

## Excursion : First Day.

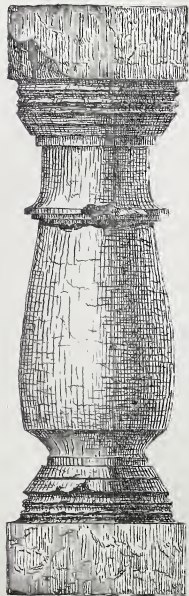
A large party started from Wincanton at 10.30 a.m.

### Roman Remains.

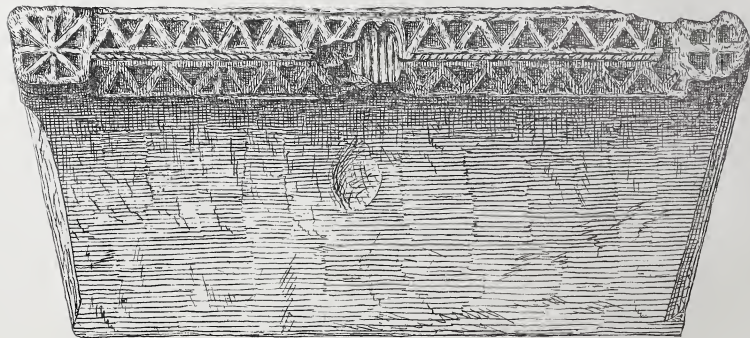
About a mile from Wincanton, on the road towards Cadbury, the first halt was made. It was to examine the remains of a Roman villa discovered at Old Barn, the property of the Rev. S. Dendy. The excursion party were courteously welcomed and escorted by the proprietor.

In digging out the foundations of some new farm buildings, an ornamental stone column and slab, portions of a tessellated pavement, &c., were found, about four feet below the surface. The column is about four feet in height, by ten inches in diameter, moulded, but fractured about a foot from the top. The stone slab is about three feet six inches by two feet, three edges being chamfered and ornamented, and the fourth left square and plain. The front edge was curiously carved with triangular-shaped indentations, with a scallop in the centre, and double crosses at the ends, and twisted bead borders.

In a trench, excavated at a little distance, other evidences of Roman remains were found by Mr. Winwood and Mr. Parker : A number of small tesserae, bits of black pottery,



*Height*  
*3ft. 2in.*



*3ft. x 2ft. 4in.*

*Stone Pillar and Slab, dug up on the site of a Roman Villa, near  
Wincanton, Somerset.*

Wm. Bidgood, Taunton.

charred wood, masses of burnt earth, in which grains of wheat were discernible, and a lozenge-shaped stone tile with remains of an iron nail, were also brought to light.

The Rev. Prebendary SCARTH said there was little doubt that this was the site of a Roman villa, and that if it could be thoroughly investigated they would find tessellated pavements here, and perhaps extending over a considerable area. Those tesserae were never found except on the site of a Roman villa; and, moreover, the site was just such an one as would be chosen. There was a good spring close at hand; it was on the declivity of a hill; and it was in a very fertile part of the country. It was about seven miles from the main Roman road; but that did not show that there was not a vicinal road near it, as villas were always situated on a good road. Mr. Scarth proceeded to show the points of resemblance between this site and that of one of the most interesting Roman villas discovered in this country—at Chedworth, near Cirencester—and also described the general appearance of such remains. The walls, when uncovered in a previously undisturbed site, were generally found to be about four feet in height; the rest of the edifice had originally been formed of a framework, filled in with wattles, similar to the “cob” walls still found in Devonshire, and other parts of the country.

Upon the site of these Roman villas there were found a great quantity of hexagonal tiles, which had covered the roofs. The area of the villas was very considerable. They were long, low buildings, sometimes taking the form of a square, and sometimes of an L. Sometimes there were three ranges of buildings, and these were again enclosed in a large quadrangle or court. Within the enclosure were found burials in stone sarcophagi or in rough clay black urns. They had found at least a dozen of those rough

urns near Bath, which were at first supposed to be ancient British, but were nothing of the kind—they were Roman. They found in Roman villas some of the coarsest pottery.

The speaker went on to describe discoveries of Roman remains near Gloucester, and at Lydney, Cirencester, and other places; and next referred to the stone column which had been found here. It was a very curious fact that nearly every villa which he had had the opportunity of seeing opened, produced one of those short pillars. He was inclined to think the present one Roman. Very lately there were some stone slabs found at Cirencester which had a pattern very much like that on the stone slab found here. Those were said to be mediæval, and not Roman; but it was proved afterwards that they were found on the level of the Roman city. Cirencester was a Roman city that was constantly producing remains. Many of the remains which were considered mediæval he believed to be Roman. He thought this pedestal, as well as the stone slab, was Roman; the pillar was turned in a lathe.

A pleasant and picturesque drive brought the excursionists to

### North Cadbury,

where the party was joined by the Right Rev. the Lord Bishop of Bath and Wells, and many other members of the Society from the surrounding district.

The Rector of the parish, the Rev. H. Castlehow, kindly produced the old parish registers—two volumes in parchment, beginning with the year 1558, in excellent preservation, and full of beautifully executed initial letters. The following entry occurs in the register—“About the yeare of our Lorde 1567, in drawinge up the great bell into the tower, y<sup>t</sup> fell downe by some mischance, brake downe the loftes before y<sup>t</sup>, and brake the marbell tombe

in the bellfrye, bearynge the picture of John Fferroure, in brasse or copper, wh sometyes was Rectore of the P'sonage of this P'yish of North Cadburye, about wh tombe was wryten in brasse or copper thease words :—  
 'Heare lyeth the bodye of John Fferroure, sometyes parson of thys place, whiche builded this tower at his owne proper coste'—wh then was playnlye to be read of anye, and was read by me

GILES RUSSELL,  
 then minister of this p'yshe."

### The Church,

dedicated to St. Michael, was rebuilt by Elizabeth Lady Botreaux about 1417. In restoring the chancel, a few years ago, a flat stone was found on the top of the wall plate, when the old roof was removed, with the date 1417 scratched on it, and under it a mason's chisel. The church was formerly collegiate. A copy of the charter granted by Henry V appears in Dugdale's Monasticon. The church is a fine specimen of the Early Perpendicular style, and consists of a tower, nave, chancel, north and south aisle, and north and south porch. There is a tradition in the parish that the tower was first built, and stood alone for some time. This is borne out by the appearance which the junction of the side aisles with the tower still presents. Both aisles appear to have been joined on to the tower, and of later construction. The wall of the south aisle encloses a portion of the string-course of the tower above the clerestory windows; and the north aisle encloses one of the tower buttresses with the old string-course as far upwards as the roof. There are four clustered columns on each side of the nave, and clerestory windows over them. The roof of the nave, side aisles, and chancel is of oak,

covered with lead ; and that of the nave and chancel rests on fine carved stone brackets. The reredos of Bath stone, containing the four Evangelists, in Painswick stone, coloured, and the sedilia, are new. The oak benches in the nave are unusually massive, and the ends give specimens of early carving. On the back of one bench is the date, "Anno Domini, Mill<sup>mo</sup> cccccxxviii." There is an ancient stone font at the west end of the nave ; and in the tower a richly-sculptured altar tomb, with two recumbent figures upon it—a knight in armour, and a lady by his side, and at their feet a lion and a dog. There is a deeply carved canopy at the head, but no arms or inscription. On each side of the reredos is a lofty niche with a fine sculptured canopy over it, apparently coeval with the chancel. The north and south porch, each with two windows, and fire places, and the former with a parvise, are striking features in the church.

### Cadbury Camp

was next visited. Colonel Bennett, the proprietor, had arranged for inspection a collection of interesting objects found in the Camp, including horseshoes, bones, Roman coins, querns, and a stone in the form of a hatchet.

The Rev. H. W. WINWOOD described the bones as those of *bos longifrons*, deer and swine.

Mr. STEVENS stated that the quern was of an early and very interesting form.

Mr. JAMES PARKER thought the stone hatchet very doubtful. One very like it from Cambridge had been recently examined by himself, and Dr. Rolleston, and they had come to the conclusion that it had never been manufactured.

A gentleman present observed that two stone hatchets, very similar, had lately been found near Congresbury.

Mr. JONES remarked, that he believed there was no classical authority to prove that the Romans ever used horseshoes. There certainly was no Latin word for horseshoe, and he did not know that any illustration of their use occurred in any ancient sculpture. The only instance he had himself seen, was a faint trace on one hoof of one of the horses in a *biga*, basso relievo, in the Museum at Avignon, but this he was sure was accidental. Columella, the great Roman authority on rural affairs, in his treatise on the choosing and rearing of horses, makes no reference to horseshoes. It was, therefore, he thought by no means certain that the horseshoes were of the same date with the Roman coins.

Having enjoyed the magnificent view, embracing a district, it is said, with a radius of 30 miles, the company assembled on the camp under the presidency of Sir W Medlycott.

The LORD BISHOP pointed out how that the ancient occupants had, in this camp, according to their usual custom, taken advantage of the natural formation of the ground in constructing this strong-hold.

The Rev. Prebendary SCARTH, at the request of the president, described the camp and its fortifications. He remarked that the subject was one which was full of interest, but which it was very difficult to say anything certain about. He thought that all he could say, after examining this camp, and looking round the fortifications of the encampment, and comparing it with the other camps of a similar kind in this country, but more especially in South Wales, and all that line of country which was occupied by the Britons previous to the Roman conquest, when Caractacus so nobly defended his country—having himself examined those defences, he was inclined to think

that everything showed this to have been an ancient British earthwork; and he thought the remains found within it tended to confirm that opinion. The chief features of this were the very strong ramparts with which it was surrounded, and more especially the entrances. The entrances were particularly curious from the way in which they were fortified, showing that they were of particular importance. He knew of no camp which showed the entrances so well defined as this, except that wonderful work, Maiden Castle, near Dorchester, which was one of the noblest and most wonderful works that existed in this country. He thought the earthwork they were now examining was only second to that. It did not appear to have had any Roman camp within in, as was sometimes found. There was a Roman camp within the British fortification at Clifton, for example. Again, the construction of the ramparts here, so far as he had been able to examine them, was very different from what they found at Clifton, where there was an inner core composed of lime and stone, a mass which could not be cut through.

At the Society's meeting last year he had the opportunity of saying something on the camps at Clifton Down, and on each side of the Avon. Their ramparts were a solid mass of concrete, and that led us to suppose that the Romans must have had a hand in the formation of two of those camps at least. Here there was nothing of the kind; the ramparts were composed of lias stones and earth—the simplest kind of ramparts; the sort you would find at Maiden Castle. Then this did not lie at all in the line of a Roman road, so far as he could make out. It lay a considerable distance from the great fosse road, and also the road which ran along the top of the Mendip Hills; and although there might have been vicinal roads near it, it



did not appear to have been a main point of occupation in Roman times. That was another confirmation of the opinion that it was an ancient British fortress. He thought on examining the ancient British fortresses they would find that the earlier ones were really the stonger. The indications we had of the way the Britons fortified themselves in ancient times showed that they were by no means an unskilled people. He thought we very much depreciated their condition at the time they were conquered by the Romans. He thought the very fact that a chief like Caractacus could stand against the whole Roman force seven years, and could for that time defend himself, showed that our ancient British forefathers were a people not at all to be despised.

One point it was necessary to clear up. He did not know if there was a spring to be found within this camp—(a Voice: Yes, three springs)—there might be; but the truth was these great fortresses were not long occupied. They were only occupied in times of national danger, when the cattle were driven in, and when perhaps the inhabitants of the whole district took refuge. It would have required a very large force to have besieged a camp of those times; and he did not think they were long held as places of permanent occupation, but only for temporary refuge. That belief was suggested to him by an inspection of Maiden Castle; and he saw points of resemblance in the New Zealand pahs. He wished he could have thrown more light upon the camp.

Mr. Wm. ARTHUR JONES said he wished to supplement the interesting observations which Mr. Scarth had made, by reminding them of what had been said by his late much respected colleague, Mr. Warre, who was one of the best authorities we had ever had in this county on earth-

works. In papers communicated by him to the Proceedings, he had described three types of encampments, and he had placed this camp of Cadbury among those which were mainly occupied during the time of war as strong-holds. They would notice here the absence of anything like a cattle enclosure. Most of the ancient British camps in Somersetsshire were composed of three enclosures,—first, the cattle enclosure; then an enclosed and fortified space for dwellings; and lastly the strong-hold, which corresponded to the keep of a Norman castle. Mr. Jones further observed, that when the ditches were of their original depth, and the mounds loftier and steeper, and bristling with sharp-pointed stakes, it would have been no easy matter to take this place by storm.

The Rev. W. BARNES, who was next called upon, made a few observations upon a discovery which had been made at Maiden Castle, inasmuch as he believed that discovery might give hints for other such discoveries in such strong-holds as this and others.

Some time ago the farmer who held the land was trying to make a sheep pond at the top of the hill, that is, in the outer camp, the one we might assume to be the cattle enclosure; and within the space of a square sheep pond he found no less than seven round pits—very round, very clearly cut, and about the size of wells, and from four to seven feet deep. All of them were filled with a very black, loose, fatty earth, and that earth was found to be mainly of animal and vegetable substances. In the earth were found many interesting objects—pieces of pottery; one of the stones of a quern; many bones, especially the bones of the red deer; those bones showing at the same time what their animal food was in those days.

Among the things found in one of those pits was a comb,

which, it was shown, could not have been Roman, but belonged to a very early time. It was made of a flat bone—a sheep's, he believed—ground down, and the teeth were cut in the end, not in the side of it. Well, he believed that if the turf were taken off there would be found scores, if not hundreds, of those pits, for they were very close together. He was of opinion that the pits were made at various times. He had seen one instance where a pit was begun to be excavated, and evidently abandoned, because it cut into the circle of another, which was an older pit, but still not so old that they could think fit to dig into it. He made these notes because he dared say they might readily find such pits here, and he hoped it would be tried. It was only to take an iron bar and try over the ground.

The BISHOP inquired what Mr. Barnes thought those pits were for?

Mr. BARNES : Refuse pits, and not dwellings.

The BISHOP : But that was one of the common forms of the earliest dwellings—pits where the circles touched one another, and I suppose were covered over with branches. Is that not the earliest acknowledged form of British dwellings?

The Rev. Canon MEADE mentioned Pen pits; and another gentleman referred to those of Worle.

Mr. BARNES said they were filled with what was no doubt animal and vegetable matter; and the farmer found it very productive when applied as manure. Proceeding to offer a few notes on the "Stone Age," he said it so happened that speech tallied with history in so many points, and that our history as well as the Celtic speech ran back to the stone age. Now, we had the word flint, and the word chisel; both these words belonged to the stone age, and expressed a solid Saxon

image. Thus, the Teutonic word for arrow was *flean* (to fly), and *et* was a diminutive added, making *fleanet*, or flint; therefore flint meant arrow. Chesil—such as the Chesil Beach near Weymouth—meant hard stone, pebble, or flint; therefore that word was used when a chisel, or *ceosel*, was of stone. The word hammer, meant a hard knob, a stone. These words, and many others he might mention, went back to the stone age, and were proofs of the Celtic age of our race.

Mr. E. T. STEVENS followed with some remarks on the pits on Maiden Castle. Within the last week he had been negotiating for the purchase of those specimens found there. He would mention that he had particularly stipulated that if there should be any local museum or collector, he would waive all claim. He had lately examined in the neighbourhood of Salisbury a great many of those pits; and he had found remains almost identical with those which occurred at Maiden Castle. He had found three combs, and, if indications of workmanship, and also slight indications of shape, had anything to do with it, they would belong to three periods.

Mr. Stevens gave a detailed description of the specimens, and also referred to discoveries at another place near Salisbury, and in the Hebrides, and at Grimes' Graves, Norfolk. He enlarged at some length upon the interesting evidences of ancient excavations for flints and chalk. The pits at Salisbury were clearly not of that form. He would give them a brief statement of the means by which those discoveries had been made. The ground was trenched for garden purposes, and they found all over the field that black patches occurred. The idea was that they had been burning weeds there. The owner cut into the black earth, and he was not satisfied with that explanation. He went

to work and found himself in a chamber of a bee-hive shape, not at all of the straight sides which were found at Maiden Castle and elsewhere. It was a chamber of earth, about six feet in height, and eight feet in diameter. He not only found that, but on working out one corner he worked into a second, a third, and a fourth chamber of similar shape, and all communicating with each other; and there was likewise a semi-recess, with what object he was not prepared to say. In the course of some recent excavations it was found that the aperture was about two feet six inches at the upper portion; it was enlarged downwards, and then swelled out into the chamber; and that was the invariable way in which the approach to these pits was made. Found in those pits were articles the same as they always rendered. There were a bone of *bos longifrons* worked into a hook, a bone ring, bone combs, a bone needle; very few flint tools; pottery, all hand-made, and the ornamentation of which was of a very peculiar and singular character. But while they found, until a recent date, no evidence of an iron implement, all the flint tools that they found had been flaked by means of iron implements; and there were rust-marks upon them in almost every case. Mr. Stevens went on to speak of trenches which had been found around some of the pits, containing specimens of Roman pottery.

Mr. SCARTH pointed out how very strongly the entrance to the camp was protected. There were eight mounds or ridges, each with a ditch between them; and the road in was curved, so that the attacking force might be taken in flank. Of course had that camp been well garrisoned it would have been almost impossible for any force to have

taken it. In order to get a full idea of the strength of the place, he advised them to keep along the ridge on which they were now standing for some distance.

Attention was called by Colonel BENNETT to a cottage near the church (South Cadbury); which Mr. Scarth suggested to have formerly been the "priest's house."

At Compton Pauncefoot the company halted to partake of a collation, which had been prepared in the National School-room.

### The Church of Compton Pauncefoot

was then visited, when the Rev. James Senior, the Incumbent, pointed out its principal features. Four modern painted glass windows, of Belgian work, were much admired.

By the courtesy of Captain Sandford the cavalcade passed through the beautiful grounds of Compton Castle on their way to

### Blackford Church.

Mr. SCARTH briefly pointed out the interesting points of the church. The doorway was a Norman arch of very early character, although not the earliest. It was almost a *fac simile* of a Norman arch at Langridge, not far from Bath, and was in fact a type of doorway which had been copied into a good many churches; he had found them in various parts of England. The next point was the font, which was Norman, and of a very early character; and then the staircase which formerly led to the rood loft. In one of the side windows was a little stained glass, one pane having a chalice, with I H S on it. It was an interesting church, and well worthy a visit. The corbels still exist, which formerly supported the beam that bore the

rood loft. There was an instance in Wales of a rood loft still remaining as it was in the olden time; it was in Montgomery, and was the only one he knew of.

### Maperton.

The handsome church of SS. Peter and Paul was re-built about two years ago under the direction of Mr. Hall, architect, and is very highly decorated in its interior; the windows being also all filled with stained or painted glass. There is some very fine Bath-stone carving in the reredos and other parts of the chancel. Fixed in its place in the chancel, and in strong contrast with the elegant decorations, is a quaint old piscina, which

The Rev. G. SAUNDERS informed the Society was found built into one of the old walls that was pulled down. It showed, he thought, that there must have been a Norman church standing on this site before the one which is now rebuilt, and which was in the Early Decorated style. Some very curious bits of old stone carving have been built into the walls of the porch to preserve them.

Mr. HALL, the architect, described the work which had been done, and gave it as his opinion that the tower, which remains untouched, was built in the latter part of the fifteenth century.

Mr. SCARTH acceded to a request that he would explain the origin of the largest fragment of old carving amongst those to which we have referred as being preserved in the porch. The fragment is rather more than a foot square, and it was examined with much interest.

He said that some years ago a very interesting Saxon cross was found near Scarborough, and he took a very great deal of pains with it, which resulted in his discovering the names of six or seven Saxon abbesses. In the

north of England there were some Saxon remains, and also in Devon and some parts of Somerset. When he saw this carving here, at first sight he took it to be a part of the stem of a Saxon cross. Those crosses were much more common than was now supposed ; in the north some of them actually remained in their original positions. They were put at the heads of graves, and were principally composed of three stones ; sculptured, often with three figures in a row, and below and above those figures were Runic knots, or representation of basket-work. This piece had all those characteristics when you first saw it, but when you looked closer into it, it would be found that the ornamentation was of a later period. It was Early English. There was the trefoil, which was not found in the Saxon carvings ; but when you looked closer into it, you found traces also of the shape of the cross. He apprehended, therefore, that instead of being part of the stem of a cross it was a portion of the cover of a coffin—about the thirteenth century work. It was interesting, showing that the church had an early foundation.

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