

Second Day's Proceedings.

On Wednesday the excursions were continued, a large party of members and visitors, numbering nearly one hundred altogether, leaving the "Red Lion Hotel" at 9.30 a.m., in carriages and brakes.

Torr Steps.

After a delightful drive of six miles, through most picturesque scenery, the first stop was made at the famous Torr Steps. This remarkable bridge is over the river Barle, which here separates the parishes of Dulverton and Hawkridge. According to Mr. J. Ll. W. Page's interesting book on "Exmoor," the measurements of the stones are as follows:—The average length of slab is, perhaps, about seven feet; the width, three feet six inches; the longest being eight feet six inches by five feet wide. In the centre they are laid singly; towards the end the stones being narrower are placed side by side. The piers facing the current are protected by sloping stones about four feet in length. There is not an atom of cement in the structure. The name Torr, sometimes spelt Tarr, according to the suggestion of Mr. Langrishe, is derived from the Celtic *tochar*, a "causeway," modified first to *toher* and then to Torr.

When the members were assembled at the steps, Mr. W. A. E. USSHER delivered a short address, in the course of which he said that after an examination of the rocks, he had not the

slightest hesitation in saying that they did not come from a distance, as near there they had the same kind of rock. That rock quarried easily, and there they had the natural rock without dressings. It was not possible to give the date of the stones. Of course there was the curious legend which had given it the name of the Devil's Bridge. He should like some archæologist to give an opinion as to whether it was a British or Roman work.

Mr. WEAVER said that authorities seemed to agree that it was pre-Roman.

Mr. USSHER: Then we will call it Druidic.

The heat was great, and the way steep, so the members much appreciated the kindness of Mrs. Darby, of Liscombe Farm, who took many of them in and gave them refreshment; from thence they proceeded to Winsford Hill, where the inscribed stone was inspected.

The Rev. D. P. ALFORD, late Vicar of Tavistock, said there were three similar stones in the vicarage garden there, one of which was found in Tavistock, and the other two were brought from the neighbouring village of Buckland Monachorum.

Mr. WEAVER said that the inscription on the stone at Winsford Hill bore in Roman characters the letters CARATACI [N]EPUS "the nephew of Caratacus." The inscription was reproduced in Vol. XXIX of the Society's *Proceedings*.

For the following quotation we are indebted to Mr. Dicker, of Winsford, showing that the stone was a landmark in 1279.

"Annals of Exmoor Forest," by E. J. Rawle, p. 39. "Perambulation" [1279]. "De Hernesbureghe per magnam viam usque Wamburegh usque Langestone."

"From Hernes Barrow [an ancient mark probably on Room Hill] by the great way, as far as Wambarrow [a well-known mark on the highest point of Winsford Hill], as far as Longstone [an inscribed Roman stone standing beside the old high-

way, about 120 yards from the guide post, where the road from Tarr to Winsford intersects the high road on Winsford Hill at Spire Cross.]”

A visit was afterwards paid to the Devil's Punch Bowl, a short distance away, and while looking at this vast depression, the visitors had a good view of a fine specimen of the red deer, which was distinctly seen at the bottom of the “Bowl.”

Exford Church.

After luncheon at the “White Horse Inn,” the members walked to Exford Church, where the Rector, the Rev. E. G. PEIRSON, read the following paper:—

“It is difficult for one who has hardly a smattering of archæological knowledge to add anything of interest about this parish to the interesting notes contributed by my predecessor on the occasion of the last visit of the Archæological Society. But, at all events, the Society has paid its visit to this church in the best of all weeks in the year, for this week is the octave of its Dedication Festival—the church being dedicated in the name of St. Mary Magdalene. Here at once is a somewhat curious fact. The church has not always been dedicated in her name. Its original dedication was ‘St. Peter.’ The change in the dedication took place at the time of the Reformation. One may well ask why St. Mary Magdalene was allowed to oust St. Peter. My belief is that the close connection between the name of St. Peter and the See of Rome rendered his name in the sixteenth century somewhat unpopular; while on the other hand the story of St. Mary Magdalene (who by-the-by was erroneously confused with the “woman in the city who was a sinner,”) was thought to be a prominent illustration of the doctrine of free forgiveness, which then had special prominence. Hence, I fancy, the change in the dedication. At all events, at the time of the Reformation, a special collect, epistle, and gospel were added to our Prayer

Book for St. Mary Magdalene's Day, though for some reason, at which I can only guess, it has since been removed. I want you to look at the capital of the most westerly pillar, and to tell me whether, as I sometimes fancy, it contains a record of this double dedication. I seem to see a P and two M's, which might possibly be due to a desire to permanently record this change. But I confess that what I read as these letters may also be nothing but stalks of the conventional foliage to be seen on all the capitals.

The addition of the south aisle to the church was made, as you will have seen, at the same time as the change in the dedication took place; and the circumstances which made the addition necessary, the means by which the funds were raised, and the name of the Priest, George Ellysworthy, who was instrumental in securing this addition, may all be gathered from those Somersetshire Wills which have given all of us so much pleasure and instruction.¹ Nine years ago, when pulling down, by the order of that terrible official, the Diocesan Surveyor, the old cottage that then stood at the church-gate, and which used to serve as the Parish Poor-house, I came upon many traces of this addition to the church. When the old south wall was taken down, the waste material was apparently used to build this cottage. The walls were of immense thickness, and buried in them were, what I believe to have been a piscina, and the top stone of a priest's doorway, as well as several other wrought stones, and some blocks of huge size. These stones are now in a rockery in my garden.

Now I want to ask of you, as experts, several questions for my own information. (1). Do you think that the upping-stock at the church-gate, or at least one stone of it ever formed part of a stone altar? Or am I drawing too largely on my imagination? (2). Can any one tell me authoritatively what the lost head of the preaching cross, by the south porch, originally was? I mean was it a plain or floriated cross? Or was

1.° *Wells Wills*, p. 84.

it a rood? I have long wished to be able to replace the head, but want to do it in a way that will not excite the ire of the Archæological Society. I wonder if you think it would be possible to reproduce the original with sufficient exactness, and also if you think it will be possible (and not altogether barbarous) to get the head cut from the old upping-stock?

(3). Another question on which I should like to elicit opinion is this. There is about half-a-mile from the church a cottage (once a small farmhouse) which bears the name of Prescott. From this cottage, a lane which is probably as ancient as any lane in the parish—and we have lanes which were demonstrably in use 800 years ago, and one of which, at least, bears a name that puts its date back indefinitely further—well, this particular lane from Prescott used to lead straight to the church. Though modern changes have partly diverted this track, yet its old course can easily be traced; and curiously enough, just where it used to strike the churchyard, a few projecting stones still form a rough stile over the wall. Now, what I want to know is, if you think that the name of this cottage (which still contains a round-headed stone doorway, and a little square window let into the side of the big fire-place), shows that it was the original priest's cot or parsonage house of this parish. I like to think that my predecessors, before they came into permanent residence here, used to stop at that house when they had come over the moor, and "clean themselves" before going into church. In that case the cottage, or at least its name, must date a long way back, for there seem to have been clergy resident here from early in the twelfth century.

Certainly these old lanes are of wonderful interest in this neighbourhood. They were used as convenient boundaries in the various perambulations of the forest of Exmoor, and the marks, mentioned in the course of these perambulations, which can almost all be identified to-day, all stand along the line of some still traceable and generally passable road or track. In

one case, however, a lane, used as a boundary of the forest at the time of the second perambulation in the twelfth century, which was led by the Dean of Salisbury, must have been in a very different condition to what it is in now, unless the Dean was a better horseman than the present Rector of Exford.

You will, of course, all remember how very eager the people and parsons of bygone days were to have their houses excluded from the forest. My house seems to have been lucky enough to stand just outside the boundaries, except during the unlucky reign of King John. He swept into the forest all houses lying west of a line from Dulverton to Minehead. But except during those few years my house stood either a couple of hundred yards, or, later on, one and-a-half miles outside the forest boundaries.

There is, I expect, a mass of interest for archæologists in a neighbourhood like this, where changes take place so slowly. Even my untrained eyes find plenty to interest them, and the spinning wheel and the pack saddle always demand a second glance. But if I am not mistaken, there is still more interest for the ear in the old stories that are told and the dialect that is still in use amongst us here."

Mr. BUCKLE expressed the opinion that the top of the churchyard cross was of tabernacle work, and it probably represented Christ on the Cross, with St. Mary and St. John standing on either side.

The RECTOR remarked that if, in the course of another thirty years, the Society visited Exford, the members must not be shocked if they found the cross restored to the form suggested by Mr. Buckle.

Colonel BRAMBLE expressed the opinion that the cross belonged to the 15th century period. It was the successor of the original cross, which was the meeting place for the people of the parish, and was there before the church was built.

A curious old stone, known as an "Upping Stone," placed at the entrance to the churchyard, was afterwards inspected.

The RECTOR explained that it was placed there for the convenience of women who attended the church, and enabled them to get on horseback after the service was over.

Winsford Church.

The next halt was made at Winsford, one of the most picturesque of Somersetshire villages, situated on the Exe, amidst woodland scenery of the most charming description.

The Vicar, the Rev. Prebendary W. PALEY ANDERSON, received the Society, and gave a description of the church. In welcoming them he said he feared there were not many antiquities of great interest to show them, except the beauties of the everlasting hills around them, and the valleys of the ever-flowing rivers. With regard to the church itself, he could not help contrasting its present state with that of forty-three years ago, when he first came to the parish. Then the west end was blocked up with a gallery, in which all kinds of music were discoursed without much harmony. The chancel screen was made up chiefly of the Royal Arms and the Ten Commandments—good things in their places, and the Royal Arms were interesting, being Jacobean, but not suitable for a chancel screen. The church was fitted with square and high pews, in which the farmers used to sleep comfortably. The church, as they saw it now, had a peculiar interest, because its restoration was carried out by the late lamented architect, Mr. Sedding, or, he should say, according to his plans. That was his last work, and Mr. Sedding died in his house before the work was finished, in the spring of 1891. The whole of the roofs of the nave and the side aisle were renewed after the original design. Some of the principals were retained in the new roof. The church was re-seated with oak seats, and a new floor laid. He thought that the restoration would not come under the condemnation which he lately saw quoted in *The Spectator*, of a “Neo-Gothic forgery, the tinsel of nineteenth century ecclesi-

ology." He particularly drew attention to the tracery of the glazing in the windows, all from the designs of Mr. Sedding, and of exceptional beauty. It was not for him to point out to more experienced archæologists traces which were to be found of Norman, Early English, possibly even Decorated, or Perpendicular styles in this church. The hinges of the south door were noticeable as not belonging originally to the door, being too large. Indeed the door was not hung on them. Probably they were brought there from some larger door at Barlynch Priory. The niche in the porch seemed to show the wheel of St. Katharine, to whom a side altar was dedicated in the church. The porch was restored some years ago by Mr. Giles, and the font re-set by Mr. E. G. Paley. The chancel was done by the Rector, Sir Thomas Acland, at the same time as the church, the architect being Mr. Ashworth, of Exeter. In conclusion, the Rector said he could show them at the Vicarage a silver tankard of 1697, and some old books, very early editions of classical and other works.

Mr. BUCKLE supplemented these remarks with some interesting particulars in regard to the architectural features of the church. He said it was of the Perpendicular period, with the remarkable feature that nave and aisles were covered by a single roof; so far as he knew, there were only two other churches in the county designed on the same lines; they were at Norton-sub-Hambdon and Cannington. This church in all its characteristics was emphatically a moorland church. There was a good deal of roughness about the whole of the work of the arcade, but it had been restored in a very pleasant way in keeping with the characteristics of the church. He called special attention to the windows, which it appeared had been introduced at different periods; the earlier two-light windows were very much like those at Porlock Church. In fact the whole church reminded one very much of Porlock, although the latter had not got the same sort of roof. There were also two square-headed windows over the chancel arch, put there, he be-

lieved, to light the roof, on account of there being no clerestory. The position of the rood-loft was plainly marked. The west tower was a fine example of the style of the western district of the county. It was very similar to the towers of Minehead and St. Decuman's. It stood out with a grand massiveness. Its buttresses were perfectly plain and square, set a little way from the angles of the tower, a plan largely adopted in that district and in Devonshire. Another feature of great interest was the font, a circular Norman one, very roughly carved into a series of arches. Somewhat similar fonts were to be found at Hawkridge and at Withypool. There was a little mediæval glass in the church. In the chancel was to be seen the beginning of a beam which might have formed the support of the Lenten Veil.

Mr. WILLIAM DICKER also read an interesting paper, which will be found in Part II.

Many of the visitors paid a visit to the Vicarage, where Mr. Anderson showed them some rare and valuable books, of which the following is a list:—

	A.D.
1. A Latin Translation of Xenophon	1467
2. Aristophanes, Aldus, folio	1498
3. Plautus, folio	1500
4. Sophocles, Aldus, Editio Princeps	1502
5. "Institutio Christianæ Religionis." Auctore Alcuino (Johā Calvino)	1539
6. Aschylus, Victorii	1557
7. Lucian	1555
8. Euripides, Stephanus	1602
9. "Vox Piscis" (mentioned in Walton's "Angler," in connection with the "Salmon Ring," of which Mr. Anderson is the possessor)	1626
10. Quarles' Emblems. Illustrated	1634
11. Pliny's Letters. Elsevier	1653
12. Terence, Minellii	1680
13. Lucian	1687
14. Newton's Principia. First Edition. (Rare and valuable)	1687
15. Milton's "Paradise Lost," with "Sculptures" ..	1707
16. Belisaire	1767
17. Scott's "Lay of the Last Minstrel." A fine Quarto Edition	1805

The visitors afterwards had tea in the Schoolroom, supplied by Mr. and Mrs. Dicker, at a moderate charge.

The two last places included in the day's programme were Weir Rock and Barlynch Priory.

Barlynch Priory.

Colonel BRAMBLE gave a brief description of what now remains of the building. He said the lofty wall running back in the rear of the cottage towards the river appeared to be the south wall of the church, and the thick fence-wall north of it, occupied probably the position of the original north wall of the church. Several of the apertures of windows of the south wall remained ; at a considerable height, so as not to interfere with the pent-house alley of the Cloister, the remains of which could be distinctly traced in the lower part of the wall, one of the corbels supporting the roof timbers being still *in situ*. Two large blocks of masonry, running from north to south, parallel with the roof and in line with the cottage, probably represented the east side of the cloister, in which would have been situated the Chapter House and Day-room, with the dormitory over. The other two sides of the main cloister had disappeared. That on the south side would have contained the refectory, and the one on the west the workshops and lay-brothers' quarters. If that reading was correct, the extensive block of buildings between the farm house and river could not have formed any part of the main cloistral buildings, but they must have been part of the lesser or inferior cloister, or other adjuncts of the main building. In the gable of the building attached to the farm house there was about the only architectural feature remaining ; a small piece of the tracery from one of the windows inserted in the modern wall. It is pierced with two small quatrefoils.

The party then made an inspection of what now remains of the old Priory.

Dulverton was afterwards reached about seven o'clock.