

NOTES

FOUR MEDIEVAL MANUSCRIPTS IN THE TAUNTON CASTLE MUSEUM.

The Society possesses four medieval Latin manuscripts given to it in the years 1889, 1906, 1947 and 1948. For so small a collection it is remarkably representative of books and scripts from the twelfth to the fifteenth century. MS.3 is a specimen of a kind of theology popular in England in the first half of the twelfth century and of the English twelfth-century hand. The script is smaller than the average, but often admirable.¹ MS.4 is thirteenth century and French, one of the very numerous small Bibles written during this century on thin parchment in more or less minute hands and adorned with an initial in gold and colours at the beginning of each prologue and book of the Bible.² MS.1, late fourteenth century, is a good specimen of the most popular medieval history of England and of the less formal type of English book-hand. MS.2, fifteenth century, is an English service book in the more formal type of hand, used principally for liturgical manuscripts. A typical style of English decoration of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries is to be seen in MSS.1 and 4.

MS.1. *The Polychronicon of Ranulph Higden.*

This copy seems to have the common form of the text, agreeing with that of the manuscripts called A and B by Babington in his edition (Roll Series 41, 1865-86). It begins (p.27) 'Post preclaros arcium scriptores' and has a continuation after the words 'capitis interdixit' at A.D.1342 (p.417), where many copies, but not this one, have the note 'Huc usque scripsit Ranulphus'. The continuation is probably the same as that which occurs in some twenty other manuscripts: it ends at A.D.1377 with the words 'continuacionem postea habuerunt', followed by 'Explicit liber septimus et vltimus policraticon nuncupatus'. The last chapter of bk. 7 is numbered 52. In this copy as in others of the AB text, the initial letters of the chapters of bk. 1 have been chosen so that, if put together, they spell the inscription 'PRESENTEM CRONICAM CONPILAVIT FRATER RANULPHUS CESTRENSIS' (cf. Babington, i.x). An index, Abraham—de Zacharie occisione, precedes the text (pp.11-26) and is itself preceded by a brief chronology to A.D.1377: 'Incipit cronica bona et compendiosa de regibus anglie tantum a Noe usque in hodiernum diem. Noe fuerunt tres filii anno etatis sue xj^{mo}'.

In its main lines the manuscript agrees with Winchester College MS.13, which has the same chronology and index before the text

1 See Pl. XIV 1.

2 See Pl. XIV, 2.

and the same continuation to 1377. The chronology occurs also in three other copies of the Polychronicon, Brit. Mus. Add. 12118, Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, 21 and Vatican lat.1959.

Ff.218. Folio (12.2 x 8 in.). Written space $8\frac{3}{4}$ x $5\frac{1}{4}$ in. Quires normally of eight leaves. Written in a good hand of the late fourteenth century, with 43 long lines to the page. Bound late in the eighteenth century.

'liber beate marie de Keynesham' in a hand of ca. 1500 at the end of the text. Another Keynsham inscription of somewhat earlier date is on the front flyleaf. 'Liber Ricardi Godwyn' (p.434, probably fourteenth cent.). Bought by 'Robart Rosewell' for 7s. 6d. in sixteenth century. Belonged in 1860 to the Bristol bookseller, Thomas Kerslake, and offered by him then to Sir Thomas Phillipps for seventy-five guineas. The offer was declined and Kerslake gave the manuscript to the Society in 1889.

MS.2. *A Book of Hours.*

A Book of Hours written in England for Dominican use, preceded by a Sarum calendar. The Dominican origin is apparent in the Litany (f.46) and from the combined evidence of the responses in the Office of the Dead (ff.54-82) and the antiphons in the hours of the Virgin (ff.9-41).¹

Contemporary additions on three preliminary leaves (ff.i-iii) include :

1. ff. i-ii, a text in English 'Ure lorde ihesu cryste in his reuelacion to seynt Bryde among al other things he said to hir on this wise. iij thynges y bidde the to do. iij thynges y bidde the nought to do', and ending 'and shame of shryfte'.

2. ff.ii v-iii v. 'Oracio de sancto Thomas de aquino. Concede michi queso misericors deus que tibi placita sunt ardentem concupiscere . . . et tuis gaudiis frui per gloriam. Amen'. This prayer has been printed most recently by A. I. Doyle, 'A prayer attributed to St. Thomas Aquinas', *Dominican Studies*, i (1948), 229-38.

At the end a hand not much later in date than the main hand has written a prayer to St. Anne and the following lines (f.103v) : 'Omnipotens domine pro tua pietate miserere anime famule tue et a contagiis mortalitatis exutam. in eterne saluacionis partem restitue. Orate pro anima sororis Alicie Brainthawyt (or Bramthawyt) que dedit nobis istum librum'.

Ff.103. Small quarto (9.3 x 6.3 in.). Written space 5.7 x 3.5 in. Quires of eight leaves. Eighteen long lines to the page. Written in several English liturgical book-hands. Early sixteenth-century English, and probably London, binding of brown leather over wooden boards. The leather is decorated with two panel stamps. The panel on the upper cover, in very bad condition, contains the figures of St. John the Evangelist, St. Barbara, St. Katherine and St. Nicholas, in four compartments within a floral border, which bears the initials S.G. (here illegible) at the foot. The panel on the lower cover has a broad border of acorns enclosing a compartment in which are flowers springing from both sides of a central shaft. The two panels are nos. 158, 159 in Weale's *Rubbings* and are found together on books printed between 1514 and 1530 (see G. D. Hobson, *Bindings in Cambridge Libraries* (1929), p. 58, and *Blind-stamped panels in the English book-trade* (1944), p. 61.

1 I am indebted to the Reverend S. van Dijk for these details.

The inscription on f.103v shows that the manuscript was a gift from sister Alice Brainthwaite, probably to the Dominican nunnery of Dartford, of which she was prioress in 1461 (see *Victoria County History of Kent*, ii., 185, 189). Her name, as owner, is in MS. Harley 2254 in the British Museum. Later inscriptions are 'William Hart Anno Domini 1752' (f.52) and 'Purchased at Mr. Hart's sale in the year 1832—a relic from the Abbey of Muchelney'. The obviously erroneous suggestion that the manuscript is from the Benedictine abbey of Muchelney serves at least as evidence that it was in Somersetshire in 1832. It was given to the Society by Mrs. Strong of Somerton, near Taunton, in 1906.

MS.3. *Miscellaneous theology.*

This manuscript contains a collection of miscellaneous short theological texts and forms a fair example of the sort of book students and clergy made for themselves at the beginning of the twelfth century, when there did not exist any elementary text-book of systematic theology.¹ The contents include computistical notes, doctrinal pieces, expositions of the hidden significance of events in the Bible and in the services and ritual of the church, some sermons (ff.3-8, 40, 43-4) and a prayer (ff.65-6). The computistical notes (ff.8-14v) were of particular practical value since a knowledge of the rules for calculating the festivals of the church was part of the education of every cleric. Several of the doctrinal pieces are common in manuscript and owed no doubt some of their popularity to the fact that they sheltered under the name of St. Augustine and St. Jerome. Thus we have here the collection of sixty-five questions by 'Orosius' and answers by 'Augustine' (32v-40), 'Augustine' de disciplina cristianorum (ff.41-3), the disputation of 'Augustine' with Felician, (f.90-94) and an anonymous tract, *De membris domini*, which is often ascribed to St. Jerome (ff.88v-89v): all four texts, the real authors of which are unknown, will be found in print among the works of St. Augustine. Two treatises are concerned with the eucharistic controversy, the first of the great dogmatic disputes of the Middle Ages: the *De corpore et sanguine domini* of Paschasius Radbertus, the ninth century abbot of Corbie (ff.45-50v, incomplete at the beginning and in the middle) and extracts from the dialogue between Guitmund (bishop of Aversa c. A.D. 1088) and Berengar of Tours (ff.1-3): these, also, are in print in Migne's *Patrologia Latina* and elsewhere. Another doctrinal piece (ff.26-32) is an extract from a collection of theological sentences of the school of Anselm of Laon which has attracted much attention in recent times and has been described as 'the first concerted effort towards theological systematization', an effort finally crowned a century and a half later by the *Summa theologiae* of St. Thomas. The texts which are concerned mainly or wholly with allegorizing (ff. 14v-25v, 66-87) are none of them common or, so far as I know, in print: their sources are largely Isidore, Rabanus Maurus, and Amalarius of Metz. As a whole the collection looks backward to the ninth century or earlier,

1 A full description of the contents is kept with the manuscript.

and is in this respect typical enough of the manuscripts produced in England immediately before the schools of Paris began to exert their influence.

Ff.94. 10.2 x 6.9 in. Written space ca. 8.6 x 5.3 in. Two cols. of 40-47 lines. Twelve quires, normally of eight leaves each (4¹², 7¹⁰, 11¹²). The first two leaves of quire 8 are missing before f.56 and at least three leaves of quire 12 (f. 90-4) before f.90. Only one leaf of quire 6 remains (f.45). The binding having been lost, the leaves became disarranged and were in disorder until 1949. That the present order is correct is not certain at two points, since gaps occur after f.44, the last leaf of quire 5, and after f.89, the last leaf of quire 11. It seems probable however, that quires 1-5, which are written in 40 lines (quire 1), 41 lines (quire 3) 44 lines (quire 2) and 45 lines (quires 4, 5) originally preceded quires 6-11, which have 46 lines (quires 6, 7, 9-11) and 47 lines (quire 8). I have placed ff. 90-4 at the end, as quire 12, chiefly because of the worn state of f. 94, which is partly blank. It is possible, however, that their correct place is in the gap between f.44 and f.45. The number of lines to the page (45) would support this arrangement, as does the character of the contents which fit well with the series of texts attributed to St. Augustine on ff.32-44.

Written in several English hands of the first half, and probably the second quarter, of the twelfth century. The first change of script occurs on f.27v and there is another marked change on f.65v. The first hand is admirable. The principal initial letters are red, with little or no ornament, but only some have been filled in. On ff.20, 20v, 26 and 49 the pencil sketch for the initial has been drawn and left uncoloured.

The manuscript was bound in Oxford in 1951. It had no binding when it was given to the Society in April 1947 by Mrs. Denmark, née Hollway, through Mr. Charles Burnell of Charlton House, Shepton Mallet. Previously it had belonged for some time to the Hollway family. Nothing is known of its earlier history, but it seems to have affinities with Salisbury manuscripts and may just possibly be a manuscript which was listed at Salisbury by Patrick Young, ca. 1622, and is not there now. According to Young this manuscript contained (a) *Tractatus theologicus tributus in 65 capita ex Patribus concinnatus*; (b) *tractatus alter anonym.* *Initium 'Charissimum sibi mi frater si cupias scire'* and (c) *Aug. contra Felicianum*.¹ These three texts occur in the present manuscript on ff.32-40, 54v-65 and 90-94.

MS. 4. *A Bible.*

A small and damaged illuminated Bible, beginning imperfectly in chapter 30 of Genesis. The books are in the order Pentateuch, Joshua, Judges, I-IV Kings (the two books of Samuel being, as usual, counted as I, II Kings), I, II Chronicles, three books of Esdras, *i.e.* Ezra, Nehemiah and the apocryphal III Esdras (here called 'secundus Esdras'), Tobit, Judith, Esther, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Baruch, Ezechiel, Daniel, Minor Prophets, I, II Macchabees, Gospels, Pauline Epistles, Acts, Catholic Epistles, Apocalypse. The Apocalypse is followed as in most thirteenth-century Bibles, by the dictionary of Hebrew names, beginning 'Aaz apprehendens'. A small illuminated initial begins each prologue and book. There are in all nearly a hundred of these

¹ See N. R. Ker, 'Salisbury Cathedral Manuscripts and Patrick Young's Catalogue', *Wiltshire Archaeological and Nat. Hist. Magazine*, liii (1949), 181.

initials, but the series is incomplete owing to the excision and consequent loss of twenty-one leaves containing them. Pss. 1, 26, 38, 52, 68, 80, 97 and 109 are usually introduced by illuminated initials in Bibles of this sort : five of these initials survive here (Pss. 26, 38, 68, 80, 109).

Ff.487. Small quarto (9.9 x 7.1 in.). Written space 6.2 x 4.2 in. Two columns of 47 lines. Quires mainly of sixteen leaves. Written in a small hand of the middle of the thirteenth century. Script and decoration appear to be French, but there are early marginalia in English hands. Of the medieval binding one worm-eaten board, without covering, survives. The manuscript was repaired at the Bodleian in 1952. It was given to the Society in 1948 by Mrs. Denmark in the same way as MS.3.

Notes on Pl. XIV.

1. The upper part of a leaf of MS.3, reduced, showing the beginning of a series of extracts from a collection of theological sentences compiled in the school of Anselm of Laon. Spaces were left for coloured initials at the beginning of each paragraph, but only the first space was filled and that only with the preliminary pencil sketch for the A of 'Arbitrium'. The corner of the leaf was torn off and then mended before it was written on. The theological sentences are preceded by ten lines of verse by Eugenius of Toledo on the ten plagues of Egypt. The last four lines are shown on the plate :

'Septima fulmineum murmur cum grandine uibrat.
 Octaua frugi nocuas. grandique locustas.
 Nona dedit piceas. tractu [*for tactu*] palpante tenebras.
 Vltima quæ decima est prolis primordia truncat'.

2. The lower part of a leaf of MS.4, reduced, showing the initial P, in 'Preuaricatus' on a gold background, at the beginning of II Kings, and a contemporary note in an English hand at the foot of the page. The note, is an early example of biblical criticism. It quotes Alexander of Hales (d. 1245) to the effect that the word 'amalech' (I Kings 22.26) in this and other Bibles is not a personal name, but the Hebrew for son of the king : 'in gallico. fiz le rei'. 'Amalech' is the vulgate reading and 'Ioas the sone of Amalech' figures in the English Wycliffite Bibles. In Coverdale's Bible of 1535 the translation is, however, 'Ioas the Kinges sonne', and so in all subsequent English Bibles.

Septima salmmev mñ 7 gñdme ubrar.
 O ctava frugi nocua. gñdq; locustas.
 Non a dedit piceal. tñu palpaate tenebra.
 Vlana g' decima 7 pl' pñcadia truncat.

DE LIBERO ARBITRIO;
 ARBITRIO 7 iudiciu ammi sine
 de bono sine demalo. libm di
 aduñt; sine coactione. Hoc
 libm arbit. i. discretionem
 me boni 7 mali 7 iudicio meo. 7 ho y angls
 natals sine supaddita gra hñt 7 sola
 discretendi. si ex natals libam sine adbonum

at. Inhoie autt pec carnis
 ex sicarni copulenta spm
 impugnat. Aliquantiu tñ spm
 ale' anie leuitate agguabat. Post
 peccati autt spm 7 impugnat 7 quat.
 Inñita ura u' coipa omni 7 cuncte
 7 copulenta carebunt: corp' aut' nec
 impugnat nec grauat. **DE**
PRELATIONE IUCIFER;
 REAUIT AS ME' CECOS angles
 unu n admet. s. sym individua
 le. qm'ia scpta lucifer appel

1- MS. 3. Miscellaneous Theology, twelfth century (3).

tantu si' omnium est ergo p'm m die
 ma. Ererit h' h' h' in curru suo conu'ti
 v'it' 7 moxerit est uerq; stur h' aut' h' u
 g'at pluge in sinu' carnis 7 sp'io p'f'isur
 in amido dicitur: aliquam sol' occidit
 dicitur. vñt' q' uerq; reuoluit' in auctore
 7 in d'm suam. floccur' et ad' rec' 7 p'
 lauat' in f'mm'iam 7 q' uerq; reuoluit'
 g'ent' in amantiam 7 lauauit' curru' ei
 p'f'isur' 7 amant' 7 uerq; reuoluit' ad' h' con
 g'um'ent' curru' 7 h' uerq; reuoluit' uerq;
 d'ni d'ni q' uerq; reuoluit' h' uerq; reuoluit'
 moni' uerq; reuoluit' 7 d'ni d'ni q' uerq;
 h' uerq; reuoluit' quau' ed' h' uerq; reuoluit'
 h' uerq; reuoluit' quos' ex' h' uerq; reuoluit'
 in h' uerq; reuoluit' dicitur regum' h' uerq;
 7 d'ni d'ni q' uerq; reuoluit' h' uerq; reuoluit'

Tunc p' uerq; reuoluit' in h' uerq; reuoluit'
 h' uerq; reuoluit' dicitur h' uerq; reuoluit'
 h' uerq; reuoluit' in h' uerq; reuoluit'
 h' uerq; reuoluit' in h' uerq; reuoluit'
 h' uerq; reuoluit' in h' uerq; reuoluit'
 h' uerq; reuoluit' in h' uerq; reuoluit'
 h' uerq; reuoluit' in h' uerq; reuoluit'
 h' uerq; reuoluit' in h' uerq; reuoluit'

2. MS. 4. Bible, mid-thirteenth century (3).

A MANUSCRIPT COPY OF NAUNTON'S *Fragmenta Regalia*
AT TAUNTON CASTLE

In the Society's collection at Taunton Castle there is a copy of Sir Robert Naunton's *Fragmenta Regalia or Observations on Queen Elizabeth her Times and Favourite*s. It measures 7½ x 6 in., is bound in vellum and is in excellent condition. There are 87 pages neatly and closely written in an early XVII century hand. Naunton completed his work about five years before his death in 1635. Before 1641, when the first printed edition appeared, the *Fragmenta* circulated in manuscript copies, some of which have survived. The British Museum has six,¹ and two others, one folio and one quarto, are briefly described in an early Report of the Historical Manuscripts Commission.²

Both the first (1641) and second (1642) editions of this famous book were most carelessly printed. Arber, the modern editor, reprinted in 1870 from the third edition of 1653. There is no evidence that he collated his text with a manuscript copy, or indeed that he ever saw one, although he states that the work 'may have circulated in MS. during Naunton's Lifetime'.³

The Taunton MS. appears in general to be a reliable copy. There are many passages in which its reading is clearly to be preferred to that of Arber's edition. A single example is :

MS. ' . . . for I know how defective and imperfect it is as limmed only in the original nature'.⁴

Arber. ' . . . as limbed onely in the original nature'.⁵

The reverse is occasionally the case. The most remarkable instance of a point where the manuscript makes no sense occurs in the celebrated "tennis-ball" section, which deals with Sir Walter Raleigh.⁶

The early history of this manuscript can only be guessed. There is an inscription on the fly-leaf which reads : ' Found at Poundisford Park to which it was brought by the daughter of Robert Tristram, Esq., Merchant of Barnstaple who died about the year 1700 '. Jane, Robert Tristram's daughter, married in 1737 Isaac Welman of Poundisford Park, Taunton. She was the granddaughter of the Rev. John Hanmer, who had suffered for his religious opinions during the XVII century.⁷ Her grandson, Charles Noel Welman, was Vice-President of the Somerset Archaeological Society in 1851.

A. K. HUDSON.

1 MSS. Harl. 3787, 7393 ; Lansdowne 238, 254 ; Addit. MSS. 22, 591, 28715.

2 *Third Report*, 214 and 246.

3 8.

4 86.

5 64.

6 MS., 61-2 : Arber, 52.

7 See Wainwright, *The Barnstaple Records*, i, 197.

THE FALL OF THE THOLUS IN WELLS CATHEDRAL

Bishop Jocelin of Wells completed Reginald's Cathedral Church and consecrated it in 1239. He died in 1242. Six years later, in 1248, an earthquake, recorded by Matthew Paris, brought down the Tholus, the fall doing much damage chiefly to the capitals of the piers.

What this Tholus was has never been satisfactorily explained. Dean Armitage Robinson was inclined to the opinion that it was some decorative object such as a stone ball or cross terminating a gable or roof, but it is difficult to understand how the fall of such a comparatively light object could have done such extensive damage. It is described by Matthew Paris as 'magnae quantitatis et ponderis' which implies an architectural feature of considerable size.

The word has gone out of use in architecture but the dictionaries translate it as 'a circular, domed building, cupola, lantern'. The last interpretation is suggestive and an examination of the mason's marks on the lantern of the central tower shows that they are those of Bishop Jocelin's time and not, as would be expected, of Reginald's men. The 'spear', No. 148,¹ is very distinctive of Jocelin's time and occurs frequently, and so does the cross No. 143. The 'spade' is there but in a new form with three instead of two handles which may be the sign of a younger brother or son of Jocelin's man. Nos. 88, 94, 132, 141, 154, 168, 198, 199, 210 are in evidence and are of Jocelin's masons.

Moreover Bishop Reginald invariably uses the key stone at the head of his arches, never the apex joint. Jocelin uses both. The inner order of the lower tier of arcading in the lantern is constructed with apex joints; this again points to Jocelin's men as the builders.

In 1325 the need to furnish the new Choir arose and it was decided that the old stalls, which till then had stood under the tower and easternmost bay of the nave, were in too delapidated a condition for re-use and new stalls were provided at the expense of the canons. The existing stalls were only some 130 years old and their condition cannot be explained by the normal ravages of time: some major disaster seems to be indicated.

When we examine the lantern and find Jocelin's methods of building and the marks of Jocelin's masons on the stones we may conclude that the Tholus which fell in 1248 was the whole of the lantern of the central tower and that its fall wrecked the canons stalls beneath it.

G. A. A. WRIGHT.

1 *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.*, xciv (1948-9), 123-8.

MEARE LAKE VILLAGE EXCAVATIONS, 1951

Excavations at the Meare Lake Village, which were interrupted during the second war, were resumed in the summer of 1948 and continued for short periods in 1949 and 1950 (*Proceedings*, xciv, 164; xcv, 170-1).

The examination of the western three-quarters (the other one-quarter is divided from the rest by a rhine) of the Eastern Village has been continued this season (13 August to 4 September) under the direction of the undersigned, the object being chiefly to complete the examination of this area by the excavation of some of the mounds occurring between and around others which have already been dug and planned.

In spite of somewhat inclement weather the season's work proved a success but for the scarcity of paid labour. The director had, therefore, to rely to a large extent, on the voluntary help of a number of interested persons, including Dr. M. W. Bird (who sometimes brought his gardener), Mr. W. R. Chisholm-Batten, Mr. James A. Crabbe, Mrs. St. George Gray, Mrs. J. B. Clark and Mrs. G. E. Fraser.

This season the excavation of Mound XX was completed. This circular dwelling consisted of three superimposed floors of clay, with some oak and brushwood in the foundation resting on the undisturbed peat. There were four hearths, the layers overlapping to some extent. Attention was then paid to three other mounds (Nos. XXIII, XXVII and XXIX). No. XXIII was unproductive and consisted entirely of clay—evidently a store for the renovation of adjacent dwellings when new floors had to be laid down, for these people lived very near the water-level of the former 'Meare Pool'.

A section was made across Mound XXIX to test its productiveness. Little was found here except the skeleton of a largish bird (without the skull).

Then the work turned to Dwelling-mound XXVII, over half of which has been left for examination when excavations are resumed. The upper floor of clay was roughly paved with lias stone in places. There were two floors below the upper one.

Among the small finds were: The greater part of a finely ornamented drill-bow (rib of sheep) a finely worked weaving implement, spindlewhorls, a glass bead, an iron spearhead, a 'cheek-piece,' and a number of small flint implements.

H. ST. GEORGE GRAY.

A FLINT 'POINT' FROM CALLOW HILL

The flint 'point' illustrated in fig. 1 was picked up as a surface find in 1948 on Callow Hill, Somerset (National Grid Ref. 31/433552), and is now in private possession. The excellent workmanship and fine state of preservation make it worthy of publication, for permission for which I am indebted to the owner, Mr. S. Clutterbuck.

The point, which is in the form of an elongated oval, is 6.8 cms. long and 2.2 cms. wide at the point of greatest width. Almost the whole of both faces have been very carefully worked, a ridge or 'keel' with a reverse-S twist being left on the 'upper' face. Three very small patches of crust remain on this face. The pointed end (this being distinctly more pointed than the other) has suffered a very slight recent chip, visible in the drawing of the under face. There are no traces of grinding. The implement is patinated grey-white, but has an iron stain across the lower half of the upper face.



Fig. 1. Flint 'Point' from Callow Hill. (†)

The point bears a superficial resemblance to some plano-convex knives,¹ but there is a marked central ridge, and the edges are not those of a knife; the symmetry, and the presence of careful flaking on both faces, suggest that it should be classed conventionally as a lance-point or lance-head and assigned probably to the Neolithic period. It resembles such specimens as that figured in Evans, classed however as a borer, and having only the convex face worked²;

1 Cf. example in W. F. Grimes, *Prehistory of Wales* (1951), 194, fig. 54, No. 12.
2 Evans, *Ancient Stone Implements of Great Britain*, (2nd edition, 1897). 328, fig. 235.



1. From bed of the River
Axe, Wookey Hole.
V.2. Roman Cooking Pot,
second century A.D. (1/2).



2. V.8. Pewter Wine Ewer,
Roman period. (1/2)



3. Kimmeridge Shale Foot of Roman Table from Upper Langridge Farm, near Bath. (1/4)

another, 'well adapted for a lance-head', but perhaps used as a scraper or knife¹; a point from Grimes Graves 'with flat underface and ridge nearly central'²; and the point from the Neolithic hut-site at Grovehurst, Kent³. On stylistic grounds and from the point of view of technique, in addition to the conditions of finding, a Neolithic or possibly Early Bronze Age date seems correct.

J. W. GARDNER.

SHALE FOOT OF ROMAN TABLE FROM UPPER LANGRIDGE FARM

The piece of Kimmeridge shale illustrated on Pl. XV, 3, comes from the site at Upper Langridge Farm, near Bath, and is the one briefly referred to in the report of the recent excavations there.⁴ It is the claw foot and lower part of the leg of a small three-legged table of a type becoming familiar to us from discoveries in Dorset, where similar feet are known from South Street, Dorchester, and from Maiden Castle. A complete leg with foot attached was excavated in Colliton Park, Dorchester, in 1937.⁵ All these feet closely resemble one another, but the Langridge example is slightly larger than the Dorset finds. It is of particular interest as an addition to the list of discoveries of this kind from sites outside Dorset, the only others being pieces of the upper part of the leg found at Rothley, Leicestershire, and Foscott, Buckinghamshire, and another foot of slightly different type excavated at Caerleon.⁶

Evidence for the chronology of these shale objects is unfortunately uncertain. The nature of the Langridge site prevents a definite date being suggested for the foot, as it did not turn up in close association with other finds, but the excavator feels it may have belonged to the earlier phase of the occupation rather than to the later. This would agree with the Colliton Park leg which came from a rubbish pit beneath a Roman house, and may be second century. On the other hand the Preston example is from a villa occupied in the late third century, and the Maiden Castle foot is of fourth century date. Probably these tables were a long-lived type remaining fashionable for several centuries. They must also have been treasured in Romano-British homes, and handed down from generation to generation as heirlooms.

J. LIVERSIDGE.

1 Evans, *op. cit.*, 336, fig. 250.

2 *The Sturge Collection, An Illustrated Collection*, 44, fig. 232.

3 R. F. Jessup, *Archaeology of Kent*, 43, fig. 6.

4 *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.*, xcvi (1951), 176. I am much indebted to Mr. J. W. Gardner, F.S.A., for the opportunity to examine this specimen.

5 For Dorset examples see *Antiquity*, xxiv (1950), 25 ff. and *Antiq. Journ.*, xxi (1951), 193.

6 *Arch. Camb.*, lxxxvii (1932), 98, fig. 44, Nos. 1, 2.

A NEW ROMAN BUILDING NEAR SOMERTON

EARLY in October 1951, the find of Roman flue tiles and lias masonry was made during ploughing operations by an employee of Mr. White of Catsgore Farm, Somerton. Mr. White informed Mr. J. W. Searle of Somerton, and on 9 October he and the writer examined the site and carried out a small, trial excavation. The N.G. Reference is 31/49972595 or, for the benefit of those not using the National Grid, the position is about 130 yards east of the SE. corner of Rough Plantation (O.S. six-in. Somerset LXXIII N.E.). It is clear that this building is a fresh addition to the considerable and growing group of Roman houses in the Somerton area, and it has not been recorded by Hasell. The plough-share, set a little deeper than usual, had caught a large lias paving stone, disturbing several box-flue tiles in bringing it to the surface. The surface is remarkably free from building debris. Subsequent trial excavation showed two 24 in. (plus and minus) foundations of blue lias crossing at this spot, with the remains of heavy lias paving, below which the flues had been set. No tesserae have been noted, and only a few fragments of coarse pottery. The depth of soil covering the foundations, approximately 10 in., is surprisingly small. The site will be kept under observation as far as practicable, but no further excavation is contemplated for the immediate future.

H.S.L.D.

THE BIRDCOMBE VILLA, WRAXALL, NR. BRISTOL
(An Interim Report)

THIS building stands at a height of 63 ft. O.D. on an eminence on the south bank of the river Land Yeo (Nat. Grid Ref. 31/479716). It appears to cover an area 75 feet by 60 feet, but several 'platforms' on the slope down to the river may yet show the foundations of older buildings below an accumulation of medieval rubbish.

The earliest part consists of a plain but solid building with walls of Dolomitic Conglomerate. The roof-tiles are of Pennant Sandstone. There are no heated rooms in this part of the building. One small room had a white cement floor, and elsewhere there are traces of flagged floors. The whole site is exceptionally poor in dating material. Of the coins, only one, a well-worn Marcus Aurelius, is older than A.D.250. A few scraps of late Samian ware have occurred as surface finds; several of these are mortar-covered and probably pre-date the house itself.

On the south side, a bath-suite, added at a later date, consists of a furnace-room and three apsidal bathrooms. Traces of a blue and white mosaic floor were found in one of the heated rooms. The apse of the cold baths had a pink *opus signinum* floor with a quarter-round moulding and wall plaster of the same colour. This bath-suite underwent various alterations, and eventually an open drain of Pennant slabs was added. This ran round the house from

the east side of the older building to the west end of the bath-suite. Its extent suggests that it was designed to catch water from the eaves as well as the overflow from the cold bath. A date of about A.D.300 is suggested for this final construction.

There is evidence of a 'squatter's' occupation at the close. Painted wall plaster, tesserae and box-tiles had been thrown into the deeper part of the cold bath and covered with a 9 in. layer of clay. Other box-tiles were thrown into the open ditch outside the baths, to be covered later by the natural collapse of the roof and walls. Surprisingly, no coins later than Constantine II have yet been found.

Pottery and debris of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries suggest a prolonged occupation of the ruins in medieval times. An interesting 'find' is a quartered silver penny of Henry III. It was probably during this period that many of the walls were stripped down to foundation level.

C. M. SYKES.

A FINGER RING FROM MYNCHIN BUCKLAND PRIORY

ON 20 September 1951, Mr. R. J. Bark, aged 83 years, of 64 Paisley Avenue, North Hamilton, Canada, visited the Taunton Castle Museum. He produced a gold finger ring (fig. 1) and told Mr. J. Stevens Cox and the Keeper the following story of its discovery :

' My maternal grandfather, John Harris, who later emigrated to Canada, was a farm bailiff on a farm at Durston, Somerset. About the year 1850 he was seeding a field when he saw something glitter in a lump of earth. He put the earth in his pocket and on returning home broke up the lump and found the ring. John Harris gave this to his eldest daughter, Jane, then a young girl, but his wife took possession of it for safety and gave it back to her when she was older. Jane Harris was my mother and gave the ring to me. All that I know of the find spot is that the ring came from a field below a small fort '.

Mr. Bark was unable to recollect the name of the farm, but said he once possessed a photograph of Durston Church. Nevertheless the general locality is fairly certain. The 'small fort' is most likely to be the mound at the top of a low hill on Buckland Farm. It is a prominent point in the lower part of Durston Parish about 120 feet O.D. and was probably a windmill tump, not a round barrow as marked on the Ordnance Survey map (Nat. Grid Ref. 31/297278).

The ring has an internal diameter of 17 mm., a thickness of 6.5mm. and is of modified cable-pattern form, having four pairs of slightly curved rectangular surfaces each containing a black-letter on hatched background, to represent four open-paged books ; it has a design of alternating facets between each group of letters. The inscription is in French and reads : *me va bi en* (' May it go well with me ' or ' May I do well '). One side of the ring shows four tiny

perforations in alternating angles and the other side shows perforations in the four opposite angles. The ring is light for its size and apparently hollow. It appears to have been made in the early fifteenth century, and to have been worn by a woman, since it will not pass over the knuckle of the little finger on an averaged-sized male hand.

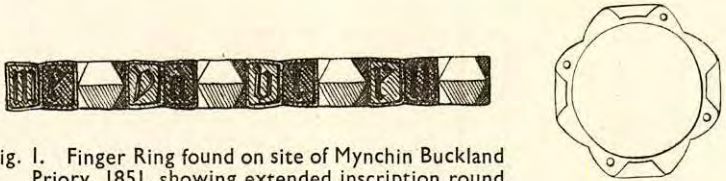


Fig. 1. Finger Ring found on site of Mynchin Buckland Priory, 1851, showing extended inscription round edge and plan of ring. (†)

The ground on which it was said to have been found belonged to Mynchin Buckland Priory up to the Dissolution. The story of this remarkable establishment, consisting of a Preceptory of the Knights Hospitallers and the only Nunnery of that order, has been well told by the Rev. Thomas Hugo¹ and summarised by Mr. H. St. George Gray.² In his account of the Consecration of the Virgin,³ Hugo details an important part of the ceremony when the Bishop blesses and places the sacred ring on the fourth finger of the nun's hand, to remain there as a symbol of holy espousal to Christ and separating her for ever from contact with the outer world. Dr. Joan Evans, who has examined a drawing of this ring, describes it as a secular and not a religious ring, although this does not preclude its being worn by a prioress or sister at this date.

Hugo himself possessed two rings, which were found at Mynchin Buckland and which are described and illustrated.⁴ One, a slender gold ring of the thirteenth century, is set with an uncut sapphire, and probably belonged to an early prioress; it was found in 'Coglett, Field' near the site of the Priory in 1858. The other, also of gold but much stouter and of fifteenth-century date, has a heart-shaped bezel with the monogram: *ih̄s*; it was dug up in a field called 'Broadworthy' near the site of the Priory in 1853.⁵ Hugo continues: 'Another, which was described to me as of cable pattern, was found in the immediate neighbourhood, in 1851, and has since been taken by its owner to one of our colonies.'

1 *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.*, x (1860), i, 1-112.

2 Council of the Order of St. John for Somerset, *County Bulletin*, No. 10 (March 1949), 11.

3 *The Mediæval Nunneries of the County of Somerset, etc.* (1867), Introduction, pp. xxxiii-iv.

4 *Ibid.* (Mynchin Buckland Priory), 107-8.

5 The fifteenth century ring is in the Victoria and Albert Museum, No. 740-1877 (C. C. Oman, *Catalogue of Rings in the Victoria and Albert Museum*, Pl. XXXI, No. 733). The whereabouts of the earlier ring has not been traced.

It seems reasonable to identify this last description with Mr. Bark's ring. His mother, who died in 1915 aged 73, was born in 1842, nine years before the ring was found. Thus she would have been a young girl at the time of discovery, making it almost certain that this is in fact the ring referred to by Hugo in 1860.

It is less easy to account for the three rings having been discovered at different find spots in the vicinity of the Priory in the mid-nineteenth century.

W.A.S.

SCHIST HONES FROM SOMERSET

HONES made from various kinds of stone were common in this country in the Middle Ages, but the use of schist for the purpose appears to be restricted. That this rock is rare in Britain, though found in extensive deposits in Brittany and the central massif of France, would account for the fact that hones are only found in the southern half of Britain.¹ Ranging in date from the tenth to the

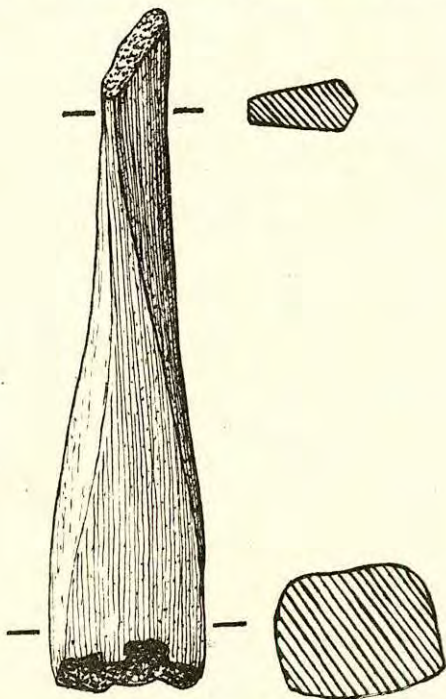


Fig. 1. Schist Hone from Muchelney Abbey. (1)

¹ G. C. Dunning, *Soc. Ant. Research Report, XV: Jewry Wall Site, Leicester* 230, figs. 63, 64.

thirteenth century, they were most common in the twelfth century.

That shown in fig. 1 was discovered on the site of Muchelney Abbey. Time has obscured all details relating to its discovery and associated material if any. Fractured at the point of greatest wear, this much-worn specimen is now 3.4 in. long.

It is noteworthy that this with three from Ilchester¹ and the only other recorded Somerset schist hone, from Taunton,² all lie along tributaries of the River Parret, until recent times one of the main transport lines of the county.

L. WALROND.

REPORT ON HUMAN REMAINS AND MATERIAL RECOVERED FROM THE RIVER AXE IN THE GREAT CAVE OF WOOKEY HOLE DURING DIVING OPERATIONS FROM OCTOBER 1947 TO JANUARY 1949
(with notes on subsequent operations)

FOR some years, the Cave Diving Group has been exploring the underground river in the Great Cave of Wookey Hole. Their object was not an archaeological one, but the discovery of hitherto unknown caverns which lay beyond the submerged arch in the Third Chamber.

On 9 June 1946 during the charting of the river bed in the First Chamber, three skulls, other human bones and a pottery vessel were discovered just within the arch of the tunnel leading from the First to Third Chamber (fig. 1). It was obvious that some form of archaeological investigation was necessary and, in the autumn of 1947, E. J. Mason was invited to attend the diving operations as archaeological adviser.

Diving Apparatus. Rubber diving suits with self-contained oxygen apparatus are used, together with a powerful portable underwater light. A logkeeper and one or two attendants are necessary for each diver.

Survey. To assist divers walking on the river bed and the location of finds, wire guide lines are laid along the bed of the river, marked at 10 ft. intervals, offsets being measured to the positions of the objects. This information is recorded on a master chart.

THE FINDS

Pottery. Identified by Dr. Hubert Savory, National Museum of Wales, Cardiff.

V.1. Pottery bowl, belonging to late first or early second century A.D. and of a form descended from native British (Belgic) prototypes. This is the most complete pottery vessel of our collection, the only damage being a piece missing from the rim.

1 In the possession of J. Stevens Cox of Ilchester.

2 *Proc. Lo.W. N.H. & A. Soc.*, ii, pt. 8 (1937), 68, fig. 7, No. 11; H. St. George Gray, *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.*, lxxxvi (1940), 64, pl. III.

The broken edge has been worn smooth by friction of sand-laden water. Measurements : outer diameter of rim 8 in. : diameter of base $2\frac{3}{4}$ in. : height $5\frac{5}{8}$ in.

- V.2. This is the largest Romano-British pot and is decorated with lattice pattern. The largest part of the vessel consists of original sherds, the remainder being restored. Probably second century A.D. Measurements : outer diameter or rim $7\frac{3}{8}$ in. : diameter of base $3\frac{3}{4}$ in. : height $8\frac{3}{4}$ in. (Pl. XV, 1.).
- V.4. Part of the rim of a medieval globular cooking pot of late Saxon and Norman type of eleventh to twelfth century A.D.
- V.7. Romano-British fumed-ware flanged dish of third to fourth centuries A.D. Measurements : outer diameter of rim $5\frac{1}{4}$ in. : diameter of base 3 in. : height $2\frac{3}{4}$ in.

Lead. Two lead ewers of late Romano-British type, of third to fourth century, used in Roman times as wine vessels. V.6. Measurements : greatest diameter $7\frac{7}{16}$ in. : outer diameter of base $3\frac{13}{16}$ in. : present height $10\frac{1}{2}$ in. V.8. Measurements : greatest diameter 9 in. : diameter of base 5 in. : present height $14\frac{1}{2}$ in. (Pl. XV, 2.).

Glass. Two glass bottles of the late seventeenth century. A Mr. Rogers writing in 1694 of Wookey Hole described 'the seller that is curiously vaulted'. The 'seller', also termed the cellar in the report, is obviously the Third Chamber ; he continues, 'and it is very usual to carry Bottles of Wine and drink there upon a Stone Table which is formed in it of natural stone'. It is apparent therefore that the two wine bottles are the results of this custom. V.5. and V.3. Measurements : diameter of body 5 in. : diameter of base $5\frac{1}{4}$ in. : height $7\frac{7}{8}$ in.

Human Remains. Examined and reported upon by Professor C. M. West, Professor of Anatomy, University College of South Wales and Monmouthshire, Cardiff.

Extracts from Professor West's reports :—

		<i>Approx.</i>	
		<i>Age at Cephalic</i>	
		<i>death</i>	
		<i>Indices</i>	
Sk. 1.	Part of a maxilla	Young	—
Sk. 2.	Almost certainly male. Bulging forehead and great backward bulging of occipital bone	25 years	80.2
Sk. 3.	Fragmented skull	—	—
Sk. 4.	Bulging forehead and great bulging of the occipital bone	30 years	76.5
Sk. 5.	Actually two fragmentary skulls, one showing fullness of occipital bone	—	—
Sk. 6.	Almost certainly male. Much bulging of occipital bone. Very high palate.	30 years	70.7
Sk. 7.	Probably female. High forehead, orthognathism, post-coronal depression	25 years	75.4
Sk. 8.	Great bulging of occipital bone	25 years	78.2

Sk. 9.	Almost certainly female. Occipital bulging.	25 years	73.5
Sk. 10.	Very large male skull. Orthognathism, only slight occipital bulging	..	28 years	76.9
Sk. 11.	Some bulging of occipital	..	40 years	83.0
Sk. 12.	Very little bulging of occipital	..	23 or 24 years	80.8
Sk. 13.	Considerable occipital bulging	..	25 years	78.4
Sk. 14.	Some occipital bulging	..	22 years	79.4

A number of other human bones representing male and female skeletons were retrieved, although no complete skeletons were discovered and those found were far fewer than the number represented by fifteen bodies. However a number of bones may still lie buried in the mud. From the bones found the estimated heights of the individuals vary from between 5 ft. 0 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. and 5 ft. 7 in.

Skull features are interesting, revealing in a number of cases that they apparently belong to one family; the principal features are the form of the occipital region and the length of the canines, but there is a wide range of cephalic indices. The age at death was estimated in the case of eleven skulls, and ten of these were in the age group 22 to 30 years. With the exception of one of 40, the absence of older skulls may be noted, but the skulls of young individuals would tend to fall apart and be swept away by the river.

CONCLUSIONS. From the associated material, the bones would appear to be of the Romano-British period and may represent any time between the late first and fourth centuries A.D. No Iron Age material has yet been recovered from the river.

The Great Cave was shown by Mr. H. E. Balch to have been continuously occupied during the time of the Glastonbury Lake Village until the end of the Romano-British period. Since pottery of Glastonbury type was found during Mr. Balch's excavation, there is evidence that the Wookey Hole people may have been akin to the Glastonbury people or the remnants of those people after the destruction of the lake village. Professor West compared the Glastonbury skulls with those from Wookey Hole to ascertain whether there were any common features which might suggest a Glastonbury ancestry. He reports as follows:—

'There are undoubted resemblances to the Wookey Hole skulls in certain respects, but the Glastonbury skulls do not show as great a degree of occipital bulging as the Wookey Hole skulls, and though Boyd Dawkins calls attention to a post-coronal depression, even suggesting the use of a bandage under the chin, this is more marked in the Wookey skulls. Another feature is that the bregma appears to be placed a good deal further back in the Glastonbury than in the Wookey Hole skulls.

'The most striking thing about the Glastonbury remains is their great similarity so far as measurements are concerned, so that taking

an average does give a fair picture of any one skull. This is by no means the case with the Wookey Hole material, where there are great differences between individual skulls. The fact is that while the Glastonbury remains are very similar, in the case of Wookey

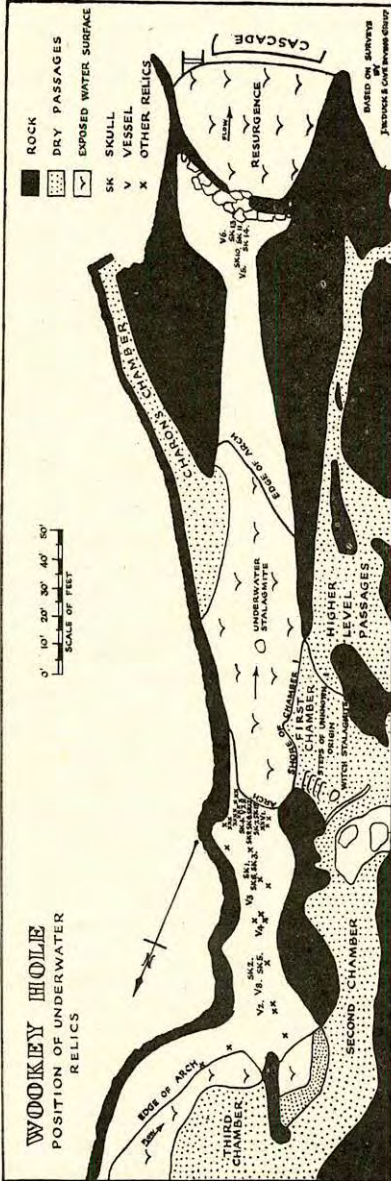


Fig. 1. Plan of Wookey Hole showing positions of objects recovered from the bed of the River Axe during diving operations.

Hole there seems to be a mixture, some resembling Glastonbury in certain respects but not in others. The arc measurement in which there is great difference between the Glastonbury and Wookey Hole remains is that of the occipital arc which is much larger in the Glastonbury specimens. Another point is that none of the Glastonbury skulls shows the degree of brachycephaly that is found among the Wookey Hole skulls.

‘My general conclusion is that while some of the Wookey Hole skulls may belong to the same group as the Glastonbury specimens, they do not all do so.’

There is the question of how these human remains came to be in the river. As will be seen from the position of the finds on the plan, they probably entered the river from the Third Chamber and drifted into the tunnel. The absence of abrasions on the bones shows that they could not have been rolled or swept rapidly along by the river, but they may have drifted downstream gradually with the mud. The bones and objects were in the majority of cases found behind barriers of boulders. Those found at the resurgence may have been swept out of the tunnel at times of exceptional flood and trapped behind the slope of boulders at the resurgence. Within living memory, bones and skulls were swept out of the cave and down the river at such a time of flood.

There would appear to be three possibilities regarding the circumstances in which the remains entered the river :—

1.—It has been suggested that there were human sacrifices having some connection with the Witch stalagmite, which is in the First Chamber near the tunnel leading to the Third Chamber. Since most of the remains have been found in this tunnel *upstream*, probably entering it from the Third Chamber, it is difficult to imagine any such connection. If any such sacrifices were made, they would have been thrown into the river in the Third Chamber.

2.—The remains may have been thrown into the river as burials or even placed in the river bed at some time when it was dry.

3.—These remains may have been washed from some place of burial. Here again, from their position, the Third Chamber is suggested. Excavations carried out in this Chamber, however, revealed nothing more than a few sherds of Romano-British pottery. One or two of the bones show gnaw marks made by rodents, which would suggest that the bones were not always beneath the water. One of the pottery vessels has a broken rim which is water-worn, pointing to the fact that shallow water has rushed over it for a considerable time.

NOTES ON SUBSEQUENT OPERATIONS

By the end of January 1949, the material lying on the river bed had been cleared and a separate diving team was formed to undertake the task of actual excavation of the river bed by means of a

pressure hose. This excavation was known by the Cave Diving Group as 'Operation Sandblast' and is now proceeding.

An inspection of the river bed has been made and it is found to consist of (a) soft sand, (b) same material but more solidified, (c) dark ooze.

Very little material has been found in the First Chamber. It is anticipated that more material may be concentrated in the tunnel between the First and Third Chambers, and it is hoped to excavate the river bed here when more fully experienced divers are available in the archaeological team, as the tunnel is not safe water.

EDMUND J. MASON } *Joint Archaeological Controllers,*
DORRIEN MASON } *Somerset Section, Cave Diving Group.*