

Stone Coffins found under the Pavement in
South Transept, and under Tower,
Wells Cathedral.

BY W. FIELDER, SACRISTAN.

IN May, 1893, while excavating in order to lay pipes for taking the waste water from the new organ blowing apparatus,

1. A tomb or stone coffin was found, about eighteen inches under flooring, four feet west of entrance to Canons' vestry (St. Martin's Chapel), very complete, made of Douling stone in pieces, and covering of same stone, the sides of coffin worked fine and smooth, hollow for head, everything below the middle of the body entirely perished, ribs and shoulder bones visible, but much decayed. The skull appeared very complete, and something like hair seemed to be attached to it; feet pointing east; no chalice marks. The lower portion of the coffin had to be sawn off in order to lay the pipe; the end was built up with the piece cut off, and the remains left undisturbed. It must have been a slender man, as the coffin in the broadest part was not more than about sixteen inches wide. (These remarks are made from looking into the coffin from the feet end.)

2. Six feet to the north, in a straight line, was another coffin, which had been broken in and was out of shape. Bones found there, which were reburied.

3. Eleven feet further north, another coffin (just opposite the iron gate of chapel of St. Calixtus), all crushed in and out of shape. No remains visible.

4. In a line six feet west of the centre of the north projection of the screen of the choir entrance, is a solid stone coffin about a foot under the flooring, rough inside as if cut out with an axe only, rounded at the feet, with remains in it in a very decomposed state, as of a very large person. The body seemed to have been buried wrapped in some linen substance, and with sandals* (leather) on the feet, of which there were remains. Close adjoining the above, on the north side, are more remains and fragments, very decomposed, of what seemed an oak coffin.

* Except the leathern sandals, there seems to be no clue as to either the date or the identity of the persons buried.—[ED.]

[Communicated by the Rev. Canon Church, who remarks that “the absence of chalice and patens seems to show that the persons buried were lay folk.”]