

of the *Hon. Secretaries*), and Mr. H. St. George Gray, F.S.A. (*Asst.-Secretary, Curator and Excursion Secretary*).

The Presidential Address

The BISHOP then delivered an informal Presidential Address, full of learning and lightened by humorous touches. Epitomized the address was as follows :—

I thank the members of this Society for the honour they have conferred on me. The post of President of the Somerset Archæological and Natural History Society is one I hold it dear to occupy. I think, perhaps, I may say that I am myself a trained archæologist, for when I was at Cambridge I read archæology under several fathers of the science. I have always had a love for all things old, beautiful and natural. I wish to welcome the Society to Wells, and I do so with special warmth because of the great value of its work to the county and diocese.

By your excavations you have made the unwilling soil render up the secrets of the past, whether a comparatively recent past, as at Glastonbury Abbey, or a far distant past, as at the Meare Lake Village.

The history I learnt from text books when I was young was of a past that was mostly concerned with wars and battles, and the history of all battles is, I think, more or less the same ; but the real history I should like the children of future generations to learn is about the men of old, where they worshipped, and what they felt, how they lived and what were their emotions, how they clothed themselves and what they ate, and all about them. The proper study of mankind is man.

The study of things old is connected with the study of things natural, and in the title of the Archæological and Natural History Society, art and nature are very properly linked together.

Somerset is a rich field for your activities. Nowhere in any part of England is found such a splendid series of churches as in this county. (Unfortunately they make the diocese a very costly one to maintain.) I was asked recently, 'What church do you think the most beautiful in your diocese ?' and I said, 'The one I visited last !'

Then you have many interesting Tudor manor-houses and plenty of picturesque, rural cottages. I think it is a fact of experience that fine buildings engender culture and character.

Why, I am often asked, do I admire ancient things? Why were they superior to modern? I think the reason is that they were the expression of the craftsman's real soul, his artistic sense without which that element of personality was not complete. You will find a wonderful expression of craftsmanship in the capitals of the nave piers in Wells Cathedral, the carving of which is marvellously varied. The conventional foliage is there intermixed with grotesque figures, animals and flowers.

True art is unself-conscious expression. Self-consciousness is the bane of modern days, whether in architecture, music, literature, painting, sculpture or the lesser crafts. In olden days there was no struggle after originality at all, because quite naturally men and women lived close to Nature. There was no striving after striking effect, no demonstrations of superiority, resulting in what was bizarre and grotesque, and then developing into a cult of the ugly. There was a jollity about the work of the old craftsmen, and that is why we read about 'Merrie England' in the olden time.

It is in Nature that man finds his inspiration and salvation. Industrialism kills beauty when cogs, wheels and motive power take the place of men's hands; and mass production destroys individuality. Mechanism and mass production produce mathematical accuracy, but art and beauty owe a great deal to irregularity and to the wear and tear of time: indeed what we so often call 'the mellowness of time' is in reality good, clean, honest dirt.

British reticence, a strong trait in the British character, is well seen in our old buildings and early art. . . . There was much over-decoration in Victorian times when that great maxim of art that nothing is ugly until one begins to decorate it, was not understood. . . .

In conclusion I would emphasize once more the part played by Nature in all great art.

The Bishop was cordially thanked on the proposal of Mr. A. W. Vivian-Neal, seconded by Mr. H. Corder.

to his co-editor, too, for the careful introduction he had provided.

The cost of the volumes, as anticipated, was considerable, amounting to nearly £400. The husbanding of the Society's resources over a number of years, and the offer of temporary membership of which fourteen libraries and private individuals availed themselves, had enabled them to end the year 1935 in a condition of solvency.

There was a great deal of work which the Society could take in hand if a larger number of subscribers could be enrolled. An income of less than £150 did not carry them very far.

For the year 1936, aided by a grant from the Somerset County Council, the Enrolled Deeds of the County were being issued. The originals were in the Somerset Record Office at the Shire Hall, Taunton. The work of transcription and the editorship of the volume had been undertaken by Miss Bates Harbin, whose father was for many years Secretary of the Society and a contributor to its volumes.

At their 1936 meeting the Council would consider the offer of a volume dealing with the Life and Work of Bishop Burnell from the pen of another historical student of the younger generation, Miss Ursula Hughes. There was a further volume of Bridgwater archives awaiting publication, with the probable offer of a supplementary grant from the Bridgwater Corporation.

This concluded the business of the Annual General Meeting.

At 3.50 p.m. a large party of members assembled outside the Gate House of

The Bishop's Palace

and proceeded across the lawns to the eastern side of the buildings, where they were kindly entertained to Tea by the BISHOP and Mrs. WYNNE WILLSON.

Before the party inspected the building, a description of its history and architectural features was given by Professor HAMILTON THOMPSON. As two detailed accounts of the Palace have been published in the Society's *Proceedings*, the first by Mr. J. H. Parker in 1861-2, and the second by Mr. E. Buckle in

1888, it is necessary merely to summarize the successive periods of building which are to be traced in the existing structure. (1) The main block, with hall, great chamber and chapel above a vaulted undercroft, was constructed in the time of Bishop Jocelyn, 1206–1242, probably towards the end of that period. (2) The great hall, now in ruins, with the chapel at its north-east corner joining it to the south-west angle of Jocelyn's building, was added by Robert Burnell, Bishop 1275–1292. (3) The fortification of the area, with the gatehouse, was the work of Ralph of Shrewsbury, Bishop 1329–1363. (4) Thomas Bekyngton, Bishop 1443–1465, added the large block adjoining the early block at its north-west angle. This included a hall and kitchen, and, as part of this work, a gate-tower was also built, south of which a wall, with a cloister-walk on the inner side, ran to Burnell's chapel and hall. This divided the courtyard into outer and inner portions. (5) Additions were made to Bekyngton's block by John Clerk, Bishop 1523–1540, who was responsible for the bay windows on the side next the moat. After that period much was done in the way alike of destruction and repair: Bishop Burnell's hall was ruined, and the restoration of the rest of the house by Ferrey about 1840, following a period of decay, was accompanied by alterations which made the history of the main building and Bekyngton's block somewhat difficult to read, while it heightened the house by a storey.

Well of St. Andrew

On leaving the Palace a visit was made to St. Andrew's Well and the east end of the Cathedral, where Mr. H. E. BALCH made some interesting remarks.

The great well of St. Andrew, under the shadow of the east end of the Cathedral, rises from an unknown depth, where two subterranean watercourses meet, one from the east and one from the north.

The arms of the City show three wells and these may have risen, long ago, in separate enclosures. At present there are only two such, but within the larger one quite a number of big springs can be seen. They frequently change their points of rising, and there is a marked tendency for the most northerly

one to recede in that direction, causing anxiety for the foundations of the Lady Chapel, only a few yards away. This appears to have been a fear in the minds of the builders, for excavation has shown the existence of a deep 'apron' wall sweeping in a wide arc round that area.

The so-called 'bottomless well' at the eastern extremity, near the outflow, is a gaping hole, but Bishop Kennion told Mr. Balch he had dived into it and touched a sandy bottom. When a weight is lowered, it soon enters a kind of quicksand in which it is held up, probably by water pressure.

At times of heavy rain it is a thrilling experience to stand near the springs, as they heave and burst, throwing up sand and grit—to such an extent that the moat, having become unduly shallow, was cleared by machine drags, four or five years ago, no less than 8,000 cartloads of sediment being removed.

Thus it is that the swallet streams, entering the limestone to the north and east, are sapping and undermining the hills, though nowhere yet has the underground channel been reached.

This spring, originally pure, at one time supplied much of the city, and steps have been taken recently to purify it once more. Bekyngton's conduit still stands and sends its supply to the conduit and down the city streets, and though the citizens no longer pray at his tomb for the repose of his soul, he is still remembered with gratitude and his limpid streams flowing down the streets are a never-ending wonder to visitors from afar.

Evening Meeting

The Evening Meeting was held in the Lecture Room at Wells Museum, by kind permission of the Managers and the Hon. Curator. Three short addresses were given on this occasion.

Mr. H. ST. GEORGE GRAY described a hoard of late Roman Coins recently found on Shapwick Heath. The coins, the pewter vessels and the pottery beaker were exhibited. A paper on this subject will be found in the second half of this volume.

Professor A. HAMILTON THOMPSON gave an address on Bishop Burnell, dealing with his public career and his influence in

state affairs, and alluding to his buildings at Wells and Acton Burnell in Shropshire.

Mr. R. S. BATE, Hon. Librarian of Wells Museum, gave a short account of some of the Manuscripts preserved in that building.

Second Day's Proceedings

The morning was devoted to Wells, and the members assembled in

The Vicars' Close

where they were met by Professor HAMILTON THOMPSON, who explained that the college of Vicars Choral was founded in the middle of the fourteenth century by bishop Ralph of Shrewsbury, and the buildings there were among the most interesting of the kind, not merely in England, but anywhere else. The Vicars Choral had a common hall on the first floor above the gateway, with windows of the fourteenth century on the western side. In the fifteenth century this hall was enlarged and the bay window put in. The chain gate was built in 1459, that is in bishop Bekyngton's time. The chapel and some of the individual houses were visited before the party passed on to

The Deanery

where, on the lawn, the Dean (the Very Rev. R. H. Malden) welcomed them. He pointed out the part of the house constructed by Dean Gunthorpe, who was an active public servant under both Edward IV and Henry VII. The Dean and Mrs. Malden conducted the visitors through the several rooms, including the panelled drawing-room of William III's time, with carved fireplace and some of the earliest sash-windows in England.

From the Deanery the members proceeded to

The Cathedral

where Professor HAMILTON THOMPSON addressed the Society upon the history and architecture of the edifice. In the course of his description he said that the story of the building had

been so often told, and its features discussed in such detail, that all that could be done was to sum up leading points. He then spoke of the introduction of a body of secular canons at Wells early in the tenth century who followed the rule bequeathed by St. Chrodegang to the churches of Metz and Lorraine. In this respect there was a close likeness between the early history of Wells and that of the Devonian cathedral church of Crediton; but, while the church of Exeter, after the translation of the see from Crediton, preserved clear traces of its Lotharingian constitution, the later constitution of Wells was in conformity with the Norman practice which at the Conquest found its way into most of the cathedral foundations of England.

The site and plan of the Saxon church at Wells had been discussed by the late Sir William St. John Hope in a paper printed in the Society's *Proceedings* for 1909. This church is said to have been rebuilt or at any rate enlarged by bishop Robert of Lewes in the second quarter of the twelfth century. However this might be, it was unquestionable that a new church was begun after 1174 on a site to the north-east of the older and smaller building under the auspices of bishop Reginald de Bohun, in whose time the presbytery and transepts were completed and the nave begun. The church was finished to the west end by bishop Jocelyn, who died in 1242. There had been some difference of opinion about the progress of the work. The original design was carefully preserved throughout. The construction retained much of the massiveness and solidity characteristic of Romanesque work, but the detail from the beginning was of a thoroughly Gothic character and the chief evidence of progress was seen in the remarkable series of sculptured capitals, which displayed an advance in elaboration and delicacy of style as the building proceeded westward. Such documentary evidence as existed was in the nature of general statements, but it had been customary to ascribe the whole of the nave and the beautiful north porch to Jocelyn's time. The results, however, of a review of the historical and architectural evidence by the late Dean, Dr. J. Armitage Robinson, and Dr. John Bilson, set forth in two papers published in vol. lxxxv, 1-68, of the *Archæological Journal*, showed

that revision of this received opinion was necessary.¹ In particular, there was a break in the masonry west of the porch, followed by the use of larger stones and by a change in tooling, which pointed to the completion of the nave as far as this point at an earlier date. The west front, including the lower portion of the western towers, which project beyond the aisles, displayed an advance in design and construction, and was probably finished before Jocelyn's death.

In the first half of the fourteenth century the transformation of the east end of the church took place. Reginald's church had probably terminated in an ambulatory with an eastern aisle of chapels behind the high altar, of the same character as the nearly contemporary east ends at Chichester, Exeter, York and other churches. In the thirteenth century a Lady Chapel was built east of the cloister, occupying part of the site of the Saxon church. In the reconstruction which took place towards 1330 all east of the high altar was rebuilt, forming a wide retro-choir or ambulatory with transeptal extensions to north and south, and with an octagonal Lady Chapel to the east. Of much the same date were the central tower and the chapter-house, which was built above an earlier vaulted octagonal chamber and was approached by a stairway of remarkable beauty. The building of the central tower weakened the crossing-piers and led to the insertion of the strainer arches soon after the middle of the century. It had been supposed and was possibly true that the geometrical drawing incised in the floor of the chapter-house and now only faintly visible was intended as a guide to the masons in the setting-out of these arches, but it was more likely that a drawing in such a position should have some reference to the chapter-house itself.

Soon after the addition of the strainer arches, the form of which was no doubt suggested by the dedication of the church to St. Andrew, the presbytery east of the choir, together with the whole vault and clerestory of the eastern arm of the church, was renewed. This work was completed about 1362, the year of the death of bishop Ralph of Shrewsbury. Its style, like that of the earlier part of the church, was somewhat in advance

¹ The importance of these papers in the study of the architecture of Wells Cathedral can hardly be exaggerated.

of its day, showing a distinct approach to 'Perpendicular' Gothic. It should be remembered, however, that much precocity in this direction had already been shown in the West of England, *e.g.* in the choir at Bristol and in the collegiate church at Ottery St. Mary, and that the work at Wells is actually later than the received date of the choir at Gloucester.

The latest substantial additions to the fabric were the upper parts of the two western towers, at the close of the fourteenth and beginning of the fifteenth century. The cloister also belonged to the fifteenth century, but the outer walls were still almost entirely of earlier date.

In the course of the address allusion was made to the figure-sculpture of the west front, the finest display of the kind in England, presenting several different types of statuary, to the stained glass of the choir and Lady Chapel, to the series of episcopal tombs and effigies, to the chantry-chapels of bishops Bekyngton and Bubwith and of treasurer Hugh Sugar, and to the clock in the north transept, which appropriately responded by striking twelve o'clock just as the address concluded.

An hour was spent in the inspection of the Cathedral, and some of the members visited the Chapter Library, under the guidance of Mr. R. S. Bate. In the Chapter House the Dean gave a short address, and Mr. H. F. Carter spoke in the common room of the Vicars Choral.

Wookey

After lunch the members proceeded to Wookey, and at the Church of St. Matthew, they were met by the Rector, the Rev. H. L. WALKER, who briefly described the building. An account of this church will be found in the *Proceedings*, lv, i, 8-12.

Old Rectory House

The garden and exterior of the Old Rectory House, close to the Church, were visited by permission of the owner's (Mr. J. S. Alexander) agents. This building and the Court House were briefly described by Mr. ST. GEORGE GRAY.

Chancellor Scott Holmes, in his little book on 'The History

of the Parish and Manor of Wookey ' (1886), said he was never able to find out why this house was called Mellifont Abbey.

It is generally agreed that the corbels and carved spandrels originally came from Jocelyn's cloisters on the south side of Wells Cathedral, which were taken down when bishop Bekynton and his executors built the present cloisters ; but before they and the oriel window came to the old Rectory, it has been said that they had formerly been at the Manor or Court House. When the old Rectory was rebuilt an old house then within the churchyard, mentioned in a terrier of 1634, was brought in as offices for the enlarged house.

The Court or Manor House

was also visited. The present Court-farm house contains all that remains of the old Manor-house of the early bishops of Bath and Wells. This building is so thickly rough-cast that little of the stone can now be seen, but the central portion, formerly the hall, is said to be of blue lias, and the chapel on the east and the so-called ' camera ' on the west are of Doultling stone. Part of the Early English western door of Jocelyn's chapel is to be seen to-day. This chapel was 20 ft. wide, but its length cannot be ascertained. There was formerly a corridor between the hall and the chapel, which is regarded as the north end of a cloister (T. Scott Holmes, *History of Wookey*, 23-25).

Canon Holmes regarded the whole group of buildings as they existed in the thirteenth century as standing in the north-east corner of a plot of land about $6\frac{1}{2}$ acres in extent, and round this on all sides ran a moat ; this moat was close under the walls of the north of the house.

The remains of one or two fish-ponds are seen to the south-west ; they are perhaps better viewed from the grounds of the old Rectory House.

Wookey Caves

Here a large gathering of members were addressed by Mr. H. E. BALCH, F.S.A., the well known authority on the Caverns of Mendip. Those wishing to refresh their memory on this



CHEWTON MENDIP CHURCH
Norman Doorway in the North Wall

From a Photograph by the Very Rev. Prior E. Horne, F.S.A.

great subject should read 'Wookey Hole, its Caves and Cave Dwellers', which Mr. Balch published in 1914.

Before leaving for Wells soon after 6 o'clock tea was taken at the Restaurant close to the Caves.

Evening Conversazione

After dinner, the Mayor of Wells, Alderman E. E. BARNES, entertained a large party, which included members of the Corporation and their wives and of the Wells Natural History and Archæological Society, to a *Conversazione* in the large Town Hall. The entertainment, which included refreshments, mainly consisted of items exemplifying the Somerset Dialect, by Mrs. PORCHER and Major J. A. GARTON.

All those who took part in the proceedings were cordially thanked before this attractive entertainment came to a close.

Third Day's Proceedings

At 9.30 a.m. the motors left the Market Square, Wells, and proceeded *via* East Horrington to

Maesbury Camp

which was visited by permission of the tenant, Mr. P. Keen. Owing to a heavy rainstorm the visit to this camp at the Shepton Mallet Meeting in 1933 had to be abandoned. The notes prepared by Mr. ST. GEORGE GRAY for that occasion were read on the present visit; they were published in *Proceedings*, lxxix, pp. xviii-xxi; his fuller account of the camp appeared in vol. liii, ii, 73-81.

Proceeding *via* Whitnell Corner and Green Ore the members arrived at

Chewton Mendip Church

at 10.50 a.m., where they were welcomed by the Vicar, the Rev. P. C. Bush. Professor HAMILTON THOMPSON said that the Church of St. Mary Magdalene has an interesting history. It was given, with its chapels of Emborrow, Ston Easton, Farlington Gurney, Paulton and Welton, by the Conqueror to the

abbey of Jumièges in Normandy, to which it was appropriated, being regarded as a member of the cell of Jumièges at Hayling Island in Hampshire. The confiscation of alien priories during the Hundred Years War brought the presentation to the vicarage into the possession of the Crown. In 1414 the alien priory of Hayling with its appurtenances formed part of the foundation endowment given by Henry V to the Carthusian house of Jesus of Bethlehem at Shene in Surrey, with whom the appropriation and the advowson of the vicarage remained until the Dissolution. The latter, after passing through various hands, came in the later part of the seventeenth century into the family of Kingsmill, from which it passed in the last century to the Earls Waldegrave.

The architectural features of the church have been described with some fullness by Mr. Bligh Bond in the *Proceedings* for 1909. The aisleless twelfth-century church consisted of nave and chancel. The chancel was lengthened in the thirteenth century, when a south chapel was added to it and the eastern part of the south wall of the nave was pierced by two arches. The short aisle or chapel thus formed was lengthened westward early in the fourteenth century, when the two western arches were added, the south doorway was made, and the aisle and chancel chapel were probably widened. Windows were inserted at this period and later. The latest structural addition to the building was the very fine west tower, which takes its place among the best examples of Somerset tower-design.

A feature which deserves special notice is the chancel-arch. This was widened in a southward direction when the chancel was lengthened. The twelfth-century arch was tall and narrow, with an altar on either side of it. The tall round-headed recess at the back of the northern altar still remains behind the pulpit, and there are traces of a similar recess on the south side.

In the *Proceedings* for 1873 (vol. xix, i, 34) a recess in the north wall of the chancel, formed by the lowering of a window sill, was claimed to be a 'frith-stool' for persons who took sanctuary in the church. Mr. Bligh Bond has pointed out that there is no reason for this fantastic theory. The recess was simply an aumbry, probably used as an Easter Sepulchre, the

top of which seems to have been cut off when the window was inserted in the fourteenth century. A new piscina and sedilia were inserted in the south wall of the chancel in the fifteenth century, but part of the thirteenth-century double piscina was then left.

The table-tomb with effigies in the chancel chapel is said to be that of Sir Henry Fitzroger (*d.* 1353) and his wife Elizabeth (*d.* 1388).¹ There is, however, a considerable difference in style between the effigies and the tomb, and it is probable that the tomb was made by order of their grandson William, Lord Bonville, who died in 1461.

The beautiful churchyard cross deserves attention. There was no permanently endowed chantry in the church, and the only mention of it in the Chantry Certificates of 1546 and 1548 refers to a light maintained out of the revenues of a tenement called 'Barrow House'.

The Very Rev. Prior E. HORNE said that he wanted to draw attention to the fine Norman doorway in the north wall. A little examination of it would show that it was not in its original position. The bonding-stones on either side of the arch were not distributed evenly up the sides, as they would be if the arch was originally built in, as the church wall went up, but they are most irregular. On the east side, for instance, is a group of four bonders touching each other, and then comes a long space with only two more, altogether. The bonders are distributed on the west side in the same uneven way. In fact they are not really bonders at all, but pieces of an old wall left adhering to the arch, when it was removed from somewhere else, for the ends of these 'bonders' are not square, but uneven and badly broken, showing that the arch was forced out of its original position. The speaker said that he ventured to think that this doorway had originally been the central chancel-arch in the Norman church, and the two smaller arches, one still perfect and the other fragmentary, were on either side of it. The perfect side arch could be seen at the back of the pulpit, and a shaft of the other still remained on the wall on the south side of the present chancel-arch. The width of these two smaller arches, when perfect, would leave the required space

¹ *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.*, lxxvii, 32.

for the central arch, now being used as the north doorway. It should also be noticed that the cap-mould remaining on each of these small arch-shafts is of exactly the same design and size as the cap-moulds at the doorway. (Plate I).

In a discussion that followed afterwards by members who were standing at the doorway itself, it was pointed out that the head of the doorway is a tympanum forming an aperture for a normal-sized door, and that the jambs and caps below are one with the enclosing arch, and that therefore the arch was made for a doorway. Prior Horne replied that he was not at all sure that the filling-in of the arch and the arch itself were all of one date.¹

Proceeding *via* Farringdon Gurney and Temple Cloud the party arrived at

Cameley Church

at 12 noon (Rev. I. Westhead, Rector). Professor HAMILTON THOMPSON said the Church of St. James² belonged to the prior and convent of Bath, but it was not appropriated to them, and they received a pension of 13s. 4d. a year out of the rectory. In the reign of Elizabeth the advowson of the rectory came into the possession of the Hippisley family, in whose hands it remains.

The building is aisleless with nave and chancel and west tower. The tower was added about 1380–1400, but the rest

¹ After the meeting, Prior Horne took a thoroughly experienced, practical mason to examine this doorway from a working mason's point-of-view. The mason was quite certain that the doorway had been removed, as the bonding stones showed this plainly. He pointed out that the filling-in of the arch to make it into a doorway was probable, as two different kinds of stones had been used for the purpose—the dog-tooth arch and shafts and caps were probably Douling, and the filling in was a local stone. The arch immediately over the door itself had also two kinds of stone used in the voussoirs which was unlikely if it was new work.

² It may be noted that, in the old arrangement of the diocese of Bath and Wells, the parishes of Chewton Mendip and Cameley were both in the archdeaconry of Wells and the rural deanery of Frome, while the parishes of Hinton Blewett, Compton Martin and Ubley were in the archdeaconry of Bath and the deanery of Redcliffe. This still holds as regards the archdeaconries, but the first two churches are in the modern deanery of Midsomer Norton and the remaining three in that of Chew Magna. From the civil point of view all are in the hundred of Chewton.—A. H. T.

of the church is upon its twelfth-century foundations, though largely rebuilt in the fifteenth century. The south doorway of the twelfth-century church remains, indicating a date about 1160, and the chancel-arch, though plastered over at a later period, seems to be substantially of the same date. Internally, the church is an interesting example of a building which retains its post-Reformation furniture and fittings, chiefly of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The west gallery is of the earlier period, and the south gallery was added in 1819. The greater part of the population of the parish is in the village of Temple Cloud, where there is a modern church, and the parish church, though kept in repair, has consequently been left without restoration.

MR. H. ST. GEORGE GRAY followed with some collected notes : Through the thirteenth, fourteenth, fifteenth and into the sixteenth centuries the manor of Cameley was held successively by the families of de Marisco, Boteler, Burnell and Vaughan. Later in the sixteenth century the manor came into the possession of the Hippisley family.

Few would pass Cameley Church without being impressed by its unmistakable signs of antiquity. Before going into the church one is struck by the external steps leading to the gallery, and on entering the south porch one notices the Norman doorway, and also the large red stone on the floor.

Little has been done to destroy the old-world feeling of this country church. The gallery, bearing the inscription 'erected for the free use of the inhabitants 1819', is lacking in artistic merit : but there are some very attractive features still left—in the chancel-arch, the font, the pulpit, the old pews and benches, and the stone benches on either side of the church.

The font is square and in its upper portion quite plain. Harvey Pridham places it in his third Norman division, 1135–54.

The pulpit, with its handsome sounding-board above, is well carved in the upper part in slight relief. Both it and the reading-desk have the date 1637 scratched upon them in more than one place. Behind the pulpit the blocked-up doorway of the rood-loft is seen.

The benches on the north side towards the west are said to have been cut from the solid tree.

A piscina still remains in the south wall of the nave at the east end, which is at present hidden by the side of the box-pew. Above this pew on the east wall is an elaborate monument to a member of the Jones family who died in 1692 (*Proc.*, lxxx, 23). Beneath, a brass reads, ' Restored in the year 1892 by Benjamin Edward Somers, of Mendip Lodge, a descendant in the sixth degree and the representative in law of the said Cadwallader Jones '.

On the floor of the nave near the chancel-arch are some ancient stones. One of them of coffin-lid shape bears an inscription, ' Hughe Brown, son of Cadwallader Jones, who died in 1691 '.

The roof bosses are worthy of attention ; all are of human heads except one, a floral design. The chancel east window is very small and consists of only two lights of plain glass.

The gallery at the west end of the church is a curious construction reminding one of the days of the church band. It bears the Royal arms of the time of Charles I. The tower was erected, or partly restored, by one of the St. Loe family, as it bears their arms on the south side.

Under the window at the west door there are the arms of the Hippisley family. Though the family resided at Cameley for many years there is not a single stone at Cameley to their memory. The name first appears in the burial register for 1570, when John Hippisley's name is entered.

In one of the earliest registers an entry appears stating that in this parish an Irishman who visited the place about the beginning of the sixteenth century was hanged there because he *was* an Irishman. A tragedy was enacted at the rectory probably about this time, when the rector and his servants were murdered. The authors of the crime were subsequently executed at Chard.

The Cameley plate includes an Elizabethan cup and cover inscribed I.P. 1573 (date-mark for 1572). There is a similar cup at Hinton Blewett.

A short drive brought the members to

Hinton Blewett

where a buffet lunch was taken at the Ring of Bells Inn, after which the Church of St. Margaret (Rev. R. Duggan, Rector)

was visited. The building was described by Professor THOMPSON.

The advowson of the church has descended with the lordship of the manor. Of the Norman church nothing now remains but the font, and the fabric was largely rebuilt in the fifteenth century, when a north aisle of four bays was added to the nave. The west tower is somewhat earlier than the rest of the building, and its unusual breadth and massive appearance indicate that it stands upon the foundations of a twelfth-century tower. There is little to remark in the interior apart from the excellent fifteenth-century roofs and seating, but a recent restoration, carried out with great respect for ancient work, has given it a singularly attractive effect.

The chantry certificates note the maintenance of four masses in the church, probably obits, the slender endowments of which came out of a tenement called Kentscroft.

Prior ETHELBERT HORNE said that an episode in the later history of the Church was not without its interest.

Somewhere about the year 1760 the then vicar married a popish wife, Ann James, whose mother was a Beaumont of Wells, Beaumont House being still in existence in that city. Ten years later, the Gordon Riots began in London, as the result of an early emancipation Act that had recently been passed allowing the opening of Catholic places of worship. The rioters burned these in London wherever they found them, and hearing that one had been recently opened in Bath, they came down and succeeded in raising a mob in Bath, that quickly destroyed all the new work. They next turned their attention to Hinton Blewett, and set out for the village, intending to destroy the vicarage on account of the vicar's popish wife. The Rev. Mr. Brookes had timely notice of their coming and with the help of his neighbours, moved out all his furniture and plate and distributed it among the houses of his parishioners. His wife Ann went off into concealment and the vicar next took the crosses off the gables of the church, as it was thought that perhaps the sight of them would inflame the rioters to attack that place as well. As a matter of fact the mob was pursued by the military and dispersed, before it had got many miles out from Bath, and so the destruction at Hinton Blewett

never took place at all. The rather nondescript crosses that are on the church now are probably those that replaced the older ones.

The Rev. John Brookes retired in 1804 and sold the advowson, as he had embraced his wife's religion.

A table-tomb in the northern part of the churchyard has the inscription *To the Memory of the Rev. John Brookes who died May 19, 1824, aged 83. Requiescat in pace.* His wife does not appear to be in the same grave and she may have been buried in the Beaumont vault at Ston Easton, where many of her family lie.

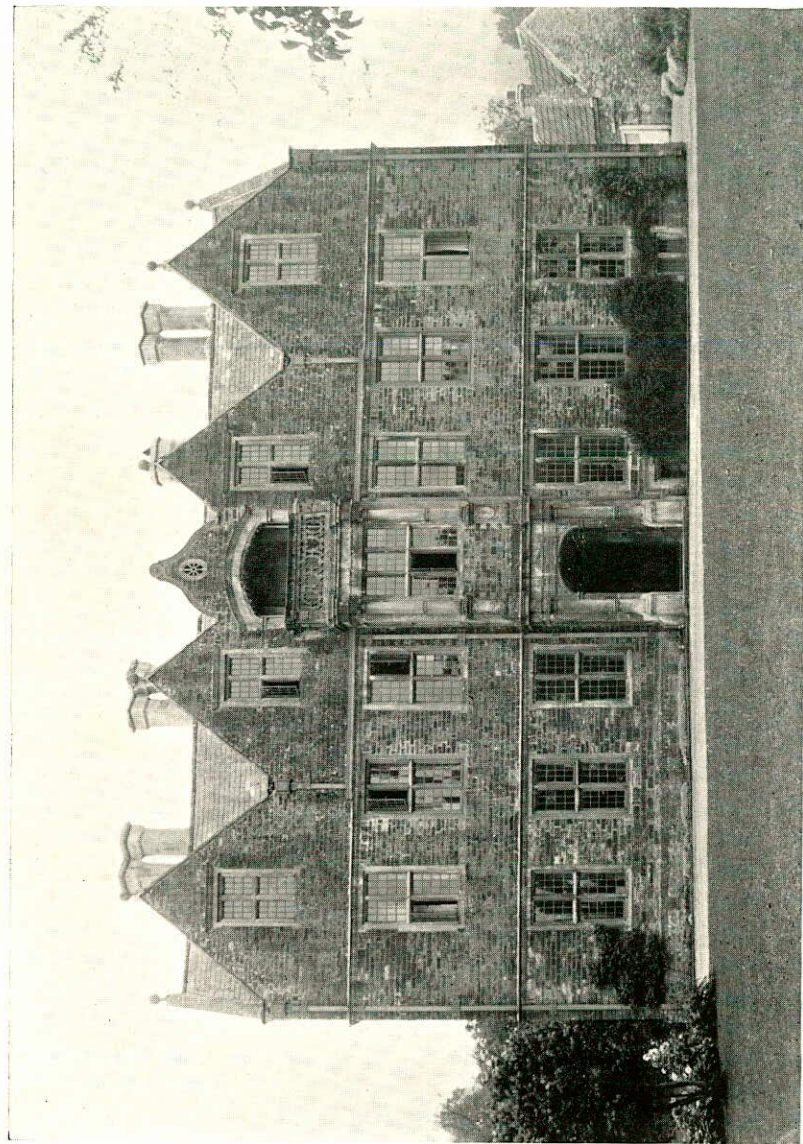
At 2.20 p.m. the party arrived at

West Harptree

where GOURNAY COURT was visited by the kindness of Colonel E. G. HIPPISELY COX, C.B.E. (See Plates II and III). Being unable to leave London to meet the members, he kindly prepared the following notes on the history of his country residence which were read at the meeting :

Gournay Court is the manor or court house of West Harptree Gournay which formed part of the great possessions of the House of Gournay.

Domesday Book records that in the time of Edward the Confessor the manor was held by Edric and that it was granted by William the Conqueror to Geoffrey, bishop of Coutances, of whom it was held by Azelin, a shadowy figure who may have been founder of the family of Percival, and of that of Lovel of Castle Cary and also of de Gournay. The early history of the Percivals is uncertain though a precise account of their origin was published in *The House of Yvrey* by John (Percival), 1st Earl of Egmont, in 1742. Probably he was himself the author of the book, though it appeared in the name of James Anderson. (See, *Royal and Noble Authors*, Horace Walpole ; 'Some Somerset Manors', by Sir Henry Maxwell Lyte, *Som. Rec. Soc.*, extra series, 1931, 106.) We are told that Azelin's younger son John had West Harptree Gournay for his inheritance and from it adopted the surname de Harptree. John's descendant in the fourth generation is said to have



GOURNAY COURT, WEST HARPTREE

From a Photograph by Mr. G. L. Dafnis

married Eva de Gournay and their son Robert to have assumed the name of Gournay.

Mr. Daniel Gurney states in *The History of the House of Gournay* that Anderson (or Egmont) whose view is adopted by Collinson, is incorrect in attributing to Azelin the parentage of John de Harptree, lord of West Harptree Gournay. Eyton in *Domesday Studies*, i, 67, seems to agree with Mr. Gurney, however there may have been more than one John de Harptree in the generation after the Conquest. The documents upon which Mr. Gurney bases his conclusion set out in Appendix cvi of his book (ii, 611), clearly refer to a John de Harptree who held the manor of West Harptree Tilly and not the manor of West Harptree Gournay. West Harptree Tilly formed part of the land of the Count of Mortain and descended through a different family. It is easy to see how confusion could arise in default of knowledge of the existence of two manors in the same place which gave a territorial name to more than one person.

West Harptree Gournay remained in the possession of Robert de Gournay's descendants for at least four generations and eventually came to Sir Thomas de Gournay whose father is recorded as being in the wars in Scotland in 28 Edward I. This Sir Thomas took part in the battle of Pomfret in 1322. He was a strong partizan of queen Isabella and the Mortimers in opposition to Edward II, and was an accessory to the murder of that king at Berkeley Castle in 1327. Collinson states that Sir Thomas de Gournay fled to foreign parts, that he was seized at Burgos in Spain whence he was commanded by Edward III to be brought over to England and that his execution was privately performed at sea. This is not entirely correct. Sir Thomas de Gournay fled to Burgos and was there arrested by order of Alphonso king of Castile. Long negotiations took place with a view to his return to England; the case must be one of the first of proceedings for extradition. Meanwhile, Sir Thomas escaped from Burgos and fled to Naples there only to be arrested again by order of Robert king of Sicily. A knight of Yorkshire, one Sir William de Thweng, a member of a well-known baronial family, was ordered by Edward III to proceed to Naples and to bring Gournay to England. Sir William de Thweng's account for the expenses

of his mission still exists and affords much information as to the progress of events. Taken by ship from Naples to a port in Languedoc, de Gournay was conducted overland and for some unexplained reason a detour was made into Spain where Thweng was himself detained for a time. Arriving at Mount Blaunk, a small town in Tarragona, de Gournay fell ill. After some delay the party proceeded by land and by river to Bayonne where Gournay's illness became more acute. The account shows the amounts paid for physicians and medicine for Sir Thomas, but notwithstanding all efforts to save him he died at Bayonne. A full account of the capture and death of Sir Thomas de Gournay is contained in a paper communicated to the Society of Antiquaries by the Rev. Joseph Hunter, F.S.A. (*Archæologia*, xxvii, 274). The estates of Sir Thomas de Gournay were forfeited to the crown, but West Harptree Gournay was enjoyed by his son, Sir Matthew de Gournay, knight banneret, a renowned warrior who was present at Crecy and Poitiers. He was steward of the king's territory of Landes, 1379. In the first parliament of Henry IV he sat in the upper house. On the death of Sir Matthew in 1406, at a great age the male line of the Gournays came to an end (*D.N.B.*, xxii, 291; *Proc. S.A.S.*, xxxiii, ii, 87; xxxvi, ii, 44).

It is uncertain whether the de Gournay estates finally became vested in the crown by escheat or by direct grant (see Mr. J. Batten's paper, *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.*, xl, 23), but the manor of West Harptree Gournay has remained in the crown until the present day, annexed to the duchy of Cornwall. It is possible that Sir Matthew held the manor for life in consideration of his great services to the crown in the French wars.

Rutter, in his *Delineations of Somerset*, says that the Prince's Manor House, as Gournay Court was sometimes called, stands on the site of the mansion which was inhabited by the Gournay family for many generations, but the principal seat in Somerset of the Gournays was certainly Richmond Castle in their neighbouring manor of East Harptree. Leland records after his journeys through Somerset (1540-1542):—

'All the Buyldynge of this Castle is clene downe. . . . There standithe yet a Pece of the Dungeon of it. Syr John Newton dyggyd up many olde Foundations of it toward buyldynge of a new Howse hard there by caullyd Estewood.'

Before this the Gournays must have been much at West Harptree and their interest in it is noted by Leland who says :—

‘There is a nothar Village by Est Harptre caulyd West Harptre Gurney; and there be the Variete of Armes that Gurney gave in the Glasse Wyndowes, and his Cote Armure.’

According to Collinson, one John Buckland received in 1543 (35 Hen. VIII) a grant of the manor of West Harptree Tilly from John, Lord Russell. This John was a near relation of Walter Buckland or Buklond of Shepton Mallet and Agnes his wife, the donors of the market cross at Shepton Mallet and many of his descendants lived in West Harptree and East Harptree. (Buckland Family, *Brown's MSS.*, i, 189–236; xxvi, 1–14).

The building of Gournay Court seems to have been begun by John Buckland's grandson Francis Buckland who married Elizabeth daughter of John Warner of Fifield, co. Hants, for his initials F. B. and those of his wife E. B. appear in the spandrels of the chimneypiece of the Bay Room at Gournay Court.

Francis Buckland graduated at Magdalen College, Oxford, in 1580, and was admitted to the Middle Temple, 8 February 1584–5. Doubtless he obtained a lease of the property for a suitable number of lives from the Duchy of Cornwall. He was alive in 1623 and then, according to the *Visitation of Somerset* (the entry in which is signed by him in that year) had issue six daughters and one son John who was born in 1611. John married Elizabeth (born in 1610), daughter of Sir Robert Phelips of Montacute, and Bridget his wife, daughter of Sir Thomas Gorges of Longford Castle, Wilts.

In the year in which John Buckland was born, there died a member of the same family, Ralph Buckland, a celebrated Roman Catholic divine, who had been thought, as Collinson quaintly says, to have ‘paid some little attention to the Gunpowder affair in 1605’. The accusation is shown in the *Dictionary of National Biography* to have rested on very slender evidence (*D.N.B.*, vii, 205).

John Buckland must have completed or done much to improve his father's house. In the spandrels of the outer porchway arch there are carved the arms of

BUCKLAND—*gu. three lions rampant ar. on a canton sa. a fret or.*

and

PHELIPS—*Ar. a chevron gu. between three roses of the last seeded and leaved ppr.*

and the crests of the two families, *on a chapeau gu. turned up with erm. a talbot sejant or.* (Buckland), and *a square beacon on two wheels or. filled with fire ppr.* (Phelips) are in the spandrels of the inner arch. The arms of Buckland impaling Phelips are carved in the stone mantel in the Winter Parlour.

John Buckland was a member of Lincoln's Inn and a man of considerable importance in Somerset. He was a justice of the peace and one of the representatives of the county in Parliament in the years 1654, 1656 and 1659. Perhaps some insight into his character can be obtained from the words 'Altogether Vanity' which he placed on the cap of each of the pillars of the outer door jambs of the house.

John Buckland had one son who predeceased his father and the parish register contains the following entry :—

1668 John Buckland the son of John Buckland Esquire died at London of ye small pox June ye 20th and was buried in Lincolns Inn Chappell June ye 26th.

He himself died in 1678 and it is recorded in the parish register for that year that

John Buckland Esquire was interred August ye last.

John Buckland the elder left, when he died, a widow and an only child Elizabeth who on 14 April 1664 had married John Bluett of Holcombe Rogus, co. Devon. John Bluett died s.p.s. on 30 September 1700 (*Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.*, lxxx, xl; Vivian's *Visitations of Devon*, 94). By his will John Buckland bequeathed the messuage of the manor of Westharptry to his wife for her life and after her decease to his daughter Elizabeth Bluett and to her heirs in tail (*Brown's Wills*, v, 72). The failure of heirs to Elizabeth accounts for the fact that there are no 'Bluett' entries in the parish registers. The last entry relating to the Buckland family records the burial on 18 April 1699 of Charles Buckland a second cousin of Elizabeth Bluett.

After the close of the seventeenth century the Gournay



JACOBEOAN FIREPLACE, GOURNAY COURT,
WEST HARPTREE

From a Photograph by Mr. G. L. Dafuis

Court property seems to have become a farm, and it continued as such until it was restored to its former estate in 1908-9, it is understood, at the instance of Queen Mary then Princess of Wales. Little structural alteration was made. A new passage was contrived on the ground and first floors at the rear of the east side of the house, and small rooms placed in the angles in the inner courtyard to provide necessary offices. The stables were converted into a servants' wing. Since 1909 works of repair have been carried out and paint has been removed from panelling and stone fireplaces. The most important alteration has been the removal of a modern wall so as to throw the entrance passage into the hall which is now entered directly from the porch. The fireplace in the hall was adjusted to the new dimensions of the room and replaced in what appears to be its original position. This fireplace and the one in the Winter Parlour are mentioned in John Buckland's will as follows :—

I doe appoint that there bee left by my Executrix in my dwelling house to bee by such of my name or bloud as shall hold the same the two moveable chimney peices in the best Parlour and in the Hall Chamber six of the ordinary Table boards in the low Roomes end and eight of the ordinary Bedsteeds with such formes stooles shelves and such other necessities as my Executrix shall Judge necessary and convenient to remaine with a duplicate of the Inventory thereof to the last of my name or bloud enjoying the Interest in the said house and to his or her Executors or Administrators And I doe desire that the best Table board in the Hall with fower Lyons on the Fower Leggs may remaine in the like manner.

The panelling in the hall although of the period of the house was not originally at Gournay Court. It was brought from Beau Desert and erected in 1935 when the dressed stone facing of the archway leading from the hall to the staircase passage was also inserted.

Tilly Manor

Tilly Manor was visited by some of the members, by permission of Mr. and Mrs. Herbert King. Soon after the Conquest Tilly Manor was owned by the family of Tilly, who were illustrious in Normandy. At the beginning of the reign of Richard I

there was a Tilly living at West Harptree. William Tilly, who was a benefactor to Glastonbury Abbey, was lord in the reign of Edward III. Lionel Tilly was the last of the family who possessed the manor (*temp.* Henry VI). In 1476 it was the property of Walter Rodney, but in 1543 the manor was crown property and was granted to Lord John Russell, who subsequently sold it to John Buckland, whose family held it until the end of the seventeenth century.

A fireplace on the ground floor is dated 1659; one of the rooms upstairs is panelled in cedar wood. Only the central portion of Tilly Manor remains, but it is said that originally it had 'wings' on either side; and the remaining portion was at one time loftier.

West Harptree Church

This was not on the official programme but several of the members visited the church under the guidance of the Vicar, the Rev. Preb. F. E. Peart.

Mr. F. BLIGH BOND writes: Although this church has suffered from the crude and drastic methods of reconstruction current in Victorian times when most of the new detail was imported from the designs of Viollet-le-Duc or from Normandy models, yet the architect who designed the reconstructions in 1864 had the sense to follow the original plan of the triple arcade he found in this church, even though he altered the design to suit his taste for French thirteenth-century work. The Vicar fortunately is able to recall the original Norman stonework cast out and now lost. There appear to have been three Norman arches displaced, and of these two were small ones and one large. We may thus picture here an arrangement similar to that at Chewton Mendip, though on a smaller scale, and the new 'Gothic' arcade will give some reminiscence of the plan.

At 3.10 p.m. the Church of St. Michael

Compton Martin

(Rev. S. W. Emberson, Rector) was visited. Professor HAMILTON THOMPSON said that the church, to which the chapel

of Nempnett was attached, was, like Hinton Blewett, in the patronage of the lords of the manor, and the advowson descended from the Martins through a number of successive families. A summary description of the chief features of this interesting building was given by Mr. Bligh Bond in the Society's *Proceedings* for 1909. The chancel and nave arcades are of the middle of the twelfth century, and the Norman clerestory remains. The north aisle was widened and rebuilt early in the fifteenth century, the south aisle was similarly treated later, and the tower appears from documentary evidence to have been built as late as c. 1530.

The most remarkable features of the building are the chancel and the eastern column of the south arcade. The chancel is vaulted in two bays with massive cross-ribs carved with chevron ornament. Towards the close of the fifteenth century the older chancel-arch appears to have given way, and a new arch was made, while the adjoining arch of the south arcade was reconstructed. The new chancel-arch was wider than the old one, with a three-centred head and shafted responds. The corbels of the adjoining vault, which were left untouched, thus project beyond the responds with an odd effect.

The piers of the nave arcades are circular with scalloped capitals, but the arches above, of two orders, are unmoulded. The eastern pier on the south side, however, is much more slender than the rest with a round scalloped capital. The surface of the shaft is worked with a series of spiral flutings divided by half-round mouldings in high relief between rows of small pellets, curving continuously from the necking to the base of the shaft. Parallels to this are found at Pittington near Durham, Orford in Suffolk and other places, where the piers are all of this type, but in this particular instance there seems to be no adequate reason for a departure from the general design. The rebuilding of the chancel-arch and of the eastern arch of the south arcade in the fifteenth century has removed any possible clue with regard to its history. Though less massive, there is no difference in date between it and the other piers, and it is much more likely that the aisling of the church was begun at this end of the nave and that the design was changed, than that this isolated pier was added at the close

of the work. At the same time there is at least the possibility that it is a purely imitative piece of work, inserted at some unrecorded restoration subsequent to the fifteenth century, and, considering the skill with which the twelfth-century church of Tickencote in Rutland was almost rebuilt in the eighteenth century and the remarkable power of counterfeiting medieval sculpture displayed about the same period at Lincoln and other places, this possibility must not be left out of account.

In the Chantry Certificates returned in 1546 obits are mentioned in the church of Compton Martin, for the support of which a cow had been given by a benefactor or benefactors unspecified. The annual produce was reckoned at two shillings.

Since the meeting took place, Mr. F. BLIGH BOND has written: This church presents many problems for the antiquary. The low-vaulted roof of the chancel of Norman date, in contrast with the lofty proportions of the nave (also of early date) call for some satisfying interpretation. The reconstruction of the eastern bay of the nave, where a pointed arch has been introduced into the Norman arcade, and the pier adjoining this on the west has also undergone a reconstruction of a more ornamental nature, might at first sight suggest the fall and collapse of a central Norman tower, were it not for the fact that on the opposite (north) side of the nave, the original arcade continues right to the chancel opening. The reconstruction then is due to local weakness affecting the southern side of the chancel opening, and it is clear enough that the removal or deficiency of lateral support to the heavy vault of the chancel at its south-west angle was the cause.

The Chamber over the Chancel.—There still exists above the vaulted roof of the chancel a chamber-space below the roof which traditionally has been used as a columbarium or pigeon-loft for the manor. But this was not the original intent. It is the writer's opinion that this fine Norman church first had a chamber of more ample height above the chancel arcade, similar to that at Capel-le Ferne in Kent, and, like that example, furnished with an arched opening to the nave, over the centre of the chancel-arch. Below this opening there would have been the usual triple Norman arcade with its hagioscopes slanting through the masonry of the chancel walls

on either side. The removal of the three arches in the period immediately following the Norman, and the substitution of a single arch to the chancel opening—a process here attended by more than the usual risk on account of the great height and weight of the wall above—caused the imminent collapse of the southern jamb and that of a whole bay of the nave adjoining : a collapse hastily remedied by the taking down of the upper part of the chancel wall with the consequent disappearance of the original chamber over it and the arched opening which would have caused a further thrust of the wall to the southward side. No attempt could be made to rebuild the southern jamb of the chancel opening ; for this would have involved further trouble with the ponderous vault dependent on its support. Therefore it was suffered to remain, though seriously tilted to the south, and the adjoining masonry on the nave side was rebuilt, the drum of the Norman pier being ornamented according to the advanced taste of the times. The spiral fluting which distinguishes this column is not a mere embellishment of a previously existing plain Norman drum, for an examination shows plainly that in its upper part, the actual jointing of the masonry follows the curve of the fluting. It is only in the lower part that it may be supposed that the original masonry remains and has undergone a subsequent decorative treatment to harmonize with the work superadded at the time of the reconstruction—perhaps early in the thirteenth century, or else late in the twelfth.

Prior ETHELBERT HORNE gave a popular description of the way that it seemed to him that this church had been restored in the fifteenth century, and how the restoration had been more or less a failure and had never been completed. He also drew attention to the columbarium over the chancel and said that this was the only instance he knew of in the county of a columbarium in a church. In Herefordshire there were several in church towers.

[For description of the effigy in Compton Martin Church, believed to be that of Thomas de Mortone, see *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.*, lxiv, ii, 40. This is in many respects one of the most interesting monumental effigies in the county.

For the connection of St. Wulfric of Hazelbury with Compton Martin, see *Som. Rec. Soc.*, xlvii, p. xli.]

Ubley

At Ubley Church, which was the last item on the day's programme Professor A. H. THOMPSON said :

The advowson of the church of St. Bartholomew belonged to the abbot and convent of Keynsham. The rectory remained unappropriated and at the Dissolution the right of patronage passed to the Crown and remains with it.

The church consists of chancel, nave with aisles, and west tower with a short spire. It is almost entirely of the fifteenth century. The tower and spire are a pretty and unpretentious piece of design.

Mr. BLIGH BOND has sent in the following notes since the meeting : There are evidences of a fifteenth century reconstruction here in the southern jamb of the chancel opening which contains the stair to the roodloft and distinct remains of tabernacle-work as for the reredos of a side-altar, surviving beneath the later reconstructions. From this, the former existence of a chancel opening of smaller dimensions may be readily inferred, and this would imply the same symmetric arrangement of side altars with hagioscopes to chancel both north and south of the central arch which may be traced in other Mendip churches.

Mr. ST. GEORGE GRAY has added the following collected notes : In early times the manor of Ubley belonged to the Abbey of Keynsham, and at the dissolution of the monasteries the chancellor took the advowson for himself. It continued in the gift of the Lord Chancellor until about 1870.

It is stated that when the dissolution of Keynsham Abbey took place Thomas Cromwell, the vicar-general, paid a visit to Ubley and stayed the night at the manor-house, known in modern times as Waterloo House (now a ruin). The rectory is still a manor, and has its manor roll and ancient records of its court baron, together with leases of glebe lands dating from the reign of Elizabeth down to 1874.

With reference to the church the pulpit is Jacobean ; and the book-rest, whereon in early times the precious copies of the Gospels were chained, is also Jacobean. The reredos was placed in its present position at the time of the restoration of

the building, and was constructed from the old reading-desk and some of the ancient carved pew doors, etc. The altar, a fine piece of work, bears the date 1637.

Among the list of former rectors there is one who during the Cromwellian period became noted. Hunt in his *Diocesan History* states that 'two of the Somerset clergy were punished for refusing to read the Order of Declaration of Sports; Humfrey Chambers, the rector of Claverton, by imprisonment and suspension for two years, and William Thomas, the learned and godly rector of Ubley, by three years' suspension'.

About 1649 George Bull, who eventually became bishop of St. David's, placed himself as a pupil to William Thomas. In after life he spoke of the benefit he had received during his residence in the well-ordered household of Ubley Rectory. It was at Ubley that he had access to some of the works of the most prominent divines of the day, lent him by the rector's son Samuel, who was afterwards vicar of Chard and prebendary of Wells, and who suffered death in the Stuart cause.

Some of the entries in the registers (which date from 1671) are curious. The dislike to the use of the cross in baptism is manifested in an entry under the date 1711. The same register contains on fly-leaves accounts of severe storms and other calamities. In 1683 'there was a mighty frost, people did dye so fast'.

In 1318, Ubley was given a charter for the holding of a fair. It has survived, but chiefly as a cattle fair.

Tea was taken at the Mendip Hotel, Blagdon, after which the Members drove back to Wells, *via* Burrington Combe, Nordrach, 'Castle of Comfort', 'Miners Arms', and Green Ore.

In the evening the Wells Museum was opened for the visitors, by kind permission of the managers and the curator (Mr. H. E. Balch, F.S.A.).

Fourth Day's Proceedings

At 9.20 a.m. the motors left Wells and proceeded *via* Hillgrove cross-roads, 'Hunter's Lodge' and 'Miners Arms' to North Hill,

Priddy

Unfortunately there was some rain here, but a large number of the members visited the Earthen Circles, Ashen Hill Barrows and Priddy Nine Barrows (altitude 1000 ft.), under the guidance of Mr. H. ST. GEORGE GRAY. Owing to the weather, the address which he had intended to give at the Barrows was given in the Church.

The Archaeology of Mendip

At this spot we are only 8 miles s.w. of the famous group of Stone Circles at Stanton Drew. Some of our largest circles, such as Stonehenge, Avebury, Arbor Low, Stennis, Stripples Stones and the Hurlers, have been excavated to a varying extent; but Stanton Drew remains to be examined.

In this part of Mendip, that is in the neighbourhood of Priddy, we are not only struck by the groups of round barrows, but also by the four circular enclosures running in a line N.E. and s.w., in the south extremity of the parish of East Harptree, and not in Priddy as sometimes recorded. Locally they are known as 'The Castles'. They have never been thoroughly surveyed, but the three most southerly¹ are about 200 yds. in diameter, with some 70 yds. between the adjacent rings—which consist of a low bank of earth and stones with a ditch outside.

The fourth and most northerly circle is hardly in line with the other three, and is about 400 yds. distant from the most northerly of the series of three. The fourth circle has been destroyed for about one-quarter of its circumference on the s.w. There are no determinable entrances.

The period of construction is very doubtful—local tradition inclines to the belief that they are Roman. Sir Norman Lockyer regarded these rings as being of an astronomical character. It is said that there are two definite star alignments, either Arcturus at different periods before 1300 B.C., or Capella at later periods. Lockyer thought that this might be the site of a notable observatory. There is a 'Roman road'

¹ The most southerly of the rings is the best preserved.

here running at right angles to the line of sunrise at the summer solstice : another road is said to point to sunrise on May-day : meeting the last is still another ancient track which is believed to point to sunrise at the winter solstice.

The isolated circle of similar type surrounding some barrows on Beacon Hill, beyond Maesbury, has a diameter of over 200 yds., but some antiquaries regard it as of modern construction. There is a group of somewhat similar rings near Thornborough, Yorks.

At Priddy we are apparently on the western boundary of the Long Barrow area, and examples are to be seen, some in a poor state of preservation, at Red Hill, Felton Hill, Butcombe (Fairy's Toot), Priddy, Pen Hill, Green Ore, Mountain Ground Chewton, Chew Head, Holcombe (Giant's Grave), Buckland Down, Murtry Hill, Frome Field, Devil's Bed-and-Bolster, and the Wellow long-barrow near Stoney Littleton. The latter is probably the best known of these Neolithic barrows. It is of the true passage-grave type, having an entrance leading to a passage 48 ft. long, with three burial-chambers on each side and one at the end. This monument is under the guardianship of H.M. Office of Works.

And now turning to the round barrows of Mendip, most of which have been listed by Dr. A. Bulleid, Mr. A. T. Wicks and Mr. H. E. Balch, it is difficult to realize that within two miles of Priddy there are nearly a hundred of these mounds—rather a monotonous series as they are nearly all of the common bowl type.

It was reported at the Society's annual meeting at Minehead in 1931 that at that time the Inspectorate of Ancient Monuments had scheduled no less than 211 tumuli in the Mendip area.

Of Priddy Nine Barrows one has been almost destroyed. Encircling ditches are not visible except in one instance—the most easterly barrow but one. The most easterly of all is by far the best preserved of the barrows, and does not appear to have been rifled like the rest of this group and the eight barrows comprising the Ashen Hill Group. Nearly all these barrows to-day are the homes of rabbits, and some of them are absolutely riddled with their holes. They date apparently from the mid Bronze Age.

Some of the barrows of both these well known groups were opened by the Rev. John Skinner in 1815, and were found generally to contain a small circular hole, 18 in. wide and the same depth, filled with burnt bones; in one were contained a few beads, similar, it is said, 'to those found with Egyptian mummies'. In others some amber beads and a few bronze implements were found; also a 'grape-cup' exhibited in Bristol Museum. An 'incense-cup' (so-called), quite plain, was found in a barrow near the Castle of Comfort Inn, now in Taunton Museum. To the N.W. of this inn, Prior Horne dug a barrow on Pool Farm in which a fine stone cist was exposed containing cremated human bones, but nothing else.

At Combe Beacon, Combe St. Nicholas, in 1935, little was found in the mound itself except a large cairn of stones. This covered a tiny mound of burnt material and below, dug into the old surface, was a hole little more than a foot deep which contained charcoal and other burnt material but apparently no burnt human bone. A full report has been published (*Proc.*, lxxxi, 85-107).

Before leaving this interesting prehistoric 'cemetery' allusion might be made to the landmark known as 'Westbury Beacon' which dominates some of the South Mendip country. Twenty bronze implements were found there about 1840, which were sold to a farmer for two gallons of cider! It is stated they were 'almost a foot in length and very heavy'.

Several Mendip barrows have been opened by the Bristol Spelæological Society, and some of them have proved very interesting; but perhaps the most productive and attractive barrow exploration in the county was that carried out at Wick Barrow, parish of Stogursey, in 1907, and which has been fully reported upon (H. St. George Gray, *Proc. S.A.S.*, liv, ii, 1-78).

The Geology of Mendip

Owing to the inclement weather, Dr. F. S. WALLIS, deputy director of Bristol Museum and Art Gallery, also made his remarks concerning the general structure of Mendip in Priddy Church, and not from a vantage point immediately outside the church as previously arranged.

Emphasizing the fact that in order to understand and appreciate the present scenery of Mendip it was necessary to consider its formation and evolution from earliest times, he said that for many aeons of time, the area was one of deposition. First, the Silurian rocks, which included a volcanic phase, were laid down. These beds were followed by Old Red Sandstone rocks deposited by rivers flowing from the north-west; the Lower Limestone Shales, the Carboniferous Limestone and the Coal Measures.

With the aid of coloured diagrams, he showed how these rocks were folded into a series of elongated anticlines with axes trending east and west. This folding was followed by weathering and marine plantation during which period the broad back of Mendip was initiated. Once again the area was depressed below the level of the sea and the Triassic beach deposit, now known as Dolomitic Conglomerate, was followed by the various strata of the Mesozoic succession.

The final stage in the evolution of Mendip scenery consisted in the stripping off of these Mesozoic rocks and the revealing of the Palaeozoic rocks.

The scenery of Mendip was thus chiefly dependent on three types of rocks: (a) Old Red Sandstone, (b) Lower Limestone Shales, and (c) Carboniferous Limestone. The Old Red Sandstone beds form heath-covered moorland either with well-marked stream courses or with general boggy conditions. The Lower Limestone shales were always marked by a well-defined depression and the succeeding Carboniferous Limestone gave the characteristic level and grass-covered plateau with few trees and no surface streams.

Dr. Wallis in conclusion suggested that the foundation of Cheddar Gorge may be due to the underground solution of the limestone and the gradual unroofing by collapse of the resulting caves. On the other hand, it has been argued that Burrington Combe was produced by ordinary river action during the Glacial period, as owing to the soil and sub-soil being frozen the surface water could not follow its usual underground passage and was thus able to erode its bed in a normal manner.

Priddy Church

Professor HAMILTON THOMPSON then described the church. He said : The Church of St. Lawrence was originally a chapel dependent upon the Church of Westbury, which was appropriated to the prior and convent of Bruton. The present building, with chancel, aisled nave and west tower, was rebuilt in the fifteenth century and is a plain example of work of that date. At the Society's meeting in 1909 attention was called to an apparent discrepancy between the mouldings of the arches and the piers beneath them, but, while it is possible that the piers may have been rebuilt by underpinning, there does not appear to be any certain warrant for the conjecture. The most interesting feature of the building is the small medieval pulpit south of the chancel-arch, approached by a steep and awkward stair. The chancel-screen and the parclose of the chapel at the end of the north aisle are of plain fifteenth-century work. There is also a plain Norman font which bears witness to the antiquity of the foundation of the chapel, and a large piece of a fifteenth-century altar-frontal of needlework is still preserved. (*Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.*, lxxii, 50).

The churches visited on this day were all in the archdeaconry of Wells and rural deanery of Axbridge and are still in the modern deanery so named. Priddy is civilly in the hundred of Wells Forum, Cheddar and Rodney Stoke in that of Winterstoke.

The addresses in Priddy Church were listened to by a large congregation, including the Vicar, the Rev. W. S. Hale, the school children and their teachers.

Cheddar

At 11.35 a.m. the members left Priddy and proceeded to Cheddar Church, *via* Cheddar Gorge.

The Church of St. Andrew was described by the Vicar, the Rev. Preb. T. F. PALMER, R.D., after which there was an interval for lunch and for visiting other points of interest in the parish.

The Church has been described in the Society's *Proceedings*, vols. ix, i, 40 ; xxxiv, i, 40, 74 ; and lv, i, 81.

Rodney Stoke

At Rodney Stoke the members were met by the Rector, the Rev. E. R. Oxby, and the church was described by Professor THOMPSON. He said: The Church of St. Léonard at Rodney Stoke, otherwise called Stoke Gifford, was from an early date and still is in the collation of the bishop of Bath and Wells. It owes much, however, to the lords of the manor, which was possessed from the twelfth century by the family of Rodney.

The font of the twelfth-century church is left, but the existing structure was entirely rebuilt in the fifteenth century, probably upon the foundations of the earlier building. It consists of chancel with north chapel, aisleless nave and west tower. The chapel was added to the chancel about 1480, and the general rebuilding may be attributed to about the same period. There is a general description of the church and monuments by Bishop Hobhouse in the report of the Society's excursion in 1888, and the tombs and effigies in the wall between the chancel and the Rodney chapel are fully described by Dr. Fryer in the *Proceedings*, lxx, 79-81, and lxxiv, 52, 53. These are, on the west, the tomb of Sir Thomas Rodney (*d.* 1478), the son of Sir Walter Rodney, who is buried at Backwell, and, on the east, that of his son, Sir John (*d.* 1527). In the adjoining chapel are three later monuments. That of George, son of Sir Edward Rodney, who predeceased his father in 1651, blocked the recess containing the tomb of Sir John, which was restored and rearranged in 1885.

Sir Edward Rodney (*d.* 1651), whose monument is against the west wall of the Rodney chapel, was responsible for the beautiful screen which separates the chancel from the nave. This was erected about 1625 and is a good example of Laudian Gothic, with its adaptation of Renaissance detail to mediæval traditional forms. The loft which originally crowned it has been removed, but the arcaded panels of the front, divided by pilasters, and the carved cornice are set above the elaborate cornice of the screen. Sir Edward also caused the windows in the north wall to be made: the ends of the dripstones bear, in the western of these, the arms of himself and his wife, Frances Southwell, while those of the eastern window are inscribed with

the letters R. and P., the second of which has been taken as referring to John Pickeren, the rector instituted in March 1628-9.

Ebbor Rocks

The motors left Rodney Stoke at 3 p.m., and proceeded *via* Easton and Henley and parked at Wookey Hole Caves. From thence the members walked to the upper part of the Ebbor Rocks, and in spite of the rain, many of the party visited the chief of the prehistoric rock-shelters under the guidance of Mr. H. E. BALCH, who gave a short address.

Tea was afterwards taken at the new restaurant at Wookey Hole Caves, and the official vehicles reached Wells at 5.45 p.m.; this brought the very interesting four-days' meeting to a close.