

REPORT OF THE SUMMER MEETING OF THE ROYAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE AT TAUNTON, 1950

INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY OF THE MEETING

The Summer Meeting of the Institute in 1950 was held at Taunton from Monday, July 17th to Saturday, July 22nd, in association with the Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Society, the Glastonbury Antiquarian Society, the Wells Natural History and Archaeological Society and the Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society. The Officers and Council wish to record the thanks of the Institute to all who collaborated in the Meeting and especially to the members of the Local Committee, namely, Major-General R. Evans, C.B., M.C., the Chairman; Mr. L. Atwell, Mrs. J. B. Clark, Mrs. E. A. B. Clive, Mrs. D. P. Dobson-Hinton, Litt.D., F.S.A., Lieut.-Col. C. D. Drew, O.B.E., D.S.O., F.S.A., Dr. F. C. Eeles, O.B.E., The Rev. Preb. G. W. Saunders, Mr. H. F. Scott-Stokes, F.S.A., and Mr. W. A. Seaby, F.S.A., Curator of the Somerset County Museum. To Mr. H. S. L. Dewar, F.R.G.S., F.R.A.I., who acted as Hon. Secretary of the Meeting, a particular debt of gratitude is owed for the services he rendered to the Institute in the organization and administration of the Meeting.

The Patrons for the Meeting were the Lord Lieutenant of Somerset (the Right Hon. Lord Hylton, D.L.), the Lord Bishop of Bath and Wells (the Right Rev. H. W. Bradfield, D.D.), the Right Worshipful the Mayor of Taunton (Councillor W. F. Haywood, J.P.), the Right Hon. Earl Waldegrave, the Right Rev. Abbot Ethelbert Horne, F.S.A., Sir Cyril Fox, D.Litt., Ph.D., F.B.A., F.S.A., President of the Somerset Archaeological Society, Mr. H. E. Balch, M.A., F.S.A., Curator of Wells Museum, Dr. A. Bulleid, F.S.A., Mrs. H. G. Bates-Harbin, Mr. H. St. George Gray, O.B.E., F.S.A., Mr. G. F. Luttrell, Lt.-Commander I. D. Lyle, Mr. G. Roper, Mr. A. W. Vivian-Neal, M.C., D.L., F.S.A., and the late Mr. W. Wyndham, F.S.A.

The President of the Institute, Miss Joan Evans, D.Litt., D.Lit., V.-P.S.A., was present throughout, and there attended in all 117 persons, 83 being Members and their guests, 34 members and guests of the associated societies. The Headquarters of the Meeting was at the Castle Hotel, and the Centre for information and registration was at the County Museum, where members were invited to tea on Monday afternoon when the history of the Castle and museum collections was described by Mr. W. A. Seaby. An account of Taunton was also given by Mr. H. J. Wickenden, M.A., and the Roman material from Ilchester was described by Mr. J. Stevens Cox, F.S.A. At an evening meeting on July 21st, a lecture on 'The Lake-Villages of Somerset' was given by Mr. H. St. George Gray, O.B.E., F.S.A.

The Mayor and Mayoress of Taunton received the company on Monday evening in the Municipal Hall. The Council Chamber and a selection of Borough Charters were described by Alderman C. H. Goodland, M.B.A., and Mr. K. A. Horne, Deputy Town Clerk, respectively. Lt.-Col. J. A. Garton, M.C., gave an Address on Somerset customs and dialect. Members of the Institute also enjoyed the hospitality of Mr. and Mrs. A. W. Vivian-Neal at an Evening Reception at Poundisford Park.

The present Report of the proceedings of the Meeting is divided into parts by period and subject. The following synopsis of events appeared in the programme issued for the Meeting:

MONDAY, JULY 17TH. TAUNTON: St. Mary Magdalene, Castle and Museum. Evening Reception by the Right Worshipful the Mayor of Taunton at the Municipal Hall.

TUESDAY, JULY 18TH. TOUR EAST OF TAUNTON: Montacute, Brympton d'Evercy, Newton Surmaville House, Ham Hill Camp, Muchelney Abbey.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 19TH. TOUR SOUTH OF TAUNTON: Castle Neroche, Forde Abbey, Pilsdon Pen Camp, Mapperton Manor House.

THURSDAY, JULY 20TH. WELLS: Cathedral. Afternoon: Bishop's Palace, Deanery, Vicars' Close, Bishop Bubwith's Almshouses, St. Cuthbert; Croscombe Church. Alternative afternoon programme: Wells Museum, Wookey Hole, Glastonbury Museum. Evening Reception at Poundisford Park.

FRIDAY, JULY 21ST. TOUR NORTH-WEST OF TAUNTON: Crowcombe Court, Dunster Castle. Afternoon: Dunster Church, Cleve Abbey. Alternative afternoon programme: Old Barrow Signal Station, Porlock Stone Circle. Evening Lecture in the Museum.

SATURDAY, JULY 22ND. TOUR SOUTH-WEST OF TAUNTON: Holcombe Court, Cothay Manor House.

Thanks are due to the guides and contributors notably the late Sir Alfred Clapham, C.B.E., F.B.A., F.S.A., Miss V. M. Dallas, F.S.A., Mr. H. S. L. Dewar, Mr. A. R. Duffy, A.R.I.B.A., F.S.A., Dr. F. C. Eeles, Major-General R. Evans, C.B., M.C., Mr. Walter H. Godfrey, C.B.E., F.R.I.B.A., V.-P.S.A., Mr. H. St. George Gray, O.B.E., F.S.A., Professor C. F. C. Hawkes, F.B.A., F.S.A., Mr. P. K. Baillie Reynolds, T.D., O.B.E., F.S.A., Mr. E. C. Rouse, M.B.E., F.S.A., Mr. R. S. Simms, Mr. S. D. T. Spittle, M.A., A.R.I.B.A., Mr. Geoffrey Webb, F.S.A., Dr. Margaret Whinney, F.S.A., and Dr. Margaret Wood, F.S.A. The Institute is also indebted for permission to make the visits, to the Dean of Bath and Wells and the incumbents of the various churches; to the Ministry of Works (Machelney Abbey); the National Trust (Montacute House); to the Bishop of Bath and Wells (Bishop's Palace); and to the proprietors and tenants of the remaining buildings visited, namely, Mrs. V. D. Astley-Rushton (Cothay Manor); Mr. J. R. W. Blathwayt (Porlock Stone Circle); Mrs. H. G. Bates-Harbin (Newton Surmaville); Mrs. E. A. B. Clive (Brympton d'Evercy); Dunster Castle Estate (Cleeve Abbey); Mrs. Fleetwood-Hesketh (Holcombe Court); Miss C. Halliday (Old Barrow Signal Station); Mrs. Labouchere (Mapperton Manor House); Mr. G. F. Luttrell (Dunster Castle); Mr. R. York Rickard (Pilsdon Pen Camp); Mr. G. Roper (Forde Abbey); the late Mrs. Trollope-Bellew (Crowcombe Court). Especial thanks are also due to Mr. H. E. Balch, F.S.A., Curator of Wells Museum, for his address, and to Mr. H. F. Scott-Stokes, F.S.A., Honorary Secretary of the Museum of the Glastonbury Antiquarian Society.

It is more than seventy years since the first Summer Meeting of the Institute was held at Taunton in 1879 (Report in the *Archaeological Journal*, xxxvi, 1879). Other Summer Meetings in Somerset have been held at Bath in 1858 (Report, *Arch. Journ.*, xiv, 1858), and in 1930 (Report, *Arch. Journ.* lxxxvii, 1930).

Offprinted copies of the Report of the Meeting at Bath in 1930 are still available through the Office of the Institute (c/o London Museum, Kensington Palace, London, W.8), price 2s. 6d. each (2s. 10d. post free). Offprints of the present Report are also available price 5s. 6d. (5s. 10d. post free), and copies of the Meeting Programme may be obtained, price 2s. 6d. (2s. 10d. post free).

In conclusion the Editor wishes to record her thanks to those who have contributed to this Report and to acknowledge most gratefully the help which she has received from the Hon. Secretary, the Assistant Secretary, and from the Hon. Secretary of the Meeting.

PART I
PREHISTORIC AND ROMAN

MESOLITHIC CULTURES IN SOMERSET

By W. A. SEABY

While it may not be fitting in many respects to use a county boundary to define the area of a prehistoric culture or series of cultures, nevertheless a line, which stretches for approximately 45 miles along the Bristol Channel, follows much of the main watershed across Exmoor and the Blackdown Hills, picks up the Rivers Axe, Parrett and Yeo in its traverse to the escarpment of the chalk uplands of Wessex, and the Rivers Frome and Avon in its return to the Severn Estuary, may be claimed a boundary very largely made up from natural topographical features. Somerset is as complex in its geological structure as in its physical appearance. Great areas are situated on heavy marls, on peat moors and on alluvial clays and sands. Much is on limestone of widely differing kinds, on sandstone, or on upturned slates, grits and shales. Wide plains cover thousands of acres, for the most part only a few feet above sea level, while nearly as much again is taken up by large open stretches of upland moor at 800 to 1,500 feet. Yet the characteristic picture of both the northern and southern parts of the county is that of good undulating pasture and arable land.

As one might expect in a region so diverse in its natural features, cultural differences are apparent from the earliest appearance of man. That such differences, both in tool technique and in the material used, persisted for a great length of time must have been largely due to the rise and fall in the land level with prolonged flooding of vast stretches of central Somerset, thus physically separating the two main areas—the Mendip Hills and the Brendon-Exmoor massif. Somerset has very little natural fresh flint, but in the superficial deposits known as clay-with-flints and in some of the river gravels, comparatively small flint pebbles occur, particularly in the drainage basins of the Parrett and Avon rivers. Chalk occupies only small areas of Somerset, including the western extremity of Salisbury Plain and tracts between Chard and Crewkerne. The upper greensand is more important as it forms the bold scarp of the Blackdown Hills and contains plentiful beds of chert, which was in great demand by generations of palaeolithic hunters who occupied the Somerset, Dorset and Devonshire border region.

Indeed it is by comparing the distribution of the later chert implements, made from freshly-quarried gravel and from water-laid pebbles, and the distribution of flint implements, made from the fresh material on the chalk, or from rolled pebbles of central and western Somerset, that we begin to get a picture in broad outline both of the main inhabited areas and of the trade and migration routes during the Forest period in Somerset. As yet little has been published on the Mesolithic content of the county, except for the important series of artifacts excavated in the Mendip caves where the industries are mainly Upper Palaeolithic, sometimes running through the period into Neolithic and early Bronze Age cultures.¹

A considerable amount of material has now been collected from the open sites but there has been little or no excavation or investigation on the lines carried out in the west Surrey greensands² and not sufficient of the artifacts have been studied on a comparative basis to give anything like a clear or complete picture of the several cultures revealed, nor their sequence and inter-relation.³ One of the first considerations would seem to be the proportion of flint to chert at the various sites and where possible the sources from which each is derived. Another important consideration must be comparison of the basic forms of implements and by-products and their frequency at each site.

A start is now being made in the south-west to obtain the pattern of distribution of the sites, their soils and levels as at present known; the apparent cultural relationship of some

¹ J. G. D. Clark: *The Mesolithic Age in Britain* (1932), 38-41. *Proc. Univ. Bristol Spel. Soc.*, i-vi.

² W. F. Rankine: *Mesolithic Survey of the W. Surrey Greensand* (1950).

³ For summary of evidence, see *Arch. News-letter*, iii, No. 8 (Feb., 1951), 125-8.

of them; the prevalence of certain forms of implements and the absence or scarcity of others; the occurrence of both chert and flint, the form in which it is found and whether outside its natural environment; also the main differences so far noted between cultural groups from north, central and south-west Somerset.¹

PORLOCK STONE CIRCLE

By H. ST. GEORGE GRAY

In 1928, the late Mr. E. T. MacDermot, of Lillycombe, near County Gates, author of *The History of the Forest of Exmoor* (1911), informed Mr. St. George Gray that he had observed some stones on Porlock Allotment which appeared to be the remains of a stone circle.

The stones, although in Porlock parish, were found to be only a very short distance from the parishes of Stoke Pero, Oare, Exmoor and Exford; and Berry Castle Camp is 7 furlongs ENE. of the circle.

This circle (fig. 1) was found to be eighty feet in diameter and the survey shows 21 stones remaining, some very small, the largest (now recumbent) 6.3 ft. in length. When the survey was made there were 10 standing stones and stumps remaining, and 11 stones prostrate, all of which fall pretty accurately on the line of the circle except those on the S. and SW. But during the war it is believed that the circle was somewhat disturbed in military training. The stones are green micaceous sandstone presumably of Devonian age and probably of local origin.

The Withypool Stone Circle, which was first known and surveyed in 1906, is 6½ miles south of the Porlock Circle. It proved to be 120 ft. in diameter. Thirty-seven stones remained at the time of the survey; there were many gaps, but if the stones were at an average distance of 3½ ft. apart, then there were originally nearly a hundred stones. The average height of the existing stones was only 1.03 feet, the highest being 2 ft.

A little south of the Porlock Circle are the Almsworthy stones arranged in oval form. This forms Part III of the series of papers on 'Rude Stone Monuments of Exmoor' by the contributor. Part IV deals with the cairns on Dunkery Hill, and Part V with Hernes Barrow and the Caratacus stone.

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THE LAKE-VILLAGES OF GLASTONBURY AND MEARE

By C. F. C. HAWKES

The Glastonbury Lake-village, discovered by Dr. Arthur Bulleid in 1892, and that at Meare discovered in 1895, have revealed a fuller picture of British life in the pre-Roman Iron Age than any other sites. The former was excavated by Dr. Bulleid in 1892-8 and then with Mr. H. St. George Gray in 1904-7, and published by them in 1911-17. The whole work was sponsored by the Glastonbury Antiquarian Society, and the greater part of the finds are in Glastonbury Museum; Taunton Castle Museum has a small series, and all the finds from the Meare Lake-village. This, since 1910, has been under excavation for the Somerset Archaeological Society by the same two scholars, and the first part of their publication has been issued lately.

Both villages stood within the margins of the former lake, in the sixteenth century still five miles round and called Meare Pool, which filled this part of the basin of the river Brue, and opened down it westward, navigably for all small craft, to the estuaries of Bridgwater Bay. The Meare village, consisting of an East and a West village 100 yd. apart and each holding up to sixty houses, was placed in a shallow marshy bight, between the

¹ Sponsored by the Council for British Archaeology, Group 13.

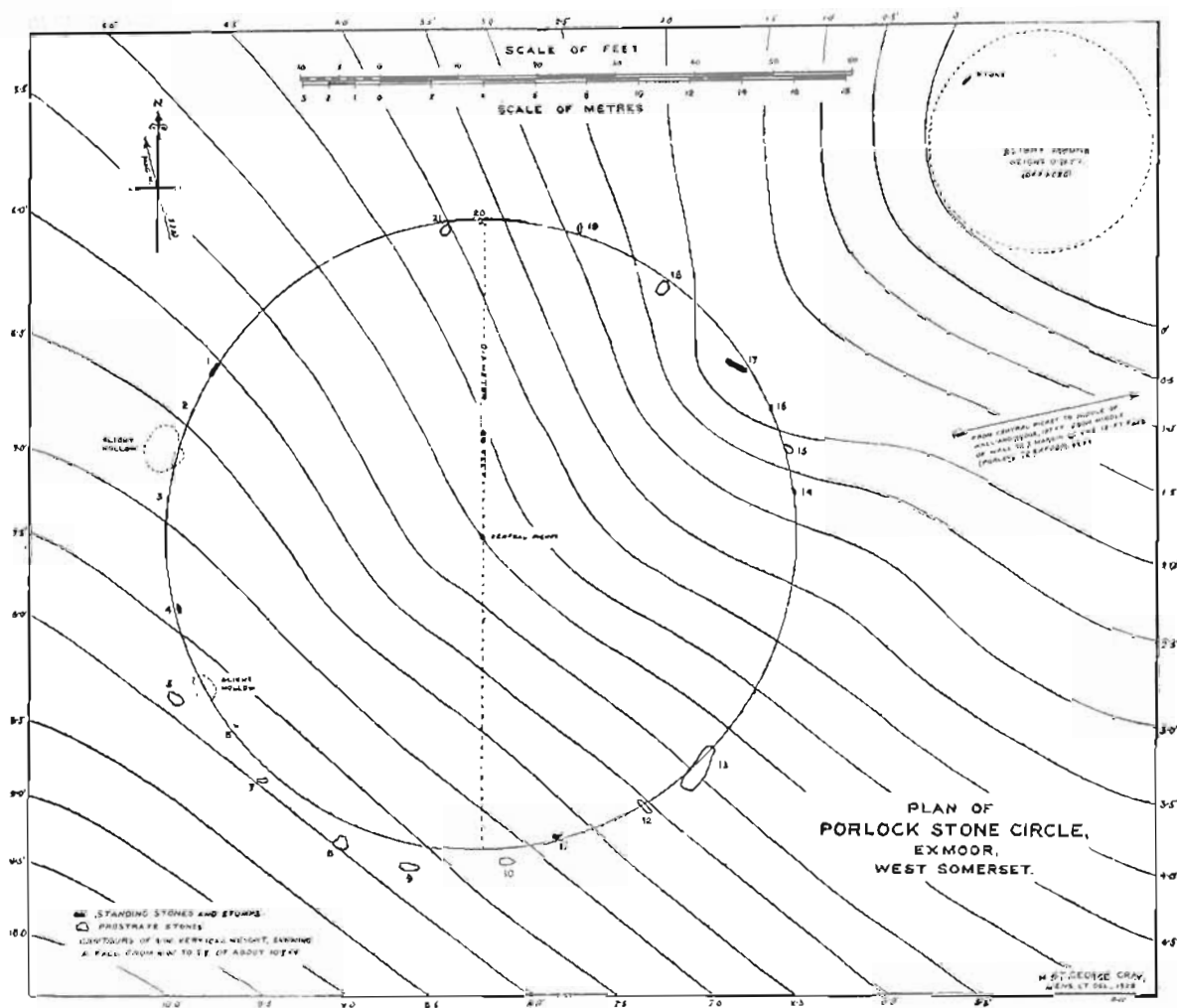


FIG. I. PORLOCK STONE CIRCLE—PLAN
(From *The Proceedings of the Somerset Archaeological Society*)

present Meare and Westhay ; the Glastonbury village, some three miles farther east, stood adjoining deeper water near the eastern margin. Close behind this comes the rising ground of Avalon, with Glastonbury Tor above it ; and thence along the low ridge eastward a trackway, spanned near the Tor by the defence-work of Ponter's Ball (which has yielded Iron Age pottery from deep in its ditch), gave access inland to easy limestone country, and so to the Mendips and north past Bath, south to Dorset and the Channel, and east through the 'Frome gap' on to the Wiltshire chalk. The villages were thus opportunely sited not only for protection, by the lake and the swamps and dense woods round it, but particularly for trade, by water and by land ; and their material, as is well seen from the Glastonbury collection, fully bears out this view.

To build what was therefore not merely a village, but equally a 'water-fort' and trading-station, on the sodden lake-bed peat, meant constructing a firm artificial island. The Glastonbury pioneers did this by laying down a foundation of logs, a little over two acres in extent, surrounded with a stockade of piles and packed with brushwood, bracken, rush, peat, clay and stones, and covering it with circular clay floor-beds, of which, out of eighty-nine found, at least sixty were the floors of circular wooden houses, the uprights of their wattle-and-daub-clad walls driven into the log-platform beneath, and at about 6 ft. up probably bent in to form a dome roof, thatched with reed, peaked high over the clay or other central hearth. Foundation-subsidence often enforced the renewal of floors and hearths, giving the house-sites each its own stratification ; between them sometimes ran rubble pathways, and while moorings or strandings for dug-outs or other boats are suggested by several re-entrants in the stockade, the main staithe and wharfage lay outside it on the east, where an L-shaped causeway, adjoined by an embankment, of clay, stone, and wood-work, ran out for over 100 ft., presumably to reach water deep enough at all times for laden craft.

The villagers evidently raised crops and stock on the adjacent mainland, and engaged also in hunting, fowling and fishing. Carpentry—including turners' and wheelwrights', wainwrights', ploughwrights', and boat-builders' work—hurdle-work and basketry, netting, spinning, weaving, sewing, leather-work, and carving in antler, horn, and bone, are all attested among the remains of their industries discovered ; among stone products found were querns, sometimes saddle-querns but more often the newer and more labour-saving rotary querns ; and for a diversion there were dice, of oblong shape with an oval-mouthed box—clearly an exciting game. While metal was worked on four sites only, and never on all of them at once, excellent tools and other things of iron and of bronze were found in numbers, and others of imported materials such as glass beads, Mendip lead, Cornish tin, and Kimmeridge shale : all this speaks of trade, and so more explicitly do two of the well-known iron currency-bars. The village never came within the region of British coins (one only, tin, was found) ; and it has been widely believed that in the first century A.D., shortly before the Roman conquest, it was destroyed by invading Belgae. But Boyd Dawkins's view that the scattered pieces of human skulls and skeletons found attest a massacre has long been questioned ; and at Meare there have been similar finds, with as little sign of destruction. Moreover, the small amount of cordoned and pedestalled pottery found can no longer be reckoned Belgic, but belongs to the 'Hengistbury B' tradition now dated from the first century B.C. The occasion of the villages' abandonment in the first century A.D.—Meare only slightly after Glastonbury—is thus still doubtful ; perhaps more can be said of their foundation.

Meare was formerly dated from about 250 B.C., Glastonbury from about 150 or 100, on the strength partly of the depth of strata, due in fact mostly to foundation-subsidence, and partly of La Tène I and II brooches which really, like La Tène III, need be no earlier here than 50. Stray Glastonbury pottery occurring at Maiden Castle, moreover, must be dated well after 50 ; and it seems unlikely that either village was founded much before that. The pottery altogether, indeed, and most decisively the well-known decorated ware, fits better so into the general run of south-western Celtic style. More of it belongs to the second of the discernible stylistic phases, with curves and lines lightly tooled, and less to the first, with the decoration moulded, which disappeared probably round 25 B.C. And it is this first phase that shows the initial influence of the cordoned 'Hengistbury B' ware,

which Wheeler's work of 1938 in North-West Gaul, e.g. at Le Petit Celland near Avranches, suggests was brought over from that coast by survivors when Caesar conquered it, in 56 B.C.—that is, at the same time as Veneti from the other coast, round beyond Ushant, with their different pottery, will have migrated to the Dorset lands round Maiden Castle. The Lake-villages show their Gaulish element in a distinctive South-West British culture. Perhaps they were deliberately built then to bring to new marts and harbours, sequestered here in Somerset, what was left of the trade to which Caesar had closed the Channel.

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THE IRON AGE HILL-FORT ON HAM HILL, SOMERSET

By W. A. SEABY

Ham or Hamdon Hill stands 240 ft. above the village of Stoke and just 420 ft. above sea-level, the western side being scarred from old quarry workings. Its position is a commanding one with extensive views across Somerset to the north and west and into Wiltshire and Dorset to the east and south.

The hill is constructed from top to bottom as follows: 40 ft. of Ham Stone, next, 80 ft. of Yeovil Sands with 'doggers', next, Upper Lias Clays, then Marl Stone. The best quality Ham Stone of Upper Lias formation is considered an excellent local building stone both for its durable quality and for its warm golden colour. It can easily be worked with saw or chisel. It has been quarried for this purpose at intervals since Roman times, but very little of the good stone now remains.

Finds, most of which have come from the over-burden during quarrying operations or from the surface of the fields, testify to occupation of the area at least from Neolithic times. The Walter Collection at Taunton Castle Museum, for instance, includes igneous stone and flint celts, leaf-shaped arrow-heads, scrapers, borers, cores and flakes in abundance. In addition holed stones and adzes, barbed and tanged flint arrow-heads, whetstones and burnishers, grain-rubbers and bronze tools and weapons have come to light. There are also remains of medieval date, some of them probably the debris left by the quarry workers over a long period. It is, however, to the later phases of the Early Iron Age and to the Roman period that most of the artifacts belong.

The hill, enclosing 210 acres, is intrenched round its three-mile perimeter by a double or single Iron Age defence-system, the north-west spur being most strongly fortified. Entrances, owing to extensive quarrying, are now difficult to determine, but the banks turn in near the junction of the north-west spur with the northern escarpment of Stroud's Hill, forming what may have been a well-defended entrance by way of The Combe. In the south-east corner the road from Stoke to Odcombe drops down the hill at Bedmore Barn orchard through another intrenching of the defences, which may also have formed an original entrance.

The hill-fort appears to have been most intensively occupied in the first century B.C. and during the first sixty or seventy years of the Christian era. There is also considerable evidence of further occupation during the third and fourth centuries A.D. What must have been a large Roman villa stood just within the defences on the boundaries of Butcher's Hill and the Warren near Bedmore Barn, one building being excavated in 1912. It is possible that the original owner may have carried out the earliest quarrying operations on the hill, in which case the finds of mid- and late-Roman date in the area of the quarries could belong to the labourers who lived and worked there as a native community.

No systematic archaeological excavations were made on Ham Hill until an Excavation Committee was formed early in 1923, field excavations being conducted by Mr. H. St. George Gray in 1923, 1925, 1926 and 1929 in the north-west area. Even then only comparatively small-scale excavations could be carried out. One of the most interesting finds, in 1923, was the discovery of a cremation pit-burial, late and probably Belgic, which included an iron dagger of the type with pseudo-anthropoid hilt and tinned bronze sheath, an iron adze head, arrow-head, bronze buckle and studs. Another Iron Age burial was that of an infant. It was in a roughly constructed stone cist with massive slab as cover-stone, an olla-shaped pot inverted over the bones and a ring-headed iron pin found with them. A third burial, also an inhumation, was discovered with a Roman flanged bowl and an overstruck imitation of a coin of Constantius, dating from the middle or later half of the fourth century. Skeletons, perhaps part of a war-cemetery as at Maiden Castle, Dorset, and Bredon Hill, Glos., were discovered on the north-west corner of the hill in 1866.

Amongst other excavated or loose finds now in the County Museum, Taunton, which have from time to time been found mostly on the western side or north-west spur, must be mentioned: pottery sherds of typical Hallstatt form (Iron Age A); bowls with black burnished surface, having tooled scroll or hatched geometrical decoration of Glastonbury type (Iron Age B or 'AB'); bead-rim vessels, suggesting Belgic invasion, and other forms of south-western type, dating towards the time of the Claudian conquest (Iron Age 'ABC'); also many of the typical Roman wares; iron tools and weapons in some numbers and Roman scale armour; the series of bronze brooches, dating from La Tene I to the late Roman period include a fine late pre-Roman form with zoomorphic head on the bow: a simplified version of the famous Birdlip silver brooch (C. Green in *Proc. Prehist. Soc.*, 1949, 188-90). Chariot horn-caps, iron tyres of wheels, bridle-bits and nave-bands testify to the native use of chariots, as at Maiden Castle, Horton, Polden Hill, Cadbury Castle and elsewhere in the south-west. Perhaps the greatest treasure is the charming little stylized bronze bull's head of Celtic type which may have been used as an ornamental terminal to a sceptre or chariot-fitting: this came to the Museum with the W.W. Walter Collection in 1901.

An examination of the coin finds shows that both iron currency-bars and silvered bronze coins of the Durotriges were in use here before the Roman occupation but that Claudian coins, particularly the imitations of the Minerva *as*, found favour after the arrival of Roman troops in the area. After this there is little before the mid-third century 'radiate' series (except for a great hoard of first, second and early third century *sestertii* connected with the Roman villa). Fourth-century bronze coins are common and include many imitations of the FEL TEMP overstruck series, some of which were struck from the same dies and may have been issued at this settlement. A few *minimi*, probably in use as late as the fifth century, have also been found.

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PILSDON PEN CAMP

By C. F. C. HAWKES

Pilsdon Pen Camp occupies the high south-eastern summit of Pilsdon Pen (909 ft. O.D.), which dominates the Jurassic limestone ridge of West Dorset near the Somerset border, and has fine views in all directions, especially south over the Vale of Marshwood, with Lambert's Castle and Coney's Castle—similar hill-top camps—on the right, and Lyme Bay beyond. In shape it is a narrow oval, following the steep contour of the hill with its two long sides; these converge around the summit above the path which leads up from

the Bettiscombe-Broadwindsor road. The internal area, of $7\frac{3}{4}$ acres, is 400 yd. in length; the defences (not greatly spoilt by modern hedgebanks) consist of two impressive lines of main rampart and ditch, each ditch having its own counterscarp-bank, except where, in the south part of either side, towards the summit where the natural slope is steepest, the inner of these is merged in the outer of the main ramparts. From this and the fact that on the north where the defences cut inwards across the level back of the hill, the inner rampart and ditch turn in sharply while the outer swing round in a gentler curve, it can be thought that the outer are a subsequent addition. Yet not certainly: for on Dr. Wheeler's view of these works as designed for sling warfare, which would require of them a cross-breadth not less than average sling range (*Maiden Castle*, pp. 50-51), the 70 yd. that they measure on the two steep sides would need increasing to nearer 100 yd. on the level northern one; this then may be the sole purpose of the gentler outer curve there. Excavation alone can decide the matter finally. A like uncertainty surrounds the pair of hollows which on this same side appear behind the inner rampart: they may, or may not, represent the twin ends, separated by a central entrance-way, of an inner ditch belonging to an earlier phase when the camp was shorter. The low banks running back from them could then be remains of rampart-ends, intrenched to flank the entrance.

Such an early camp could well be of Iron Age A, with the multiple-ramparted construction following it in Iron Age B, towards or soon after 50 B.C., as at Maiden Castle. But this western tract of Dorset, beyond the end of the Chalk at Eggardon Hill, may have lain outside the 'Maiden Castle B' country, and in that of the 'Glastonbury' people (p. 23), whose well-known camp of Hembury, excavated in 1930-5 by Miss Dorothy Liddell¹, is only 18 miles west of Pilsdon, and very like it in size and design. Both have a main entrance on the NE., and also one on the west, which at Hembury anyhow was proved original. Of the two more seen at Pilsdon, that on the NW. cannot be; that at the south end may, if one takes the break in the outer works there to imply it, but one need not. Near the middle of the camp, where the internal breadth is about 100 yd., is a feebly-embanked enclosure (with remains of a mound near its centre), some 55 yd. square; its SW. side seems formed by a pre-existing pillow-mound, while another lies near on the east, and three more to the south. Two round mounds, near the latter, alone look much like barrows.

WOOKEY HOLE

By C. F. C. HAWKES

Wookey Hole, unique among the Mendip caves for its wonderful combination of natural features, lies some two miles north of Wells, in the head of a ravine down which the river Axe flows, emerging from an underground course through the cave's recesses. On the east side of the ravine, across a rustic bridge, is the Hyena Den, explored on its discovery in 1852 by the geologist and later President of this Institute, Sir William Boyd Dawkins, and found to be rich in the bones and teeth of Pleistocene animals—mammoth, woolly rhinoceros, cave-bear, reindeer, bison, wild horse, etc., foxes and many hyenas—the debris seamed sometimes by bands of ash, with some flint implements, showing occupations by palaeolithic man. Boyd Dawkins's original MSS. of his exploration are preserved in Wells. High above it is the Badger Hole, explored since 1938 by Mr. Balch and a team of helpers, who have found, stratified below badger and Romano-British, more Pleistocene remains, the flints typically Aurignacian, with a modified Late-Pleistocene fauna; earlier relics may still here await discovery. The many Palaeolithic sites of Mendip include rock-shelters in the nearby Ebbor Gorge, where also, and variously over the hills, have been found many later implements, notably flints—of which a large and fine series has been collected by Mr. Anthony McEwan—of the Bronze Age, which is represented too by many neighbouring round barrows. In the great river-cave of Wookey Hole itself, however, archaeology starts only with the Iron Age.

¹ *Proc. Devon Archaeological Exploration Soc.*, i, pt. 1 (1930), 1-24; i, pt. 2 (1931), 90-120; i, pt. 3 (1932), 162-190; ii, pt. 3 (1938), 134-175.

In the rock wall of Triassic Conglomerate forming the head of the ravine (200 ft. high), and above the lower cave-mouth whence the river issues, is the narrow higher entrance, leading to the outer cavern-gallery which was the main site of occupation. The excavation here, published first in 1911 and fully by Mr. Balch in 1914, disclosed from an average of 4 to as much as 7 ft. of stratification, the Iron Age strata making most of it, sealed by Romano-British. Their pottery and other relics as a whole (though one pot-type¹ could be earlier, and one looks somewhat Belgic²) attest the same culture as the Glastonbury and Meare Lake-Villages (p. 87), of the century or so before the Roman conquest. Continued use of the cave is shown by Romano-British material, including pottery, and by Roman coins, increasing in the fourth century and ending with Valentinian II (375-92); among the latest relics was a female skeleton together with those of goats, kept tethered at the spot. Many other animal and some human remains were found; and of the three great chambers opening successively beyond this, their stalagmitic formation flood-lit now (as are those in the adjoining lateral grottoes), the first is specially notable for the stalagmite known from its form as the 'Witch'. Some few other finds also have shown that these recesses were penetrated in ancient times, as were some of the upper galleries nearer the entrance; but modern diving has successively reached seven inner chambers, in the last of which the Triassic Conglomerate is found abutting against the more ancient cliff of the Mendip Carboniferous Limestone, pierced by a large submerged river-outlet still not far explored. A passage of Clement of Alexandria (d. c. 200: *Stromata* vi, 3) suggests that the strange sound-effects at times heard in the cave may have been already on record in Roman times. The cave was a place of note throughout the Middle Ages; it was described about 1470 by William of Worcester, by Drayton in the *Polyolbion*, and by a succession of topographers and naturalists from Camden onwards. The name Wookey is perhaps a British word borrowed and deformed. All the chief finds from the cave, with abundance of others from the district, are to be seen in Wells Museum.

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NOTE ON RECENT EXPLORATION IN WOOKEY HOLE

From the Report by E. J. MASON

On June 9th, 1946, during the charting of the bed of the river in the first chamber, just within the arch of the tunnel leading from the first to third chambers, three skulls, other human bones and a pottery vessel were discovered. Further investigation was carried out by diving operations between October, 1947, and January, 1949, with Mr. E. J. Mason as archaeological adviser. Amongst the objects discovered in a depth of from 9 to 11 ft. of water during the whole of this period were: four pottery vessels, two being cooking pots (one of Belgic derivation) of the early Roman period, a flanged dish of third or fourth century A.D., and part of the rim of a globular Norman bowl; two lead ewers, varying in size, but probably both wine vessels of the late Roman period; two glass wine bottles of

¹ Balch: (1914), 75, pl. xiii, 7; cf. *Antiq. Journ.*, xx (1940), 235-9 (Eggington, with further refs.).

² Balch: (1914), pl. xiv, 8; cf. *Arch. Journ.* lxxxvii (1930), 296-7. But pl. xiii, 4, and pl. xvi, 2, 7, are certainly of the 'Hengistbury B' class (Bushe-Fox, *Hengistbury Head* (1915), pl. xvii, etc.) recognized by Dr. Wheeler, and dated shortly before the middle of the first century B.C.,

in N.W. France, most notably at Le Petit Celland near Avranches: *Antiquity*, March, 1939, 78-9, with fig. 8, whence in S.W. Britain also the type *Glastonbury Lake-Village*, ii, 275 and 190 (pl. lxxx), and *Maiden Castle*, no. 234 (fig. 75, see 239-40). These then are not Belgic, but derived from N.W. France, and possibly the same is also true of Balch's pl. xiv, 8. See also below, pp. 87-8.

the late seventeenth century (when it was quite customary to carry bottles of wine into the third chamber and drink upon the Stone Table there, as recorded in contemporary literature); fourteen skulls; also a number of other human bones, far fewer than the number represented by fourteen bodies, none of which was found in direct association with the skulls.

Professor C. M. West (University College, Cardiff), who examined the human remains, reported that the estimated heights of the individuals varied from 5 ft. to 5 ft. 7 in., the skulls revealing that in a number of cases they belonged to one family; the principal features of resemblance were the form of the occipital region and the length of the canines, although there was a wide range in the cephalic indices. The age of death was estimated in ten cases at between 22 and 30 and in one at 40; the absence of older skulls was notable whilst the absence of younger skulls could be accounted for by the fact that such would tend to fall apart and be swept away by the river.

Professor West compared these skulls with those from Glastonbury and found that there were undoubted resemblances in certain respects between the two groups, but that the Lake Village folk did not show as great a degree of occipital bulging. While some of the Wookey Hole skulls might well have belonged to the same group as the Glastonbury specimens he did not think that all did so.

How did the bodies, perhaps all of which may be said to date from between the first and fourth centuries A.D., come to be in the bed of the river? Probably each body entered the river from the third chamber and drifted into the Tunnel connecting with the first chamber. The absence of abrasions on the bones shows that they could not have been rolled or swept rapidly along by the river, but that they must have drifted downstream gradually with the mud. Those found trapped behind the slope of boulders at the resurgence may have been swept out of the tunnel into this position at times of exceptional flood. Whether as human sacrifices or as interments thrown into or buried beside the river in the third chamber, there is no evidence to suggest that the bodies were decapitated or otherwise mutilated before they were deposited.

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A fuller report of these discoveries is to be published in *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.*, xcvi (1951).

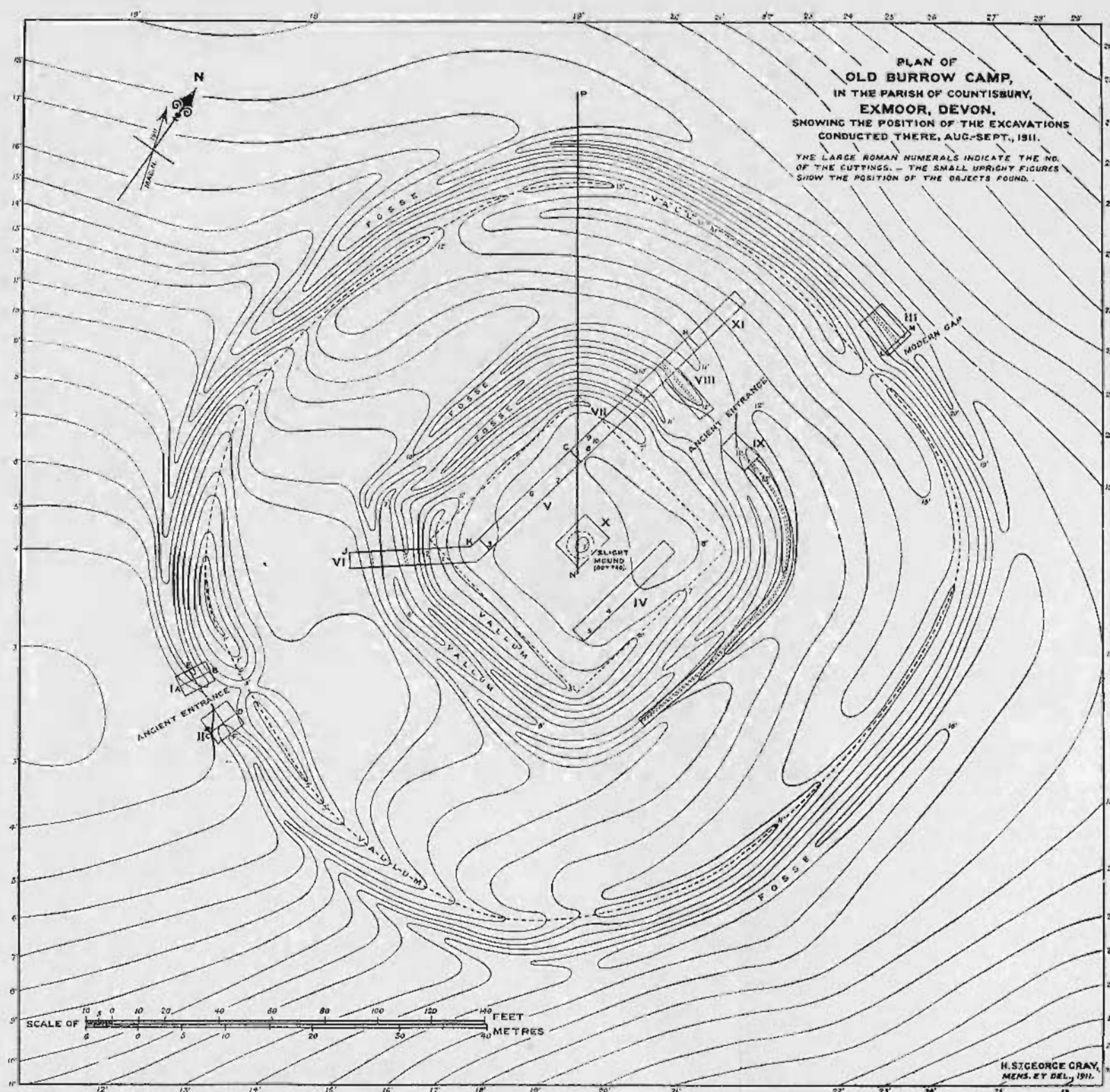
THE ROMAN TOWN AT ILCHESTER

By J. STEVENS COX

Ilchester has long been known as a Roman settlement, but neither the type of settlement, the area occupied, nor the dates of occupation were known with certainty. The systematic excavations carried out in 1948-50 by J. Stevens Cox under the direction of Mr. C. A. Raleigh Radford, F.S.A., have substantially answered some of the more important questions respecting Roman Ilchester. The evidence revealed by the excavations has been supplemented by information obtained when sewer and water-main trenches were dug through Ilchester in 1949 and 1950. As a result the Roman occupation of Ilchester can be dated from c. A.D. 55-60 to the early fifth century. At first Ilchester was a settlement of wattle and daub circular huts surrounded by a ditch and earthen bank. Before the end of the first century these huts had been cleared away and the lay-out of Ilchester re-designed in the traditional Roman town style with paved streets and strip houses built with lias stone walls 24 in. thick (some of these walls are still standing; 3 ft. high, 1 ft. beneath the surface of the street), floors of *opus signinum*, mosaic and lias slabs, with roofing of Devon slate, dressed has and imbrex tegula tiling, and walls of painted plaster. The ditch and earthen bank were filled and levelled respectively before A.D. 100.

The excavation on Ivel House lawn revealed four phases: (1) wattle and daub huts; (2) buildings with mosaic pavements; (3) buildings with *opus signinum* pavements; (4) buildings with mosaic pavements.

Late in the fourth century a 3 ft. wide lias wall (foundation of herring bone construction) was built around the town enclosing an area of about thirty-two acres. In the



OLD BURROW CAMP—PLAN
(From Transactions of the Devonshire Association)

second to fourth centuries the Roman town had extended much beyond this area of 32 acres, especially to the south.

From the time of the destruction of the early earthen banks until the erection of this late fourth-century stone wall, Ilchester appears to have been an open undefended town.

Roman burials, some in Ham Hill stone and leaden coffins, have been found on the north bank of the river Ivel, and along both sides of the Fosseway SE. of the town, and along the sides of the Roman road to Dorchester.

The Roman coins found between 1948-50 exceeded 350 (including two small hoards) and extend from Claudius I to Honorius and Arcadius. The finds included large quantities of pottery, Samian (including form 29) and coarse wares (including ribbed or ridged bowls) similar to Belgic cemetery finds at Maiden Castle. This type of bowl is common at Ilchester in the early levels and occurs in about a dozen variations of ornament. The three ridges forming the constant central theme. This type of bowl appears to have been developed from a Durotrigian leather prototype. The ridges of the bowl representing the overlapping of the leather, and the dotted decoration, the stitch holes of the prototype. This class of bowl is found on several sites in the area occupied by the Durotriges. It is also represented at Exeter, which is outside the Durotrigian territory. Spindle whorls, bone and bronze pins and needles, brooches, objects of Kimmeridge shale, bangles, counters, hone stones etc., are plentifully represented among the small finds. In addition, a base silver coin of the Durotrigian class has recently come to light in Ilchester, similar to those found at Ham Hill.

The sites of stone Roman quays on the south and north banks of the river have been found. The Ivel was navigable until late nineteenth century.

Two hitherto unrecorded Roman sites were found south and south-west of the town, some 1,000 yd. beyond the 'walls'. The evidence points to probable villas but they have not yet been excavated.

OLD BARROW SIGNAL STATION

By H. ST. GEORGE GRAY

Old Barrow Camp—a signal station or fortlet—is in the parish of Countisbury, and about 800 yds. from the Somerset border. The outer earthwork (pl. XV) has the general appearance of being circular, but a careful survey shows flattening on the N., S., E. and W., the minimum diameter from crest to crest being 258 ft. and the maximum 285 ft. Outside the bank is a well-defined fosse. On the SSW. an entrance is seen which by excavation was proved to be ancient, 9½ ft. wide.

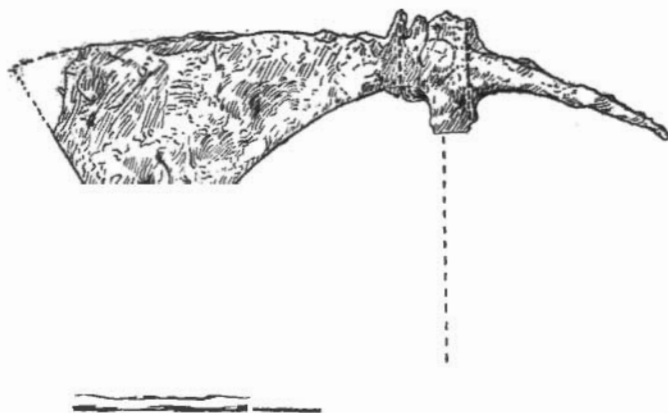


FIG. 2. IRON AXE-ADZE FROM OLD BARROW SIGNAL STATION

(By courtesy of Mr. H. St. George Gray)

A large part of the enclosed area is occupied by a square enclosure having double defences and rounded corners; internally about 80 ft. square with a slight mound in the centre which produced nothing on excavation. The sides of the 'square' practically correspond with the lines of flattening of the outer earthwork.

Excavations were carried out here by Mr. St. George Gray and the late Dr. W. M. Tapp in the summer of 1911. The central space was trenched when a few fragments of Romano-British pottery, much weathered, bits of flint and some charcoal were found. The most interesting discovery was an iron axe-adze (fig. 2) uncovered on the old surface under the inner bank of the 'square'. This implement is 17½ in. in length and the nearest form to the Exmoor specimen was found at Novaesium in Germany.

There can be little doubt that this station was used as a post of observation probably by Romanized Britons, even down to the time when, in the late seventh and early eighth centuries, the Danes and Norse were hovering about the Channel and settling in South Wales. Or, perhaps, Old Barrow may have belonged to a scheme—as R. G. Collingwood thought—to defend the west coast of Britain against the Scots of Ireland.

Old Barrow compares well with the Roman fortlet on Barrock Fell, Cumberland, described in the *Trans. Cumb. and West. Ant. and Arch. Soc.*, n.s., xxxi (1931), 111-18.

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PART II

TAUNTON: ORIGINS, CASTLE, BOROUGH AND ST. MARY MAGDALENE CHURCH

TAUNTON

By W. A. SEABY

There is no evidence of settled occupation in Taunton earlier than a reference at the beginning of the eighth century stating that King Ina built a fortress, which was shortly afterwards destroyed, on the bank of the River Tone. Roman pottery and coins have been found at Bishops Hull, at Holway and elsewhere in the immediate vicinity but no trace of buildings of this date have come to light.

In 1001 Taunton was burnt to the ground by the Danes, but by the date of the Domesday Survey it possessed 'borough right' and had sixty-four burgesses of military status paying sixpence each to the Bishop of Winchester, three mills paying 95 shillings (not all in town), a market paying 50 shillings and a mint also paying 50 shillings. The earliest coins date to the reign of Cnut (1017-1035), and the market was conferred on the town by Edward the Elder, a right which must have added immensely to its prosperity. The Court Leet was set up in Taunton in 883 and still meets annually.

From a charter, dated 904, we learn that Bishop Denewulf gave certain lands to King Edward on condition that his monastery at Taunton should always be exempt from the payment of royal tribute. In 1127 Bishop William Giffard built and endowed a priory for Canons Regular of the Order of St. Augustine. The site is on the north side of the town and a barn built out of materials from the monastic buildings is situated in a builder's yard off Priory Avenue. The church of St. James was originally a chapelry of the Priory and dates from the thirteenth century; most of it was rebuilt in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

On the site of the parish church of St. Mary (a chapelry of the Priory, 1127-1308) may have stood a Saxon church of the time of Ina and there is evidence in the stonework foundations for a church of eleventh-century date. The building as seen to-day is largely Perpendicular, a magnificent tower having been added at the beginning of the sixteenth century, which was reconstructed in facsimile 1858-62. The little Leper House, with its chapel of St. Margaret, still standing on the Yeovil Road, was built from money given by Thomas Lambright in the late twelfth century. Later it became an almshouse for the poor of West Monkton and to-day is the headquarters of the Somerset Rural Community Council.

In 1295 Taunton sent two citizens to Westminster for Edward I's Model Parliament and thereafter borough members were 'elected' whenever Parliament reassembled. As is usual with towns belonging to ecclesiastical manors, Taunton did not benefit from local government until long after other towns of comparable size and importance had received royal charters. The Saxon borough court and the Court Leet were thus the only forms of local authority until the civil power passed into the hands of a Mayor, Aldermen and Burgesses in 1627.

The fact that Taunton resisted Charles I in the Civil War was not forgotten at the Restoration when the fortifications were destroyed and the charter forfeited. A new charter was, however, granted through the mediation of Dr. Peter Mew, Bishop of Winchester, in 1677, when the boundaries of the town were enlarged. But the Corporation 'possessed no lands or houses or store of money and the Mayor very trifling privileges' so perhaps it is not surprising that Taunton was deprived of her charter in 1792, when neglect to fill vacancies brought about the dissolution of the Corporation. A third charter was granted in 1877.

In spite of the poverty of the municipality, traders and men of influence did much to

restore prosperity and to rebuild the town in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In 1768 the Market House Society obtained an Act allowing the formation of a Market Trust. In reality those appointed by the Trust took over the work of the Court Leet officers to ensure that the centre of the town was kept clean and orderly and that the worst evils of the elections were done away with. Foremost amongst those responsible for making great improvements in the town was Sir Benjamin Hammet, the eminent banker. It was due to him and to Kinglake, the father of 'Eothen', that many good late Georgian buildings are to be found throughout the town.

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TAUNTON CASTLE

By W. A. SEABY

The first record of a fortress at Taunton (Fig. 3) is a reference in the Saxon Chronicle under the year A.D. 722 which states that Ethelburga, consort of King Ina, fighting against the etheling Ealdberht, destroyed Taunton 'which Ine had before built'.

Shortly afterwards Frethogyth, consort of King Ethelheard, gave Taunton Deane to the Bishop of Winchester, possibly to assist the King in garrisoning a bulwark against the Brito-Welsh in Devon. The Manor of Taunton remained in the hands of the Bishops (except when 'confiscated' by the reigning monarch) over a period of many centuries.

It is thought that the Saxon and early Norman township of Taunton was protected by vallum and fosse and there is a tradition that William Giffard who held the See from 1100-1129 'built the castle'. However that may be, there is no doubt that by the end of the twelfth century Taunton Castle possessed a massive square stone-built keep together with a bailey which was protected by a moat, fed by the stream known as the Potwater and emptying into the Mill stream of the River Tone. Bishop Peter de Roches engaged in extensive building operations at Taunton Castle in 1208 and it is possible that the Constable's Tower, the first Great Hall and the Inner Moat, together with the curtain wall and corner turrets, were constructed during his long episcopate.

After the death of Bishop Peter in 1238 the castle was frequently in the hands of King Henry III during his struggle with the monks at Winchester regarding the election to the bishopric, and the Patent Rolls bear testimony of several appointments and mandates granted by the King. The East Gate, or Castle Bow, is believed to have been erected in the reign of Edward I.

From here on the history of the Castle is a chequered one but until Bishop Langton rebuilt the gateway of the Inner Ward in 1495, as may be noted by his arms and those of Henry VII incorporated in the stonework, there appears to be little alteration to the layout of the buildings. In 1523 Bishop Fox restored the school hall, which now forms part of the Municipal Buildings. It is to be noted that both buildings east and west of the Inner Gateway have fine timber roofs which may be attributed to the work of either Langton or Fox. The defences were further strengthened during preparations made to resist the Spanish invasions several years before the Armada set sail in 1588.

During the Civil War the town changed hands several times. The Castle, however, after it had surrendered in 1644 Pye and Robert Blake was held for the Parliamentarians, although closely besieged twice during the next twelve months. In 1662 an order was issued that the fortifications of Taunton should be destroyed and, almost certainly as a result, the Norman Keep was demolished and the Castle moats partly filled in. The foundations of the Keep were excavated under the direction of Mr. H. St. George Gray, between 1924 and 1929.

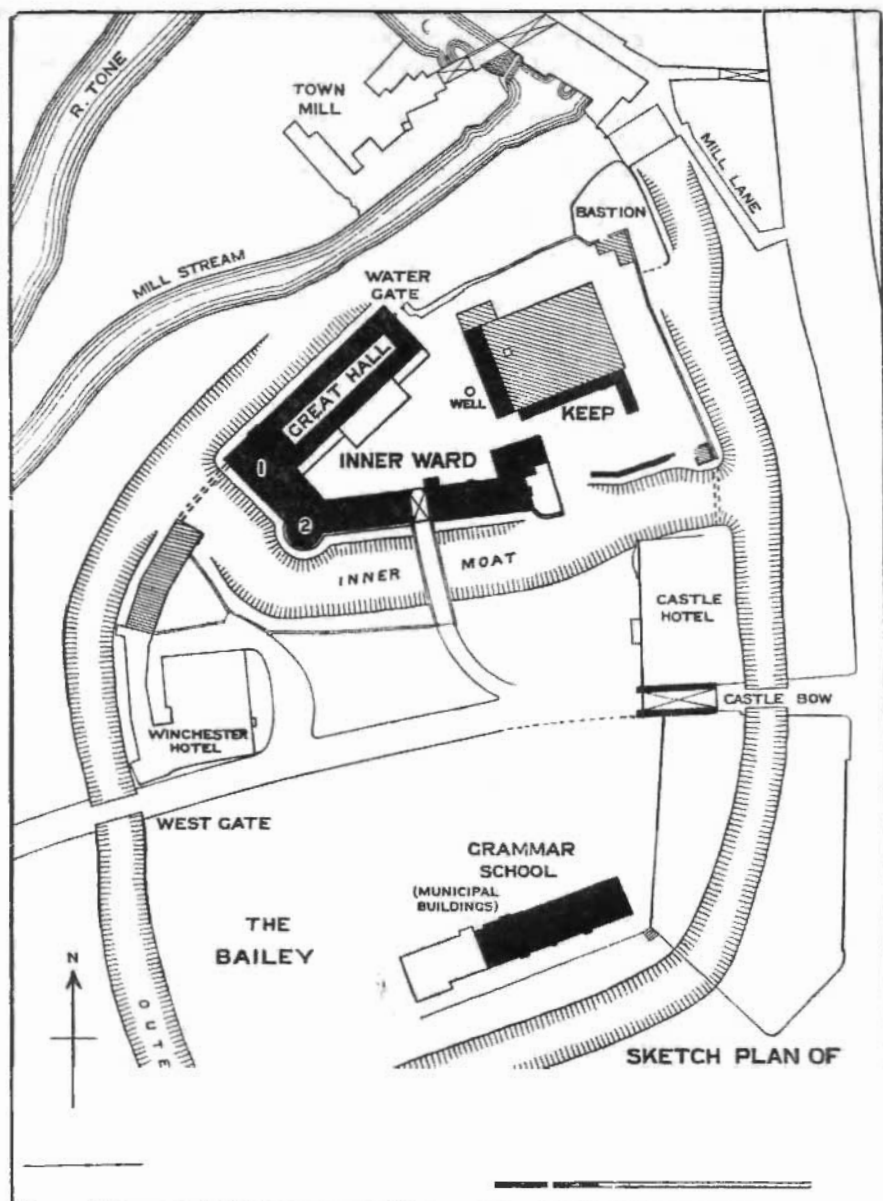


FIG. 3. TAUNTON CASTLE—PLAN
(From *The Proceedings of the Somerset Archaeological Society.*)

In June, 1685, James, Duke of Monmouth, was proclaimed 'king' in Taunton but in less than three weeks was defeated at Sedgemoor. On September 18th the Lord Chief Justice Jeffreys reached Taunton and lodged in the town. The Assizes were held in the Great Hall of the Castle, where more than 500 men were brought before the five judges, many being condemned to death but most to transportation or imprisonment. This Hall, used as an Assize Court since the thirteenth century, continued in use until the Shire Hall was built in 1858.

During the late eighteenth century Sir Benjamin Hammet, Member for Taunton, took office as Keeper of the Castle. He restored many of the dilapidated buildings, built the Adam-style Library, inserted the large Gothic windows and repaired the Great Hall. In 1822 the Castle and Manor were sold by the See of Winchester which still retained the mill rights. In 1873 the Inner Ward was purchased by the Somerset Archaeological Society in order to save the ancient buildings from destruction and to house its Library and Museum. The new block, east of the Great Hall, built to house the archaeological collections was opened in 1934, the cost being generously borne by Mr. William Wyndham, who also built the Bygone gallery and new office block, and the Wyndham Lecture Hall.

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ST. MARY MAGDALENE CHURCH, TAUNTON

By MAJOR-GENERAL ROGER EVANS

This magnificent church with its almost unique double-aisles on both sides of the nave, its remarkable, angel-capitals in the nave-arcades, its richly ornamented king-post roof, and its exceptionally lofty and beautiful tower is justly considered to be one of the most important parish churches in the country.

Not a great deal of the fabric is in its original state. Between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries the church was allowed to fall into sad decay: walls, windows and roof became in a dangerous condition; some of the foundations of the piers of the nave-arcade began to show signs of failure, and the whole floor broke up. When restoration came, it had to be drastic.

Why so important a church was allowed to deteriorate like this is a mystery. For centuries a church had stood on the present site. St. Mary's was originally a parochial chapelry served by the Canons of the Augustinian Priory in Taunton—preserved for us to-day only in the names Priory, Canon Street, and St. Augustine Street—and remains of Norman, or possibly Saxon, foundations have been found under the piers of some of the existing structure. It is certain that a church stood here in 1244.

Of these earlier churches there is nothing to be seen. There is, however, reason to believe that in the thirteenth century the church consisted of a chancel with a chantry chapel on each side, a short nave with north and south aisles, and possibly a central tower.

What we have to-day is a great and beautiful building consisting of chancel and chantry chapels and vestry; nave with double aisles on both sides—there are only four other parish churches in the country which display this feature—double storied south porch, and a western tower. There seem to have been two main phases of building. First, at the beginning of the fifteenth century, the contemporary nave and aisles were lengthened and new western tower begun. Second, a hundred years later, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, the chancel was raised, a new rood given to the nave, the fine clerestory windows and intervening niches added, and the second south aisle and the beautiful porch (which bears the date 1508) were constructed.

How much of the structure is original and how much a very careful copy made in the nineteenth century it is difficult to determine. It is certain that the tower, which is of exceptional height and of remarkable grace and beauty of design, is wholly a *replika*

of the original which, having become dangerous was pulled down and rebuilt 1858-62. So badly had the stones of the tower decayed that only two of the original blocks could be re-used—the two carved spandrels in the archway of the west door. The tower is arranged in four storeys of beautiful proportion and is crowned by a light and airy parapet enriched with elaborate crenellations and richly-decorated pinnacles. Somerset is a county renowned for the beauty of her church towers: the tower of St. Mary's is a magnificent example amongst them.

Within the church, there is a very fine oak roof over the nave; some fragments of sixteenth-century glass; and some interesting tombs—notably that of Robert Grey in the north wall of the north aisle. The church plate includes a large silver flagon, chalice and paten which have been used regularly since 1639. The church possesses a Register of twenty-seven volumes which form an unbroken sequence from 1558.

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PART III

WELLS: CATHEDRAL, CHURCH, AND RELIGIOUS AND CHARITABLE FOUNDATIONS

WELLS CATHEDRAL

(Plan, Plate XVI)

The following accounts of the Cathedral by the late Sir Harold Brakspear, and its Glass, by the late Mr. G. Mc. N. Rushforth, are reprinted from the Report on the Summer Meeting at Bath, 1930 (*Arch. Journ.* lxxxvii, 1931, 467) :

Tradition, handed down by Leland, says that King Ine founded a bishopric at Congressbury, and in 721 he removed it to Wells. He possibly founded a college of priests there and removed them to Wells. It was not until 909 that the diocese of Somerset was taken out of that of Sherborne by King Edward the Elder. He placed the bishop's see at Wells, possibly in the college of priests, and appointed one Athelhelm as the first bishop.

In 1061, Gisa was consecrated bishop, and he found the church and see in a bad state, with only four or five canons who were forced to beg their bread. He at once set to work to increase the revenues and obtained various estates from King Edward the Confessor, his queen Edith, and King Harold. He was banished by King Harold, but was reinstated by the Conqueror who added to the estates. Gisa is reputed to have erected a cloister, dorter and frater, forcing the canons to lead a regular life.

John de Villula (John of Tours) succeeded in 1088, who removed Gisa's buildings and erected on their site a new house for himself. He removed the see to his newly built church at Bath, and took the title of Bishop of Bath.

Bishop Robert of Lewes, consecrated 1136, made the constitutions of the chapter ; he is said to have rebuilt the Saxon church and caused Wells to be made a borough. He restored the property to the canons and divided it from that of the see. He arranged the quarrel between Wells and Bath, by settling that Bath should take precedence, but that the bishop should have a seat in both churches and be elected conjointly by the two chapters. He died in 1166 and the see was vacant for eight years.

In 1174, Reginald de Bohun, archdeacon of Sarum, was consecrated Bishop of Bath. What occurred to bishop Robert's church is not known, but an entirely new church was begun by Reginald, towards which he obtained grants and gave large sums. He also extended the privileges of the town, enlarged the endowment of the chapter and increased the number of prebends to thirty-five.

For many years there has been contention among archaeologists about the building of the present church, owing to the statement of a canon of Wells, who wrote in the fifteenth century, that Jocelyn built the whole church from the foundations. There is now, however, no question that Reginald began the church, and the points in dispute are, when he began it and how far it had proceeded at his death. Dr. John Bilson has just contributed a valuable paper on the subject in the *Journal*, but his dating is considered by some to be too late ; they contend that the church could not have been started later than 1180, and had proceeded as far as the eastern chapels of the transepts at Reginald's death in 1191. A change of certain details takes place at this point, though the general design of the building is unaltered from end to end. The work was apparently proceeded with, without interruption, until the bay westward of the north porch was reached, where there is a decided break in the work and the method of tooling was changed from diagonal to vertical.

Reginald was followed by Bishop Savaric, who was appointed by the chapter of Bath,

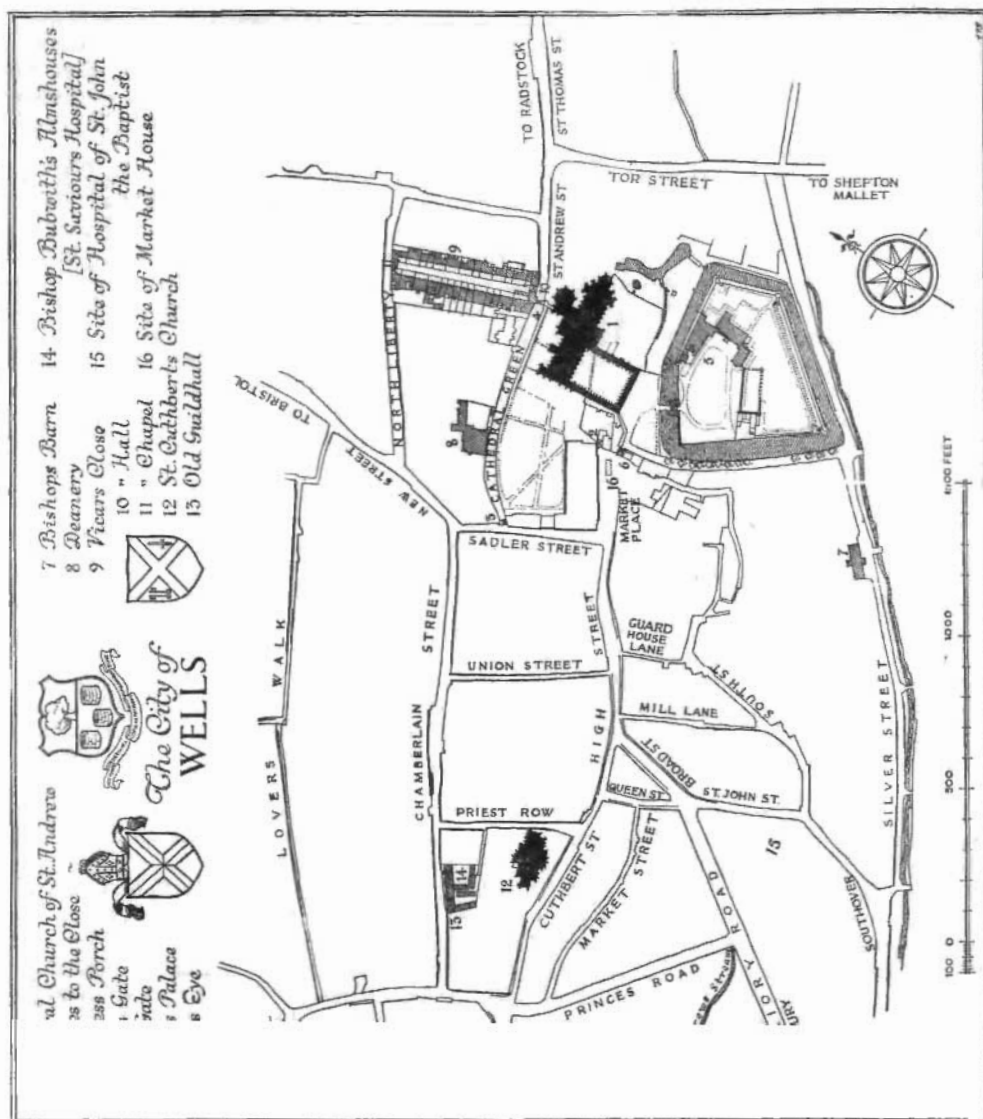


FIG. 4. PLAN OF THE CITY OF WELLS

in opposition to Wells, and he spent his time in forcing the monks of Glastonbury to have his seat in their church. He is stated to have broken into the abbey with soldiers, under the authority of King John, and to have established himself there with the title of Bishop of Bath and Glastonbury.

He was followed in 1206 by Jocelyn Trotman, a canon of Wells as Bishop of Bath and Glastonbury. He published the interdict in his diocese in 1208 and then went abroad. When the interdict was removed in 1213 he returned, and in 1219 made terms with Glastonbury, relinquishing the title and the abbey in exchange for four manors. He increased the number of prebends at Wells to fifty, provided houses for the canons and started a grammar-school, but his most important work was the completion of the church begun by Reginald and carried on by the chapter.

In 1220, the bishop had a grant of sixty oaks for a lime kiln, and the church was hallowed in 1239. Just before his death in 1242, in the preamble of a charter bishop Jocelyn states 'the church of Wells was in peril of ruin by reason of its age, we began to build and enlarge and got as far as to hallow it.' This was exaggerated by the chronicling canon, already referred to, who states that 'bishop Jocelyn pulled down the ruinous church and built it again from the pavement.' What actually happened was stated by an earlier canon, about 1370, that 'Bishop Jocelyn built the greater part of the church towards the west', in other words, the western part of Robert's church was standing and this Jocelyn removed as he continued Reginald's church westward. The extraordinary feature of this work is that the design of the earlier nave is continued up to the west end, and is unquestionably of the same building as the fully developed thirteenth-century work of Jocelyn's west end. The courses of the aisles range with the towers, the arches into the towers are of Reginald's detail towards the aisles, but of Jocelyn's detail towards the towers, and the two kinds of work are cut upon the same stones.

Almost before the west end was finished a new octagonal chapter-house was set out on the north side of presbytery and was carried up as high as the sills of the windows of the sub-vault: the staircase to the chapter-house was then proceeded with and the whole building was finished early in the fourteenth century.

Bishop William de Marchia died in 1302 and great efforts were made by the chapter to procure his canonization, in consequence of which the east end of the church was altered, or added, for the accommodation of his shrine, and this work was followed by building the east end of the presbytery and remodelling the quire. The work is said to have been assisted by Bishop Ralph of Shrewsbury (1329-1363) who was buried in front of the high altar.

The tower was raised about this time which caused the piers to give way; to counteract which the piers were recased and the St. Andrew arches were built, which are such a characteristic of this church.

The south-west tower was finished with the aid of Bishop John Harewell (1367-1386), and the north-west tower by the executors of Bishop Nicholas Bubwith (1407-1424), but the pinnacles of both towers seem never to have been completed.

The church consists of an eastern octagonal Lady chapel, with flanking chapels and a low transept to the west; a presbytery of six bays with aisles; a central tower over the crossing; transepts with east and west aisles; a nave of ten bays with aisles, a north porch, and two western towers outside the line of the aisles. It is 383 ft. in length and 135 ft. across the transept.

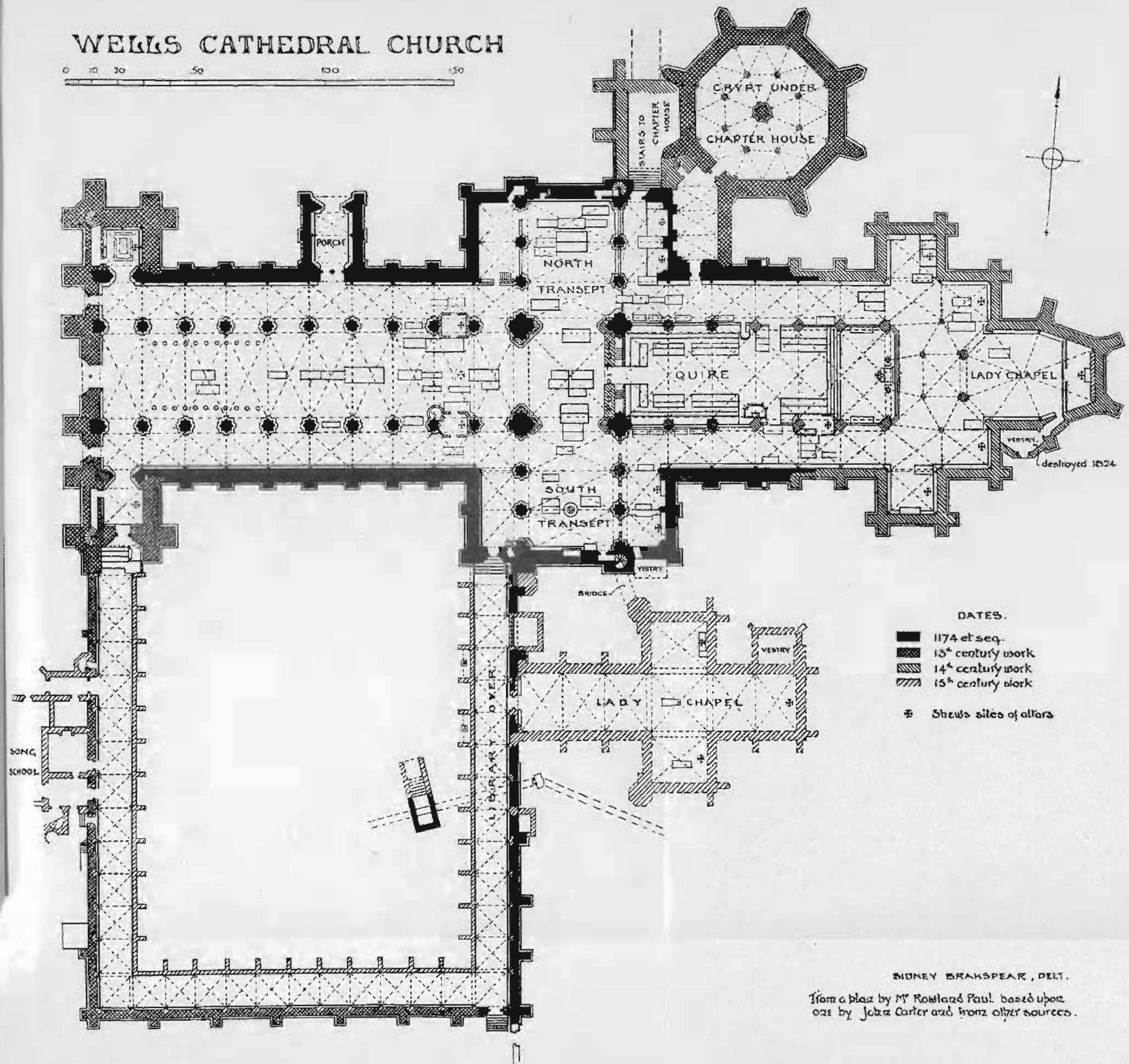
Bishop Reginald's church remains in the three western bays of the presbytery, the transepts and the nave. The original termination seems to have consisted of an ambulatory aisle, outside the main east gable, with chapels to the east. The original aisle windows remain on the east side of the north transept but the pattern was changed for those of the rest of the church. The carving of the capitals of the arcades is remarkable, and advances in character from east to west.

The Lady Chapel retains much of its original glass, which will be referred to later, and with the flanking chapels and transept, covered with intricate vaulting supported upon slender columns, is an unusual termination.

The north porch is one of the most beautiful in the country; either side wall is

WELLS CATHEDRAL CHURCH

0 10 20 50 100 150



decorated with deeply-recessed wall panelling and the outer arch is acutely pointed, with alternating carved and moulded orders.

The west front is covered with wall panelling, having marble columns, and contains the most complete series of contemporary figures of apostles, saints, and kings in existence. The thirteenth-century work stops at the level of the main parapets, but the later work, of the two towers, though totally different in design is extraordinarily harmonious.

In the second arches on either side of the nave are fifteenth-century chantry chapels with traceried sides; they are of Bishop Bubwith on the north and Treasurer Sugar on the south. A similar chantry to Bishop Beckington is under the second arch on the south side of the presbytery. There is also a number of monuments of interest, including the thirteenth-century series of effigies of Saxon bishops. Before the floor was relaid there were, on either side the nave, incised circles for the Sunday procession to stand in order, when making the station before the Rood.

The misericords are all that remain of the quire fittings, they are 64 in number and of considerable interest.

The chapter-house is raised upon a sub-vault, which is vaulted to a central column and eight lesser columns around it; it is gained by a staircase from the north transept, of which the upper steps are winders to the door of the chapter-house. The steps were carried on northward by Bishop Beckington, who erected the gatehouse called the 'Chain Gate', to connect the cathedral with the vicar's close. The chapter-house has, on all but the west face, seven panels for the seats of the chapter, forty-nine in all: it is vaulted from a central column from which spring thirty-two ribs, and the windows retain some of their original gloss.

The cloister is on the south side of the nave but only has alleys on the east, south, and west. The outer walls are of Bishop Jocelyn's work, but the alleys are of the fifteenth century, each bay covered with simple lierne vaulting supported upon wall shafts. Over the east alley is the library, built with the money left by Bishop Bubwith.

Eastward of the cloister was a large Lady Chapel which is mentioned in the thirteenth century, but this was pulled down by Bishop Stillington in 1480, to make way for the sumptuous chapel he built. This chapel was 107 ft. in length, cruciform on plan, and covered with rich fan vaulting. The west end, against the east wall of the cloister, remains, and some of the bosses of the vaulting are now built into the wall of the east alley of the cloister.

The quire and Lady chapel have important fourteenth-century glass. The east window of the latter (largely restored by Willement) retains its subjects (the Virgin surrounded by prophets and Old Testament types), but the side windows are for the most part a mass of fragments. They seem to have had figures of saints accompanied by the donors. These are peculiarly interesting, for in the releading of 1925 the dean discovered the names of deans and canons, the earliest of whom died in 1305 and the latest in 1316. Presumably they were donors in their lifetime, and the glass, which on grounds of style had been thought to be not earlier than the second quarter of the century, must belong to its first decade. Some of the tracery lights in this part of the church have a remarkable series of heads of episcopal saints. The east window of the quire (7 lights) is filled with a Tree of Jesse, and a Doom in the tracery. Its popular name of 'the golden window' indicated its gorgeous effect. The clearstory windows have figures of saints, some of which are modern. Fine contemporary glass remains in the windows of the quire aisles and the south transept. The great triplet at the west end of the nave, having lost its original glazing, was filled by Bishop Creighton (1670-72) with a representation of the Transfiguration, under which were figures of King Ine, Bishop Ralph, and himself, forming one of the most important examples of Restoration glass. The contents of the central light were wrecked in a storm, and were replaced in 1813 by fine foreign glass of the sixteenth century, consisting of a set of scenes from the life of St. John the Evangelist, said to have come from Rouen, and a beheading of St. John the Baptist, said to have come from Cologne. The former have recently been moved to the south-east transept, and the latter to the eastern clearstory of the north transept, as the central light of the great west window is to be filled with new glass in accordance with Bishop Creighton's design.

ST. CUTHBERT'S CHURCH, WELLS

By JOAN EVANS

St. Cuthbert's (plan, fig. 5) has a long history. Professor Freeman long ago pointed out a Norman pillar piscina surviving from an earlier church on the site, of which the existence is confirmed by a charter of 1281 which records the gift of the living for commons to the Chapter of the Cathedral by Bishop Robert, who held the see from 1135 to 1165. The gift was confirmed by Bishop Jocelyn not long before his death in 1242; the confirmation probably marks the rebuilding of the church. The Early English church was cruciform with a central tower; the existing nave in part dates from it. It retains its original columns, capitals and arch moulds and its original length; the old gable line is still visible on the west wall. About the middle of the fifteenth century, however, the pillars were heightened, a clearstory added and the whole remodelled to give the effect of a fashionable town church. The transepts were made more lofty, and the nave was covered by a good wooden roof with angels holding books and shields on the cornice; the arms of the old Wells family of Coward on one of the shields commemorates a member of the family. A new western tower of notable beauty was added early in the fifteenth century. The shields of the Palton family and its alliances on the western front record marriages that took place just before 1411, and a churchwarden's inventory of 1430 includes six rings given towards its cost but not yet sold.

The original central tower remained, but may have been adversely affected when the chancel roof was raised in 1481; at all events it fell in 1561, and was not replaced. The Corporation records of that year have an entry: 'That this tyme ther is appoynted a Colleecon by the M^r of the Towne for newe makynge & Settynge uppe of the Church wher the Style did stand.'

The north transept, known as the Trinity Chapel, was the chapel of the Trade Guild of the town, which later became its Corporation. The Mayor and burgesses paid dues to the Trinity altar up to 1561, when the dues were changed into more general almsgiving. The room next it, called the Exchequer, seems to have served as a depository for valuables and documents not only for the church but also for the members of the Guild.

When the chapel was restored in 1848 a wall-painting came to light of a life-size figure of Christ wearing a red cloak over a russet robe and holding the orb of dominion. The ground was powdered with *I'hc m'cy* in black letter and *Salvator mundi* was inscribed beneath. Over the head of the figure an angel held a shield with the Five Wounds. The painting is no longer visible; the description suggests that it was of the years round 1500.

The removal of more recent panelling at the same time revealed the remains of a remarkably fine reredos of about 1470. The figures had been broken up, but many fragments had been used as rubble to fill up the niches. They are now shown in a case in the nave, and retain strong traces of their original colour. When the Institute visited Wells in 1849 Mr. Dollman presented us with a coloured measured drawing of the reredos; this passed to the Society of Antiquaries with the Institute's other drawings and is still in their library.¹ It clearly shows the blue and red colouring picked out in gold which has now faded considerably.

The South Transept, originally dedicated to St. Cuthbert, became known as Tanner's Chapel: Thomas Tanner, six times mayor of Wells, in 1402 established a chantry in honour of the altar of the Virgin there. A black-letter mural inscription, now hardly visible, records, 'Anniversare Thomae Tanner est in festo Sce Katerinae'. Its most remarkable feature is the remains of a reredos formed as a tree of Jesse in stone. Mr. Serel in 1875 printed the indenture for its erection in 1470, with 'three stagis of Imagery acording to the genealogy of our lady', by the free mason John Stowell of Wells.

The seventeenth-century pulpit has carved panels of Jacob wrestling with the Angel, Sampson and the lion, David and Goliath, Jonah and the Whale, and Daniel in the lion's

¹ MS. Catalogue BP. 88.

WELLS ST CUTHBERT'S CHURCH

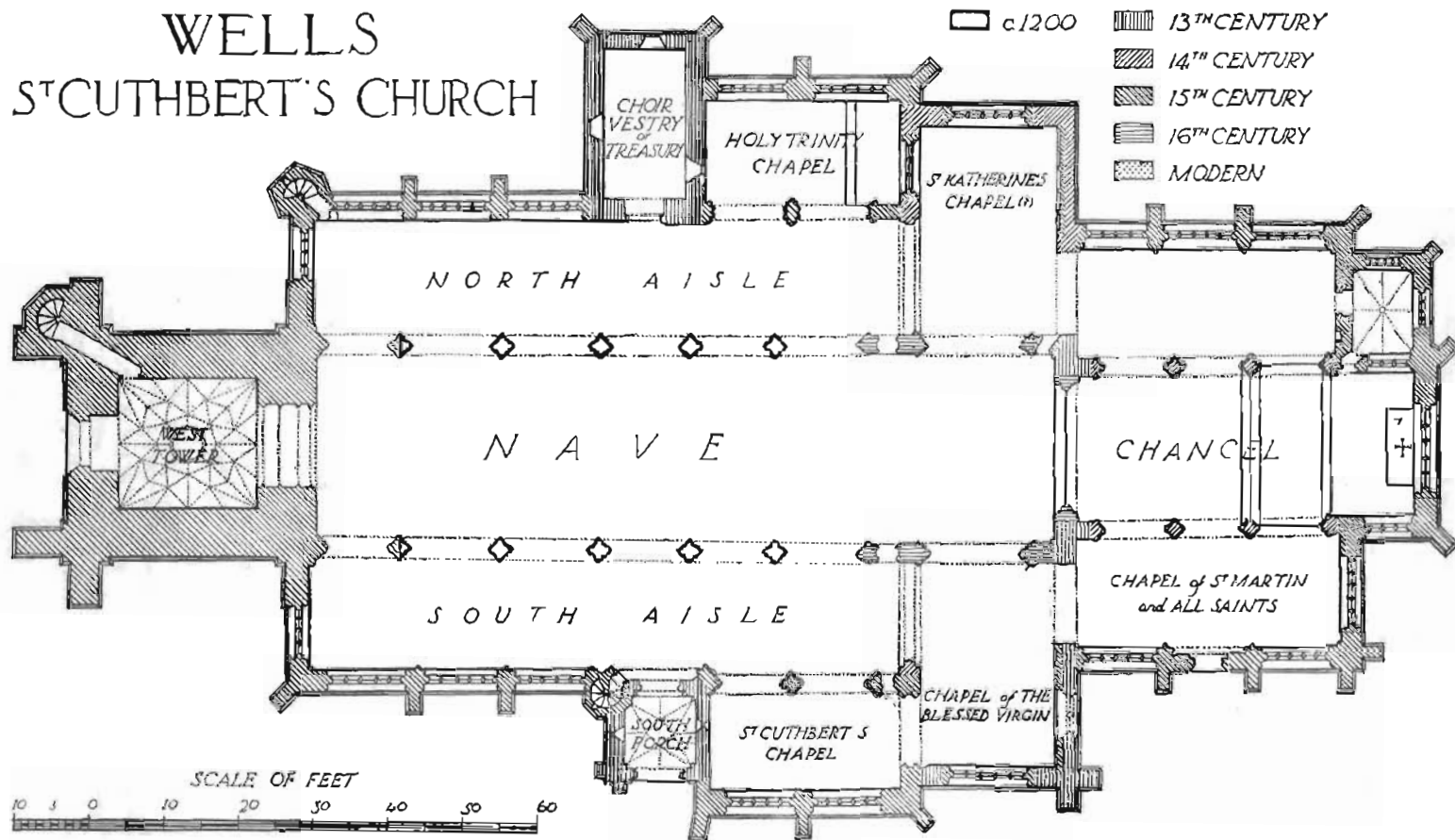


FIG. 5.

den: an interesting and consistent example of post-reformation iconography. There is some good seventeenth-century plate, and royal arms of Charles I and Charles II.

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THE BISHOP'S PALACE, WELLS

By MARGARET E. WOOD

The Palace (plan, fig. 6) is surrounded by a moat and fourteenth-century curtain wall with gatehouse. It is interesting as containing two periods of thirteenth-century domestic building: the first-floor suite of Bishop Jocelyn (1206-1242) now the Bishop's residence; and the great hall of Bishop Burnell (1274-1292), a ruin in the garden of the Palace, although the chapel is still in use.

Bishop Jocelyn's building, c. 1230-1240, retains vaulted cellars of unusual extent. It is also important for the first-floor windows, with foliated rear-arches; these, although partially restored, provide, with others in the later hall and chapel, a study in the development of thirteenth-century tracery. In the main building (c. 97 ft. by 45 ft.) which lies north to south, the first floor contained a large room or hall (68 ft. by 28 ft.) with a smaller chamber or solar to the north, and a gallery, a third the width of the building, once also subdivided, flanking these on the west side. An L-plan is formed by a small room with garderobe off the east wall of the solar.

All these rooms have vaulted basements. The hall cellar is divided into two aisles of five quadripartite bays, by central columns having capitals moulded, like the corbels, with undercut roll and roll-and-fillet; Purbeck marble is used in the upper member and in some of the bases. The solar undercroft has a double aisle of two bays and one central column, while the west range is seven bays in length. The ground floor has lancets, but these have been altered on the west front, where the entrance has been moved one bay south, and is now central, with a modern porch.

Many of the windows were discovered and restored in 1846. On the west the first-floor (gallery) windows are original, but the trefoiled hoods were added by Ferrer, possibly on original lines, together with similar windows in the modern upper storey. On the north, south and east, he removed the sashes and found thirteenth-century arches and capitals embedded in the wall, but the mid-shafts are his restoration.

In the gallery the west windows are of two rounded-trefoil-headed lights with a quatrefoil in plate tracery. Jamb-shafts with foliated capitals support a rounded trefoil rear-arch moulded with roll-and-fillet; the semi-circular hood has head-stops. There is similar work in the south window here, and in the east window to the hall, but in the latter the south windows, although of the same shape externally with trefoil hood, are larger and coupled with a quatrefoil in the gable; also the foliated rear-arch is cinquefoiled and supported on shafts, the central being shared. Even more elaborate is the double north window (to the solar), where the cinquefoiled rear-arches have foliage cusps, two-centred moulded hoods, joined centrally, and with head-stops at the outer ends. Again a quatrefoil in the gable completes the composition. Although roll-and-fillet mouldings still predominate, here the trefoiled lights and quatrefoils are in bar tracery, apparently later than the plate tracery elsewhere.

Bishop Burnell's hall block, c. 1280, retains the north wall, west end, and angle turrets, of which the south-east is isolated with a portion of south wall adhering, containing a window jamb. Beyond a gap on this side is the entrance, having a moulded two-centred arch, and attached to the south wall of the solar basement. The hall (115 ft. by 59 ft. 6 in.) was apparently aisled in five bays, with a two-storeyed block at the west where the crenellated

The Bishop's Palace at Wells

Scale 10 0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100 Feet

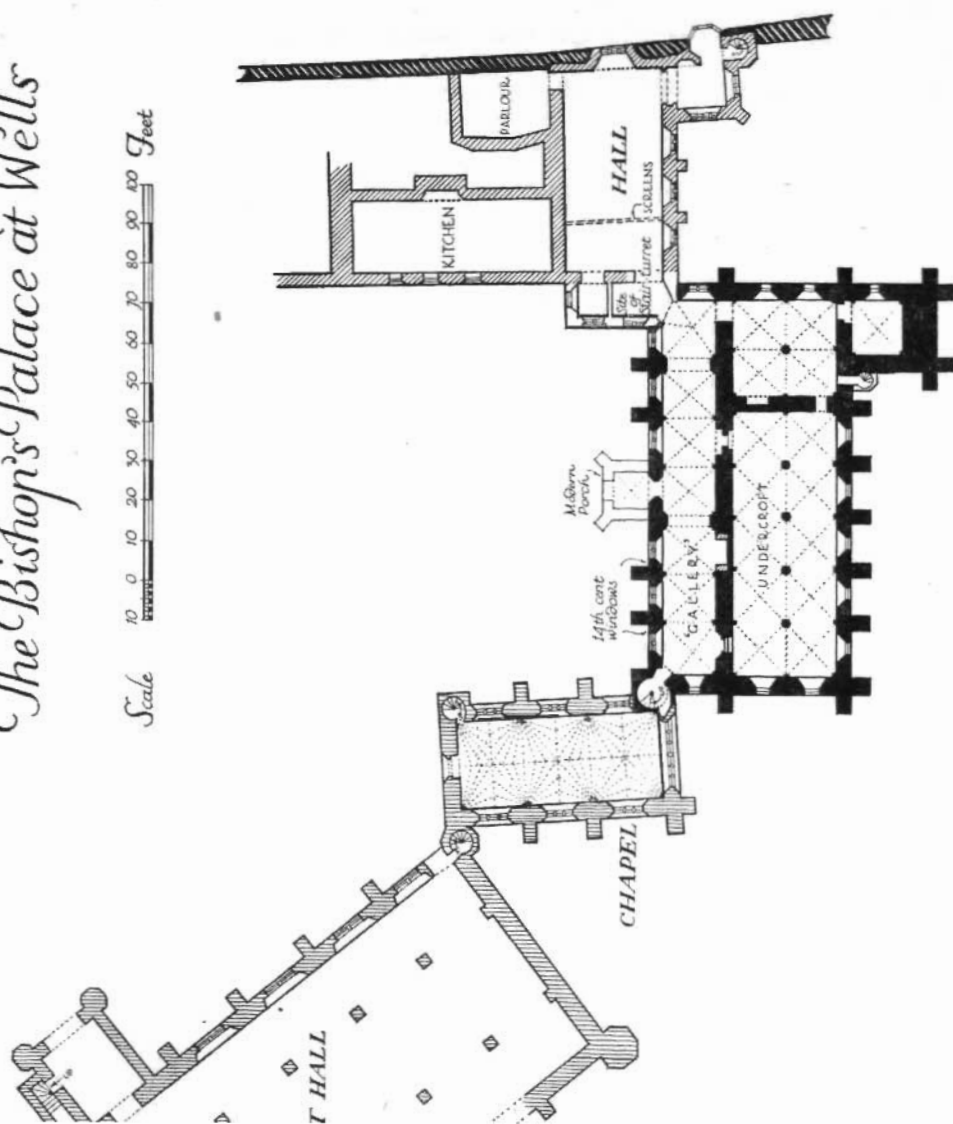


FIG. 6

parapet is slightly lower. Here a north porch, now gone, contained steps up to the solar doorway.

Again the windows provide the chief interest. The hall ones are of two-pointed-trefoil-headed lights with lobed trefoil above and a sexfoil within a moulded two-centred head and hood; each light is trefoiled below the transom; the rear-arch is two-centred moulded with scroll-and-bead. The solar windows without transom, have rounded instead of lobed trefoils in the tracery. The doorway was on the north, and on the west are traces of a hooded fireplace; the south wall has gone at this level. The solar here may have served as a guest chamber if the Bishop continued to use his earlier apartments reached through the chapel at the other end. Certainly the service rooms were under this chamber, no doubt pantry and buttery separated by a passage to the kitchen in a separate building. On the west three segmental-headed openings remain, blocked externally, and the north wall retains two lancets with splayed jambs and chamfered two-centred rear-arch.

Judging from the more developed window tracery, c. 1290, Burnell's chapel seems to have followed the building of his hall. It is of three bays, and probably on the site of Jocelyn's chapel. Some earlier walling is incorporated, as in the north wall of the hall nearby, and the west doorway is of early thirteenth century type with trefoiled outer arch and the rear arch cinquefoiled, both with semicircular hoods and head-stops. The east window has six pointed cinquefoiled lights in a two-centred arch, the west has five, and the side windows three with sexfoiled circles and other tracery. The capitals of the jamb-shafts have naturalistic carving, and mouldings include the scroll-and-bead, with roll-and-fillet, the latter also used in the tierceron ribbing of the vault.

Bishop Ralph of Shrewsbury (1329-1363) obtained licence to crenellate the precinct of his house in 1340, and the wall and gatehouse still remain, though the ditch may be earlier. Bishop Thomas Becketon (1443-1465) added to the Palace on the north-west of Jocelyn's building, and the conduit house is his work, also the 'Bishop's Eye' gateway from the market place.

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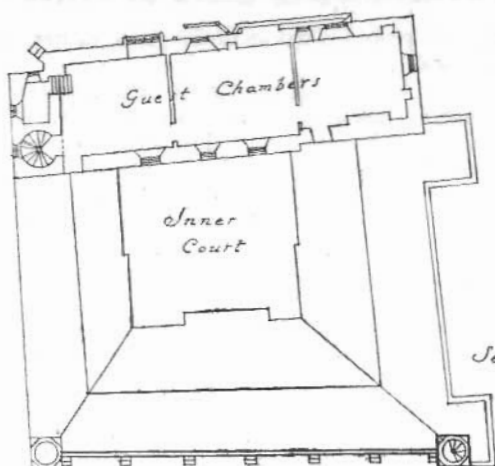
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THE DEANERY, WELLS

By WALTER H. GODFREY

The Deanery, which lies to the north-west of the Cathedral was rebuilt by John Gunthorpe (Dean, 1472-98). He enjoyed extensive patronage from King Edward IV, and in addition to the many benefices and ecclesiastical offices to which he was appointed, became Almoner to the King in 1478, and Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal in 1480. His tomb is in the Chapel of St. John the Evangelist (south-east transept of the Cathedral).

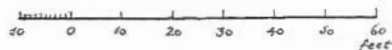
The Deanery (fig. 7) is a fine example of a fifteenth-century house, the main fabric of which has survived considerable internal re-arrangement and re-fenestration. There is a large entrance court with a two-storey gatehouse, and the house surrounds a rectangular inner court, now built over. It seems reasonable to place the position of the original hall, with its porch, screens, passage and kitchen in the east range, adjoining the entrance court. Cornelius Burges, the puritan preacher to the Cathedral is reported as having made many alterations, including turning the hall into chambers. On the ground floor is a fine late fifteenth-century fireplace, similar to one in the Bishop's Palace. The southern range, facing the Close has a range of buttresses, and octagonal turrets over newel staircases at each end. Dr. Armitage Robinson would place the hall here, but that is unlikely and the range seems always to have been of two floors. It contains two large rooms, reconstructed



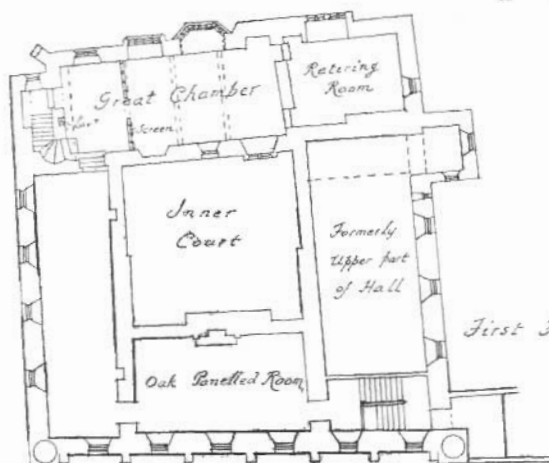
*The Deanery
Wells, Somerset.*

*Sketch Plans based on a
survey by G.C. Beech, A.R.I.B.A.
(modern partitions etc. omitted)*

Second Floor



W.H.G.
1951.



First Floor



c. 1700, the upper being lavishly panelled, with paired pilasters and a good plaster ceiling. The fine south-east staircase is of the same date.

The most important late fifteenth-century work is in the north range, where Dean Gunthorpe built a suite of rooms, as interesting in their arrangement as varied in their architectural detail, amongst which the Dean's heraldic devices are used in profusion. A stone stair at the west end leads up to the first floor, which is divided into a vestibule, with a canopied wash-basin, a great chamber and a retiring room beyond. A bold stone arch across the west of the vestibule carries an enclosed gallery, approached by a newel stair, which leads to three guest chambers on the second floor and rises in a square tower. Adjoining this to the north is a small closet. The oak screen, dividing the great chamber from the vestibule was (in the time of Dr. Armitage Robinson) found in a central position, making two equal-sized rooms, but it is probable that it had been moved. Its natural position would be a little further west than where it is now placed. The great chamber has an elaborate bay window (or oriel) the recess of which is roofed with fan tracery and it apparently had another to the south. The windows on each side of the oriel project slightly from the wall and are also richly designed with stone panelled ceilings having heraldic devices.

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VICARS' CLOSE

By WALTER H. GODFREY

In 1334 Walter de Hulle, Archdeacon of Bath, gave two messuages and lands in Wells for thirteen chantry priests, who officiated in the quire, to live together. Bishop Ralph of Shrewsbury (1329-62) refounded the College and commenced the interesting group of buildings that forms the Close (plan, fig. 8). The houses of the Vicars line both sides of a long court or lane, slightly converging as it extends northwards. The south range includes a fine entrance gateway with the original hall and kitchen on the first floor. Considerable additions were made by Bishop Beckington (1443-65) who built the Chain Gate connecting the hall on the south with the Chapter House stairway, and also an elaborate porch and staircase building to the north of the hall, with muniment rooms above. The forty-two houses (probably also remodelled by Beckington) are of two storeys with a single chamber on each floor and a square newel stair behind projecting into a garden. The elevations to the Close have a series of chimney stacks with octagonal shafts. Most of the houses have modern windows, but one or two retain their original features intact. The vista is closed by a chapel (Bishop Bubwith, 1407-1424) over which Beckington built a library. Most of Beckington's work to the Vicars' Close was done by his executors after his death.

The hall and kitchen have many interesting features and much of their original fittings and furniture. The fireplace and adjoining pulpit for the reader were built by Hugh Sugar (one of Beckington's executors). The two oriels at the east end of the north and south walls were added by Richard Pomeroy (c. 1500). Queen Elizabeth granted the Vicars a charter which is kept in the hall. The chapel, formerly entered from the west, is richly carved with ornament and heraldry, the belfry having four coats-of-arms, and the parapet enriched with niches. Its stone altar, bench-ends and screen are notable.

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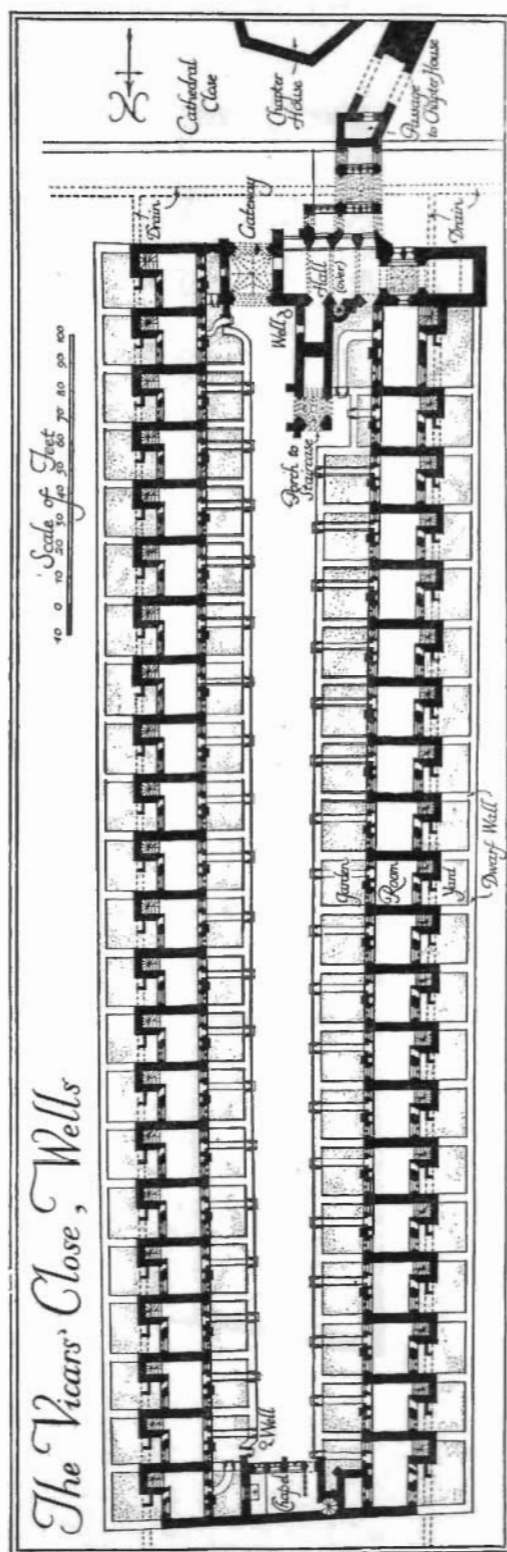


FIG. 8

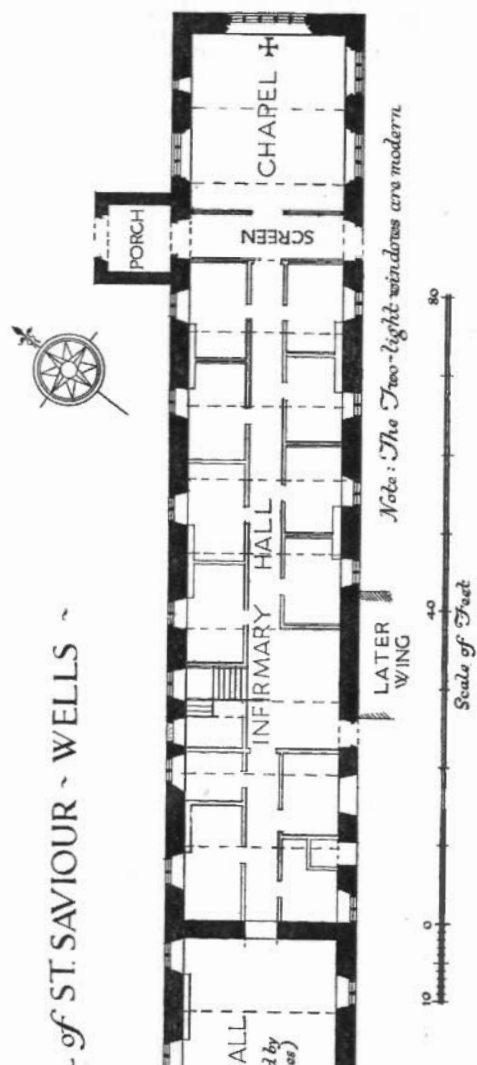


FIG. 9

NOTES ON PICTURES IN THE HALL OF THE VICARS' CHORAL

By E. K. WATERHOUSE

In addition to a singular and very damaged group from the later sixteenth century, which requires exploration, there are two half-length portraits signed by little-known painters of the eighteenth century: a portrait of *Bishop Hooper* by Thomas Hill, 1722 (or 1723), who painted other portraits of Hooper, which are in the Bishop's Palace at Wells, Melbury, Dunster, and Christ Church, Oxford, and a portrait of *Dr. Eyre* by C. Bestland 1792.

ST. SAVIOUR'S HOSPITAL

By WALTER H. GODFREY

The Hospital dedicated to Our Saviour, the Blessed Virgin and All Saints stands outside the north wall of St. Cuthbert's Churchyard and was founded by Bishop Bubwith for twenty-four persons of both sexes. It was built to the directions of his will (he died in 1424) and consists of a long Infirmary Hall and Chapel (fig. 9) entered by a porch to a screen passage between the two. Adjoining the Hospital at the west end is the Guildhall, also built by Bishop Bubwith's executors. In 1466 William Gascoigne endowed a Chaplain at the Hospital and Bishop John Still (d.1607) built the canopied seats towards the churchyard.

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PART IV
SOMERSET: CHURCHES AND RELIGIOUS HOUSES

CROSCOMBE CHURCH

By E. C. ROUSE

The church of St. Mary the Virgin is, in the main, a fifteenth-century re-building of an older structure, which had become in poor repair by the early part of the fourteenth century. Of this earlier building some portions remain visible, as in the south porch, and north door, and possibly the chancel arch. It is also probable that the older walls were merely re-faced or "ashlared" in the restoration, which took place probably between 1400 and 1440. To this latter date belong the tower, nave with its clerestory and roof, part of the chancel and most of the windows. The work was done very largely with benefactions from the wealthy clothiers of the district, among whom the Paltons were prominent. Rolls of cloth appear on two of the nave roof-bosses, and the arms of Palton and Botreaux fix the date between 1420 and 1440. The fine benches and standards are also of this date or a little later.

The exceptionally interesting and extensive Churchwardens' accounts give dates for later parts of the building, notably in 1506-7 and on to 1512-13. These additions were, first the square structure of two storeys at the south-west end, called, after 1520-21, the treasure-house and vestry, where the church Gilds used to meet; and, second, the transeptal chapel and the east end of the chancel. This north-east chapel and vestry were the work of John Carter of Exeter, described as a 'Vre Massyn'. Mr. John Harvey remarks (*Arch. Journ.*, cv, 22), that it is curious that with skilled masons available a few miles away at Wells, the church authorities should have gone all the way to Exeter for their man. The parapet goes over work of all these dates, and is very similar to that at St. Cuthbert's, Wells.

The main feature of the church, however, is the splendid seventeenth-century wood-work of the screen (pl. XVII), pulpit and chancel roof. The arms on the screen indicate the date 1616, and Hugh Fortescue, who married Mary Rolle, as the donor. The pulpit also bears these arms, and those of Bishop Lake, 1616-26. It is of somewhat less fine workmanship than the screen, and may be later work in a similar style. The roof may be dated by its heraldry—the arms of Fortescue, Fortescue and Granville, and Fortescue and Northcote appearing—as 1664.

Among the monuments, two early incised slabs should be noted; and brasses to the Bisse family (wealthy clothiers), 1606 and 1625.

The church was restored in 1889-90.

There were seven Gilds connected with the church—The Young Men, The Maidens, The Webbers, The Tuckers (or Fullers), The Hoggiers (field labourers and miners), The Archers, and The Wives. In addition there was the Gild of St. Anne, founded in memory of Sir William Palton who was a great benefactor.

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For the Screen etc., see AYMER VALLANCE, *English Church Screens*, 73, 87: illustrated in plate 274.



DUNSTER CHURCH

By F. C. EELES

William de Mohun gave to John de Villula, Bishop of Bath, in 1090, the church of Dunster that the monks of Bath might build and edify it. It was surrendered with the priory of Bath in 1539 and its value in 1535 was only £37 4s. 8d.

The twelfth-century church was probably cruciform with a central tower and of this building the responds of the west arch of the crossing, the west end and probably the western part of the north wall of the nave belong to this period. The east arch in the south transept is of about 1200 but the responds were bowed back in the sixteenth century to form a wider opening. The monastic choir was rebuilt in the first half of the thirteenth century and the existing three east lancets replaced a large fifteenth-century window during the restoration of the church. It would appear that the four arches of the existing crossing were set within the earlier crossing late in the fourteenth century as no mention is made of them in the contract for building the tower in 1443. This contract includes the three 'French' (diagonal) buttresses and the vice, the stage with windows to the north and south and the bell-chamber ('bell-bedd'), with battlements, pinnacles and gargoyles. Most of the rest of the church was rebuilt during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries including both transepts, both arcades and the adjoining aisles of the nave, the north and south chapels and the vestry chapel north of the chancel. An arbitration between the parish and the convent in 1499 directed the parish to make a choir for themselves in the nave and this no doubt led to the erection of the splendid rood-screen with its vaulted loft across the nave. The south porch is early sixteenth-century work. The waggon roof of the nave is sixteenth-century work with carved bosses. The roof of the south aisle is flat and richly panelled. It has no wall plates and was probably re-used from the nave when the waggon roof was substituted for it.

There is a much restored sixteenth-century monument, probably intended for an Easter sepulchre, between the choir and the sacristy. Upon it lie the earlier effigies of Sir Hugh Luttrell, *d.* 1428 and Catherine Beaumont, his wife, *d.* 1435. On the south side of the choir is a fourteenth-century effigy of a lady, probably Christian Segrave, wife of Sir John de Mohun IV, *c.* 1325, under a much restored canopy. In the south choir aisle is an incised alabaster slab to Elizabeth wife of Sir James Luttrell, 1493, of the normal Midland type, evidently an importation, and a large and severe renaissance monument to Thomas Luttrell, his son George and their wives, notable because made of the local alabaster, by a Dutch sculptor who did other work in the district. Near it is a massive wooden desk believed to have been made for use in the cloister and afterwards turned into a chest. Across the arch leading from the transept to this aisle is the fifteenth-century screen which was formerly under the east tower arch at the west end of the monk's choir. The rood screen is said to be the longest ancient screen in the country: there is a central projection eastward to make space for an altar.

On the north side of the church the monastic dove-cot, tithe-barn, and prior's lodging (much altered) still remain in the close.

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CLEEVE ABBEY

By R. S. SIMMS

The Cistercian House in the parish of Old Cleeve, Somerset, was colonized from Revesby, Lincolnshire, and was founded by William de Roumara, third Earl of Lincoln, between 1186 and 1191. The church and conventual buildings were rapidly erected judging by the style of the eastern range, and there was also a grant by Henry III in 1232 for timber for the choir stalls, from which it may be presumed that the eastern end of the church was almost completed by that date.

Little is known of the history of the abbey and the brethren appear to have led a secluded life in, what must have been, a remote part of the country. At the Suppression the valuation was only worth £155 9s. 5d., but this may be accounted for by the fact that extensive schemes of rebuilding were carried out at the end of the fifteenth and early in the sixteenth century. The abbots of Muchelney and Forde also indulged in extensive schemes of renovation at this period. The church, which is completely demolished, has been excavated under the supervision of Dr. F. C. Eeles, and the foundations can now be traced. It is of the usual Cistercian plan with an aisleless presbytery and two chapels in each arm of the transept and an aisled nave of seven bays. The south wall of the nave stands to the full height of the cloister roof and there is an added chapel between the north transept and the nave.

The domestic buildings are almost complete, after the Suppression they were converted into farm buildings and thus have been preserved for posterity.

The eastern range stands to its full height and contains on the ground floor from north to south, the Vestry having a circular window in its eastern wall and paintings dating from the thirteenth century on the ceiling and walls: adjacent to this is a small vaulted chamber perhaps the Treasury. The eastern end of the vaulted Chapter House has been demolished, but several bays remain with the entrance to the Cloisters.

The Parlour, Slype and Day Room are also situated on the ground floor of this Range.

The Dormitory (pl. XVIII B) stretched the whole length of the upper floor, and is approached by a flight of stone stairs from the Cloister. The windows are all of thirteenth century date and retain their window seats. At the northern end is the door to the Night Stair and the Rere-Dorter is approached by a door at the south-eastern corner of the building.

The Refectory (pl. XVIII A) was originally erected north and south in the usual manner: a fine tiled floor has been discovered, which is described by Mr. Ward Perkins in the *Proceedings of the Somerset Archaeological Society*. In the latter half of the fifteenth century the range was rebuilt with the Refectory standing on the first floor over a series of nondescript apartments. It is approached by a flight of stone steps and contains over its western end an original bell-cote. The interior is a good example of a hall of the period and has a fine wooden roof with carved bosses and figures under incipient hammer-beams. On the southern wall are steps leading to the reading desk, and there are original tiles re-set at the dais end.

Over the dais was painted a representation of the Crucifixion; this has deteriorated during the past few years and is now almost unrecognizable. A room on the western side of the staircase contains further wall-paintings representing St. Katherine, St. Margaret and certain allegorical scenes. An upper storey is over the west end of the cloister and on this side stood the cellarer's building used by the Convent in the early days of the abbey.

The Cloisters have disappeared except for the western range, which is of early sixteenth century date; against the wall of the southern range is an arched recess, presumably a lavatorium and there is also a recess in the south wall of the nave perhaps for a seat.

The Gatehouse stands to the west of the church and dates originally from the thirteenth century, but was restored by the last abbot, Dovell, and his monogram appears on the archway. There are three niches over the entrance, one of which contains a crucifix and there is another figure in a niche over the outer arch.

The Infirmary Range was partly excavated by Sir W. St. J. Hope and stood to the south-east of the main block. The buildings are now in the ownership of the Crown and came into the guardianship of the Minister of Works in 1951.



A. CLEEVE ABBEY : S. RANGE, REFECTORY



B. CLEEVE ABBEY : E. RANGE, DORMITORY AND CHAPTER HOUSE
(Photos : R. Gilyard-Beer)



A



B

A. FORDE ABBEY: NORTH FRONT, FROM A WATER-COLOUR DRAWING BY J. RICHARDS
 (Reproduced by permission of the Society of Antiquaries of London)

B. FORDE ABBEY
 (Reproduced by permission of H.M. Stationery Office: Crown Copyright)

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A late 13th-century pavement at Cleeve Abbey. *Som. Arch. Proc.*, lxxxvii (1941), 39.

FORDE ABBEY

By the late SIR ALFRED CLAPHAM with a note by A. R. DUFTY

The Cistercian Abbey of Forde, a daughter-house of Waverley, was founded by Richard Fitz-Baldwin in 1136. Originally placed at Brightley it was moved to the present site in 1141. A consecration of the church is recorded in 1239, which presumably indicates some enlargement of the eastern arm. Thomas Charde (1521-39), the last abbot, was a great builder and to him is due the imposing abbot's lodging and other works. The abbey was valued in 1535 at £373 10s. 6½d. net a year and was dissolved in 1539.

Nothing is left of the church which stood to the south of the monastic buildings and, of the monastic buildings themselves, only those adjoining the northern part of the cloister survive of the main block, with the abbot's lodging and inner gatehouse to the west of them. The chief surviving twelfth-century building is the Chapter House (now the Chapel), a vaulted rectangular structure of two bays with the vaulting-shafts recessed into the wall. The Dormitory-range extending to the north is mainly of c.1200 and the surviving parts of the Refectory and Kitchen are perhaps of the same date. The Refectory, which stood at right angles to the Cloister, was shortened, altered and divided into two storeys in the fifteenth century. The early sixteenth-century north alley of the cloister survives intact and only slightly altered. It was rebuilt by Abbot Charde and bears his device and other badges, initials and coats-of-arms. In the fourth bay of the north wall Charde's panelling has been removed to show the thirteenth-century wall-arcading of the former lavatory. The long Dormitory-range has a vaulted undercroft and the Dormitory itself has lancet-windows in the side-walls.

The Great Hall of the abbot's lodging was built by Abbot Charde in 1528, the date on the superstructure of the porch. The Hall was originally 83 ft. long but was shortened in the seventeenth century to its present length of 54½ ft. It is a building erected, as it would appear, regardless of cost and falls into line with other more or less sumptuous lodgings of the close of the Middle Ages, such as those at Cerne, Muchelney and Milton. The elaborate porch is of three storeys, the two upper with an oriel-window looking south. The porch has much carved heraldic and other decoration. The hall itself has windows of four lights with carved panels of early Renaissance character above them. The panelled ceiling inside it has probably been reconstituted in the seventeenth century.

THE FOLLOWING NOTE IS BY A. R. DUFTY

In the course of the hundred years following the surrender of the Abbey the buildings were transformed into a house. In 1649 it was bought by Edmund Prideaux, Cromwell's Solicitor-General, who during the fifties made extensive and important alterations. In addition to the work of this period in the west part of the house, in which are incorporated the western bays of the abbot's Hall, and the remarkable series of elaborate plaster ceilings which Prideaux inserted throughout much of the house, he remodelled the west claustral range, adding the Great Staircase leading up to the Saloon on the first floor. This stair has elaborately carved and pierced panels in place of balusters and the ceiling is dated 1658. The ceiling of the Saloon is notable and has in the centre a coloured achievement of the Prideaux arms; the same room contains a splendid set of Mortlake tapestries woven with scenes from the Life of Christ, after Raphael's cartoons, which is said to have been given by Queen Anne to Francis Gwyn, her Secretary at War, a subsequent owner of Forde. The seventeenth and eighteenth-century woodwork in the Chapel and in the west part of the house is of considerable interest, and the Drawing Room contains a number of panels of late sixteenth-century Flemish tapestry representing the Exploits of Constantine.

A full account of the house with a dated plan is included in the Royal Commission's forthcoming Inventory of West Dorset. Some assistance in dating was obtained from a late eighteenth-century water-colour drawing by J. Richards of the north front of the abbey

which is in the collections of the Society of Antiquaries ; I am indebted to the Council of the Society for permission to reproduce it here (plate XIX). The hall of the abbot's lodging is shown free of the modern additions which obscure it and with the four-light transomed windows still for the most part open ; all are now blocked. Particularly clear is the eastward extension of the great chimney made when, in the seventeenth century, the hall fireplace was moved one bay further to the east in consequence of the two western bays of the hall being incorporated and concealed in Prideaux's reconstruction of the west part of the house ; in this way the fireplace was kept central in the north wall of the shortened hall. The low outbuilding shown on the west has been destroyed.

The site of the church has not been excavated, but air-photographs of the abbey taken recently by Dr. J. K. St. Joseph suggest that detailed air-survey made under most favourable conditions would reveal in soil-marks something of the extent of the building.

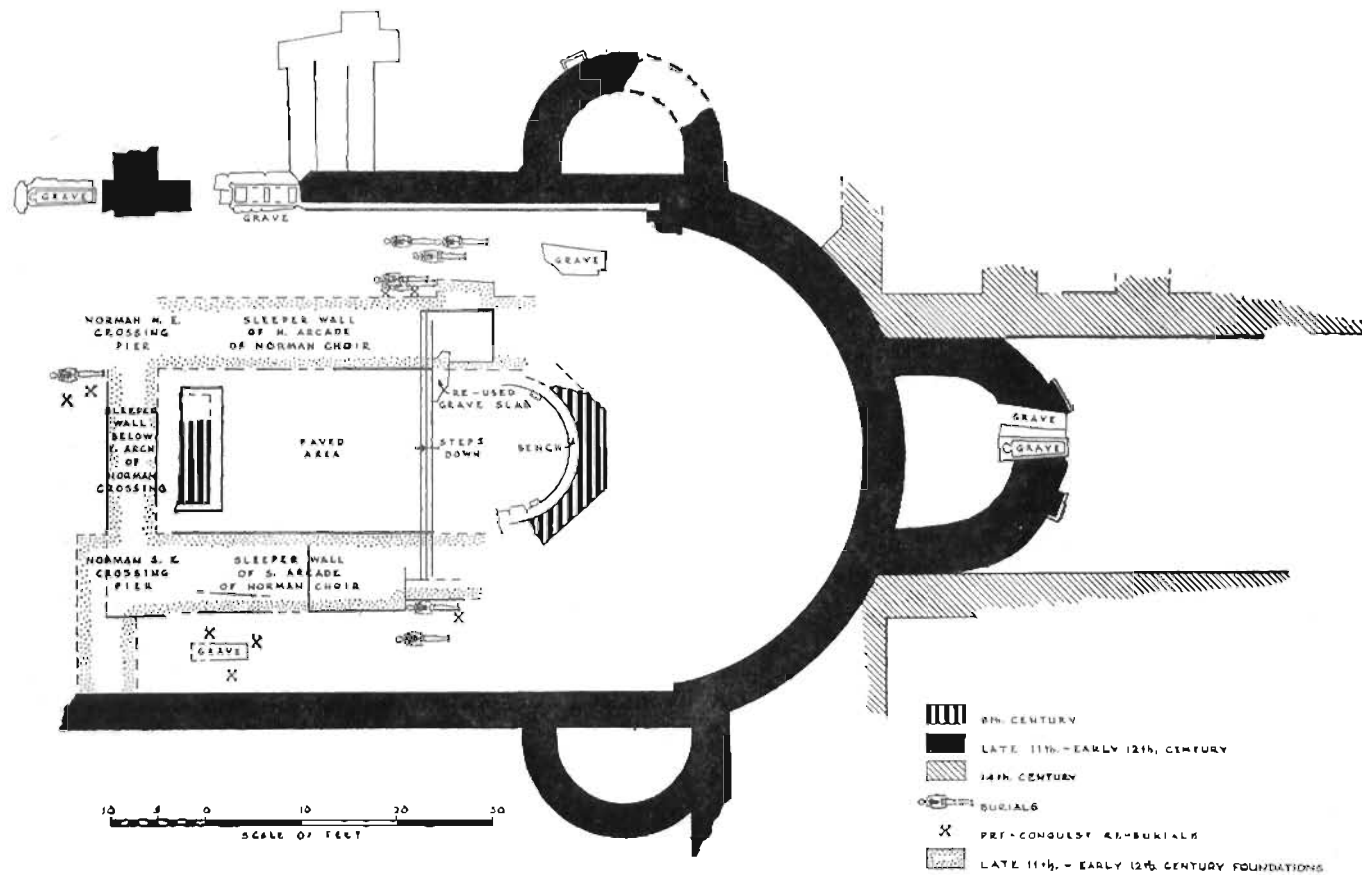
MUCHELNEY ABBEY

By P. K. BAILLIE REYNOLDS

The Abbey of Muchelney was founded probably in the first half of the eighth century possibly by King Ina after the establishment of the See of Wessex beyond Selwood (Sherborne) in 705. The charter of Kynwulf, 762, is accepted as genuine. It was re-established by King Athelstan perhaps after 937. In the pre-Conquest period it was a small monastery. It later advanced in wealth and its value in 1535 was £437 4s. 11d. ; it was dissolved in 1538. The site of the church was partially and unsatisfactorily excavated in 1872-4 and the whole site is now under the guardianship of H.M. Ministry of Works. Quite recently under the western part of the eastern arm of the church (plan, fig. 10) have been found some remains of the pre-Conquest building, consisting of a semicircular apse with a polygonal external face. To the west of this the side walls of the body of the church which belonged to this apse had been destroyed by the sleeper-walls which carried the quire-arcades and the piers of the east side of the later crossing. The space between these sleeper walls had been paved in Norman times so that it seems that the early church was preserved as a crypt to the twelfth-century church. The early church probably dates from the eighth century. The abbey-church was rebuilt in the twelfth century on a far larger scale with a main apse and ambulatory, a ' bubble ' chapel at the east end and two similar chapels at the sides. A large Lady Chapel was built on the site and to the east of the earlier central chapel and a considerable stretch of tile-paving was found within it. The Cloister stood to the south of the nave and of this the greater part of the late fifteenth-century south alley is still standing ; the windows were of four lights and there was a storey above the alley. The Refectory which adjoined the Cloister on this side had panelled piers between the bays of the north wall, each bay having a large five-light blind window. Adjoining it to the west is a complex of buildings considered to have been the abbot's lodging. One room, called the abbot's parlour, has an enriched fireplace with a space for a painting above it and, under the windows of the same room, is an early Tudor enriched bench with linen-fold ornament. There is a shouldered fireplace in a second room. All this building is of late fifteenth or early sixteenth-century date, and has continued to be inhabited till the present day. To the south-east of it is the Rere-dorter, now used as a barn, and these are the only parts of the Abbey still standing. The north wall and the east end of the church survive, a foot or two above floor level, but most of the rest of the buildings have been destroyed down to the footing. The Ministry of Works has now marked out the lines of the foundations of the missing buildings of the cloister, and the infirmary remains to be excavated.

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MUCHELNEY ABBEY

PLAN OF NORMAN CHOIR SHOWING
POSITION OF SAXON CHURCHADAPTED FROM PLANS LENT BY ANCIENT MONUMENTS BRANCH
MINISTRY OF WORKS, LAMBETH BRIDGE HOUSE, S. E. 1.

FIG. 10.

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PART V

SOMERSET: CASTLES, MANSIONS AND ART COLLECTIONS

CASTLE NEROCHE

By H. ST. GEORGE GRAY

Castle Neroche (Castle Rache) occupies an elevated point at the eastern extremity of the Blackdown Hills, at a distance, as the crow flies, of six miles SSE. of Taunton, and $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles NW. of Chard. The 'Beacon', which overlooks the vale of Taunton Deane, stands at an elevation of 905 ft. (4 ft. lower than the camp of Pilsdon Pen, the highest point in Dorset). As yet nothing discovered at Neroche can be ascribed definitely to prehistoric times; whereas the excavations in 1903, conducted by Mr. St. George Gray, produced much which is undoubtedly of the Norman period.

The whole hill-top of Neroche was fortified by lines of earthworks thrown up along the edges of the natural declivities by which it is surrounded. In places on the north side these declivities are very steep. The strength of the ramparts corresponds inversely to the natural strength of the position, and in some places where a steeper declivity than usual occurs, no ramparts were found to be necessary, the artificial defence in those places probably being confined merely to a stockade.

The first cutting (10 ft. wide) was made through ramparts and ditches on the SSE. side of Neroche, and this being the weakest side, it was defended by three ramparts and intervening ditches. The cutting produced very little that was important as evidence of date.

On the north side of the farmyard and just to the south of the 'Beacon' a pit was excavated which proved to be 6 ft. in diameter and 9.2 ft. deep below the surface. From a depth of 1 ft. to the bottom much medieval pottery was found, and included a typical spout of a water-pot. The 'Beacon' of Neroche, from a military point of view, is a position of extreme strength, and must have been more so when the Forest of Neroche practically surrounded it on three sides. From the summit of the 'Beacon' downwards, in a NW. direction, four ramparts with intervening ditches can be traced. The highest part of the 'Beacon' proved to be artificial and pottery was found down to a depth of 8 ft.

Farther to the north a little way down the slope of the 'Beacon' other excavations were made through fosse and rampart. Here the ditch averaged 11 ft. deep below the surface of the silting; close to the bottom was found a piece of unglazed pottery of Norman character, and part of a metal netting-needle of a type found at Caesar's Camp, Folkestone; Hod Hill; Powerstock, Dorset; Rayleigh Castle; Shipton-under-Wychwood; Saffron Walden; and Kilkhampton Castle, Cornwall.

In the rampart adjoining one of the chief 'finds' was several pieces of a pottery lamp of the twelfth century.

Six hundred and seventy-five fragments of pottery in all were found, of precisely similar character to that discovered on various Norman sites such as Caesar's Camp, the Cambridge ditches, and in the excavations at Taunton Castle, including the pottery found at the bottom of the square well.

At what precise period in early medieval times the earthworks on the 'Beacon' of Neroche were constructed must, for the present, remain in doubt. It is possible they may have been erected during those troubled days of anarchy when Stephen was reigning but not ruling, and when the whole country bristled with fortresses. If so, Neroche would prove to be of much about the same date as the Keep of Taunton Castle and the Castle at Castle Cary held against Stephen by William Luel in 1138.

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DUNSTER CASTLE

By MARGARET WHINNEY

The Castle has, until its recent sale, been, except for a short interval during the Wars of the Roses, in the hands of two families only, the de Mohuns, who came with William the Conqueror, and the Luttrells to whom it was sold in the late fourteenth century, and who took possession in 1404.

The history of the building is extremely complex, substantial alterations having been carried out from time to time culminating in those of 1867.

Of the Norman castle, and of the later medieval buildings which originally stood on the top of the Tor, nothing now remains. The old gateway to the Lower Ward, with the towers flanking it, and some small sections of wall are, however, probably mid thirteenth-century in date. In 1420 Sir Hugh Luttrell built a new Gatehouse spanning the approach from the town; this still stands, but two towers were added on its inner side in the eighteenth century, and the interior was altered in 1867.

The existing house dates in the main from the time of George Luttrell, who succeeded in 1571. He reconstructed the medieval buildings in the Lower Ward (those in the Upper seem to have been in ruins when Leland visited the Castle in 1545) retaining much of the old walls, but building a new façade which was perhaps designed by William Arnold, gentleman, of Charlton Musgrove. Some of his work survives in the interior, including the plaster ceiling of the Hall, the frieze of the Gallery and a fireplace dated 1620 now in a room leading out of the latter.

After the Civil War, during which the Castle sustained a siege and subsequent dismantling, Francis Luttrell (1659-1690) added one of its most striking features—the Great Staircase with exceptionally fine pierced carved panels in place of a balustrade. This, which dates from about 1680, is encased in a medieval tower, and was approached from the Hall through a columned screen, since altered. The ceiling of the Parlour (later the Dining Room) on the top floor, is also Francis Luttrell's, and is dated 1681.

In the early eighteenth century a bowling green was laid out on the site of the original Upper Ward, and a chapel was built and decorated by Sir James Thornhill. This was unfortunately destroyed in 1867, but Thornhill's painting of the 'Brazen Serpent' which served as an altar-piece is now in the parish church. Between 1747 and 1774 Henry Fownes Luttrell, amongst other alterations remodelled the Gallery over the Hall formed by the staircase landing (1773), arranged a Breakfast Room on the top floor over the Hall, and laid out the Park. Some of his work was swept away in the major remodelling made in 1867-69 by Antony Salvin for George Fownes Luttrell. A new northern tower was then added to the main façade, a new and larger tower built over the main entrance, and a further tower containing a drawing room and bedrooms replaced Thornhill's chapel on the east front. The kitchen and other offices formerly at the south end of the house were turned into sitting rooms, and a new office wing built near the north tower. Many windows in various parts of the house were altered.

Inside, an additional Hall was created on the ground floor, and most of the 1680 panelling from the old Hall and Parlour was destroyed. Some of it, however, was moved to the Billiard Room. A new drive was made, and the approach to the Castle completely changed.

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NOTE ON THE PICTURES IN DUNSTER CASTLE

By E. K. WATERHOUSE

The collection of portraits is of considerable distinction and the best of them are illustrated in Sir H. C. Maxwell Lyte's *A History of Dunster*, 2 volumes, 1909. The two chief curiosities are the Hans Eworth of *Sir John Luttrell*, 1550, and the full-length signed portrait of an unknown man (probably *John Fownes*) by Bower, 1638. Dahl, Vanderbank, and Enoch Seeman are well represented, and there are four portraits by the local Richard Phelps of Porlock. From the later eighteenth century there is a Reynolds of 1769 of *Mrs. Southcote*, a pair of portraits by Opie from the 1780's, and a pair of pencil ovals of ladies by Downman (both dated 1781). Thornhill's *Brazen Serpent*, traditionally painted for the house Chapel in 1722 and stated to be 'lost', now hangs on the north wall of the Chancel of Dunster Parish Church. It formerly hung on the staircase in the house and can be reasonably well seen in the illustration in Charles Latham, *In English Homes* (I), 1904, 105.

BRYMPTON D'EVERCY

By GEOFFREY WEBB

This group of buildings consists of the great house, the small house and the parish church. The great house is mainly of three dates, the early sixteenth century, the early seventeenth century and the mid to late seventeenth century. The earlier work, where it survives, is of great richness in its external decoration and the late seventeenth-century wing is also a very interesting piece of provincial architecture. In the first years of the eighteenth century alterations were made in a curious medievalizing manner. The small house consisted originally of a hall and solar built upon an undercroft and reached by a turret stair. This building dates, probably, from the later fifteenth century and its purpose adjacent to the greater building is obscure, though it has been suggested that it was used as a Dower House. The church is remarkable for its stone rood screen.

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NOTE ON THE PICTURES AT BRYMPTON D'EVERCY

By E. K. WATERHOUSE

There is a mixed collection of 'old masters', accumulated by Francis Fane after he had bought the house in the 1730's: the most interesting of these is a portrait of Rubens of an otherwise unknown design. Francis Fane was a patron of Michael Dahl, who painted his portrait, and the house contains the early *Self-portrait* of Dahl, painted in Rome in 1786 for his friend Henry Tilson, which has long been considered lost. The inscription on the back of this is as it was recorded by Vertue (*Walpole Society*, XX, p. 68). The best of the later portraits is the Lawrence Kitcat of the *Tenth Earl of Westmorland*.

COTHAY MANOR

By GEOFFREY WEBB

The existing house at Cothay (pl. XX A) consists of a gatehouse, the upper part of which has been rebuilt, and the manor house itself, in the main, a building of the later fifteenth century. The manor house is in plan and main architectural character an entirely normal building of its time but distinguished for the remarkable survival of its detail, fittings and internal decoration, especially its wall paintings. Some decoration was done and a new dining-room added in the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century and these features also retain their original character to an exceptional degree.

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A. COTHAY MANOR HOUSE



B. NEWTON SURMAVILLE
(Photos : Dr. Margaret Wood)



MAPPERTON MANOR HOUSE

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CROWCOMBE COURT

By GEOFFREY WEBB

A contract of 1734 establishes that this house was completed on the already existing foundations by Nathaniel Ireson (1686-1769) of Wincanton. The original architect under whom the foundations were begun is named as Thomas Parker, an otherwise unknown man. Parker's layout is highly unusual with its monumental treatment of the stable court on one side of the main block. The elevations of the house itself have details which connect it with other west country buildings, notably at Blandford. The internal finish of the house, especially the plaster work, is of a very high quality and the house has preserved to a remarkable degree the furnishings of its age.

This is the most important known work of Nathaniel Ireson who is known to have worked under Colin Campbell at Stourhead and to have made designs for Corsham. He was also a pioneer of the manufacture of 'delft' pottery at Wincanton.

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NOTE ON THE PICTURES AT CROWCOMBE COURT

By E. K. WATERHOUSE

The house contains a characteristic eighteenth-century collection of Old Masters, among which a family group, dated 1564 and in the style of the elder Frans Pourbus, is remarkable. Among the family portraits is a series by Hudson, painted about 1747, of Thomas Carew, the builder of the house, and his family. Of local interest are several portraits by the eighteenth-century Somerset painter, Richard Phelps of Porlock (1710?-1785), including two drawings which are much above his average.

HOLCOMBE COURT

By A. R. DUFTY

The Court is reputed to have been built by Sir Roger Bluett in the reign of Edward VI, but the character of the entrance-tower suggests an earlier date for the building and it may well have been completed in the fourth decade of the sixteenth century. Extensive alterations were made to the interior by Richard Bluett who died in 1615 and much of the elaborate plasterwork is his. It remained the property of the Bluett family until 1857 when it was bought by the Rev. W. Rayer who carried out very extensive restorations.

Holcombe was originally a courtyard house, with the entrance, screens and great hall in the south-east range. In 1845 the north-west range was demolished, and much rebuilding has been done subsequently; but the south-east range remains little altered since the sixteenth century and is an important example of traditional building, on plan and in elevation, in stone. The main front is strongly asymmetrical, with the porch-entrance to the screens of the great hall accentuated by a tower, four storeys high, with an oriel corbelled out over the entrance archway; on the oriel are carved the Bluett arms. Adjoining the tower on the south is a large turret containing the stairs to the upper floors. By stressing the verticals in the design of this tower-feature an appearance of undue massiveness is with considerable subtlety avoided. North of the entrance is the hall, lit by two large transomed windows which may well be insertions of the second half of the sixteenth

century; the relieving-arches over them are very noticeable, and are indeed a feature of the front. Inside the house, the original doorways to the office-wing remain in the end wall of the hall, for the rest the screens-passage is a restoration of 1858, and the ceiling of the hall is probably of the same date, 1858. The plasterwork in the dining-room, including the overmantel with the arms of Bluett quartering Chichester, is dated 1591. The first-floor room overlooking the hall from the south end contains panelling of the second half of the seventeenth century, of plain but remarkably vigorous design, imparting a robust character to the room; the gallery above, running nearly the full length of the range in the roof-space, has a modelled plaster ceiling of early date incorporating the name of Roger Bluett. The fine carved and moulded timber ceiling reset in the new library is one of the original fittings of the house.

The parish church of Holcombe Rogus, to the east of the Court, contains Bluett monuments and the remarkable early seventeenth-century Bluett pew.

MAPPERTON CHURCH AND THE MANOR HOUSE

By A. R. DUFTY

Mapperton church and the house adjoin in a single group of buildings forming three sides of a square open to the west. The church, on the south, has a chancel built perhaps in the twelfth century and a nave rebuilt by Richard Brodrepp in 1704; the fifteenth-century tower has been reduced in height and is now under a continuation of the nave roof. Inside there is a monument by P. Scheemakers, 1737, and a quantity of sixteenth and seventeenth-century English and foreign glass.

The house (pl. XXI) occupies the east and north ranges of the square; the north range, balancing the chapel on the south, is of mid sixteenth-century date and was probably built by Robert and Mary Morgan. It belongs to the interesting group of buildings in the West Country with octagonal shafts at the main angles, which are one of the regional characteristics of masons' work of the better quality in Dorset and south-east Somerset dating from the second quarter of the sixteenth century. The property passed to the Brodrepps in 1608 and to them is attributable the main block of the house, comprising the east range, which is of about the middle of the seventeenth century; in form it may follow closely, if it does not actually incorporate, an earlier block containing hall, screens and oriel, on the analogy of other houses in the county, Poyntington Manor, Bingham's Melcombe, Athelhampton, which appear to conform to a typical plan, and one perhaps of regional significance. The east front is symmetrical, with bay-windows at each end and a porch in the middle. Inside there are elaborate sixteenth and seventeenth-century plaster ceilings and overmantels; the pantheon supporters in the achievement-of-arms of Paulet, Marquis of Winchester, on one of the overmantels are of heraldic interest.

Ranges of stabling of about 1670 with mullioned and transomed windows prolong the lines of the north and south (church) ranges of the building, and they are canted so that the wing projecting forward from the west end of the south stable does not restrict the vista of country seen from the rooms in the main, east, range of the house. Care for such detail and adherence to formality without any attempt at perfect symmetry governed for a century and more the layout at Mapperton, and these have contributed in very large measure to the blending of differing architectural styles and periods here into a singularly gracious group of buildings.

The gardens have been much altered, but they remain on two levels with a seventeenth-century summer-house between, and beneath it, in all probability, water once cascaded into the pool below.

A detailed description of the house and a dated plan are included in the Royal Commission's forthcoming Inventory of West Dorset.

MONTACUTE HOUSE

By MARGARET WHINNEY

The house, built of Ham Hill stone, was begun about 1588 and completed in 1601 by Edward Phelps, a lawyer who later became Speaker of the House of Commons and Master of the Rolls. It remained in the Phelps family till 1931 when it passed to the

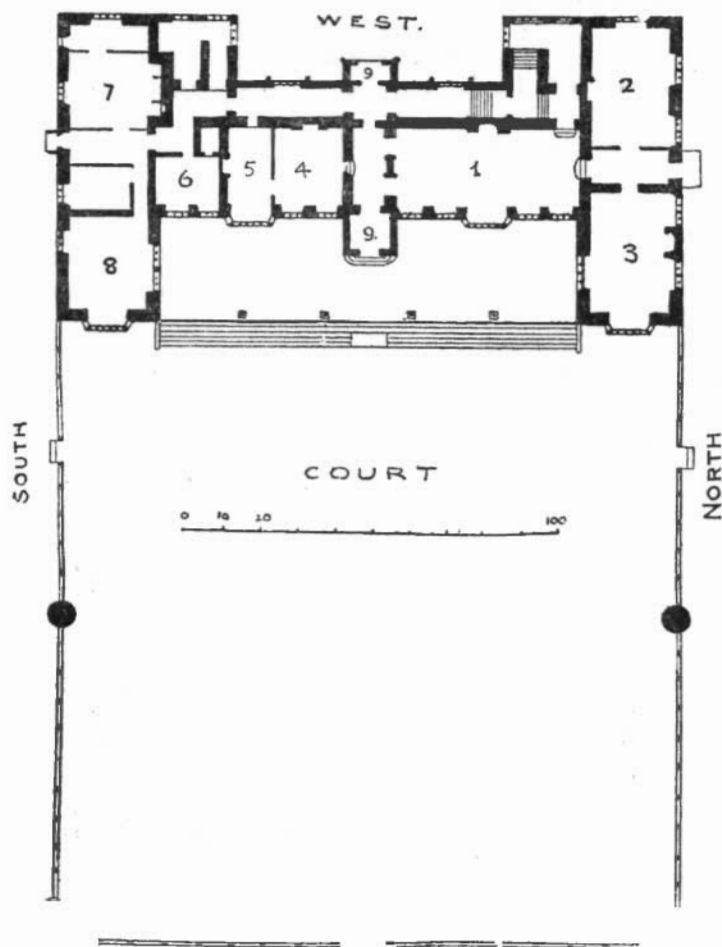


FIG. II. PLAN OF MONTACUTE HOUSE
(FROM J. A. GOTCH, *Architecture of the Renaissance in England*)

National Trust. Some minor alterations had previously been made by the late Marquess Curzon of Kedleston, who rented the house in 1915.

The H shaped plan (fig. II) originally consisted of three blocks, all one room thick, but in 1787 the centre bar of the H was widened by the addition of a corridor on the west side, then the back but now the front of the house. The new front was constructed from

materials brought from a Phelps house at Clifton Maybank, dating from about 1530.

The east front has the original central porch, opening on to the screens passage, with the Great Hall on the north and the offices (now thrown into a single room) on the south, thus retaining the medieval house plan. The exterior, however, is typical of the late sixteenth-century desire for symmetry, and the stone screen in the hall attempts a classical design. The top storey, which had figures of the Nine Worthies in niches on the east front, is almost entirely occupied by the Long Gallery. There are a number of good panelled rooms with fireplaces typical of the period. The house at present contains a loan-collection of furniture and pictures.

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NEWTON SURMAVILLE

By GEOFFREY WEBB

The site of this house was bought by Robert Harbin in 1608 and the rain-water heads of the building bear his arms and the date 1612. The building is an exceptionally complete example of its time inside and out.

The entrance front (pl. XX B) forms a particularly interesting composition consisting of a normal three gabled scheme varied by the placing of the oriel to the Hall and the Great Chamber, and the porch with an oriel above it as symmetrical features under the spaces between the gables.

The house, which has remained in the family of the builder, is remarkable for the completeness with which the contents have been preserved.

NOTE ON THE PICTURES AT NEWTON SURMAVILLE

By E. K. WATERHOUSE

The house contains portraits of the family and of close connections from the end of the sixteenth century, but the only one to which a painter's name can be attached is an oval crayon of *Edward Phelps, M.P.*, drawn in 1782 by Lewis Vaslet, who was then working at Bath.

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