

## SECOND DAY.

*Wednesday, August 5th, 1857.*

A large party assembled at Bruton and proceeded on the Excursion.

The first object of interest was the ancient Priory of Stavordale, now occupied as a farm house, some parts of which are in excellent preservation, though unfortunately very little, if any, care is taken to maintain the characteristic features of the building. The chapel still remains, and exhibits many traces of the elegance and beauty of the original structure. The nave is occupied as a barn, and the choir as a farm house, and the spot which no doubt formerly was graced by a road screen, now shows only a huge partition wall.

The Rev. F. WARRE gave a brief sketch of the history of the building. He stated that it was a small priory of Canons regular of St. Augustine, and was built by one of the Lovell family, in the reign of Henry III. In the time of Edward III, another of the same family founded a chantry, on the site of which the present chapel might probably stand. In the year 1533, the priory was united as a cell with Taunton, which, in common with all the Augustine priories of Somerset, was connected with the great priory of Bristol. Mr. Warre also gave a list of the

priors, as far as he had been able to ascertain them, and read a curious document relating to its suppression in the time of Henry VIII, which had been furnished him by Lord Talbot de Malahide, being a petition from Richard Zouch, for a grant of the property, on the plea that it was given by his ancestors.

The Rev. T. HUGO remarked, on the architectural character of the existing remains, that these were entirely of the later perpendicular period, with the exception of portions of a south doorway, which probably belonged to the former church. Little of the conventual buildings remained, and these were changed so much as to be recognised with difficulty. Mr. Hugo, however, drew particular attention to what was originally a most exquisite chapel on the north side of the chancel, with a connecting arch beautifully panelled, and a roof of fan tracery. It still preserves much of its original beauty, but is divided into several floors, each of which is used by the resident household. He strongly recommended that careful representations should be published of the brackets, &c., of this very interesting roof, which he characterised as some of the finest that he had ever seen. The only difficulty, and that but an apparent one, was in the woodwork of the secular dwelling-house, which divided the building into several stories, and numerous apartments. This seemed of an age coeval with the stone work of the sacred edifice itself. But the difficulty vanished when it was recollected that the Zouch family obtained possession of the place, and occupied it immediately after its surrender to the king. From our knowledge of its construction, as arrived at from the style of the architecture, we find that the edifice was both erected as a church, and converted into a private dwelling within the space of a few years.



*John Leghorn, del et sculp*

*Seal of St. Andrew's Priory, Somerset.*

Although, therefore, at first sight perplexing, the difficulty could thus be satisfactorily disposed of.

From Stavordale the company proceeded to Keniwilkin's Castle, Pen Selwood Church, Pen Pits, and Orchard Castle, which are described in Mr. Warre's paper, Part II, p. 42. An interesting relic of the ancient British period was obtained during the visit, from a labourer in the village of Pen—a portion of a *Torque*, found by him in Pen Pits. This is now deposited in the museum of the Society, and delineated among the illustrations of the present volume.

From Orchard Castle the members went to Stourton, where they dined together, and afterwards, were admitted, by the courtesy of Sir H. Hoare, into the grounds and the museum of Stourton House. Here the proceedings of the second day closed.

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