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## The Presidential Address

The President, Mr. ARTHUR F. SOMERVILLE, then delivered his address, entitled 'Records and their Preservation', which was as follows:—

In the first place allow me to thank the Society for the great honour they have done me, by electing me as their President and allowing my name to be enrolled amongst those distinguished former presidents to whose qualifications for this important office I have no claim; my only qualification being membership for fifty years, and a very real and sincere interest in the work of the Society.

I think we ought to record the honour done to our late president, Sir Charles Peers, on his appointments as Antiquary to 'The Royal Academy', and Trustee of the British Museum, and also on his Award of the Royal Gold Medal of the Royal Institute of British Architects: and also the well-merited honour done to our active Secretary and Curator, Mr. H. St. George Gray, by his election as President of the S.W. Group of Museums and Art Galleries for the year 1933-4, succeeding Mr. Maxwell, Director of the Bristol Museum, the first President of this Group which represents Bristol and the six S.W. Counties.

Death has deprived the Society, as you have heard, of many of its prominent members, among whom I might mention Major Cely Trevilian, our President in 1925—that great master of pageants and one to whom the county owed such a deep debt of gratitude for his encouragement of rural industry and church music, whose memoir will be found in the last volume of our *Proceedings*; the learned Dean of Wells, Dr. J. Armistage Robinson, who left a lasting memorial of himself in the preservation of the west front and historic ancient glass of the cathedral at Wells, and to whose work and scholarship the Bishop of Bath and Wells paid such a graceful tribute in his sermon after the funeral; the Rev. F. W. Weaver, who had

a great reputation as an antiquary and for many years was joint Secretary of the Society; and more recently, Mr. Charles Tite, one of our oldest members, whose work and deep interest for the Society will never be forgotten. But, on the other hand, we can rejoice that we can still count among our active members, the father of the Society, Sir H. Maxwell Lyte, who became a member in 1870, and our youthful and active nonogenarian, Alderman John Morland, to whose centenary we are looking forward before many years have passed.

This is the fourth time that our Society has held its annual meeting in Shepton Mallet. The first visit was in the year 1865, under the presidency of the late Sir R. H. Paget, who succeeded Mr. F. H. Dickinson, the latter having been a vice-president from the foundation of the Society in 1849. On that occasion visits were paid to Doultling, Pilton, Pylle, Ditchheat, Evercreech, Chesterblade, Cranmore, Maesbury, Chilcot, Croscombe and Dinder.

Perhaps the most interesting matter in connection with that visit was the then recent discovery in November 1864, of the Roman potters' kilns, on the site of a brewery, then lately built and afterwards occupied by the Anglo Brewery, but unfortunately all traces of it have now disappeared. One of the kilns however was described in a paper read by the late Rev. Preb. H. M. Scarth, which, with illustrations, is found in Vol. xii of the *Proceedings*. Another matter of great interest in connection with the history of Shepton Mallet was a paper on the Strode Family by the late Mr. Thos. Serel in the same work. The Strodes were wealthy merchants and clothiers, and like our former president, Mr. Wyndham, generous benefactors for the promotion of education. It is rather curious that no reference was then made to the ancient history of Shepton Mallet as the centre of a great clothing industry, or to the interesting old houses formerly occupied by the merchants and clothiers, when Shepton Mallet was one of the most important towns in the county.

The second visit of the Society to Shepton Mallet was in 1884, under the presidency of the late Lord Carlingford, who gave a most interesting address, dealing with the geology of the district. He called attention to the unfortunate absence of

‘historic feeling’ in the restoration of several of our churches, which had led to the destruction of many architectural features that had preserved their past history; and he also touched on the importance of preserving the language of Wessex. Since then our architects have realized that preservation and restoration must be carried out in a true conservative spirit; and, as the Society is aware, we have now in this diocese an ‘Advisory Committee for the Protection of Churches’ to whom all plans must first be submitted before a faculty is granted.

The dear old Somerset language has found champions in the Somerset Folk Society and Major J. A. Garton, and I think we need have no anxiety as to its preservation in the future. The volume of *Proceedings* of that year is full of interest, but I will only call attention to a paper by the late Canon Church on the Prebend of Dinder, as a matter which both affected me personally, as I had prevented the separation of the Prebend from the Cure of Souls, and had also created a considerable amount of interest in the diocese at the time.

The opportunity is afforded me here of calling attention to an unwarranted change of the name of a well-known stream which rises at a spring close to Doulting Church, and which flows down the valley, passing Shepton Mallet, Croscombe, Dinder and Dulcote, joining the river Brue near Godney. In a document of the time of king Ina this stream was called the ‘Doulting Water’. Later, when Croscombe became a thriving town and the centre of the woollen industry in the district, its name was changed to the ‘Croscombe Stream’. In my early life it was known by that name, or merely ‘The Stream’. About the year 1884 H.M. Ordnance Survey sent their officials to the district, and they enquired at Shepton Mallet as to the name of this stream; and it is understood that, on hearing from a non-resident that it had no special name, they suggested that it *must* be ‘The Sheppey’, entered it on their map as such, and so it appeared in the next ordnance sheet issued. Just before it appeared the late Bishop Hobhouse called my attention to the change of name and asked me to interview the authorities at Bristol. They, however, refused to reinstate the real name of the stream, and since then it has been officially called ‘River Sheppey’.

The third visit to Shepton Mallet was in the year 1907, when your Society did me the honour of electing me as your president. On that occasion I made an effort in my address to recall something of the ancient history of the town, with special reference to the woollen clothing trade, which had built up the prosperity of Shepton Mallet and its neighbouring town of Croscombe; for the latter, up to the time of Charles II, was placed among the chief towns of Somerset, and had then a population of over 4000 inhabitants. *Sic transit gloria mundi*. Shepton is now an important centre for agriculture, but has lost all its industries; while Croscombe is but a country village whose inhabitants are engaged in agriculture or work in the local quarries. In 1907 some of the old houses were visited and they would well repay another visit on this occasion.

Vol. liii of the Society's *Proceedings* contains an interesting paper on the manorial history of Shepton Mallet and Croscombe, by Sir H. C. Maxwell Lyte, and I would refer members to this for information on the subject.

Our Society has during its eighty-four years existence done very valuable work in building up a record of county history, architecture, archæology, geology and botany, and the Museum at Taunton, thanks to our present curator and secretary Mr. H. St. George Gray, is a treasure house where students can gain most valuable information on all these subjects.

#### RECORDS AND THEIR PRESERVATION

There is still a great deal to be done in a comparatively new field; the preservation of Records. Thanks to the county Record Society a valuable history of old records has been gradually compiled; and the recent efforts of the Chairman of the Records Committee of the County Council, Sir Matthew Nathan, has not only secured better and safer accommodation for important county records, but has also been the means of getting deeds and documents, which were in danger of being lost through neglect, or of perishing from want of care, deposited in safe custody at the Shire Hall, Taunton.

But, this has only touched the fringe of this important matter. In the first place there is constant evidence of old

parish documents having disappeared during the last hundred years and many in quite recent years. I will give a few examples which have come under my notice. About forty years ago, the late Bishop Hobhouse, aided by the Rev. J. A. Bennett, Dr. Scott Holmes and others, edited a valuable record of Churchwardens' Accounts of the parishes of Croscombe, Pilton, Tintinhull, Morebath, and St. Michael's Bath, ranging from 1349 to 1560, which was published in Vol. iv of the Somerset Record Society. These churchwardens' accounts give a most interesting sketch of parish and church life at that period, besides other information relating to family and local history. The Croscombe accounts were especially interesting; these have disappeared and so far we have been unable to trace them.

The executor of a late resident at Wells found a large number of very valuable documents collected by the testatrix's father, who had held an official position in this and other dioceses, at a time when evidently old documents were looked upon as so much rubbish, and having an antiquarian frame of mind had made a collection of them. The executor has now kindly given them to the excellent curator of the Wells Museum, Mr. H. E. Balch, who is getting them catalogued, and intends handing back to the proper authorities any documents unconnected with the county.

A former clerk in the Wells Diocesan Registry, an original member, I think, of our Society, and a keen antiquary, had a similar turn for collecting old documents; but at his death many of them were sold to a dealer at Bath, from whom I bought one dated 1298 which refers to a field opposite my house. There have been authentic cases of old parish documents used by rectors' wives as covers for jam-pots, and in another case for lamp-shades! And, from what the present diocesan registrar has told me, in many parishes old documents have disappeared. One must remember that in past years these old documents were considered of but little value, and there was no family continuity in the office of custodian,—the incumbent constantly changing, the churchwardens being appointed annually; and rarely I expect were there to be found among them any who understood their value.

as a record of parish history. Moreover, the receptacles for these old documents were unsuitable for their preservation from damp and decay; this was the case at Dinder.

In 1914 was published, for Convocation, a report, drawn up by the late Chancellor Scott Holmes, of the ecclesiastical records of this diocese, and also a short account of church plate, with a most interesting introductory preface. Very valuable as this report is in many respects, it is not a real guide as to what documents were then in the custody of the incumbents and churchwardens. Take, for instance, one entry in Dr. Holmes' book which is as follows,—‘Dinder—Parish Registers, vol. i. Baptisms, Marriages and Burials, 1696–1812’, ‘Churchwardens’ Accounts . . . . .’; ‘Other Parish Books or Documents in Church Safe . . . . .’

In November 1931, with the consent of the rector, I handed over to the County Record Office, Shire Hall, Taunton, six registers and books dated 1578–1783, and four other documents; and two others were received about the same time from the Rt. Hon. H. Hobhouse, whose great-uncle, Dr. Jenkins, had been rector of Dinder. Many of these documents were in a very dilapidated condition, and, through the kindness of Sir Matthew Nathan, were sent to the Public Record Office, where they were repaired and made available for reference, which was impossible in their former condition. The total cost for repairs came to £22 13s. 4d.; towards which a kind friend gave a donation of £2 2s. 0d. and the parish paid the difference. I mention this, as it shows not only how necessary it is to preserve these old documents, but also how expensive it is to repair damage caused by neglect. Rural deans are supposed to see that parish documents and plate are not only in safe custody but also in proper condition; very seldom however has this been done in the past, and I am afraid, too, seldom at the present time; but the important point is that we have no *real list* of parish documents, nor any proper information as to their condition and safe custody.

A very important Measure for the protection of parochial registers and records was considered and passed by the Church Assembly at the spring sessions in 1929 and received the royal assent on May 10th, 1929. This measure gives the bishops

very wide powers for safeguarding all register books of baptisms, marriages and burials in the charge and under the power of any minister of the diocese ; for establishing diocesan record offices and for the removal to such offices of documents covered by the measure, which are not in safe custody ; and further for the recovery of such documents which are improperly held in private hands. An attempt was made to include churchwardens' accounts and other documents of historical interest, but it was considered unwise to go beyond the documents specifically mentioned in the measure. These excluded documents, among which might be mentioned those relating to charity lands, overseers' accounts and removals, and others which are of great local interest are therefore unprotected.

Useful as this measure is as far as it goes, it is in danger of becoming a ' dead letter ' and for these reasons among others.

No provision is made for the cost of establishing and maintaining these diocesan record offices, nor for the repair of documents which have become useless through neglect and dilapidation, nor for the cost of proceedings by the bishop, when an incumbent refuses to obey the bishops' instructions. Furthermore, bishops will as a rule be unwilling to take any steps to compel incumbents, who may be getting fees for inspection of documents in their custody, to give up such documents, though there is a provision for sharing inspection fees with the custodian of the diocesan record office. This being so, the question arises how can this gradual loss and deterioration of valuable documents be prevented, and is it possible to safeguard also historical documents not covered by this measure ?

It seems in the first place to be a mistake to duplicate unnecessarily offices for the custody of historical and ancient documents. I would suggest that, if such documents could be deposited at a central office, such as we have at the Shire Hall, Taunton, arrangements might be made with the clergy as to documents covered by the 1929 measure, for a division of fees subject to a reasonable charge for safe custody. Meanwhile, some steps should be taken to obtain a full list of all documents under the charge of incumbents, and provision made for their proper supervision by rural deans at their triennial visitations. The safe custody of these documents is

moreover a most important matter, for it has come to my knowledge that at the death of an incumbent, or at his removal to another living, many documents have been lost and destroyed as rubbish.

The extreme value of these records as a source of information from which local history can be built up is so self-evident that I need not press the point. Anyone who has read the history of an ancient family and its historical home, like that of 'Lyme' and the Legh family, compiled by Lady Newton, will remember how much information was obtained from local records. The history of many of our towns, with a story of their trades, customs, and the part their citizens took in the national life of England, is to be found in their archives, some of which have been, or are being collated and summarized by the county record society; but when one comes to valuable documents scattered all over the county, unclassified, undeciphered, and undecipherable, in the custody of some five hundred or so parishes, one can realise what a wealth there may be hidden there for the future historian, wealth which is in danger of gradually disappearing.

I think the history of some forty or fifty parishes has been written, some of intense interest and compiled by reliable authorities. And here I might mention several interesting articles on the history of Churches in the Martock District, their Registers, Plate and Bells, written by the Rev. G. W. Saunders, Vicar and R.D. of Martock, and extracts from the Churchwardens' Accounts of the parish of Castle Cary made by Mr. Henry B. Attwood, both of which have lately appeared in issues of the *Western Gazette*, while there are others of less merit; but there must be many of the remaining parishes whose history if written would throw still more light on the past history of this county.

So I do suggest that the safe custody of county records is a matter of great importance and no apology from me is needed for calling attention to it in my address, though in doing so I run the danger of being dubbed a 'professor of dry as dust'! even though I have no claim, like your former president, Sir M. Nathan, to have any real knowledge in this important subject.



In proposing a vote of thanks to the President for his address, the Rt. Hon. Sir MATTHEW NATHAN, G.C.M.G., said :

‘ The kind things that Mr. Somerville has said of me must be taken to refer to my intentions rather than to my achievements. I certainly share his interest in Somerset documents and his anxiety as to what may become of them. He has mentioned the preservation of those documents as somewhat a new subject to be dealt with by the Archæological Society, and I would go further and say that interest in documents, if not new, has been greatly renewed all over England in recent times. This has been, at any rate in part, due to the lively interest in their preservation taken by the present Master of the Rolls, Lord Hanworth, who has spoken on the matter in various places in different parts of the country. It is since his visit to Taunton to open the County Record Office there less than 2½ years ago that the County Records Committee has started the collection of private muniments that may be of interest to county and parish historians ; and, in addition to the splendid collection of official archives, we now have, through the generosity of various people prominent in the county, several thousand deeds and other documents, many of great interest. In addition to those that have been given, many have been deposited in the Somerset Record Office on loan for the advantage of safe custody and to save them from such dangers as those to which the President has referred as well as from the risk of fire and damp. Where records are so treasured by their owners that these dangers are reduced to a minimum, the desire of the Records Committee to have a key that will make such documents available for students has been met in several cases by the deposit with the Records Committee of catalogues of documents in private muniment rooms. I would take this opportunity of appealing to members of the Somerset Archæological Society who possess old documents referring either to lands or to interesting county matters either to deposit them in the Somerset Record Office or to present that office with a catalogue of the documents.

‘ Our President in his address has dealt specially with parish documents. These documents may roughly be divided into two classes—those directly connected with the duties of in-

cumbents and those of a more secular nature not so connected. In the former class I would put the parish registers and possibly also the churchwardens' accounts. The President has dealt fully with the wide powers given to the ecclesiastical authorities for the safeguarding of registers and with the difficulties that stand in the way of the exercise of those powers. A Diocesan Record Office has not yet been established under the 'Parochial Registers and Record measures', and all the Somerset Records Office can do in the matter is to offer the hospitality of their muniment rooms to those in possession of valuable historical material which they are anxious should not be destroyed or lost. This applies especially to documents of purely lay interest, such, for instance, as those relating to the highways, when parishes were still responsible for their upkeep, and to the maintenance of the poor before the establishment of unions in 1834.

'Then apart from the preservation of these documents there is the question of a record as to what are in existence. That made some twenty years ago by Dr. Scott Holmes is, as has been pointed out by the President, very incomplete. Parish books or documents other than the registers of baptisms, marriages and burials, are scarcely mentioned in it. The President having shown how necessary it is that a new and complete list of all the books and documents in the charge of incumbents should be prepared, the best way for this to be done remains to be considered. We want in the first instance a classification of all the documents likely to be found in parish safes and chests, and for this classified list to be circulated with a brief questionnaire to all parishes. Possibly a small committee representing this Society, the Somerset Record Society and the County Records Committee might do this work, getting any necessary authorisation. The task should be taken in hand at once and we ought to work for its completion within the next three years. I do not think we could find any better way of showing our appreciation and of recording our thanks to Mr. Somerville for bringing up the subject and dealing with it as he has done in his valuable Presidential Address. Pending showing our gratitude in this substantial way, I propose that we record a vote of thanks to him.'

At the close of the Annual Meeting the members visited

## Shepton Mallet Church

where they were met by the Rector (the Rev. R. L. JONES) and Dr. F. J. ALLEN.

An architectural history of the Church by Dr. F. J. Allen, with illustrations, will be found in the *Proceedings* of the Society for 1907, vol. liii, pt. 2; it is therefore unnecessary to give a full description here. In the Smyth-Pigott Collection at Taunton Museum is a drawing of the exterior in 1833 by J. Buckler, which is reproduced as a frontispiece to pt. 2 of the *Proceedings*, vol. liii. It shows the Church to have been a picturesque group of buildings possessing transepts, aisles, south porch, and chancel chapels. But in 1837 nearly all the adjuncts were ruthlessly destroyed, and in their place huge ungainly aisles were erected: but the tower, nave, and chancel remain, and are of more than ordinary interest.

### THE EXTERIOR

Externally the tower and the clerestory are notable. The tower is of early Perpendicular character, its date being suggested by the heads of a king and a queen, probably Edward III and Philippa, carved at the ends of the weather-moulding of the west door. This tower, of excellent detail and composition, has the commencement of a spire, which ceases at the height of 8 ft. and is capped with a lead-covered pyramid. Most of the greater towers in the Mendip district were developed from the design of this one. The clerestory is almost invisible from the churchyard, being hidden by the great ugly aisles of 1837; but it can be seen from the outside path on the south side. It has a rich parapet and very fine gargoyles, also a particularly good niche beneath the eastern gable. Unhappily it was wrought in a soft variety of Doulting stone, much of which had become so rotten that it had recently to be renewed, as it was falling; the restoration, however, was done very conservatively.

### THE INTERIOR

The nucleus of this Church is a very small and very narrow nave, the proportions of which are of Anglo-Saxon character,

namely, length 37 ft. 2 in., height 25 ft., width only 14 ft. 5 in. This nave was extended westwards in the Norman period, as shown by the rude early cornice running from end to end below the clerestory. Into the walls of this early nave the present nave-arches were inserted. The two eastern on each side are of excessive width, much wider than the nave itself. They are of Transitional Norman character, their piers being portions of the original wall, to which are attached responds bearing 'pollard willow' capitals. The western arch on each side is of later and uncertain date, its responds (which might have indicated the date) having been at some time destroyed and replaced with miserable substitutes. The chancel-arch is a few years later in character than the nave arcade, and has responds with extremely fine capitals similar to those supporting the vaulting in the eastern part of the nave at Wells Cathedral, date about 1200. A pair of similar responds were found in an outhouse in the churchyard a few years ago, where they had lain unnoticed since their removal from some unrecorded part of the Church at one of the destructive alterations. The lowest member of each of these responds consists of a finely carved head and shoulders. These relics are carefully preserved, and it is proposed to reinstate them if a suitable place can be found. [For description and illustration of them see Vol. lxiv (1918), 62-67.] The eastern part of the chancel was rebuilt in 1847, with retention of the fine double piscina of about 1230-40, and the fine stone-figure corbels supporting the ceiling. The western half may be contemporary with the very early nave, and its walls have on their outer aspect (towards the aisle chapels) most interesting marks of former attached buildings which are now difficult to explain. A plain thirteenth-century depressed arch was inserted into the wall on the south side, and a similar one, altered in the Perpendicular period, may be seen on the north side. On the north side of the chancel is the shell of a fifteenth-century two-storeyed vestry; it contains the organ, to accommodate which the internal structure was barbarously destroyed about 1859.

The clerestory of the nave was added at the end of the fifteenth century. It was at the time of building the most splendid portion of the Church, with stained glass windows

having between them niches with statues, the whole crowned with a magnificent wagon-head ceiling of carved oak. In puritan times the windows were knocked out, tracery and all, the statues and niches hacked almost completely away, but the ceiling only slightly damaged. The ceiling is the finest of its kind in existence, having 350 carved panels, all of different designs, and more than 350 carved bosses, all different, between the panels; also 36 supporting angels and other details. (*Proc.* vol. liii, pt. 2, plate VII facing p. 12).

There are two fountains, a modern one of 1837, and a Norman one which after several years of banishment has been reinstated and supplied with a new base.

At the west end of the Church, under the tower, are several monuments to the Strode and Barnard families, including a large brass dated 1649, elaborate and well executed, and quaint in design and wording. The ceiling in the tower is a fan vault, added in the late fifteenth century, and similar in detail to the vault in the tower at Wells Cathedral.

Two thirteenth-century stone effigies of knights in armour (probably members of the Malet family) are on window sills in the north aisle, where they were placed when the Church was altered in 1837.

The members also visited the old Grammar School, Strode's Almshouses, the Shambles, and

## The Market Cross

We are indebted to Dr. F. J. ALLEN for the following notes:

The Market Cross (frontispiece, *Proc.* liii) was built in A.D. 1500, as recorded on the original brass plate attached to it, of

*Of y<sup>e</sup> charyte man for the soules of Walter bukland & Dams hys  
 wyf whos good tyme Crosse was made in the yere of o<sup>r</sup> lord god  
 as h<sup>e</sup> whos obbyt shalbe kepte for Eber in thys parisse Church of  
 Shepton collect y<sup>e</sup> xxv day of November whos soules In p<sup>er</sup> don*

which the above is a photographic copy (size of plate 24 $\frac{3}{4}$  in. by 3 $\frac{3}{4}$  in.). But since that time it has undergone several alterations, so that it is now a building of mixed dates, and as a piece of patchwork is only a little less picturesque than a genuine ancient building.

It consists of a spire 51 ft. high, the lower part of which is surrounded with a hexagonal shelter. The massive central column, beneath the spire and within the shelter, is apparently the only portion which has escaped reconstruction. The original shelter seems to have resembled the corresponding portion of other similar crosses (*e.g.* Cheddar) in having buttressed columns supporting four-centred arches, and was topped with a parapet and pinnacles: but at some time in the seventeenth or early eighteenth century the shelter was taken down and rebuilt *without buttresses*, perhaps because they had projected in the way of the market carts. Resistance to outward thrust of the arches being thus removed, it was necessary to reconstruct the arches in a form which required the least possible abutment. Each of the present arches consists simply of a pair of large flat slabs, cut to the required curve, and supporting a key-stone: they have hitherto served their purpose well enough, for the columns have not yielded to the outward pressure of the arches. The bases of the columns are formed of heavy blocks of masonry, well fitted to withstand the impact of market carts. The parapet and pinnacles of the shelter are apparently original, reinstated when the rest was altered.

The spire is in three stages, of which the uppermost was originally capped with a large heavy mass of stone, carved with representations of the Crucifixion and of Saints, probably St. Mary and St. John. Similar broad finials were used for many old crosses, some of which are illustrated in Mr. Aymer Vallance's *Old Crosses and Lychgates*. The carved figures of this finial may have tempted the iconoclasts to destroy it as idolatrous<sup>1</sup>: it is said to have fallen and damaged the supporting structure, and the cross remained for many years with a truncated spire topped with a weather-vane. In 1841 the spire was rebuilt under the direction of G. B. Manners, architect, of Bath, who apparently copied the old work, or followed it closely, as far as it was extant, but added the present very successful finial in place of the broad carved stone. This is the impression of his work which the writer derives from the

<sup>1</sup> By shooting at it? The angels in the ceiling at the Church contain many bullets shot at them in iconoclastic times.

careful consideration of two existing drawings of the cross before restoration.

One of these drawings, dated 1747 and published in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1781, is very unskilful, shocking in perspective, and doubtless very incorrect. In those days, when the details of Gothic architecture were not understood, it was customary to make these very incorrect sketches, giving what the draughtsman supposed to be a picturesque representation of the object. Pooley in his *Old Stone Crosses of Somerset* gives an approximate copy of this sketch, with modifications according to his own interpretation of it.

The other old drawing, dated 1833, eight years before the restoration, is by J. Buckler, and is in the Smyth-Pigott Collection in our Museum. It is fairly skilful, but not up to the Buckler average, and suggests hurry in execution. The spire portion is evidently an imaginary restoration, for its details are more than a century earlier than the known date of the building, and the artist has placed a large floriated finial at the top, where the cross should be.

Even in the sketch of 1747 it is evident that the draughtsman tried to represent the shelter as it now is, and Buckler's drawing confirms the evidence that this part of the building remains unaltered since the first rebuilding. The writer's relatives who saw the restoration in 1841 could distinctly remember that the shelter was not taken down at that time. As to the spire, both drawings, though differing much from one another, seem to suggest that the lowest of the three stages was formerly much as it is now, the earlier drawing giving the rough outline, and Buckler's supplying some of the detail—with 'embroidery'. The drawing of 1747 shows the six shallow niches in the middle stage: Buckler's restoration almost eliminates this stage, but represents the pinnacles at its corners which are reproduced in the present building. Above the middle stage both drawings represent a truncated pyramid, which is surmounted in the older drawing with the great head-stone with statues, and in the later one with the floriated finial. This upper third of the spire is the portion which Manners replaced with his elegant shaft, pinnacle, and cross, while it seems probable that in the lower two-thirds he followed, or at least imitated, the previous building.

In Vol. liii it was stated that the administration of the 'Cross Charity' was transferred to the Urban Council. The writer was mistaken on this point: the administration still rests with the trustees.

At 4.50 p.m. the members were entertained to Tea at 'Summerleaze' by the kind invitation of Mr. Charles R. Wainwright, who was cordially thanked. Those interested had the privilege of seeing Mr. Wainwright's collection of Somerset Club Brasses in his billiard room.

Between 5.30 and 6.45 p.m. some of the members rambled round Shepton Mallet to see the old buildings, under the guidance of the Rev. G. H. Mitchell.

### Evening Meeting

A Reception and Conversazione was held at the Council Offices by the kind invitation of the Shepton Mallet Natural History Society, of which the Rev. R. L. Jones is President, and Mr. E. E. Poles, Secretary.

A lantern display illustrating places of local interest was given by Dr. F. J. Allen, after which the Museum, recently re-arranged, was visited, and refreshments taken. The programme concluded with an address by Major J. A. Garton on 'The Origin and Development of the Somerset Dialect'. The local society and its officers were suitably thanked before the party broke up.

### Second Day's Proceedings

It was wet when the motor-coaches left the Market Place at Shepton Mallet at 9.25 a.m., but the weather greatly improved as the day advanced. The first stop was made at

### Evercreech Church

which is dedicated to St. Peter. The members were met by the Vicar, the Rev. C. C. Angell, and Mr. F. C. EELES, who gave a short account of the building, and referred those present to the description given in *Proceedings*, liii, 60-62.



This Church is of typical mid or east Somerset work, but is of no great size. Its most remarkable feature is the splendid tower, not large but most beautifully proportioned. This is described by Dr. F. J. Allen in *The Great Church Towers of England*, pp. 38, 43.

The building was considerably restored in 1843 when the south aisle was rebuilt to correspond with the north aisle, and galleries were built in both aisles. This was done in such a way as to cause remarkably little injury to the appearance of the interior. Some grotesque gargoyles dating from 1843 are the work of a local mason who possessed exceptional skill. They are really very good: that at the south-east corner is said to be a skit on a former vicar—very much in the medieval manner. The east window retains its fourteenth-century tracery: the side windows of the chancel are later, but earlier than the rest of the Church.

The party left at 10.10 a.m. for

### Ditcheat Church

which is dedicated to St. Mary Magdalene. Here the members were met by the Rector, the Rev. H. H. Tripp, and Mr. F. C. Eeles. In our *Proceedings* descriptions of this Church will be found in vols. xiii, i, 25; xxiv, i, 48 (with illustration of church); xxx, i, 26; and lix, i, 21.

### The Manor House. Ditcheat

Before leaving Ditcheat the seventeenth-century Manor House was visited by the kindness of the owner, Brig.-General J. A. Gibbon, C.M.G.

### East Pennard Church

The Rev. G. A. A. WRIGHT, the Rector, described this Church which is dedicated to All Saints, and the following is an amplified account of the remarks he made in the limited time at his disposal.

The building is a remarkably beautiful and refined example of a church built all at one time in a quite definitely early form

of Perpendicular architecture. This of course does not apply to the tower, which is of somewhat earlier date. The building retains almost all its original window-tracery and stone-work with very little renewal or repair. The interior has the charm of plastered walls and eighteenth-century oak seating including box-pews in the aisles. It has escaped to an unusual degree the disfigurements so unfortunately characteristic of nineteenth-century restorations.

A church existed on this site in the tenth century or earlier. A charter of King Eadred, dated A.D. 955, refers to the manor as 'Pengeard Mynster'. This implies a church of some importance. Foundations of it were found in 1932 beneath the south arcade. Beneath the broad continuous foundations of lias of thirteenth-century date were seen narrower foundations of roughly squared Tor burrs, a material frequently used by the Saxons for such work. We were fortunate enough to hit upon the doorway, an opening 2 ft. 6 in. wide and exactly between the present north and south doors, which probably accounts for the position of these doors so far to the east of the centre of the Church.

This building was replaced in the twelfth century by another of the same width but longer. Towards the end of the fourteenth century a tower was added.

The present Church dates from about 1420 when the nave and chancel were widened on the north side, thus throwing the tower off the long axis of the building.

There is a tradition in the parish that the Church was thrice burnt down; if this is reliable there must have been another rebuilding as the present structure shows no trace of fire.

The Church consists of clerestoried nave of four bays with aisles, a large chancel, south porch and western tower. The clerestory is peculiar in that one window is omitted on either side, the westernmost on the north side and the second from the west on the south side. These windows do not appear ever to have existed.

The large four-light east window contains glass collected there a century ago. In the top pair of tracery lights are the remains of an Annunciation; beneath are the arms of Glastonbury whose chapter held the advowson of the living; on either

side are two six-winged angels, with wheels above and below. The heads of the two central main lights contain canopy work probably from some other window ; in the head of the left-hand light are radiant suns, the badge of Edward IV, which dates the glass 1461-1485. In the lower roundels will be noticed a crested lark similar to one in Bristol Cathedral chapter-house, a small head with an axe which may be Thaddeus, Matthias or Jude, and a large human eye. It seems probable that this was a Jesse window, and this is the eye of Jesse. In the borders will be seen many pieces of white glass with a yellow band curving and branching across them—parts of the stem of Jesse.

In the south wall of the sanctuary is a piscina with a cusped ogee arch ; the single bowl is octagonal and the drain covered with a knob. On the north side is a small plain aumbry.

The end of an altar mensa was found three years ago in the pavement of a store room at the Rectory and now lies in the sanctuary ; the other end is built into the pedestal of the pulpit.

The stalls in the chancel were formed out of old chests collected in the parish by the Rev. Thomas Garrett, 1839-1845 ; at one place may be seen the mark of a hasp and key-hole. The cherub heads and garlands which now form the reading-desks are said to have come from the previous reredos, a pedimented structure supported on a pair of Corinthian pillars which were at some time cut down to form the stand of the credence table.

The handsome Queen Anne oak pulpit shows on one panel the split pea-pod, the sign manual of Grinling Gibbons : it seems probable that it came from his workshops. It stands upon a stone base apparently of earlier date, an unusual survival.

The nave roof is an example of the mid-Somerset type of which North Cadbury may be the earliest. It consists of cambered, moulded and battlemented tie-beams supported on braced wall-pieces resting on stone angel-corbels bearing shields or musical instruments ; king-posts with longitudinal struts, moulded principal rafters, ridge-piece and purlins : the junctures of principals and purlins are covered with foliated bosses. The spandrels above the tie-beams are filled with tracery. The roof has lost its original wall-plate of form corresponding to the

tie-beams, and the angels once covering the bases of the principals. The eastern compartment is coloured in red, green and white, and the eastern spandrels are boarded over and painted with two kneeling censing angels. There are indications on the chancel-arch that the whole space above the rood-loft was once boarded and painted with a glory or a doom of which these angels are relics. Near the centre of the first free tie-beam hangs an iron pulley to support a light before the rood.

The nave pillars are formed of a square with each corner cut away in a hollow chamfer and a half-round column against each cardinal face ; the bases are highly stilted and the double abaci are octagonal ; the arches consist of two orders plainly chamfered.

The niche in the east wall of the north aisle is formed of a piece of Decorated window-tracery. It is carved on both sides and shows the groove for the glass : the presence of this points to a remodelling of the windows in the fourteenth century.

The absence of a window in the east end of the south aisle is noticeable.<sup>1</sup>

In the front of the minstrels' gallery are two old bench-ends, representing the pelican in her piety and the crown of thorns encircling the sacred initials (these are said to have come from West Bradley Church) and fourteen traceried panels, eight of flamboyant design, three geometrical (Plate II) and three which appear to be modern copies of the last ; they were brought from a farm-house at Hembridge, but some of them may have come originally from the rood-screen or loft.<sup>2</sup>

The Church contains a magnificent font of late Norman date. The bowl is square and is enriched with an arcade of shouldered round-arches. It is supported on four sphinxes grouped round a short cylindrical column. A sphinx, in the Bestiaries, symbolizes 'Righteousness triumphing over evil' ; the evil is represented by four devils' heads crushed beneath the base.

<sup>1</sup> Since the Society's visit a stair has been found within the wall, and a piscina, proving the existence of an altar in this aisle probably with a high reredos, which may have taken the form of a wall painting. The window was dispensed with to strengthen the abutment of the chancel arch.

<sup>2</sup> They may be compared with the panels of the screen at Bishops Lydeard.

But a sphinx is female and should have a pleasant face in accordance with her character ; two have, but one has a simian face, and the fourth an evil leering face with a goat's beard. The sculptor, though skilful, was, perhaps, ill-acquainted with his bestiary. All four sides of the bowl show marks of the hinges and locks which fastened the cover in medieval times.

The tower, which is 18 in. to the south of the main axis of the Church, appears to belong to the latter part of the fourteenth century. It is short for the present Church, being only 50 ft. 6 in. to the top of the parapet. It is without buttresses and the quoins are of large blocks of Doulling stone. The ground floor is lighted by a large west window, the sill of which has been raised to permit of the insertion of a door beneath, probably for the purpose of admitting the two big bells added to the peal *circ.* 1740 ; the tracery of the window was removed at the same time. The parapet is moulded without battlements. Above the keystone of the first floor window on the north side is a rose of three rows each of seven petals ; this is probably a badge of the Abbey of Glastonbury and not a Tudor crest ; another, mutilated, exists beneath the clock-face on the west side of the tower.

The tower-arch is of two orders, plainly chamfered without impostes, the mouldings being carried to the base.

Access to the first floor is had by a left-handed newel-stair at the south-east corner, showing externally as a slight projection ; at the first floor it dies into the wall, and further ascent is made by ladders.

The bells, said to be the second best ring in Somerset, are five in number. The treble bears the date 1649 and the initials T.C., G.Y., R.Y., I.R. ; the second, a very handsome casting, shows the Royal Arms of James I, date Anno Domini 1607, initials I.W., I.B., and the initials and mark of Roger Purdue, bell-founder of Bristol ; the third is inscribed, ' At thy departure I shall sound and ring to bring thee into ground. I.G. 1649. T.C.' These three form the original peal ; all have had their canons removed which has caused the second to crack. In 1740 two large bells by Thomas Bilbie were added. They are very fine castings and retain their canons, the tenor is said

to weigh 33 cwt. The addition of these bells in their own frame necessitated the raising of the older frame and of the roof, the lead of which now covers the parapet. The peal has not been rung for twenty-five years owing to the instability of the frames.

In the south porch is a broken stoup ; another is outside the north door. There is a mason's mark on the soffit of the south door arch ; the south door is contemporary with the Church.

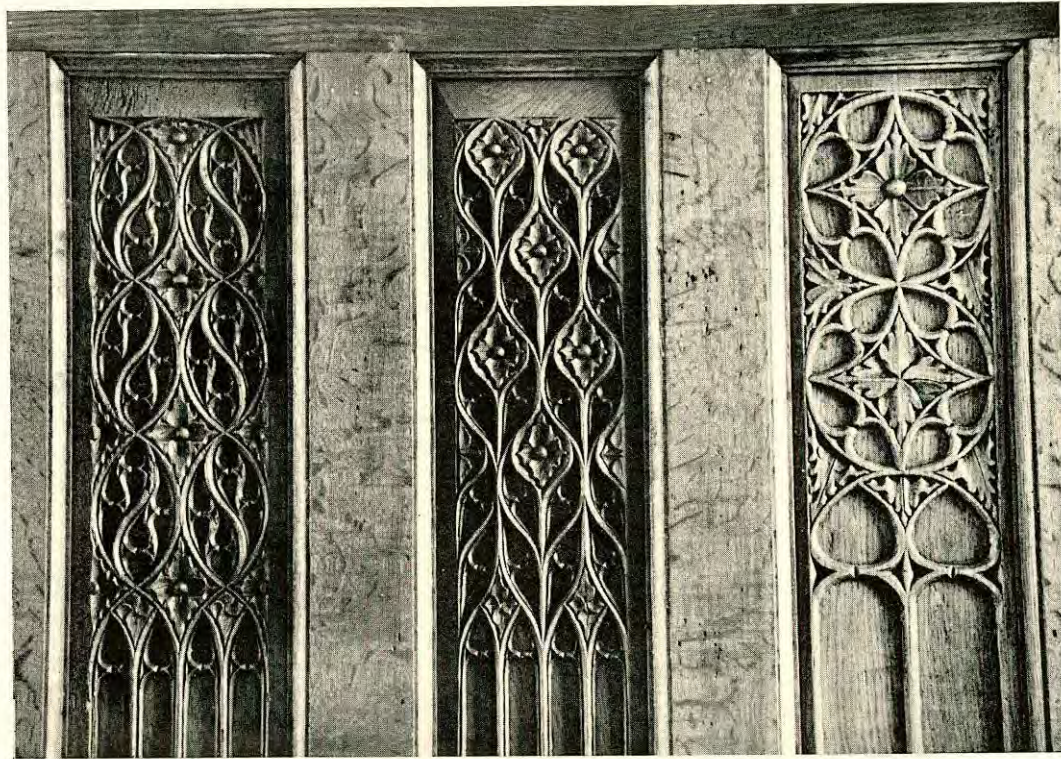
The scratch-dial figured in Prior Horne's book is on the porch ; another is built into the next buttress to the west and now faces west (one radius, almost vertical, is marked with a IX) ; another dial of early date is cut on a stone of the earlier church, which is now re-used, high up, in the north aisle.

Built into the buttress referred to above is a block of stone showing what appear to be two consecration crosses. It is recorded that the Church was reconciled in 1492 'after the shedding of blood'. It is suggested that this stone is a fragment of the high altar, and that the second roughly-cut cross is the mark of this re-consecration.

On the external jambs of the west window of the north aisle are hinges for the support of shutters to protect the window when fives were played in this corner.

One of the buttresses of the north aisle appears to be older than the rest ; it is more weather-worn and, although of similar design, its edges are chamfered.

There are some curious evidences of consecration crosses—small holes drilled in some of the buttresses beneath the first off-set, some still containing iron. They may be seen on the two angle buttresses of the chancel, on the two central buttresses of the chancel, on the first square facing buttress on the north aisle and on the only square facing buttress on the south, on the angle buttress at the north-west corner, and two on the west face of the tower. One missing from beneath the east window, one destroyed by the construction of the west door and one other, probably on the south-west angle buttress, complete the required twelve. They may have contained rivets to fasten metal crosses to the buttresses, or the crosses may have been painted, and the holes contained candle-sconces for the illumination of the crosses on the dedication festival.



EAST PENNARD CHURCH

Geometrical Traceried Panels in front of the Minstrels' Gallery

To the north-west of the tower is a fine churchyard cross standing on three steps ; its head has been restored as a war memorial.

The plate consists of a cup and cover, silver gilt, hall-mark of 1633 and maker's mark R.W. with a rose beneath ; a second cup, paten and flagon, hall-mark of 1727 and maker's mark W.L., probably William Lukin. The latter set is inscribed, ' Ex dono Mariae Gerardi Martin generosi relicta ', and bears her arms. There is also a fine pair of silver altar candlesticks, 18 in. high, with Sheffield hall-mark for 1817 and the maker's initials R.G. for Robert Gainsford, and inscribed, ' Presented by Sarah the widow of Gerard Martin Esq. to the church of East Pennard 1815 '.

The registers begin in 1608 and are continuous, including the lay registrar's book of the Commonwealth period. The earliest volume is a very tall parchment book measuring 26 in. by 7 in.

## Pilton

The Church of St. John Baptist, Pilton (the Rev. Preb. C. W. Bennett, Vicar<sup>1</sup>) was reached about 12.15 p.m. Mr. Eeles described the building, accounts of which have already been published in *Proceedings* (vols. xxxiv, i, 63 ; liii, i, 63 ; liii, ii, 94).

The Manor House was also visited by kind permission of Mrs. M. K. Capell, and a few of the members inspected the Barn by permission of Mr. Robert Creed (*Proc.* xxxiv, i, 68).

At this point most of the members returned to Shepton Mallet for lunch. The motors left at 2.20 p.m., and proceeded, *via* West Shepton and Church Hill to

## Dulcote Quarries

which were visited by permission of Messrs. Foster Yeoman, Limited.

A considerable party gathered together among the heaps of waste material, and here Mr. H. E. BALCH, F.S.A., gave a de-

<sup>1</sup> Prebendary Bennett died in March, 1934.



scription of the limestone mass of which Dulcote Hill is the most southerly outcrop of the Mendip region. The huge mass is over 3,000 feet thick and is folded in a N.W. to S.E. direction. Further it has been thrust up into its present position by tremendous pressure from the south-west, resulting in most complex foldings and overthrusts even to the point of inversion.

It is obvious from an examination of its surface that it has been subjected to most extensive denudation, which has removed not only 3,000 feet of limestone from above the underlying Old Red Sandstone, but many thousands of feet of Coal Measures that overlay both.

The abrupt termination of Dulcote Hill appears to be due to a north and south fault which is easily traceable from its origin away back in the main mass of Mendip. The resulting debris from the destruction of the vanished mountain of earlier days, lies in the great depression to the south and forms the thick Triassic deposit which has been explored to 2,000 ft. in depth without reaching its base. Recently borings for water had shown the Coal Measures in close proximity to Weston-super-Mare. Up to the time of Vaughan's work on the Avon Gorge, followed by Sibley and Welch on the corresponding rocks of Mendip, little was known of the system of zones into which these geologists succeeded in dividing the great mass of Limestone. In the Coal-field of Mendip, which undoubtedly lies also to the south, beneath the Triassic beds, McMurtrie made investigations which threw much light on the complex structure of the Coal Measures.

The conditions of the early geography indicated by all this work shows a comparatively shallow but extensive sea with its bottom slowly subsiding for a very long time, followed by a silting up, and intermittent subsidence and silting for untold ages.

Coming to the present time, the fissures in the quarry had yielded many Pleistocene remains, chiefly of great bears and bison, whilst caves and fissures showed, as everywhere in Mendip, the long-continued action of penetrating streams.

At 3.45 p.m. the motors arrived at

## Dinder Church

This Church, of which the Rev. Preb. M. Y. McClean is Rector, is dedicated to St. Michael and All Angels. As on the previous occasion (1907) the President (Mr. A. F. SOMERVILLE) described the building and its history (see *Proceedings*, liii, i, 30).

Tea was kindly provided by the President, after which the members strolled round the grounds at Dinder House before proceeding to

## Croscombe Church

(the Rev. C. W. Wootton, Rector), where Mr. Eeles described the building. (See the President's address on this Church in *Proceedings*, liii, i, 47). The conveyances then returned to Shepton Mallet, where they arrived at 6.15 p.m.

## Evening Meeting

At 8.20 p.m. an Evening Meeting was held at the Council Hall for the reading of four papers, which were taken in chronological order.

### THE SMALLER CAVES OF THE DINDER DISTRICT

Mr. H. E. BALCH, F.S.A., dealt with this subject, and has provided the following for publication :

The great ridge of Mendip is honeycombed with caves, many already discovered and, without doubt, many still concealed.

It is not so well known that, in the neighbourhood of Dinder and Croscombe, there are several shelters or little caves, with here and there indications that perhaps something larger may yet be found. The configuration of the limestone rocks, however, does not lend itself to this, so much as does that of the loftier ridge of Mendip, forming the extensive table-land to the north of Wells. There they lie in a way peculiarly favourable to the formation of caves, which themselves have contributed in no small degree to the denudation of that table-land. This difference applies particularly to the detached uptilted mass of limestone of Dulcote Hill, where the gathering ground is limited and much of the rainfall must escape down its precipitous sides.

To deal first with that bold feature of the landscape, we have here certain small caves which have features peculiar to themselves. At its western end and elevated well above the surrounding Red Marl, a constant spring occurs, having the characteristics of water derived from the limestone, precipitating tufa in quantity at the village fountain, but supplying Dulcote with its drinking water, and then escaping into the river below, which has its source at Doultong. This spring has its origin to the east and has been proved to flow along the whole length of Dulcote Hill, probably having made for itself a channel of some size, for at several points feeder caves leading to it have been found, in the course of quarrying operations.

In the westernmost quarry, perhaps thirty years ago, the firing of a charge exposed a large and imposing vertical shaft, with water-worn sides, and about 4 ft. across, undoubtedly descending to join the streamway referred to, as a stone thrown past the capstone, which had been turned over by the explosion and blocked the way, could be heard bounding and rebounding till, far below, it fell into water. The place was held to be dangerous if kept open, and it was levelled in, and now is concealed in the floor of the quarry.

All around, in this area, tributary channels have been found. One of these was filled with debris of Pleistocene date, revealing bones and teeth of bison and great bear, which bones were presented to Wells Museum, many years ago, by Mr. Somerville. Here, too, was found at about the same time the largest cave of Dulcote. Sixty feet up in the face of the cliff, the firing of a charge revealed a small opening less than 2 ft. across, with a big cavity visible within. The writer was lowered on a rope about 40 ft. into this cave, reaching a steeply descending bank of boulders and debris. At the bottom what appeared to be a large and important way, nearly vertical, was blocked with the debris. Upwards, a steep climb over rocks, precariously poised, presently reached a waterway of ancient date, —too small to pass. It was fairly obvious that this important chamber owed its origin to some vanished stream which was precipitated into the fissures of the rocks at a time when the hill was overlaid by secondary beds, long since carried away by denudation. Search failed to reveal any contents of im-

portance. On the other side of the same quarry there was a small cave with very beautiful stalagmite formations, but this was destroyed by subsequent quarrying.

Perhaps more interesting still was a filled-up cavity found two years ago during blasting at Mr. Yeoman's quarry. Here a fissure must have been open in Pleistocene time when the great extinct mammals roamed the land. On firing a charge a mass of bones was hurled into the quarry and Mr. Yeoman presented them to the Wells Museum. They represented five large bison—one of them a veritable monster—whose femur was shown to members when they were at the quarry. The fissure disappeared as quarrying proceeded.

There are still at least two untouched cave shelters on the north side of Dulcote Hill which may be explored later on.

At the very top of Dinder Wood—that most fascinating part of Mr. Somerville's estate—there is a shelter which promised good results, and though its contents cannot compare with that of others in our district, they were very interesting. Recently with the aid of two of Mr. Somerville's workmen, we dug the place completely out. After removing about 1 ft. of leaf-mould, a mass of flood-borne clay occurred, exceeding 42 ins. in thickness, laid down by one of the intermittent floods that periodically rage down the wood, carving great gullies and throwing the debris pell-mell about the valley bottom, involving great labour to restore some semblance of order. Under these conditions certain swallets come into action, indicating caves whose outlets are unknown. Under such conditions, too, probably the Neolithic axe found by Mr. Somerville many years ago must have been brought to the surface.

When this mass of flood-borne clay was removed, a stratum reaching 18 in. in thickness was exposed, black with charcoal and ash. In it were found large portions of a Romano-British bowl, many pieces of other pots, and a number of fragments of iron slag. There were no coins. The appearance of the place at this level suggested that a great flood came down, washed out much of the contents of the shelter and then deposited the mass of clay on top of the remainder. There were several bones at this level and these were submitted to Dr. Jackson at Manchester Museum.

Labelling the remains red-deer, roe-deer, wolf, dog, sheep, pig, goat, rabbit, small horse and small ox, with a small group of foetal human bones, he says, 'They are quite characteristic of Romano-British food refuse'.

The shelter had, almost certainly, for ages been exposed to the intermittent floods to which in all probability the valley owes its origin. Such floods may have scoured the shelter out several times before the head of the valley had been cut back and deeper, to leave it stranded high and dry.

Not unlike to Dinder Wood is Ham Wood, a mile to the east. It joins the Shepton Mallet valley just above the village of Croscombe and marks the junction of the Carboniferous Limestone and Dolomitic Conglomerate, cliffs of both rocks occurring. It is crossed by the Bath-Shepton railway on a viaduct and it exhibits hard by an important active swallet feeding an unknown stream.

East of the southern end and elevated perhaps 75 ft. above the valley, is the little cave known as 'Nancy Camel's Hole', it being a local legend that a woman of that name lived in it, about a hundred years ago. Dr. F. J. Allen explored this little cave in 1888. His notes show that he cleared the passage to a length of 24 ft., by which clearing its height reached a maximum of 9 ft. At the end it widened from the normal 2 or 3 ft. into a small chamber with branches, that to the left being followed for 12 ft. where it again divided but was too small to follow. There was a depth of 5 ft. 2 ins. of debris on the floor near the entrance, and two bands each of 4 ins. of charcoal 2 ft. and 2 ft. 9 ins. from the floor. In spite of these favourable conditions, there were not any definite prehistoric contents; a few fragments of flint are mentioned only, the remainder of the finds consisting of fragments of glass, an ivory knife-handle, burnt bone, a fragment of coal and another of chalk (which may easily have been chalky tufa), and a number of tobacco-pipes, with a medley of buttons, pins, a thimble, and old clasp-knife, a farthing of 1823 and glazed earthenware. The weathering of the Carboniferous Limestone had exposed a good deal of chert.

The writer recently revisited the little cave with Dr. F. J. Allen. A large amount of floor debris has again accumulated,

far beyond what is usual under such circumstances, and it appeared probable that it has been dug out from inner recesses by badgers, which have remarkable digging powers. There is a probability of the existence of such inner recesses, which might be more fruitful if the work was continued.

To the writer, however, there appeared some evidences far more interesting. In earlier investigations in Mendip a vast antiquity has been postulated for the limestone caves, and quite unexpectedly this little cave provides corroboration. Those who know the border-line where the Triassic conglomerates and marls lie against and in intimate association with the Carboniferous Limestone, recognize the red breccia and sandy beds which lie in close contact with the limestone. At the furthest extremity of 'Nancy Camel's Hole' this material is seen lying horizontally quite near the roof, and one can visualize the little cave at the level of the Triassic lake, with its tideless waters lapping into the cavity and laying down this sediment, before it and the whole area were finally submerged under the encroaching sea. It is one more and an important contribution to the study of the antiquity of the limestone caves.

Ham Wood shows the relations between the two deposits, for much of its length. The later beds have been mined for iron and perhaps ochre. There are many places in its great length which have without question been shelters for man and beast.

#### EXCAVATIONS AT SMALL DOWN CAMP, NEAR EVERCREECH

Mr. H. ST. GEORGE GRAY, F.S.A., read a short paper on this subject, of which the following is a résumé :

Small Down Camp,<sup>1</sup> the summit of which is 728 ft. above mean sea-level, is situated half a mile, in a bee line, to the S.E. of Chesterblade (where Roman remains and coins have been found) ; it is 13 furlongs to the N.E. of Evercreech and 3½ miles S.E. of Shepton Mallet. It is in a strong position, being sur-

<sup>1</sup> 'Smaledone' or 'Smalldown' is mentioned in various manuscripts and printed records, dating from A.D. 1262 onwards, to which references have been made elsewhere.

rounded on the n., w. and s.w. by a deep valley ; the eastern side, which is the only easily accessible point, is connected with an outlying branch of the Mendip range.

The Camp takes the form of an irregular elongated oval, being broader at the east than at the north-west end, and the inner bank encloses an area of about 5 acres. Externally the earthwork is slightly over one-fifth of a mile in length. The greater part of the Camp is encompassed by a vallum of considerable relief.

The whole of the east boundary of the Camp, that is the weakest side, is defended by three ramparts with intervening ditches. The height of the inner vallum here is  $17\frac{1}{2}$  ft. above the silting of the fosse.

The main entrance-causeway is on the east, and was proved by excavation to be one of the original entrances at the time the Camp was constructed ; its average width is 35 ft. The other causeway on the south-east, 30 ft. wide, also proved to be an ancient entrance.

What makes Small Down remarkable ? It is this. The site is a combination of an encampment and a burial-ground. Was the camp made before the erection of the tumuli on the summit, or vice versa ? That is a question which it is difficult to answer.

Judging from Sir Richard Hoare's description of Battlesbury Camp, near Warminster, he seems to have obtained evidence that the three barrows connected with the rampart and ditch of the Camp were constructed earlier than the lines of earthworks ; but his brief description is somewhat unsatisfactory. The same was probably the case at Eggardun Camp, Dorset.

It is, therefore, more probable that the barrows at Small Down, a row of eleven of them, existed before the lines of earthworks were constructed than otherwise, although we obtained no *actual* proof that this was so. Both barrows and the earthworks in all probability are referable to the later half of the Bronze Age.

Only three of the barrows were marked on the 25-inch ordnance sheet (1904 edition), but there exists a continuous line of eleven mounds of varying elevations, some of which slightly overlap. With the exception of No. IV (which produced the

cremation in 1904), all had external indications of having been opened or 'rifled'.

Phelps in his *History of Somerset* says that these barrows were opened by the Rev. John Skinner of Camerton. Phelps summarized the digging thus: 'In one barrow an ornamented urn was found, inverted, containing ashes only; in another, burnt bones and pieces of flint; and in the third, an urn of elegant form and superior workmanship.' Since the Small Down work of 1904 one of these cinerary urns has come into the possession of our Society through the instrumentality of the Rev. Canon E. H. Goddard, F.S.A.

In the previously untouched barrow (No. IV), besides the cremated remains, we found fourteen fragments of pottery of Bronze Age type, four knives, a scraper and two saws, all of flint, several burnt flints and eighty-one flint flakes.

The sections of ditch we re-excavated were hewn out of the oolithic limestone, and the maximum depth of the inner ditch proved to be  $7\frac{1}{2}$  ft. They produced a good many shards of Bronze Age pottery, none of which were ornamented. There was the usual soft variety, with few or no grains in its composition, and the coarse variety which consisted of marly clay and fragments of shell; it contained also small grains of calcite and quartz, the pottery effervescing strongly with acid.

The only cutting made through the vallum did not assist us in the determination of date, for no pottery and other relics were found on the 'old turf line'.

Small Down Camp was probably never a permanent home; it may represent the summer residence of a tribe which moved up into the hills with its flocks during the hotter months, or it may have been used merely as a cemetery and as an occasional defensive position for man and beast, when an enemy presented a warlike attitude. The presence of the burial-mounds in no way suggests the occupation of the Camp as a constant habitation for the living, but rather the contrary.

In conclusion we might say that several cases are known in which ancient camps include tumuli within their area; but the feature cannot be described as a common occurrence. There is said to be a barrow within Danesborough Camp on the Quantocks, but it is difficult to detect, as the place is so much



overgrown. Scratchbury Camp, near Warminster, but nearer Heytesbury, has seven mounds within its area, some of which Hoare proved to be sepulchral. Clay Hill, to the west of Warminster, is encircled by a rampart and ditch, and has two mounds on the summit, in one of which Hoare found calcined human remains. White Sheet Hill Camp,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles N. of Mere (Wilts.), encloses three mounds, which Hoare states are not sepulchral. Winkelbury, a pre-Roman camp, occupying a northern spur of the S. Wilts. Downs, presents a somewhat similar instance; the six barrows, however, are not within the camp proper, but occur at the southern end of the promontory, just outside the main ramparts. Chalbury Rings, between Dorchester and Weymouth, contains two barrows within its area, one of which was opened by Warne and found to be sepulchral. Within Poundbury Camp, Dorchester, there is one mound in the centre. The Mam Tor fortress, near Castleton, Derbyshire, has two barrows within the line of earthworks. Hollingbury Camp, near Brighton, encloses four barrows. And so one might go on! It would, however, be interesting to draw up a complete list of similar cases.

Fuller details (with illustrations) are published in Mr. Gray's paper in the *Proceedings*, 1 (1904), i, 32-49.

#### RECENT DISCOVERIES AT CLEEVE ABBEY

The following is a summary of a short communication by Mr. F. C. EELES on this subject:

Some progress has been made—though not very much owing to the lack of funds—in continuing the excavations on the north side of the nave of Cleeve Abbey church.

It will be remembered that proof was found of the addition of at least one chapel on the north side of the nave, immediately to the west of the north transept, the base of an altar and a scrap of tiled pavement having been uncovered there.

I am indebted to Sir Harold Brakspear for pointing out that in excavating the site of Stanley Abbey, near Chippenham—another Cistercian house—it was found that a series of chapels was added in a position exactly corresponding to this, namely, on the south side of the nave to the west of the south transept, the cloister at Stanley being on the north side.

Excavations at Cleeve have now been continued for the whole length of the north wall of the church, but up to the present it has been impossible to locate the north or west walls of this chapel. A great deal of the walling seems to have been grubbed up. Of the north wall of the nave, the foundations have only been found for some 20 ft. eastwards from the west end. All the rest has disappeared until we come to the small fragment at the east end close to the transept. But, strange to say, the foundations have been uncovered of two very large and massive buttresses which were added to the north wall without bonding-in opposite the fourth and fifth pillars of the arcade (reckoning from the west end). Some deeper cutting may reveal more later on, but at the moment the suggestion is that the eastern part of the north wall was disturbed to make an opening into the added chapel, with the result that it was found necessary to buttress the section of the wall immediately to the westward of it.

An interesting discovery has been made near the west end of the north wall. At the north-west corner the foundations of the original double buttresses have been found, as might be expected. Immediately to the east has been disclosed the foundation of a wall running out roughly at right-angles northwards for a considerable distance. This wall is only 2 ft. 8 in. thick, and it has been traced for about 67 ft. until it reaches a piece of ancient walling now partly incorporated in a hen-house, and evidently part of a precinct wall running eastwards from the gate-house. In the part of this wall remaining above ground to the west of the hen-house or shed is a doorway of late Gothic character which has a curious pent-house cover.<sup>1</sup> We may gather from this that the inner courtyard which was entered through the gate-house was roughly rectangular, that it was bounded on the north by a wall running out from the gate-house, and that this wall was returned roughly at a right angle, so as to meet the north wall of the church, the object being to prevent strangers entering the courtyard from wandering round the north side of the church. At a distance of 28 ft. 3 in. from the church wall there was a buttress 3 ft. 3 in. by 2 ft. 4 in. on the west side of this precinct wall.

So far the arrangement is intelligible.

<sup>1</sup> The stones which formed this are now lying on the ground.

But some distance east of this precinct wall have been discovered the foundations of another wall, also 2 ft. 8 in. thick, running north from the church wall. It has not yet been possible to determine how far it goes. At first sight it seemed as if it might have been the west wall of an aisle, although the great buttresses added further east would make this highly unlikely. But it has been found that a cross-wall, also 2 ft. 8 in. thick, running from the precinct wall, 23 ft. 3 in., eastwards at a distance of 26 ft. 3 in. from the north wall of the church. This it will be noted is longer than the distance between these two cross-walls. No trace of it has been found further east. An enclosure of some kind there certainly must have been in the angle between this precinct wall and the church wall. And if we may judge from the thickness of the walls this enclosure was built at the same time as the precinct wall. Just beyond this area eastwards have been found a number of pieces of debris from the kiln in which the tiles were fired, and some fragments of improperly fired tiles besides pieces both of plain and encaustic tiles. While no traces of the kiln itself were found, it looks as if it cannot be far off, and it may perhaps be suggested that there may have been some of the workshops or perhaps the builders' yard on the north side of the church. This annexe to the precinct wall may have been connected with works of this kind. So far as evidence is available at the time of writing this seems more likely than that this structure was a chapel.

At the east end of the choir some excavation and examination, as yet unfinished, seem to be showing that the very thick overgrown mass of masonry hitherto regarded as the base of the east wall is a comparatively modern structure dating from the time when the buildings were cleared and repaired in the 'seventies of the last century. Moreover, what appear to be the foundations of the original east wall have been discovered a very short distance further east. More investigation will be required before it is possible to arrive at any definite conclusion about this.

#### THE MYSTERY OF OWEN PARFITT

The Very Rev. Prior E. HORNE, F.S.A., read a short paper on the above subject, of which the following is a summary :

The facts of this strange case are very simple. Some time at the beginning of June 1768, an old crippled man, by trade a tailor, seventy years of age or thereabouts, was helped out of bed in the afternoon and put into a chair outside his cottage door. The cottage was situated at that part of Shepton Mallet known as Wester Shepton, near Board Cross. Owen Parfitt had not been fifteen minutes in his chair before he disappeared entirely, and from that day to this no trace of him has ever been discovered.

In 1814 a Mr. William Maskell, a solicitor in Shepton Mallet, at the desire of his friend Dr. Samuel Butler, Headmaster of Shrewsbury School and afterwards Bishop of Lichfield, interviewed some ten persons who had known Parfitt, and remembered the circumstances of his disappearance. These accounts by the witnesses and Dr. Butler's letters connected with the case, were given to the library of Downside Abbey in March 1933. The evidence of these witnesses all agreed in supporting the simple outlines of the story. The question asked was whether any rational explanation of this extraordinary disappearance was forthcoming. Prior Horne suggested that from the evidence it was clear that Parfitt could walk a little, with the aid of a stick and by holding on to objects. Overcome with the pain he constantly suffered, he had thrown himself down the well, near at hand, and the body had shot up an adit or tunnel at the bottom. Hence probing the well had failed to find it. He trusted that some day it might be pumped out and the theory tested.

### **Third Day's Proceedings**

The motor conveyances left the Market Place, Shepton Mallet, at 9.40 a.m., and proceeded to

### **Wyke Champflower Chapel**

Here is a small seventeenth-century Gothic church attached to the manor-house. It has escaped nineteenth-century 'restoration' and retains nearly all its ancient fittings. Especially noteworthy is the magnificent seventeenth-century stone pulpit—one of very few pulpits of this material erected between

the Reformation and the Gothic revival. The low-pitched waggon roof, the tympanum which divides nave and chancel and the east window contain much valuable heraldry. This and the other features of the Church are described in *Somerset and Dorset Notes and Queries*, vi, 101; and *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.*, lix, i, 22.

The very interesting form of service used at the consecration of this little church has survived. It was printed from Brit. Mus. MS. Harl. 3795, f. 9, by the late Dr. J. Wickham Legg in *English Orders for Consecrating Churches in the Seventeenth Century*, Henry Bradshaw Society, vol. xli (London, 1911), p. 91, under the title of *Consecration of the Chapel of Wyke Champflower in the Parish of Bruton in Somerset, by Dr. Arthur Lake, Bishop of Bath and Wells, on Sunday, July 18, 1624*. The form was also printed by Hearne in Leland's *Collectanea* (London, 1774, vol iv). Dr. Legg refers to the importance of the form in a note on p. 343 where he regards it as standing by itself, and not falling into any well known group of consecration forms of the period.

### Sexey's Hospital, Bruton

The members were received at 11 o'clock by the Rt. Hon. Henry Hobhouse (one of the Visitors of the Hospital), Mr. R. T. A. Hughes, Mr. H. E. Chorley (the Master), and others.

Mr. HENRY HOBHOUSE addressed those present as follows: This ancient Hospital was founded in 1638 by the trustees of Hugh Sexey in accordance with a conveyance of his lands and manors in Somerset and elsewhere 'in trust for charitable and good uses'. Hugh Sexey was the son of poor parents residing in or near Bruton and was baptized there on 18 November 1556. He began life as a stable-boy at one of the Bruton inns but was afterwards 'advanced by the help of a little learning' (probably acquired at the free Grammar School, now known as the King's School) and by 'a regularity of meritorious conduct'. We have no account of his life, but he finally held for twenty years (1599-1619) the important post of one of the seven auditors of the Exchequer.

His residence in Bruton has been recently identified by

Mr. Hughes at the west end of the town. His bust and arms are erected in the courtyard of the Hospital.

The Hospital has for the last three centuries been governed by twelve 'Overseers or Visitors' who have been chosen continuously by a system of co-option from among the leading landowners in the neighbourhood, a complete list of whom is given in my pamphlet.

The objects of the Foundation were two-fold :—

1. To maintain a number of old men and women, now varying from twenty-four to thirty, chosen from Bruton and the neighbouring parishes and excluding all 'drunkards, swearers, unquiet or disorderly persons'. These inmates are in receipt of separate rooms, plots of garden ground, blankets and certain clothes, coal and a sum of 14*s.* 6*d.* a week, including old age pensions. Besides the Master of the Hospital, there are now a chaplain, a doctor and a resident nurse.

2. The second object as stated in the original deed was to build 'a working house for breeding of children and setting them to work and for raising money to bind children apprentices and afterwards for stock for them'. These objects have been modified from time to time according to the educational views of the period and under schemes of the Charity Commissioners and the Board of Education. Thus, for more than two hundred years a school for boys of an elementary character was carried on in the Hospital premises and the boys were afterwards apprenticed. This school was abolished in 1877 and a school for training girls for domestic service was then established and carried on for thirty years. The educational funds of the charity are now divided between the three secondary schools at Bruton and Sexey's School at Blackford near Wedmore, where the bulk of the Visitors' property is situated.

Other interesting details may be seen in Mr. Hobhouse's pamphlet, a second edition of which was in the press at the time of the meeting (Barnicott & Pearce, Taunton ; price 6*d.*).

## Bruton Church

The Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary (the Rev. B. H. Lloyd Oswell, Vicar) was visited at 11.35 a.m., and was fully described

by Mr. F. C. EELES, who has since the meeting gathered more historical information, and his paper on the subject will be found in Part II of this volume.

After lunch at the Blue Ball Hotel the visitors left for Witham Friary at 1.25 p.m.

### Witham Friary Church

The party was received by Colonel Shawe, churchwarden, and Mr. EELES, who was the guide, has provided the following notes :

The famous Carthusian monastery, of which the great St. Hugh was prior, was situated some distance eastwards of this Church and there are no remains of it above ground.

Stone-vaulted parish churches, usual on the Continent, are exceedingly rare in England. At Witham we have an aisleless apsidal example of one. It is considered to be the *minor ecclesia*, or church of the *conversi* or working-monks of the order, made parochial in the fifteenth century for the use of the lay folk whom the monks had to allow to settle near them in later days when the *conversi* had disappeared. In 1459 John Porter, the prior, obtained a licence from the bishop to provide a burial-place for seculars round the chapel and to have a font *in capella de le Frery* and a chaplain. That font and the rood-loft staircase exist, with scraps of the rood-screen turned into the cornice of the seventeenth-century pulpit, showing that it was found necessary to divide off a chancel with screen and loft in the usual way as part of the necessary furnishing of the parish church. The building was extensively but carefully restored in 1877 by William White, F.S.A., whose very full description of its architecture and what he did to it, is printed in our *Proceedings*, xxiv (1878), i, 25-32. The history of the Church is further discussed by the late Mr. F. T. Elworthy in Vol. xxxix (1893), ii, 1-20.

From Witham, the motors continued the journey through Upton Noble to

## Batcombe Church (Plate I)

where Mr. EELES described the building, which is dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. The Rev. W. H. Haviland, the Rector, was unavoidably absent.

This fine Perpendicular church is chiefly remarkable for its exceedingly beautiful tower. This has been illustrated and described by Dr. F. J. Allen in *The Great Church Towers of England*, pp. 38, 42. A noteworthy feature is the square-headed seventeenth-century east window inserted, perhaps in 1629, in the small chancel which survived from the earlier church. Square-headed east windows are very rare. The architects of the Gothic revival took a violent dislike to them and allowed few to remain, even when they were medieval. They very likely indicate the use of a flat tester over the altar projecting from the east wall above the window. The Church has been described in *Somerset and Dorset Notes and Queries*, v, 122-125, by the Rev. E. H. Bates, and also in *Proceedings*, liii (1907), 55-58.

## Doultling

From Batcombe the motors proceeded, *via* West Cranmore, to Doultling, where they were met by the Vicar, the Rev. H. S. Darbyshire.

### THE QUARRIES

Permission had been given by the Ham Hill, Doultling and Portland Stone Co., Ltd. (*per* Mr. R. W. Staple, Director), to visit one of the quarries.

Dr. F. S. WALLIS kindly met the party, and with him they proceeded from the village northwards towards Chelynch. A large quarry on the west of the road, which showed a good section of the Doultling Beds, was visited.

The leader pointed out that after the upheaval of the Mendip Hills and the consequent weathering, depression set in, and various members of the lower Mesozoic rocks were banked against the flanks of the ancient range.

In the quarry under observation could be seen the Doultling Stone with overlying *Anabacia* or coral limestone; both beds



belonging to the Inferior Oolite series. The Doultling Stone is a pale-brownish coloured oolitic limestone, somewhat sparry and with a loose texture. After quarrying and on exposure to the air, the stone becomes paler, hardens and is very durable. It is quarried in large rectangular blocks by means of sawing assisted by wedges. The stone is considered to be more durable, but not so readily carved, as the Bath stone.

Outstanding examples of the use of this famous building-stone may be seen in Wells Cathedral and Glastonbury Abbey, and in the extensive restorations at Bristol, Exeter and Winchester Cathedrals.

A short time was allowed so that the members might see the Church, Churchyard Cross and the Barn.

#### TEA AT CHARLTON HOUSE

Soon after 5 o'clock the members arrived at Charlton House where they were entertained to tea by Mr. CHARLES E. BURNELL and the Misses BURNELL. They were cordially thanked by the President. One or two other speeches were made in passing votes of thanks to those who had helped to make the meeting the success it proved to be.

The motors arrived at Shepton Mallet at 6 o'clock and this brought the excursions to a close.