SHUTE MANOR, DEVON.**  
The Courtyard showing the old Hall.

## SHUTE

In the grounds Mr. H. ST. GEORGE GRAY described old Shute to the members (Pl. I).

The parish of Shute (formerly Le Sheete) is nearly a square of 2 miles on each side. On the summit of Shute Hill, according to Polwhele, is an ancient fire-beacon in good preservation, but now much obscured by trees.

A great part of the old house was destroyed by John William de la Pole, who began the building of the new House in 1787, 3 furlongs to the south-east—the English Channel is only about  $4\frac{1}{2}$  miles distant as the crow flies.

The plan of old Shute House and references to similar buildings have already been described by Professor Hamilton Thompson in *Proceedings*, lxxiii, i, 38, and will not be repeated here (see also *Country Life*, 2 and 9 February 1951, where it is fully described and illustrated).

One of the features of the house is the clavel of the great fireplace, the solid wooden span of which measures about 20 feet. Above it hangs the great wooden spit (see Pl. II).

Professor Thompson has also briefly described the Church, which was somewhat 'over-restored' in 1868-9. There are several memorials of the de la Pole family and also of the Templar family, connected with the Templars of Shapwick House, Somerset. There is also a large marble statue on pedestal of 'Sir William Pole, master of the Household of her late Majesty Queen Anne; he died 31 December 1741, aged 63 years'.

The first owners of Shute were Sir Lucas de Schete and Sir Robert de Schete, followed by Sir Thomas de Pyne and his heir Sir Nicholas Bonville. The Bonvilles were the great medieval lords of Shute. They acquired Shute with an heiress of the Pynes in the reign of Edward I. The most notable of the Bonvilles was William, christened at Shute in 1392. He fought in France in the victorious years of Henry V. As Lord Bonville he became governor of Exeter Castle.

Lord Bonville had a long and bloody feud with his neighbour, the Earl of Devon, which is mentioned in the Paston letters. At length Lord Bonville was beheaded after the Battle of St. Albans. This was the end of the Bonvilles, for both the Lord's son and grandson were slain in the field at Wakefield,



and only a great-granddaughter, ten years old, was left to inherit the estates. This was Cicely, heiress of the baronies of Bonville and Harrington, who married Sir Thomas Grey; he was created Marquess of Dorset in 1474. He was son of Elizabeth Woodville, who became queen of Edward IV.

Cicely Bonville brought to her husband an enormous amount of property, not only in Dorset and Devon but in Somerset—the manor of Puckington, with lands at Thorney, Drayton, Pixton, Taunton and Glastonbury.

Cicely's second husband was Henry Stafford, Earl of Wiltshire, who 'enjoyed Shute along with the rest of the lady's property'.

Cicely's grandson by Sir Thomas Grey, Henry, Marquess of Dorset, was in 1550–1 created Duke of Suffolk, by whose attainder in 1553 Shute escheated to the crown and was granted by the Queen to Lord Petre. Lady Jane Grey was, of course, a daughter of this Duke of Suffolk.

The Pole family resided at Old Shute a century and a half before their purchase of the property in 1787.

Arthur Pole of Cheshire, who married Elizabeth, daughter of John Pole of Devonshire, was the ancestor of the ancient family who settled in Devonshire, in the fourteenth-century in the reign of Richard II. Sir William Pole, the fifteenth in descent from Arthur, was the industrious and learned collector of the materials for a history of his native county, which were published by his descendant, Sir John William de la Pole, in 1791.

Sir William Templar Pole was the seventh baronet in succession, *c.* 1820. He bequeathed his estates to the Hon. William Wellesley, who took the name of Pole.

When John George Reeve de la Pole came of age in 1829, the celebrations were on a large scale. Two fat oxen of 50 score each were roasted on Oxen Hill, not far from Shute. They were roasted in the open air upon a spit measuring 25 feet long, which is still preserved at old Shute (Pl. II).

A warm vote of thanks was given to Mr. St. George Gray by the President before members paid a hurried visit to the interior of this ancient house.



SHUTE MANOR, DEVON.  
The Kitchen and Fireplace, showing the Roasting Spit.

*Courtesy Country Life Ltd.*

## HONITON AND HEMBURY CAMP

Honiton was not reached until 1.30 p.m. but here an excellent cold luncheon was served at Mackarness Hall in the centre of the town. Afterwards an informal visit was made to the small museum nearby and the party again embarked for Hembury hill fort. A few members preferred to visit the gardens of Mrs. Esmé Nicholl's lovely home at Egland, just outside Honiton, but most of the others dismounted at the foot of the camp and followed the old track up the slope to the western entrance and sat on the heath-covered high ground where Lady Fox gave a lively and erudite address. She welcomed the Society to Devon and pointed out the many ranges of hills that constituted that great county.

LADY FOX said that at this large Early Iron Age hill fort, the westernmost of its class, she had received early instruction in field excavation at the hands of the late Dorothy Liddell, who had, over a period of several years, investigated the defences and had found a sequence of occupations from as early as Neolithic times to the Roman period. The speaker showed how deeply cut were the multiple defences at the northern end and how difficult it would be to storm the fortress against well-placed defenders using sling-stones (see further, *Proc. Devon. Arch. and Explor. Soc.*, vols. i and ii).

A warm vote of thanks was given to Sir Cyril and Lady Fox by Mr. St. George Gray before the party returned to Honiton for tea, stopping on the way at

## AWLISCOMBE

The church of St. Michael and All Angels was described by the Rector, Rev. S. RICHARDS. After giving a brief history of the building he pointed out the main architectural features and furnishings. The porch erected by Thomas Chard, last Abbot of Ford, is notable for its two outer doorways and fan vaulting and dates from the early sixteenth-century. On the stonework is engraved the outline of a hand, called 'The Bride's Hand', said to date from 1708. At the base of the unbuttressed late fifteenth-century tower is a very large stone now used as an entrance stone but thought to be a pagan altar stone, or, more probably, the capstone of a cromlech.

Inside the church the nave was probably rebuilt in or before the fourteenth-century when it took its present dimensions ; the fine arcading is typical and the characteristic clustered columns and wreathed capitals are exceedingly refined for late Perpendicular work. It was the kind of work which inspired somewhat similar carving in the West Somerset churches of Lydeard St. Lawrence, Stogumber, Selworthy and Luccombe, carried out in other stone. There is a substantial traceried screen of Beer stone, late fifteenth-century with modern cresting. When the rood and loft were in place it was probably richly coloured, so that the stone could scarcely have been told from the wood above.

The wide south transept chapel is fourteenth-century in date, converted early in the sixteenth-century to a Chantry chapel by Thomas Chard. The chapel is lighted by a noble five-light Perpendicular window having niches and pedestals, but the statues have all been removed. There are some interesting pieces of fifteenth-century glass in this window showing St. Roche and other figures. The north aisle has the inner arch, east and north windows, all of the fifteenth-century, suggesting a chantry, since the aisle itself does not appear to have been built until the sixteenth-century. Another window contains four saints in grisaille, St. Anne, St. Catherine, St. Barbara and St. Mary Magdalene. The font dates from about 1450, and some Norman work has been uncovered by the south door.

### COMBE RALEIGH

After tea at the Mackarness Hall, Honiton, a visit was made to the charming little fifteenth-century home at Combe Raleigh of Col. and Mrs. Arbuckle, and belonging to Mr. A. R. Fenn-Wiggin. Mr. W. A. SEABY, having briefly described the building, thought to be an early rectory but now called 'The Chantry', members were split up into four parties and taken over the building.

The original timber screens dividing hall from kitchen were seen in position as well as the painted oak roof and large stone fireplace in the hall and similar fireplace in the kitchen. At the far end of the screens passage a newel stone staircase leads to the upper floor, perhaps a solar and bedchamber on two

different levels and probably the result of rebuilding in the early sixteenth-century. To the north-west was added a later wing to enlarge what must have been an unusually small house of the period.

There was not sufficient time to see the church of St. John the Baptist at Yarcombe on the return journey, but coaches parted here, one to Chard and one to Taunton, which was reached soon after 7 p.m. This completed the Annual Meeting for 1950.

## Centenary of the death of William Wordsworth

EXCURSION TO ALFOXTON AND DISTRICT,  
THURSDAY, 18 MAY 1950

THE coaches left Taunton at 1 p.m. A first halt was made at Stowey Castle, where Mr. A. D. HALLAM outlined what is known of its history.<sup>1</sup> Its origins are obscure and it had evidently ceased to be used either as a stronghold or a residence before the time of Leland. A clue to its date may perhaps be furnished by two entries in the Patent Rolls, where it is recorded that Philip de Columbers, who held the manor at that time, was, on 22 March, 1 Henry III (1216-17), granted a safe-conduct to speak with William Marshall, Earl of Pembroke, Justiciary.<sup>2</sup> Later in the year he was granted another from 2-16 September for the same purpose, and this time the significant words 'de pace sua' are added.<sup>3</sup> From this, it seems probable that Philip de Columbers was involved in the disturbances at the end of John's reign and the beginning of Henry's, and that his share in them may possibly have included the erection of an adulterine castle at Nether Stowey. There is no record of a licensed castle there.

The party then went to Stowey Court, where Mr. WYNN HOUGHTON, the present owner, gave an interesting talk on the history of the buildings. This was followed by an inspection of the gardens, fishponds and the eighteenth-century gazebo.

The main business of the excursion was introduced by Thomas Poole's epitaph in Nether Stowey church, which pays tribute to the qualities which 'secured him the friendship of some of his most illustrious literary contemporaries. Wordsworth and Davy, Southey and Coleridge were his guests and conferred distinction by their visits on his native place.'

The next place to be visited was Coleridge's former cottage,

<sup>1</sup> A description and plan of the Castle is given in *V.C.H., Somerset*, ii, 515, 516.

<sup>2</sup> *Patent-Rolls*, Henry III, 1216-25, 43.

<sup>3</sup> *ibid.*, 89.

now a museum, in Nether Stowey. The size of the party caused complications here, but after they had been successfully overcome, it was possible to arrive at Alfoxton without delay. Here, by the kindness of C. E. Holiday Homes, Ltd., members were able to view the house and grounds and were given refreshments.

At Alfoxton an address on Wordsworth in Somerset was given by Mr. A. K. HUDSON. In the course of his remarks Mr. Hudson pointed out that Coleridge had settled in Nether Stowey in December 1796 and had been responsible for bringing the Wordsworths to Alfoxton, in July 1797, from Racedown in Dorset. In a letter to Robert Southey, he described Alfoxton as 'a gentleman's seat, with a park and woods, elegantly and completely furnished, with nine lodging rooms, three parlours, and a hall, in the most beautiful and romantic situation by the seaside, 4 miles from Stowey—this we have got for Wordsworth at the rate of £23 pounds a year, taxes included'.<sup>1</sup>

The Wordsworths were fond of Alfoxton, but came under suspicion for their alleged revolutionary sympathies and were compelled to leave after only a year's residence.

The members of the party were invited to walk in the park with Dorothy Wordsworth's enthusiastic description of the scenery in their minds: 'This hill is beautiful, scattered irregularly and abundantly with trees and topped with fern, which spread a considerable way down it. The deer dwell here and sheep, so that we have a living prospect. Walks extend for miles over the hill-tops, the great beauty of which is their wild simplicity.'<sup>2</sup>

Some members of the party later attempted to test a particular remark made by Dorothy Wordsworth concerning Glastonbury Tor: 'in the park wherever we go, keeping about 15 yards above the house, it makes a part of our prospect,'<sup>3</sup> but after experiment confessed themselves puzzled.

During the year Wordsworth wrote, among other poems, *The Thorn*, *The Idiot Boy*, *Peter Bell* and *We Are Seven*. His appearance at the time he lived in Somerset was described by Hazlitt, who visited him at Alfoxton, as follows: 'There was a severe worn presence of thought about his temples, a

<sup>1</sup> Knight, *Coleridge and Wordsworth in the West Country*, 62-3.

<sup>2</sup> *Letters*, ed. de Selincourt, i, 170.

<sup>3</sup> *ibid.*, 171.

fire in his eye—as if he saw something in objects more than the outward appearance—an intense high, narrow forehead, a Roman nose, cheeks furrowed by strong purpose and feeling, and a convulsive inclination to laughter about the mouth, a good deal at variance with the solemn stately expression of the rest of his face.’<sup>1</sup>

It is interesting to compare this description with the portrait of Wordsworth which forms the frontispiece to the present volume.

Tea was taken at Kilve and at Nether Stowey. Afterwards, the re-united party returned to Taunton by way of Crowcombe, where the church was visited. Here, Mr. W. A. SEABY read some notes taken from a previous account of the church by the Rev. H. C. Young,<sup>2</sup> and the coaches arrived back in Taunton at about 7.30 p.m.

<sup>1</sup> Knight, *Coleridge and Wordsworth in the West Country*, 182.

<sup>2</sup> *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.*, liv (1903) i, 59.



## Excursion to Bradford-on-Avon and Avebury, Wiltshire, 30 September 1950

THIS was a whole day excursion run from Taunton on the extremely wet Saturday at the end of September.

Bradford-on-Avon was reached at 11.15 a.m., where the party was met in the parish church by the Vicar, Rev. C. Green, who gave a few words of welcome. Mr. C. A. RALEGH RADFORD, F.S.A., then gave his address on the Saxon Church.

### THE CHURCH OF ST. LAWRENCE, BRADFORD-ON-AVON

The Saxon Church of St. Lawrence lies across the road to the north-east of the Parish Church of Bradford-on-Avon. The building had long been put to secular uses when, about 1860, its early character was recognized by the Vicar, Canon Jones. It was then freed from modern accretions and restored to its original purpose.

The early ecclesiastical history of Bradford-on-Avon is recorded by William of Malmesbury.<sup>1</sup> Describing the work of St. Aldhelm, Bishop of Sherborne (d. 709), he writes: 'It is the opinion of many that he founded a third monastery at Bradford and this appears to be confirmed by the name of the town being set down in the charter which the Bishop gave to his monasteries. . . . And to this day there exists in that place a little church (*ecclesiola*) named in honour of the blessed Lawrence, which he is said to have built.' William of Malmesbury makes it clear that the monastery had long come to an end in his day and he would hardly have used the term *ecclesiola* to describe the main church of such a foundation. He later quotes the words of the charter, of which he had probably seen the original or a copy at Malmesbury, the most important of the three foundations. The next reference occurs in a charter of King Æthelred II, who, in 1001, granted the monastery (*coenobium*), commonly known as *aet Bradeforda* to the nuns

<sup>1</sup> *Gesta Pontificum*, v (Rolls Series, p. 346).

of Shaftesbury, in order that it might serve as 'a refuge, impenetrable to the wiles of the enemy, for the community and the relics of the blessed martyr (St. Edward) and of the other saints'.<sup>1</sup>

It is clear that William of Malmesbury was referring to the building that survives to-day. This church has a nave and chancel, with a large north porch. Originally there was a similar porch on the south side of the nave. The coursed masonry is well cut and finely jointed, though the stones are not always exactly squared. The exterior is enriched with pilasters, string courses and arcades, formed in low relief by cutting back the surface of the wall. The most elaborate feature is the arcade on the upper register of the nave and chancel, which has small flat pilasters with trapezoidal bases and capitals. Like the other ornament this is an original feature, as is shown by the fact that the capitals and the string course on which it stands project beyond the face of the wall. The small windows on the south side of the nave and chancel and in the west wall of the porch are all double splayed. The chancel arch and the arches leading into the north and south porches are tall and narrow, with bold frames and massive abaci. The large porch has its outer door set towards the west end of the north side, leaving space for an altar against the east wall.

All these are features characteristic of the later Saxon churches. The double splayed window, in particular, is derived from the Carolingian architecture of the Rhineland. It is almost the only form of window known in England in the tenth and early eleventh centuries, but does not occur either in the early Saxon period, or, save in exceptional cases, in the twelfth-century. The large porch, designed to serve as a chapel, was the successor of the earlier *porticus*, an aisle-like structure, which was often used for burials.

This church with its late detail cannot be older than 900, but the tradition preserved by William of Malmesbury, a local man writing about 1120, shows that it must have been in existence as early as the beginning of the following century. It is possible that the church was erected by the nuns of Shaftesbury to serve the needs of the people, when the estate

<sup>1</sup> Kemble, *Codex Diplomaticus*, no. DCCVI.

was given to them. The form with a narrow chancel arch would fit the needs of a parish church, better than those of a monastic community. But the purely architectural evidence points to a rather earlier date and I see no reason to dissent from the judgment of (the late) Sir Alfred Clapham, who placed the building in the first part of the tenth-century.

Reset above the chancel arch are two flying angels, which were found re-used in masonry near this position. They are poised horizontally, their hands outstretched and covered with veils, a sign of adoration based on the custom of the Byzantine court. The vigorous modelling of the figures and the delicate folds and scrolled edges of the drapery are influenced by the draughtsmanship of the contemporary Winchester school of illumination. These two angels formed part of a rood surmounting the chancel arch, a feature found in a number of Saxon churches of this date.

Several sculptured fragments are set together in the north porch. The most interesting are slabs covered with a diaper of crosses. This motive appears in other monuments of the ninth and tenth centuries. The slabs probably formed part of a shrine, possibly that in which it was intended to house the relics from Shaftesbury, should the community have needed to take refuge at Bradford.

Mr. Radford also gave an outline history of the church of Holy Trinity, where members were assembled, pointing out Norman and later architectural features. The party then split into two, one half inspecting the parish church and the rest visiting the little Saxon church across the road; after fifteen minutes the parties changed over.

Owing to the inclement weather the exterior of Mr. A. Moulton's fine house, the Hall, with its beautiful garden were not inspected. Instead the party made for Devizes where lunch was obtained in the Castle Hotel. From here in heavy rain the party set out for Avebury, members assembling in Avebury Museum (Mr. W. E. V. Young, curator) to hear addresses by Mr. St. George Gray and Prof. Piggott.

#### AVEBURY

Mr. H. ST. GEORGE GRAY, O.B.E., described the work of the Stone Circles Committee of the British Association, which body

had elected him as director and surveyor of the excavations, that began at Arbor Low in Derbyshire in 1901 and continued there in 1902. In 1905 and 1906 attention had been paid to the group of five circles on Bodmin Moors in the vicinity of Brown Willy and Rough Tor.

In 1908 the more important excavations at Avebury were commenced on a large scale and were continued by the speaker in 1909, 1911, 1915 and 1922. In all 134 feet of the great fosse on the south and south-west of the monument were excavated to the bottom of the ditch, reached at depths varying from 17 to 30 feet below the surface of the silting which has accumulated during the past 4,000 years. The stratified layers proved of great interest and the deer antler picks, with which the chalk was excavated, were found in some numbers on the bottom of the fosse. This work would have been carried out *circa* 2000–1900 B.C.

Mr. St. George Gray exhibited a reproduction of his large original plan (40 feet to 1 inch) which covered  $71\frac{1}{2}$  acres. The ground enclosed by the great ditch is  $28\frac{1}{2}$  acres, the outer circle being some 1,108 feet in diameter or nearly four times that of Stonehenge (see further, *Archæologia*, lxxxiv, 99–162).

Prof. STUART PIGGOTT, who followed Mr. Gray, said that it gave him great pleasure to be with the Somerset Archæological Society that afternoon. He said that the Society were honoured to have had as their Secretary for so many years an excavator and archæologist as distinguished as Mr. St. George Gray, who was the last direct link with that great tradition in British field archæology established by General Pitt-Rivers in the nineteenth century.

Prof. Piggott described the work which Mr. Alexander Keiller and he had carried out at Avebury and the West Kennet Avenue, and previously by Mr. Keiller in the excavations of the Neolithic Camp at Windmill Hill nearby. These excavations and restorations of the standing stones had thrown a great deal of light on the people who lived in the last phases of the Neolithic period. We now knew how they lived, what they lived on, the crops they grew and the animals they domesticated. Members would see in the show-cases of the museum the round-bottomed bowls in which they cooked their corn, the stone and bone tools employed in everyday use and the

partly reconstructed skeleton of their small ox, their horned sheep, or goat and their pig.

These small dark Mediterranean people were early in the second millennium B.C. overlorded by a taller and stronger folk from the continent, the Beaker folk, and it is during this period of domination that Avebury may have been built. In describing the finding of many of the stones, or the holes in which they stood, Prof. Piggott called attention to the destruction of the orthostats by farmers both in the Middle Ages and again in the eighteenth century. Under one of the stones they had found the body of a man who might have been the village tailor or the barber-surgeon, for he had coins of 1307 and a pair of scissors with him ; he may have been caught accidentally under the stone when it was lowered to the ground (see further, *Antiquity*, iv (1930), 24 ; x (1936), 417 ; xiii (1939), 223).

Sir William Savage proposed a warm vote of thanks to both speakers and, the rain having ceased, members inspected the bank and ditch where excavations had taken place under the direction of Mr. St. George Gray. Time did not permit for the examination of either the West Kennet Avenue or Silbury Hill, and the party returned to Taunton by way of Devizes, where tea was obtained at the Castle Hotel.