Notes

Excavation at Claverton

The Manor House at Claverton, built by Sir Edward Hungerford, had two predecessors. It was known that the first stood in a field called ' Orchard Close ', south of the church. It was built by Bishop Ralph de Salopia about the year 1340, but no vestige of it remains to-day, except some banks and heaps which are said to mark the site. The Bath Branch of the Somerset Archæological Society voted a sum of money to enable these banks to be explored, and the supervision of the work was undertaken by Mr. Gerald Grey. Work began on the site on March 28, and finished on April 2, 1928. The banks seemed to enclose a space 70 ft. in length by 66 ft. in width. Towards the centre of this space, a very rough stone floor was uncovered, which may have been merely the broken pieces of stone left behind when the best were taken. All walls, down to their lowest foundations, appeared to have been removed, the rubbish only being left behind. It is said that the Tudor house, Bassett Farm, opposite the site, was built entirely of stone taken from this old manor. The pottery found included pieces of Romano-British, some Dutch dating about 1607, a quantity of delft and some Brislington pottery of the eighteenth century or earlier. A Charles II farthing was the only coin discovered. There can be no doubt that after the stone had been taken out, the lines of the old walls were represented by the heaps formed of lime and small stones left behind. The site probably became an open, waste place, where rubbish was thrown, and this accounts for the variety of pieces of pottery found. Later the ground was straightened out, and made into pasture.

Dom Ethelbert Horne, F.S.A., who visited the spot during the

excavation, and examined the soil exposed in the trenches, agreed with this explanation of the site of the ancient Manor House.

GERALD J. GREY

AN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY RAILWAY AT BATH

(PLATE XXIV)

RAILWAY relics and Roman remains do not seem to harmonize ; but the Early Railway Age in Britain has passed too into a history which economic and social change makes even more remote in appearance than it is in years.

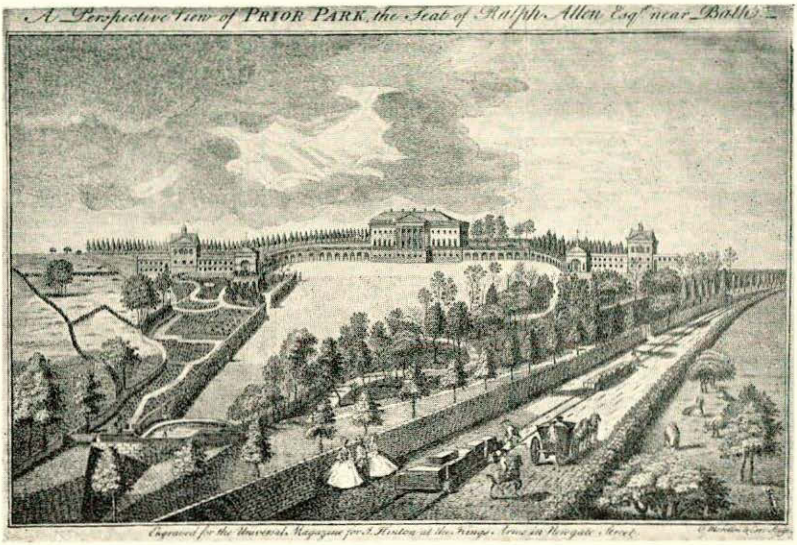
Moreover it is to-day nearly two hundred years since a primitive ' railway ' played an important part in the development of the City of Bath in that renaissance which was to restore it to the position which it had held in Roman times.

When Ralph Allen, of Prior Park, set about to develop the city he ' first purchased some quarries, then determined to make a road between the summit of the hill and the River Avon *as the gentlemen in the North of England had made between their Collieries and the River Tyne*, that heavy carriages might be drawn upon it with such little strength as would reduce the transportation of stone to the water side to half the price of carrying it down in common waggons '.[1]

Although there are records of colliery waggon-ways in the north of England long before this date, it is believed that the earliest illustration of an English waggon-way is the print of Prior Park, published in 1750.

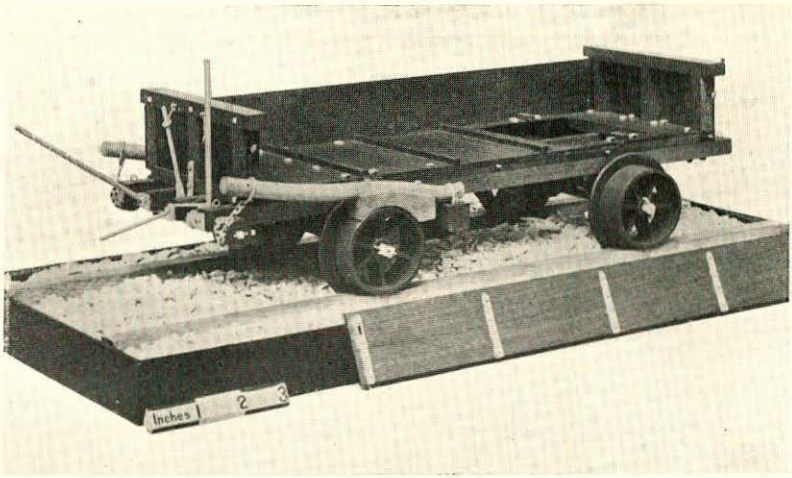
John Wood relates that ' Allen had the good fortune to meet with a person whose natural genius for mechanicks enabled him to improve upon the original ' [models sent from the north] ' and to execute the intended road, as well as the carriages to

[1] *A Description of Bath*, by John Wood, 1765, vol. ii, 424.



From the 'Universal Magazine'

PRIOR PARK AND WAGGON-WAY



From a model at the Science Museum

ALLEN'S STONE WAGGON

be worked upon it, so as to answer the purpose for which both were designed, whereby Block Stone came to be delivered at the Avon side for seven shillings and sixpence a tun of 20 cubical feet, which was half a crown a tun cheaper than it had been sold for '.

The loaded waggons, 13 ft. long, carrying 4 tons of stone, are clearly shown on the print of Prior Park, descending by gravity, on wooden rails. A description published in 1734 describes the elaborate brakes with which they were fitted, all as on the working model made at the Science Museum, South Kensington, from contemporary drawings published in Dr. J. T. Desaguliers' *Experimental Philosophy*.

The cost of a waggon was £30, which Desaguliers ' thought proper to mention as a very reasonable price considering the good and workmanlike manner in which everything is performed '.

The empty waggons were hauled up by horses, a distance of about a mile and a half, to a height of about 500 ft.

J. G. H. WARREN, M.I.MECH.E.

THE EXCHANGE OF PUBLICATIONS BETWEEN KINDRED SOCIETIES

HAVING read a paper on this subject at the Congress of Archæological Societies at Burlington House, London, on November 20, 1928, I have had another opportunity of examining the fine sets of the publications of kindred societies preserved on the bookshelves of our Society at Taunton Castle. We have occasional gaps, although the great majority of the ' runs ' from the date of beginning the exchange (sometimes earlier) are quite complete.

Below is given a list of volumes we greatly desire to acquire, and it is hoped that this note may be the means of securing at least some of them.

Cambrian Archæological Association,—*Archæologia Cambrensis*. All the first and second series ; 3rd ser., vols. i, ii ; and from vol. vii, 4th ser., to vol. ix, 6th ser. (inclusive).

Cambridge Antiquarian Society,—*Reports and Communications*, vol. i, pt. 1 ; and vol. iv, pt. 2.

Cornwall, Royal Institution of,—*Journal*, vol. i (1864–5).

Devonshire Association,—*Transactions*, vols. i, ii.

Kilkenny Archæological Association,—*Proceedings*, 1st ser., vol. i.

Montgomeryshire *Collections*, vol. i to viii (inclusive).

Notes and Queries,—*Index* to 3rd ser.

Suffolk Institute,—*Proceedings*, vol. iv, no. 6.

Sussex Archæological Society,—*Collections*, vols. ii, iii.

Wiltshire Archæological Society,—*Magazine*, vol. i, pt. 3 (1854).

H. St. George Gray, *Librarian*

The Meare Lake Excavations, 1928

The excavations at the Meare Lake Village were re-opened on August 27, 1928, and the work was continued under favourable weather conditions for three weeks and two days. The ground under examination was a continuation of the 1927 work, when floods were experienced and the excavations were abruptly cut short. The area uncovered was occupied by parts of four dwelling-mounds, and the spaces between where the clay floors joined.

The mounds excavated were the following : The E. side of Mound XXXVII, the N. and N.E. portions of Mound XXXVI, the S. quarter of Mound XXXIV, and the W. quarter of Mound XXXV. The ground where Mounds XXXIV, XXXVI and XXXVII joined was occupied by a very interesting and massive arrangement of oak beams and other timberwork placed in six superimposed layers. Over this substructure

there were layers of clay and five baked clay hearths, two of which were superimposed. The portions of Mounds XXXVI and XXXVII excavated this season did not produce any additional structural details of marked importance.

The s. quarter of Mound XXXIV, however, was full of interest at all levels. Among the outstanding points the following may be mentioned. In no dwelling-site hitherto excavated has such a number of superimposed hearths been discovered. The hearths were arranged in two sets, placed side by side, twelve in one group and eleven in the other. At the base of the large group a very complete little oven was unearthed, and lying near by was the baked clay pad which had fitted the opening. The substructure under and around these groups of hearths was another interesting subject. At one place flat planks of alder were arranged side by side forming a floor, and running down the centre of the floor was a line of circular holes, one perforation being situated at the middle of each flooring-board. Besides the alder flooring there were many pieces of mortised and cut oak ; and the examination of the substructure also disclosed portions of a large wicker basket, or possibly a cradle, of excellent workmanship. Associated with the basket-work and the superficial layer of timber of the substructure was a quantity of moss, and judging from its position on the floor it may have been used for bedding purposes.

Dwelling-mound XXXIV had evidently been occupied by a family of weavers, for not only was a quantity of loom-weights discovered, but an unusual number of weaving-combs and spindle-whorls. The further examination of this very productive and interesting dwelling-site is being looked forward to with much eagerness.

In Mound XXXV, a damaged vessel of thin bronze, with cover, was found ; in a complete state its diameter would be 12 in.

About a dozen selected ' finds ' from Meare, 1928, were exhibited at the British Archæology Exhibition, University College, London, February-March, 1929.

ARTHUR BULLEID
H. ST. GEORGE GRAY

Excursion to Cullompton and Bradninch, August 16, 1928

This half-day's excursion marked a new departure in the activities of the Somerset Archæological Society, and will probably form a precedent for similar outings in the future. A party of members, which had on this occasion to be limited in number, left Taunton Castle at 1.30 p.m., and, following the main road to Exeter, made the first stop at Cullompton.

The Church, in the absence of the Vicar, the Rev. C. W. Jameson, was described in an interesting manner by the Rev. Charles Sherwin, Hon. Sec. of the Exeter Diocesan Architectural and Archæological Society. He considered the tower the finest in that diocese. It was very much of the Somerset type and was 100 ft. high apart from the pinnacles, which were 20 ft. higher. There was an inscription at the foot of a coat of arms which recorded that its erection began in 1539. That the building of it extended into the reign of Edward VI was shown by the fact that on it they had his arms and those of the bishop of the time.

In pointing out the parvise over the s. porch, Mr. Sherwin said there was now no entrance to it except through the floor. No doubt that porch took the place of another which existed before the present s. aisle was built. That aisle was erected in 1526 at the cost of John Lane, woollen merchant, of Cullompton, and was a copy of the work in the ' Greenway ' s. aisle of St. Peter's Church, Tiverton, built in 1517. The initials, J.L., were to be seen at several points in monogram form ; also the wool-staplers mark used by Lane, wool-shears, and carvings representing the ships in which wool was sent to Spain at that time from Devon ports.

At the eastern end was an ancient vestry—in a very rare position (for that diocese), but there was one at Halberton with an upper storey.

Inside the edifice the splendid roof of the nave was very much admired ; it is a very fine example of its kind, though, perhaps, a little monotonous. Equally beautiful is the fan-vaulting of the Lane aisle. The Jacobean western gallery bears the date 1637.

The church, Mr. Sherwin said, sprang out of a college of priests established there in Saxon times. William the Conqueror gave the church to Battle Abbey.

By kind permission of Commander Plumpton the members afterwards visited an ancient house known as ' The Waldrons '. Mr. Sherwin dated its erection as *circ.* 1550, with internal decorations of about fifty years later. There were two staircases, one round, the other square. The builder of that house was probably John Petre, whose will was proved in 1558 ; his wife was Elizabeth Blackaller.

Little time remained in Cullompton for an inspection of the private museum belonging to Mr. Murray Foster, a collection which is very rich in ' bygones ' mostly obtained in the immediate neighbourhood.

The members then proceeded to Bradninch Church, where, in the absence of the Vicar, the Rev. L. St. A. Wells, they were met by Mr. C. A. Ralegh Radford, F.S.A., who gave a short description of the fabric. He said that until the Reformation the benefice was a rectory, and then was given to the Dean and Chapter of Windsor and became a perpetual curacy. The present church dated from the fifteenth century, the tower being built *circ.* 1437. The date of the chancel screen was 1528. An older screen was that now separating the S. chapel from the chancel ; it came from the N. chapel.

Perhaps the pleasantest feature of the programme was a visit to Bradninch Manor, where the members were entertained to tea by Mrs. Radford and her son, Mr. Ralegh Radford, he subsequently giving an account of the house. With his mother he showed the visitors the most interesting rooms and their valuable and beautiful contents. The house forms part of the Duchy of Cornwall estate.

Mr. Radford said the house was built by Peter Sainthill, recorder of the borough of Bradninch, probably in 1562, that being the date beneath the Sainthill arms on a piece of glass. Of the original house the N. and S. wings remained. The internal decoration of the latter, carried out at the close of the sixteenth century, remained, but of the N. wing they had only the structure. In the centre of the building was a hall reaching to the roof, but about 1720, when the last of the Sainthills

possessed the house, this portion was modernized into the Georgian style.

All those who had been instrumental in making the afternoon a success were cordially thanked.

H. St. George Gray,
Excursion Secretary

Human Remains found at Greylake, Middlezoy

On hearing of the discovery of human skulls (which were found on 1 June 1928) in the large sand-pit at Greylake, I visited Middlezoy and made various enquiries on June 7, first seeing Mr. J. Bown, a small-holder (formerly a grocer), and afterwards the owner, Mr. Frank Davis and his brother, who met me at the sand-pit in the evening. In the shed I was shown five human skulls, two of which I brought back to the museum. All the best of the long-bones had previously been taken by Mr. Martin of Westonzoyland.

We collected on the ground several parts of long-bones, including some pieces of very sharp or platcynemic tibiae. The bones, which were much encrusted with sand, were found at a depth of about 2 ft. below the surface of the mound of sand (which was capped by mould). No pottery or other relics had apparently been found.

It is just possible that these may be Sedgemoor burials of 1685.

H. St. George Gray

Explorations at Ebbor

This beautiful Mendip Gorge continues to yield results of interest.

On digging in a cave shelter on the E. side of the valley, I found during 1926 a perfect celt of greenish dolerite (?) at a depth of three feet, just where the debris passed into white tufa of considerable thickness. Two feet distant was a very perfect and unique knife of flint, with porcelain-like surface.

Examination of the animal remains by Mr. Wilfrid Jackson of Manchester Museum showed the presence of reindeer, Cave Pika, horse, badger, fox, and red grouse.

Further exploration revealed a niche in the rock wall concealed by overshot debris, and in this was a remarkable hoard of eleven large flint implements of a size and type new to Mendip, and having little elsewhere with which to compare it.

They were placed on edge, side by side, and range from a large leaf-shaped blade ($6\frac{1}{4}$ in. by 3 in.), suggesting proto-solutrean form, through even larger knives and scrapers and oval implements. (*Antiquaries Journal*, viii, 1928, pp. 197–204).

Several of these show characteristics which are associated with early and mousterian forms, being obviously produced from tortoise cores, and all without exception are patinated deeply with a white patination approaching decomposition.

Fortunately from the same gorge and under equal conditions implements of undoubted age occur in which the condition of the flint is utterly different, so that, even if one believes that patination counts for little in estimating the age of flints, so great a contrast must have significance; and taken together with these undoubted early forms, we may safely assert that we have here a find of implements dating back farther than any other yet made in the Caves of Mendip, except the Hyæna Den of Wookey Hole.

H. E. Balch

Wookey Hole

The extensive work carried out in the opening up of this great cave during 1927 led to the discovery of various objects of interest, under the floor of the entrance gallery and in those parts untouched by the earlier and greater exploration recorded in *Wookey Hole, its Caves and Cave Dwellers*. A perfect first-century fibula of bronze was found, several excellent decorated bone pins, an object in lead in the form of a square weight 5,700 grains in weight, an iron object possibly part of a pony's bit, two spindle-whorls one of which is of new form, a fragment of a bone bracelet, and a large pair of iron shears.

All of these, with a considerable number of pottery fragments, represent the Romano-British occupation.

Pottery has been found in the debris at the bottom of the pools and in the cavities in stalagmite banks.

The cleansing of the great effigy known as ' The Witch ' has revealed that in ancient days some attachments had been made to it, and apparently a stake was fixed in a socket hammered out in it.

The inner grotto of the new chambers has been opened up to the public.

H. E. Balch