

The Parish Church of Ilminster.

The tomb of Nicholas Wadham, the founder of Wadham College, Oxford, was first examined. It was erected in 1618. Mr. Batten explained the armorial bearings and the families which they represented.

MR. PARKER described the interior of the Church, and pointed out the openings in the transept pillars which, technically called squints, commanded the high altar and

enabled the congregation to see and hear with greater facility. It was an arrangement which might well be copied, but modern architects would not see the advisability of adopting any of the acts of our ancestors. The Church was built in the earlier part of the reign of Henry VII. Sir William Wadham built the transepts, the central tower, and the porch. The first part of the Church was much richer than the remainder. The north transept was very rich indeed. They had an example of the vestry behind the altar on each side of which was a door. There was a similar vestry at Magdalen College, Oxford. Stupid people call it the confessional. It was an arrangement that was found in many parts of England, and, like the squints, might be revived. The nave of the Church was rebuilt in 1825. A gentleman had told him that there were originally five arches and that they diminished the number of them to four in the most stupid manner. The high pews and gallery across the Church were equally objectionable. There might have been galleries originally. He knew many galleries which were placed on the side of the Church. It would be well to follow the example set by our ancestors—to have a country Church built as a country Church without galleries. A town Church might have galleries, but they should never extend right across the windows as they did in that Church. The interior was characteristic of the stupidity of the architecture of the great Georgian era.

MR. FREEMAN said that the Church was a very good example of a Somersetshire Church. It had retained its cruciform shape. It was indeed very similar to St. Cuthbert's at Wells, and St. John's at Glastonbury. The central tower at Ilminster had been preserved, and with the exception of the nave the Church was in very good

preservation. It contained two varieties of the perpendicular style of architecture. The Chancel was unusually large. In a Church of that size they expected to find aisles or Chapels attached to it. The founders of the chantries had devoted their whole attention to the transepts and had thus produced a chancel of unusual size. The south transept was of the customary Somersetshire type of perpendicular tracery. There was a piece of fan tracery which was very similar to that found in the Church at Axbridge. The north transept was unusually large and of a peculiar style, as it did not follow the usual Somersetshire pattern. It was something similar to what was found in St. Mary's, at Oxford, and King's Chapel, and it must have been built in the reign of Henry VII. There were also one or two Churches in Northamptonshire of similar style. The north window was decorated. The roofs in all parts deviated from the usual pattern. They had been strangely patched and mangled, but there was little doubt that they were coved roofs. He quite concurred with what had fallen from Mr. Parker in reference to the nave. The vestry was situate in exactly the same spot as it was found in all the great Minsters. The greatest gratitude was due to the founders of Wadham College for two things—that they did not make their fellowship terminable, and that they forbade their warden to marry.

MR. NEVILLE GRENVILLE thought that the society should communicate with the warden of the College and inform him of the dilapidated state of their founder's tomb. The heads of the other Colleges had been liberal enough to keep the tombs of their founders in a good state of preservation, and he had no doubt the heads of Wadham College would do the same notwithstanding the injunctions their founder had imposed upon them.

The company then left the Church, and Mr. Freeman explained its external proportions. He thought that Mr. Parker had been a little too hard upon those who restored the Church in 1825. They succeeded in following the general outline of the Church, and that was more than he could say of a good many who repaired Churches at that time. He thought that Mr. Parker had taken a leaf out of his book. He seemed to be pugnacious, whereas he (Mr. Freeman) by some chance or other was peaceable. He thought that the tower was an imitation of the central tower of Wells Cathedral. It was much loftier in proportion than Wells, but in its details it coincided. The north transept was very rich in point of detail, but decidedly superior to the south in purity of style. The north transept windows contained corrupt tracery. There seemed to be some change in the design during the progress of the work. Mr. Freeman then minutely pointed out the details of the Church to substantiate this statement.

The Chantry House, and Grammar School.

MR. PARKER said that he was requested to say a few words as to the Chantry Houses. The one opposite the Church was re-built in Elizabeth's time, and was now converted into a School House. It followed the example of the small manor houses of the period. In the centre were the chambers (as they were called) of the two schoolmasters. The chantry priest's house was built in the 15th century—perhaps by one of the chantry priests of that magnificent chapel. They could see the outlines on the walls. As there were such a number of much finer houses of the period in the county, it was hardly worth while to lose time over it.

The company walked across the fields to the

Donyatt Quarries,

which were explained by Mr. Moore, and then visited

Donyatt Church.

MR. FREEMAN, in explaining the principal features of the church, said that there was nothing particular to be seen outside the edifice except the tower, which derived a good deal of character from being of considerable height. The chancel walls had been cut through when the alterations were made, and the capitals were of peculiar design—a sort of cross between the Devonshire and Somersetshire patterns. The Church had gone through a good deal of patching, and the pillars did not agree. They had been put up in a very awkward way, and one was much higher than the others. He thought that some great change had taken place when the chancel arches were rebuilt. The windows of the aisle were of a purely local type. The windows at the east and west were of modern type, and therefore there was nothing more to say of them.

MR. PARKER said that it seemed that the Church was erected in the reign of Henry VII., and that alterations were made in it in the time of Henry VIII. There were chantry chapels at the east end of each aisle, which was peculiar to the Devonshire style. The oak carving of the benches had been well preserved, and prominent among it was the linen panel, which was peculiar to the reign of Henry VIII. Open seats were the best Church furniture in the world. There was nothing equal to them—they possessed richness without extravagance. It was a great pleasure to him to see a Church so well restored, and he was pleased to bear testimony to the general excellence of the work.

The Members then walked to

Donyatt Manor House,

and having first visited a building now used as a barn, which is in a very good state of preservation,

MR. PARKER said that it was a building of two stories in height, and portions of the fine old place still remained. It appeared to him to be one side of the quadrangle, and not a part of the regular establishment of the house, but chambers attached to the house. The date of it was 1345. The second Earl of Salisbury built the house without a license from the King, and he had to apologise and pay a certain amount to the crown. There was, therefore, no doubt as to the date. The windows looked real, and were, no doubt, fourteen-century work. Mr. Parker said that a pointed arch was only one sign of gothic architecture, and a great deal too much importance was given to that particular sign. One of the windows in the barn was of the decorated style.

MR. MUNCKTON explained that in the 18th year of the reign of Edward III. the manor of Donyatt belonged to William de Montacute. He had a capital seat and manor at Donyatt. In the 22nd year of Edward III. he caused the house to be forfeited. Having done so he was obliged to sue the King's pardon. He was created Earl of Salisbury on the 13th of March, 1337.

Through the courtesy of the occupier the Members went through the manor house, which contains a very fine old kitchen with magnificent windows.

MR. PARKER said that the house was built in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. It was a fine Elizabethan house of the period, not possessing any particular interest.

MR. MUNCKTON said that in 1552 Edward VI. gave the manor of Donyatt, in Somerset, to William Herbert, the first Earl of Pembroke. In 1625 the manor belonged to Sir Edward Coke, Lord Chief Justice of England, by whom several alterations were made in the premises.

The company then returned to Ilminster.

MR. W. A. SANFORD, gave a paper on the

Pleistocene Mammalia of Somerset,

referring more particularly to the fine collection of the remains of these animals, principally collected by Mr. Williams and Mr. Beard, and which were purchased by public subscription for the County Museum at Taunton. This paper will appear as the "Introduction to the Catalogue of the Pleistocene Mammalia in the Museum," which will be published from time to time in the proceedings of this Society.

MR. DICKINSON proposed a vote of thanks to Mr Sanford for his address. He congratulated the Society upon possessing gentlemen—Mr. Dawkins and Mr. Sanford—who had devoted their time to the investigation of the animals to which the bones found in the Mendip Hills belonged. He wished to know how it was that the cave bones had remained in such an excellent state of preservation, whereas the bones at Nineveh were fast decaying. Mr. Dickinson referred to the labours of Mr. Beard, who had collected the bones from the Mendip Hills.

MR. BOYD DAWKINS wished to say a few words in reference to the climate of England at the time the animals referred to were in existence. Mr. Sanford thought that the mean temperature was the same as it was at the present time, from the fact that oak and other trees grew at that period. In controverting that opinion he would put into

the witness box the only witnesses he was able to bring before them. They had found the remains of the musk sheep near the river Avon, and associated with those of the reindeer. The musk sheep still existed in the Arctic regions of North America. There was a time when they were found in Northern Asia, but they had since disappeared. The reindeer ranged throughout the Northern part of Europe, Asia, and America, and its habit depended upon a climate of severity. From those circumstances he argued that the climate of England at that time was an Arctic one. He differed from Mr. Sanford in thinking that the hippopotamus formerly lived in the rivers of England through the whole year. He thought that England was then the same in climatal conditions as Siberia—intense heat for three months in the year and intense cold for the remaining nine months of the year. In the summer time the hippopotamus may have wandered to England, and that accounted for the bones found in this country. He believed that the bones found were preserved from decay under conditions of severe cold, just as the Norway salmon packed in ice and sent to London. He could not tell how it was that the bones found in the caves were more durable than those found in graveyards, but it was a curious fact that they were much harder and in a better state of preservation than modern bones. He felt a great interest in the time when man first appeared upon the earth. They could not guess the immense time that man had been living on the earth, or even the immense antiquity of the earth. He was first clothed in skin and used the rudest flint instruments for all his purposes. When those animals passed away that older form of man passed away along with them. Then they found a race of men living in the

South of France, of similar habits with the Esquimaux, and both people must have lived under similar climatal conditions. These men all used bone instruments. They mastered the use of the bow and were armed with poisonous arrows. They were certainly a superior race to the preceding one. After a great blank then man appeared in England, France, Germany, and other countries. He used rude flint and stone instruments. Then he passed away and another race of men came along who made use of polished weapons. In turn they also passed away and were supplanted by men who were acquainted with the use of bronze, and who used bronze for every purpose of life. Then the entry of the Gaul into England opened up another period known as the great iron period. They could simply treat that subject geologically. They knew not when one party succeeded another, nor did they know how many years elapsed between one period and the other.

MR. FREEMAN then read a very able paper upon the "Battle of Hastings."
