

## Second Day: Excursion.

The Members and their friends visited the following places in the Excursion.

### Hilton Church,

which according to MR. FREEMAN, is in the transitional or not very advanced Early English style: the eastern bay probably the original chancel, the Perpendicular clerestory windows inserted, and the chancel added or rebuilt. The roof is a very fine one of its kind, with a low-pitched tie-beam. The pulpit also is a good specimen of its style and date, A.D. 1618. The pulpit-cloth is especially deserving of notice, having been made from an old cope. The Rector, the Rev. Prebendary Gray, stated that the chancel was said to have been built by Amberson, Precentor of Wells.

MR. PARKER said that

### The Barn at Hilton

is one of the finest in the country ; it is lighter than either of those at Doultling or at Glastonbury, and probably rather later in date, but still in the style of the fourteenth century, and probably dates from the latter part of it. There is more ornament than usual, and of very good character ; the gables are terminated by finials consisting of bunches of foliage, well carved. Near the point of each gable is a small window of two lights with pointed heads, but under one semicircular dripstone, and enclosing arch, affording one of the many indications that the form of the arch is no guide whatever to the style or date of a building, but is always dictated by necessity or convenience. The flat arches over the doorways indicate the same thing. Under each of these small windows, a little lower in the gable wall, is a carving in the panel of one of the emblems of the Evangelists, shewing that the barn belonged to the church. The loopholes are particularly good, and have rear-arches to them, like windows. The roof is also original, perfect, and very good. This old barn is a far finer building in every way than many modern churches.

The manor-house is of too late a date to be considered as archæological.

### Hulle Church

is a transitional Norman church altered into Perpendicular, but the churchwardens had been too busy with the building to enable them to make much of its history. The corbels of the old roof remained, and at the entrance to the porch is a holy-water basin perfect, which is of extremely rare occurrence.

## Ditcheat

was the next place visited, MR. FREEMAN directing particular attention to the church, which is an exceedingly fine specimen of architecture, being in the form of a cross, with nave, chancel, north and south aisles, and a tower sixty feet high. It is dedicated to St. Mary Magdalene. There was, said Mr. Freeman, a good deal of history and a good deal of art about such a church as that. It was of the early style, but had been much changed, more so than the churches of Pilton and Doultong, but not so much as St. Cuthbert's (Wells), St. John's (Glastonbury), and others. Mr. Freeman shewed what had been done to the church at various periods, and it appeared that one of the principal of the altering parties was Dean Gunthorpe, in 1472. One feature to be remarked was the east window, the tracery of which was of a pure geometrical design; the outline was a very good one, and the centre figure was not the circle seen in some churches, nor the square which was common in Germany, but a triangle; the whole of the design was carried out with boldness. The fittings-up of the choir were worthy of attention and also of preservation. They were not equal to those glorious fittings which had been taken away from Wimborne Minster; but as an example of the ancient fitting-up of the choir, they were really very valuable. The screen, the stalls, and the whole of the fittings, the date of which was 1630, were just the sort of things he would not imitate but would preserve, for they were valuable historically as shewing the retention of the older styles of the first half of the seventeenth century. He noticed two very good hagioscopes, or squints, by means of which people in the body of the church might see and hear what was going on at the high

altar. The roof of the church was weak compared with the roof of other churches in the county. In that church as usual the original choir was under the tower, and he was strengthened in that view by the fact that there were two little corbels by the church arch, which could not have served any other purpose except to support the roodloft. The church, urged Mr. Freeman, was one very well worth study. In regard to the hagioscopes, Mr. Parker expressed his opinion that they did away with the objection commonly raised to the cruciform plan of a church, and by means of them persons could see and hear all that was going on at the altar.

Contiguous to the church is the

### Manor House,

about which and its former possessors the REV. HILL WICKHAM, of Horsington, gave some particulars. The manor-house and the church formerly belonged to the Abbey of Glastonbury, and they were subsequently granted to Sir Ralph Hopton, who was one of the best specimens of a cavalier of the time of Charles I., a consistent Royalist, and a moderate man, who avoided all the excesses that were too frequently committed by King Charles's party. Mr. Wickham gave a history of each possessor of the manor-house, and of his doings in connection with national affairs. The manor-house is of the time of James I. in part, but the larger part of the time of Charles II., and therefore it is not archæological.

### Evercreech Church

had been so much repaired and added to, that with the exception of the tower, there was little for the archæologist to notice. The tower was so like that at Wrington, that

MR. FREEMAN thought it must either have been an imitation, or more probably the first attempt of the architect who afterwards built the beautiful church of Wrington.

### Chesterblade Church

is small, but interesting and curious. The chancel has unfortunately been rebuilt on a smaller scale, and deprived of all interest; but the walls of the nave are Norman, and the doorway is of that style, with alterations in the Perpendicular style. The east wall of the nave has the Norman coping preserved, with the two springers or corbels at the ends, with curious carving; this feature is very rare, almost unique. Norman coping of any kind is very rare, and here it is remarkably perfect, and the springing-stones being left, with part of the coping cut in the same stone, there can be no doubt as to the date of it, probably about the middle of the twelfth century. The chancel-arch is Perpendicular, cut through the Norman wall when the chancel was rebuilt. On the south side of it stands a Perpendicular stone pulpit or reading desk; it is in the form of a desk with shelf and panelling, but may have been used for both purposes. As its character is of the time of Henry VIII., it may possibly have been a desk for the Bible immediately after the Reformation.

### West Cranmore Church

has a fair tower of the Taunton type, giving the turret rather more prominence than usual. The vaulted roof good, also the tower-arch.

### At Cranmore Hall,

East Cranmore, the seat of J. M. Paget, Esq., the father of Major Paget, M.P., the President of the Society, Mr. Paget, his family, and several friends gave the party

a hearty welcome. After spending a few minutes in strolling about the extensive grounds, they were called together to hear a paper read by the Rev. W. A. Jones (for the REV. T. HUGO), "On the last Survivors of the Religious Orders in Somersetshire."

The large company assembled then partook of the sumptuous repast provided for them by Mr. and Mrs. Paget. On the motion of J. C. SOMERVILLE, ESQ., of Dinder House, the cordial thanks of the Society were presented for the kind and cordial reception with which they had been favoured.

On the motion of F. H. DICKINSON, ESQ., seconded by the REV. CANON MEADE, it was resolved "That the members place on record their sincere and deep regret at the absence of their Secretary, the Rev. F. Warre, through illness, and likewise the expression of their earnest hope that his health may be so far restored as to enable him to continue in future years the good services for which the Society has been so deeply indebted to him from its foundation." This resolution, carried by acclamation, was suitably acknowledged by Mr. Warre's nephew, F. W. Cornish, Esq., of Eton College.

The health of the President, proposed by W. AYSHFORD SANFORD, ESQ., was duly honoured, and the best thanks of the members presented to him for his able services.

The cordial thanks of the Society were also presented to W. C. Walker, Esq., of Shepton Mallet, and to the Members of the Local Committee for the valuable assistance rendered in the arrangements of the meeting.

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